



Committee to Protect Journalists  
2008 Annual Report



## Mission

The Committee to Protect Journalists works to promote press freedom worldwide.

We take action when journalists are censored, jailed, kidnapped, or killed for their efforts to tell the truth.

In our defense of journalists, CPJ protects the right of all people to have access to diverse and independent sources of information.

CPJ has been a leading voice in the global press freedom movement since its founding in 1981.

We defend journalists and news organizations without regard to political ideology.

To maintain our independence, CPJ accepts no government funding. We are supported entirely by private contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations.



## From the Executive Director

Dear Friends:

This report covers a tumultuous year for the media industry and for press freedom worldwide. There are, however, some indications of progress. In 2008, the numbers of journalists killed and imprisoned both dropped for the first time since the war on terror was launched in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks on the United States.

Forty-one journalists died in 2008, down notably from previous years. The decline was largely attributable to the sharp drop in the number of journalists killed in Iraq, which was consistent with an overall improvement in security conditions there.

Nevertheless, Iraq remains the deadliest conflict for journalists since CPJ started keeping records in 1981. In fact, Iraq may be the deadliest conflict for journalists in history, with the number of media fatalities easily topping estimates for both Vietnam and World War II. By December 2008, CPJ had documented the cases of 136 journalists and 51 media support workers killed in Iraq since the war began. The vast majority were Iraqi journalists, and most were targeted for assassination.

CPJ flew to Baghdad in May 2008 to meet with Iraqi journalists and foreign correspondents about the ongoing security threats. We also met with U.S. military and Iraqi government officials there and in the Iraqi Kurdish region to raise press freedom concerns, including the arbitrary detention and harassment of journalists. We continue to monitor the mounting number of attacks against journalists in Iraq, investigating the circumstances behind each incident. We help Iraqi journalists under threat to reach safe refuge, and raise funds to pay for medical care for those injured during attacks.

Over the last 15 years, about 500 journalists have been murdered in direct relation to their work, accord-

ing to CPJ research. Most of these journalists were not killed by an errant bullet on the battlefield but were deliberately targeted for their reporting. Even in war zones, murder is the leading cause of death for journalists. And in the vast majority of cases—more than 85 percent—the killers go free.

With these grim statistics in mind, CPJ launched its Global Campaign Against Impunity to bring the killers of journalists to justice. The campaign's initial focus is on Russia and the Philippines—two countries that are among the world's deadliest for journalists and among the worst in solving these murders. Already we are beginning to see results, with investigative and judicial action in several high-profile cases selected by CPJ for sustained advocacy and attention.

CPJ has also mounted wide-ranging campaigns to free imprisoned journalists in China and Cuba. Together, these two countries held 49 journalists in prison at the end of 2008, nearly 40 percent of the global total. For the first time, Internet journalists represented the largest professional category on CPJ's annually published imprisoned list. Forty-five percent of all journalists jailed worldwide are bloggers, Web-based reporters, or online editors—reflecting both the challenges and opportunities new technologies bring. That figure is likely to increase as long as expanded Internet access is not accompanied by corresponding media reforms or political liberalization in countries like Cuba, China, Vietnam, and Egypt.

The good news is that CPJ's work is making a difference, even in countries with seemingly intractable problems for the press. Our proudest moments come when journalists tell us that CPJ helped free them from unjust imprisonment, forced officials to back down from efforts to intimidate them into silence, and literally saved their lives. You will find some of their stories in the pages of this report. It is our great privilege to work alongside these brave journalists, and to fight together for the right of all people to have the information they need to make crucial decisions about their lives, their communities, and our world.

Joel Simon  
Executive Director

## Interview with the Chairman

*Veteran U.S. journalist Paul Steiger joined CPJ's Board of Directors in 2003 and was elected its chairman in 2005. A former managing editor of the Wall Street Journal and vice president of Dow Jones & Co., Steiger is now the editor-in-chief and president of ProPublica, a nonprofit news organization that produces investigative journalism in the public interest.*

### **How did you get involved with CPJ?**

What got me interested in CPJ were the various times in which CPJ was helpful when our reporters were in distress. The first time I remember was in the 1980s, when Gerry Seib [then Middle East correspondent and now assistant managing editor of the *Wall Street Journal*] was on a reporting trip in Iran. The Iranians decided that he was a spy, and they threw him in jail. CPJ was a big help in getting the *Journal* through that and helping get him out.

But what is really very vivid in my memory is, in 2002, when [*Wall Street Journal* reporter] Danny Pearl was kidnapped and ultimately murdered. And while we were trying to do anything we could to help get Danny freed, I was visited by the then-chairman of CPJ and the then-executive director who came to my office and offered to help. And the help was very practical—I mean, it wasn't just “we're here for you” kind of thing. You know, in the end it didn't work out, and Danny was killed, but it brought home to me how important CPJ is.

### **Are the dangers facing journalists covering international terrorism and conflict in places like Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iraq different from the dangers journalists have navigated in the past?**

There's no question that the world has changed—that it has become much more dangerous to be a journalist, particularly in areas of conflict. Because instead of being regarded as messengers who can help get their views publicity, a lot of insurgents of various sorts now feel that the best way to impact the public is through visible violence—and violence against journalists is one of the most visible mechanisms around. And so, whereas in the past if you had a press badge or a press symbol of some sort, it tended to protect you, now it can be a magnet for murder.

### **Has CPJ raised issues with the U.S. military regarding the treatment of journalists covering the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq?**

CPJ has been very active in pushing against the prolonged detention of journalists without charge. We helped get Bilal Hussein of The Associated Press released, and helped get Al-Jazeera reporter Sami al-Haj released. We've also pressed hard on U.S. officials to try to make checkpoints less dangerous for journalists and other civilians.

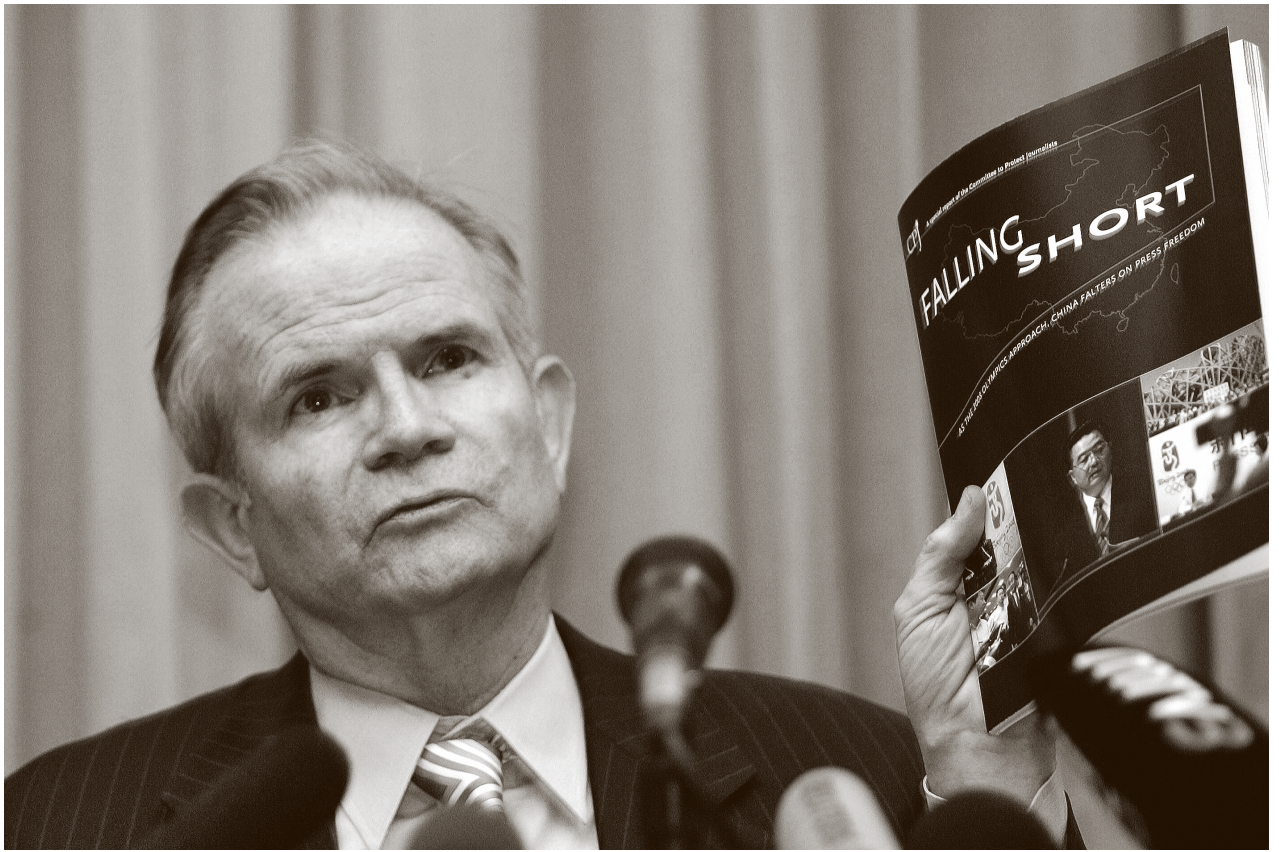
### **What are some of the major press freedom challenges within the U.S. now?**

The U.S. is still a place where journalists enjoy more freedom than almost anyplace else. But there have been worrying incursions into that freedom in recent years, from two sources. One is government officials who are trying to shut down the flow of confidential and classified information. Increasingly we've seen efforts, including at the federal level, to try to use the threat of jail or actual jail to squeeze information out of reporters. Ostensibly this is to support an important investigation, but I think with an additional agenda of trying to intimidate journalists and trying to intimidate their sources. The second avenue is private litigation, where some courts have shown a disturbing willingness to allow private litigators to demand reporters' sources. In both cases, this is the exception rather than the rule. But it looks to me like it's a growing trend.

### **Where has CPJ advocacy made a difference?**

A few years ago, CPJ did a report that said the Philippines was the most dangerous place [in the world] for a journalist. At first the Philippine government denied it, but then we showed them the statistics and they saw that it was not possible to deny it. And as a result, they started to take steps to end impunity for those who would kill journalists in the Philippines.

Another example is China, where we have been keeping the pressure on for a couple of years now to try to get Beijing to live up to the promises it made when it got the Olympic Games to allow freer access for journalists. We take that to mean all journalists—not just foreign journalists but Chinese journalists too. We try not to lecture but try simply to point out the values of having a free



*“We are trying to get China to live up to the promises it made,” says Steiger, shown here presenting CPJ’s special report on press restrictions in China at a crowded news conference in Beijing.*

press. When you have information you can trust it helps society and the economy operate better, and I think more and more people in China have embraced that notion. But, as Chairman Mao said, it’s two steps forward, one step back.

#### **What impressions have you brought back from your missions and other work on behalf of CPJ?**

What I’ve seen is the incredible courage that individual journalists and friends of journalists in extremely dangerous countries around the world, the incredible courage they have to stand up for the rights

of journalists. There’s a woman in Zimbabwe, Beatrice Mtetwa, who received CPJ’s Burton Benjamin Memorial Award for lifetime achievement in 2008. She’s a [media] lawyer who has been beaten, threatened, jailed—and yet she keeps coming back. When Barry Bearak of *The New York Times* was suddenly thrown into jail, CPJ called Beatrice for advice. She gave a little advice, but what she did was she went down to the police station where Barry was being held, and she got in the face of the officials there, and before long he was out. She just won’t be intimidated. Encountering people like that just warms my soul.

**“There’s no question that the world has changed—that it has become much more dangerous to be a journalist.”**

**PAUL STEIGER, CPJ BOARD CHAIRMAN**



Reuters/Tomas Bravo, Reuters/Thomas Peter, Reuters/Atef Hassan, Reuters/Vincent Du

## Program Overview

CPJ's staff of experienced journalists and human rights researchers investigates press freedom abuses in more than 120 countries, from authoritarian regimes like Cuba and Burma to fragmented states like Iraq and Somalia. We respond to attacks against the press through five regional programs: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Central Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa.

In 2008, CPJ carried out research and advocacy missions in Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Venezuela, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia, Egypt, Iraq, Tunisia, Burma, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Mozambique, and South Africa.

CPJ runs an International Program Network with five consultants based around the world: in Mexico City, São Paulo, Cairo, Johannesburg, and Bangkok. CPJ also has a European representative based in Madrid. This international network helps ensure that CPJ can respond quickly and effectively to crisis situations. IPN staffers conduct on-the-spot investigations into serious abuses, organize emergency missions, and provide direct support to journalists who have suffered violence and incarceration.

Program staffers use an array of advocacy tech-

niques to publicize attacks against the press and to exert pressure on those responsible for abuses—including open letters to heads of state and other influential officials, news alerts, special reports, international protest campaigns, and research and advocacy missions. Our reputation for credibility ensures that we can directly engage world leaders and policymakers on press freedom issues. Our research and analysis are also routinely used by members of the diplomatic community and senior officials at international institutions such as the United Nations and the World Bank.

CPJ works closely with other press freedom and human rights organizations around the world, sharing information on breaking news and organizing joint advocacy campaigns and investigative missions.

Generating media attention is a vital component of our work. By publicly revealing abuses against the press and championing threatened journalists, CPJ directly confronts those seeking to silence the messenger. CPJ works to ensure that a story about a journalist targeted for her reporting on local corruption in southern Mexico becomes international news, not just as a demonstration of media solidarity but as a lesson that the tactics of violence and intimidation against the press will only backfire and result in even greater attention to uncomfortable truths.



*The volatile election season was described by a reporter as “the worst time for journalists in Zimbabwe’s history.”*

## AFRICA: Focus on Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a country in crisis, with a raging cholera epidemic, more than half the country’s population dependent on food aid, and record hyperinflation, according to the United Nations. “Zimbabweans are suffering silently,” said Frank Chikowore, a local freelance journalist who was imprisoned in 2008 amid a brutal crackdown on the press and the political opposition. “There is no one able to expose what is going on.”

Over nearly three decades in power, President Robert Mugabe steadily increased pressure on the independent media to silence his critics. State radio and television have dominated the landscape, filling airtime with propaganda supporting his ZANU-PF party and vilifying the opposition. No independent daily newspapers or private broadcasters were operating within the country in 2008, and only two prominent independent weeklies continued to publish.

At least 48 Zimbabwean journalists were living in exile in 2008, including many of the country’s leading editors and reporters.

CPJ published a special report on press conditions going from “Bad to Worse in Zimbabwe,” as dozens of journalists were arrested, assaulted, and harassed by state security forces and ZANU-PF supporters during the country’s bitterly contested elections. One veteran journalist described the weeks between the first round of voting in March and a runoff in June as “the worst time for journalists in Zimbabwe’s history.”

Foreign correspondents who risked reporting there were also treated harshly. *New York Times* reporter Barry Bearak was among those arrested in 2008. “One of my captors ... described my offense to me as something despicable,” said Bearak, who was detained for five days. “I was being charged with the crime of committing journalism.”

Bearak was freed thanks to the efforts of human rights lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa, who received CPJ’s Burton Benjamin Memorial Award for lifetime achievement. Mtetwa played a lead role in defending journalists during the crackdown. CPJ continues to find ways to support independent journalists and press freedom advocates struggling to speak out.

**“Zimbabweans are suffering silently. ... There is no one able to expose what is going on.”**

FRANK CHIKOWORE, FREELANCE JOURNALIST



*More than 100,000 people marched in demonstrations across Mexico to protest the growing crime epidemic. Reporting on violent crime has become a deadly beat.*

## **THE AMERICAS: Focus on Mexico**

Mexico has become one of the most dangerous countries in the world for the press, with journalists routinely targeted for their reporting on drug trafficking, corruption, human rights violations, and abuses by the military and security forces. Twenty-four journalists have been killed in Mexico since 2000, at least eight of them in direct reprisal for their work. In addition, seven journalists have disappeared since 2005. In nearly all these cases, investigative efforts have fallen short and the crimes have gone unprosecuted.

This record of unprecedented violence in an atmosphere of almost total impunity has had a devastating effect on the Mexican media and on society at large, with journalists increasingly afraid to report on criminal activity. CPJ has launched a campaign to reverse this tradition of impunity, working with local journalists to mobilize public support within the country and push the federal government to take a more active role in protecting press freedom.

Results of our sustained advocacy in Mexico include the establishment of a special prosecutor for crimes against the press in 2006 and the enactment of landmark legislation in 2007 that eliminates criminal penalties for defamation, libel, and slander.

In 2008, we worked to strengthen federal accountability for attacks against the press. CPJ held its first-ever overseas board meeting in Mexico City to generate high-level attention to the dangers journalists face. President Felipe Calderón and senior members of his cabinet met with the CPJ delegation to discuss proposals for reform.

CPJ published two special reports on unsolved journalist murders and disappearances to help build consensus around the need to combat impunity for these crimes.

By the end of 2008, the executive and legislative branches had each put forward proposals to federalize crimes against freedom of expression. We are monitoring legislative developments and providing expert commentary on the various proposals on the table.

**“Self-censorship is now considered a legitimate form of protection.”**

LEONARDA REYES, FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF MEXICO’S CENTRO DE PERIODISMO Y ÉTICA PÚBLICA (CENTER FOR JOURNALISM AND PUBLIC ETHICS)





Chinese paramilitary police form the Olympic rings and 2008 characters to celebrate the Beijing Games.

## ASIA: Focus on China

With China on the world stage during the Beijing Olympic Games, CPJ turned a spotlight to the country's abysmal press freedom record. The yearlong advocacy campaign began in August 2007 with our first-ever press conference in Beijing. CPJ published a detailed special report, *Falling Short*, describing the myriad ways in which China had failed to meet its pledges to ease controls over the media.

The International Olympic Committee awarded the Games to Beijing based on assurances that China would apply "no restrictions" to media coverage. While authorities eased some travel and interview rules for foreign journalists, new restrictions were periodically introduced. Authorities, for instance, prevented journalists from reporting in Tibet after protests broke out there in March 2008.

In the run-up to the Games, the government actually increased controls over the domestic press. They also tightened censorship of the Internet.

We released an updated edition of *Falling Short* in June 2008. CPJ representatives were denied visas to work in Beijing during the Games, so we set up camp in Hong Kong to respond to journalists requiring urgent assistance or information. CPJ worked to alert the international media to the risks that their Chinese colleagues, including fixers and translators, might face in the course of ordinary reporting.

China remains the world's leading jailer of journalists, with at least 28 journalists imprisoned as of December 1, 2008. Twenty-four of these journalists were arrested for publishing news and information online—a chilling reminder of the government's continuing determination to control the Internet.

China's elaborate systems for monitoring and censoring online content are now being emulated abroad, in places like Vietnam, Burma, Thailand, and Malaysia.

We continue our efforts to hold Beijing to its promises to the international community and its obligations under international law.

**“There will be no restrictions on journalists in reporting on the Olympic Games.”**

BEIJING OLYMPIC BID COMMITTEE



*A woman remembers slain journalist Anna Politkovskaya during a demonstration in Moscow.*

## EUROPE: Focus on Russia

Government hostility toward independent media, the rise of organized crime, and volatile regional conflicts have proved a lethal mix for journalists in Russia. CPJ research shows that Russia is the third-deadliest country for journalists in the world—after Iraq and Algeria—with 49 journalists killed there since 1992. Two journalists were killed in Russia in 2008, both in the country’s restive North Caucasus region.

In an effort to stop the violence, CPJ has launched a pilot project to end impunity for the killers of journalists. The campaign builds on a series of CPJ missions, including a 2007 visit that prompted then-President Vladimir Putin to make his first public pledge to protect journalists.

In 2008, Putin’s handpicked successor, Dmitry Medvedev, promised that all “attempts on the life and health of journalists will be investigated and prosecuted to the end, regardless of when they occurred.” The new president made these remarks at a gathering of business and political leaders in Germany, where CPJ

had conducted high-level advocacy to persuade Berlin to use its influence to push for press freedom reforms in Russia.

CPJ is working to hold Putin and Medvedev to their words. Our advocacy on individual cases is helping to spur local investigative and prosecution efforts, though progress remains halting.

Perhaps no case has attracted more international attention than the 2006 murder of investigative journalist Anna Politkovskaya. After years of campaigning for justice, three suspects in her assassination were brought before a military court in Moscow in November 2008. Trial proceedings were first open to the press, then abruptly closed, and later reopened in the face of domestic and international outcry. However, neither the alleged gunman nor those who ordered the crime were in custody.

In a 2002 book about the conflict in Chechnya, Politkovskaya had written, “People call the newspaper and send letters with one and the same question: ‘Why are you writing about this? Why are you scaring us?’” Her response: “I want you to know the truth.”

**“Attempts on the life and health of journalists will be investigated and prosecuted to the end.”**

DMITRY MEDVEDEV, PRESIDENT OF RUSSIA



*Mahdi Army fighters raise their weapons outside the office of Al-Iraqiya television in the southern city of Basra.*

## THE MIDDLE EAST: Focus on Iraq

CPJ has intensified its reporting and advocacy efforts in Iraq, the deadliest conflict for journalists in recent history. By December 31, 2008, CPJ had documented the cases of 136 journalists and 51 media workers killed in Iraq since the war began in 2003.

CPJ routinely responds to calls for urgent assistance. We help Iraqi journalists under threat reach safe refuge, and we raise funds to pay for medical care for those injured during attacks.

In May 2008, CPJ traveled to Baghdad to meet with Iraqi journalists and foreign correspondents about the ongoing security threats. We also met with U.S. military and Iraqi government officials there to raise press freedom concerns, including the arbitrary detention of journalists. Following that mission, CPJ board member Rajiv Chandrasekaran, former Baghdad bureau chief and now national editor for *The Washington Post*, hosted a meeting in New York with other senior editors and news managers to share strategies for protecting Iraqi staff members and stringers.

CPJ conducted a major advocacy campaign in Iraqi Kurdistan, where we issued a special report on the harassment and illegal abduction of journalists by security forces of the Kurdistan Regional Government. We met with KRG President Masoud Barzani and urged him to investigate the spate of attacks against the press,

stop official interference and harassment of journalists, and reform repressive media legislation.

CPJ also works to hold the U.S. military to account for its actions against the press in Iraq. Since the war began, at least 16 journalists in Iraq have been killed by fire from the U.S. military. Twelve Iraqi journalists have been detained by U.S. forces for prolonged periods without charge or conviction. In 2008, CPJ advocacy helped secure the release of Bilal Hussein, an Iraqi journalist working for The Associated Press who spent more than two years in detention. Hussein, who was finally released without charge in April, received CPJ's International Press Freedom Award in November.

**“There are many dangers facing a news photographer in Iraq. ... All consider the journalist their enemy.”**

**BILAL HUSSEIN,  
A PHOTOGRAPHER FOR THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
DETAINED FOR TWO YEARS WITHOUT CHARGE BY  
THE UNITED STATES**



*Government restrictions on local and international media made it difficult to assess the impact of Cyclone Nargis and respond to the needs of the victims. This photograph was taken by an unidentified stringer.*

## INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM NETWORK

### Focus on Burma

CPJ's International Program Network of stringers and consultants based around the world has dramatically improved our ability to respond to crisis situations. The IPN team includes representatives in Bangkok, Cairo, Johannesburg, Mexico City, and São Paulo.

Two very different press freedom emergencies in Burma demonstrated the value of having a CPJ representative in the region with the expertise to report accurately and respond quickly. Our Bangkok-based Asia consultant, Shawn Crispin, reported extensively on the ruling junta's attempts to restrict news coverage of a crackdown on political demonstrations in the fall of 2007. During the course of the protests, security forces arrested six journalists and assaulted several more. Amid street protests in the capital, a Burmese soldier shot and killed Japanese journalist Kenji Nagai.

Crispin made an undercover visit to Burma in early 2008 for a special report on "Burma's Firewall Fighters," about how news of the protests had traveled out of one

of the most tightly censored countries in the world. The report was based on in-country research as well as interviews conducted with exiled Burmese journalists based in Thailand and India.

CPJ's special report was released just as a new crisis was unfolding. Cyclone Nargis cut a broad swath of devastation across the delta region on May 3. Burmese officials imposed strict restrictions on journalists and aid workers, making it extraordinarily difficult for the international community to cope with the growing humanitarian crisis. CPJ issued numerous appeals to the Burmese government, calling on authorities to allow foreign correspondents into the country, lift restrictions on the local media, and free jailed journalists.

In September, we celebrated the release of veteran journalist U Win Tin, Burma's longest-serving political prisoner. However, 14 journalists remained in prison at year's end.

We continue to serve as a resource for foreign correspondents seeking information about how to navigate the risks there, and we offer assistance to Burmese journalists who come under threat for their reporting.

**"If [state-controlled media] had treated the story like they should have ... there's no telling how many lives could have been saved."**

AUNG ZAW, EDITOR AND FOUNDER, *The Irrawaddy* NEWSMAGAZINE

## JOURNALIST ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CPJ's Journalist Assistance Program provides support to journalists whose needs cannot be addressed by advocacy alone—journalists injured in violent attacks, journalists forced into exile, and imprisoned journalists requiring urgent medical attention. We work closely with journalists over the long-term—for months and even years—to develop effective strategies for dealing with a crisis situation. Needs range from immediate financial or legal assistance to treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder. CPJ research shows that only one in seven exiled journalists ever returns home, and that few are able to find work in the media industry. “The fact that exiled journalists tend to be driven out of their profession altogether only finishes the job of those who seek to silence the press,” said CPJ’s executive director, Joel Simon. “We have an obligation to do everything we can to help these brave journalists get back on their feet while working hard to improve reporting conditions in their home countries.”

*Since the program was launched in 2001, CPJ has offered direct aid to more than 370 journalists from 50 countries. Recent activities include:*

CPJ placed Iraqi journalist Alaa Majeed in a new International Journalist in Residence Program we launched in partnership with the City University of New York. In Iraq, Majeed was under constant threat for her work. She was shot at by soldiers, chased by insurgents, and escaped several kidnapping attempts. Majeed received the International Women’s Media Foundation Courage in Journalism Award in 2006 for her work in McClatchy’s Baghdad bureau.

CPJ helped fund urgent medical treatment for Faramaz Novruzoglu, a reporter for the weekly newspaper *Nota Bene* who served two years in prison in Azerbaijan. Novruzoglu, who was held on politically motivated criminal defamation charges, said prison officials denied him adequate medical care and warned him that the only way he would leave the facility was in a body bag.

Over the past several years, CPJ has provided financial assistance to the families of 15 jailed Ethiopian journalists and to nine journalists who went into exile or hiding following the government’s crackdown on dissent in 2005. CPJ recommended seven cases to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, providing detailed background information and pressing for a timely resolution of their appeals for resettlement.

Clockwise from top left: City University of New York, Nina Ognianova/CPJ, Courtesy of Eskinder Nega and Serkalem Fasil



*Clockwise from top left: Iraqi journalist Alaa Majeed joined the City University of New York as an international journalist in residence; Azeri reporter Faramaz Novruzoglu at a meeting with CPJ; and a group of Ethiopian journalists celebrating their release from prison in April 2007 (from left to right: Feleke Tibebe, Eskinder Nega, Serkalem Fasil, Sisay Agena, Dereje Habtewold, Zekarias Tesfaye, and Fasil Yenealem).*

**“When we were in prison, CPJ helped our families, delegates of CPJ visited us, CPJ issued statements. ... I don’t have words to express my appreciation. First, thanks to God, next, thanks to CPJ.”**

**FASIL YENEALEM, FORMER PUBLISHER OF ETHIOPIA’S  
*Addis Zena* WHO SPENT 17 MONTHS IN PRISON**



*The Journalists Memorial at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., displays hundreds of photographs of journalists who died or were killed in the line of duty.*

## Getting Away With Murder

CPJ has launched a Global Campaign Against Impunity to bring the killers of journalists to justice. Murder is the ultimate form of censorship. When one reporter is killed, hundreds of others are sent a message that certain topics are too dangerous to be discussed. While popular imagination may suggest that journalists are typically killed by an errant bullet or mortar bomb on the battlefield, CPJ's research shows that the majority—seven out of every 10—are targeted in retaliation for their reporting and hunted down to be murdered. Even in war zones, murder is the leading cause of death for journalists.

By and large, it is local reporters covering their home countries who are the most vulnerable to attack, though their murders tend to draw far less public and political attention. Foreign correspondents make up less than 15 percent of journalists killed in the line of duty.

In the vast majority of these crimes, the killers are never prosecuted. Now, with support from the Knight Foundation, CPJ has started pilot projects

in Russia and the Philippines, two countries that are among the deadliest nations for journalists and among the worst in solving these murders. The campaign is already beginning to yield results, with investigative and judicial action in several high-profile cases selected by CPJ for sustained attention. As part of this campaign, we released our first-ever Impunity Index on World Press Freedom Day, May 3, 2008. This index lists the countries where governments have consistently failed to bring the killers of journalists to justice.

Countries with the worst records for impunity—Iraq, Sierra Leone, and Somalia—have been mired in conflict. But the majority of the 13 countries on CPJ's Impunity Index are established democracies such as Mexico, pointing to alarming failures by those elected governments to protect journalists.

"Every time a journalist is murdered and the killer is allowed to walk free, it sends a terrible signal to the press and to others who would harm journalists," said CPJ Executive Director Joel Simon. "The governments on this list simply must do more to demonstrate a real commitment to a free press."

## CPJ Impunity Index

This list includes countries with five or more unsolved journalist murders over the past decade, from 1998 to 2007. The countries are ranked by the number of unsolved journalist murders per capita.

**1. IRAQ:** Iraq has been the world's most dangerous country for the press since the war began in 2003, with at least 79 cases unsolved as of May 2008. Most were targeted for their professional affiliations.

**2. SIERRA LEONE:** The 11-year civil war ended in 2002, but the rule of law remains weak. Nine journalist murders remain unsolved, many dating from a particularly brutal period in January 1999, when rebels took the capital, Freetown.

**3. SOMALIA:** Run largely by competing warlords since 1991, Somalia remains deeply fragmented. No convictions have been obtained in five journalist murders.

**4. COLOMBIA:** The conflict among right-wing paramilitaries, leftist guerrillas, and government forces has led to dozens of journalist deaths. At least 20 cases are unsolved.

**5. SRI LANKA:** Fighting between government and separatist forces has long bled the nation, but journalists are more likely to be assassinated than to die in crossfire. At least eight cases remain unsolved.

**6. PHILIPPINES:** Journalists covering corruption, crime, and politics have repeatedly been targeted with violence, with few consequences for their killers. No convictions have been obtained in 24 cases.

**7. AFGHANISTAN:** Despite the prolonged armed conflict, journalists are more likely to be targeted for murder than to be killed in a combat situation. Seven cases are unsolved.

**8. NEPAL:** Political instability and civil war have taken their toll on the press, with five journalist murders unsolved. Four of the victims were abducted and executed while in captivity.

**9. RUSSIA:** Business dealings, official corruption, and human rights abuses are among the most dangerous topics to cover. Fourteen journalists have been murdered with impunity since 1998.

**10. MEXICO:** Drug trafficking, organized crime, and official corruption are the country's deadliest beats. No convictions have been obtained in seven journalist murders.

**11. BANGLADESH:** Political instability and entrenched corruption are the riskiest stories to cover. Eight journalist murders are unsolved.

**12. PAKISTAN:** Political unrest, sectarian strife, and tribal warfare all threaten the press in Pakistan, where eight journalists have been murdered with impunity since 1998.

**13. INDIA:** The world's largest democracy may have one of the world's freest presses, but five journalist murders remain unsolved. All of the victims were local reporters.

**“It is possible to get the police and the courts to act. ... The campaigning work of CPJ has contributed a lot to the battle against impunity.”**

SHEILA CORONEL, CPJ BOARD MEMBER,  
FOUNDER OF THE PHILIPPINE CENTER FOR INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM,  
AND PROFESSOR AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

## International Press Freedom Awards

CPJ's annual International Press Freedom Awards ceremony in New York City brings together hundreds of the world's most distinguished journalists and media executives to celebrate colleagues who risk everything to tell the truth.

In 2008, CPJ honored five brave journalists who uphold the highest standards of our profession in the face of serious threats: Bilal Hussein (Iraq), Danish Karokhel and Farida Nekzad (Afghanistan), Andrew Mwenda (Uganda), and Héctor Maseda Gutiérrez (Cuba). Maseda Gutiérrez was serving a 20-year prison sentence and was not able to accept his award in person.

Beatrice Mtetwa, a lawyer and press freedom advocate in Zimbabwe, received CPJ's Burton Benjamin Memorial Award for lifetime achievement.

Gwen Ifill, managing editor of the PBS news show "Washington Week" and a member of CPJ's board, hosted the event at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. Jeff Zucker, president and CEO of NBC Universal, chaired the dinner, which raised \$1.25 million. Zucker saluted the courageous journalists being honored and urged colleagues to be alert to the expanding threats on the horizon. "The battle over freedom of expression is moving online," he said. "It is essential that we preserve freedom of speech on the Internet."



Photographs by Barbara Nitke/CPJ



*Clockwise from top right: Alberto Ibarquien, president and CEO of the Knight Foundation, with his wife, Susana, CPJ award winner Andrew Mwenda with Nassra Abass, and CPJ Executive Director Joel Simon; CPJ board member Gwen Ifill hosts the event; CPJ board member Christiane Amanpour with Senior Research Associate María Salazar Ferro; and CPJ award winners Mwenda, Farida Nekzad, Beatrice Mtetwa, and Danish Karokhel.*



## 2008 Award Winners



**IRAQ**  
**Bilal Hussein**  
**Photographer**  
**The Associated Press**

Hussein was arrested by U.S. Marines in Iraq and spent two years detained without charge. He was freed in April 2008 thanks to support from the AP and advocacy efforts by CPJ and other journalist groups. He was part of the AP team that won a Pulitzer Prize for breaking news photography in 2005. His photograph of Iraqi insurgents firing on U.S. troops during the battle of Fallujah in 2004 was part of that award-winning package, but may also have led to his detention by the U.S. military. *“If I had to go through this again, I would not hesitate if it is to get the truth out. Because I know I would not be alone.”*



**CUBA**  
**Héctor Maseda Gutiérrez**  
**Founder and contributor**  
**Grupo de Trabajo Decoro**

At age 65, Maseda Gutiérrez is the oldest journalist imprisoned in Cuba. Arrested in the government’s March 2003 crackdown on the independent press, he was sentenced to 20 years in prison. Maseda Gutiérrez wrote about social, economic, and environmental issues for his news service, Grupo de Trabajo Decoro, and for independent Cuban media and news Web sites based abroad. His memoir, *Enterrados Vivos* (Buried Alive), was smuggled out of prison, one page at a time, and published in the United States. *“We must use our strength in order for truth and justice to conquer, or we must die striving to defend them.”*



**UGANDA**  
**Andrew Mwenda**  
**Managing editor**  
**The Independent**

One of the country’s leading political journalists, Mwenda has been arrested, harassed, and threatened for his reporting. In 2008, he was fighting 21 criminal charges related to his journalism.

Alleged “offenses” included publishing reports of torture at government detention centers. While he was in the United States to accept the CPJ award, police raided his newspaper’s offices in Kampala while attempting to deliver an arrest warrant for him. *“No amount of torture, no number of detentions, no number of raids on our offices, not even the threat of death will ever stop us from seeking and telling the truth.”*



**AFGHANISTAN**  
**Danish Karokhel**  
**Farida Nekzad**  
**Pajhwok Afghan News**



Karokhel, director of Pajhwok, and Nekzad, deputy director and managing editor, are journalists and media rights activists in one of the world’s most dangerous countries for the press. Their news agency operates throughout the country, including in its most lawless provinces. They take on great risks to expose the activities of armed groups, government officials, and international actors. *“Journalists in general are targets,” said Nekzad, “but female journalists in particular*

*face grave danger—not only from warlords, Taliban, clerics, and the government, but even from their own families.”*



**ZIMBABWE**  
**Beatrice Mtetwa**  
**Media and human rights lawyer**

Mtetwa, a 2005 recipient of CPJ’s International Press Freedom Award, has made a career out of speaking truth to power. Over the past decade, she has defended numerous journalists against spurious charges brought by President Robert Mugabe’s government. In 2008, she represented many of the journalists arrested during a massive crackdown on the press in the run-up to the presidential election—including *New York Times* reporter Barry Bearak, who presented her award at the ceremony. *“Without freedom of expression ... one cannot talk of any democracy.”*

## Publications

CPJ is well-regarded by colleagues around the world for applying stringent journalistic standards in all its work. Our reports are routinely cited by the international press, from *The Washington Post* to the *South China Morning Post*. Major broadcasters, including Al-Jazeera, the BBC, CNN, and Univision, regularly interview CPJ members as experts on press freedom.

All of CPJ's published work is available on its Web site, [www.cpj.org](http://www.cpj.org). The organization also distributes its reports to journalists, political leaders, diplomats, and senior officials at international institutions such as the United Nations and the World Bank. CPJ translates its reports into an increasing number of languages, including Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

CPJ's biennial magazine, *Dangerous Assignments*, featured many of the special reports commissioned throughout the year, as well as articles on press freedom by leading journalists from around the world.

Each year, CPJ publishes *Attacks on the Press*, an authoritative reference guide to global press freedom conditions. The 2008 edition presented reporting and analysis of media trends in more than 100 nations and documented hundreds of press freedom abuses worldwide. CPJ launched the book in February 2009 with major events in New York, Tijuana, Madrid, and Cairo.

Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Carl Bernstein wrote the preface to *Attacks* and discussed the book's findings at a press conference at U.N. headquarters in New York. "Today, the greatest threats to freedom of the press are more insidious than a generation ago," Bernstein wrote. "They are intended to induce a climate of fear and self-censorship through systematic violence and emblematic arrest."

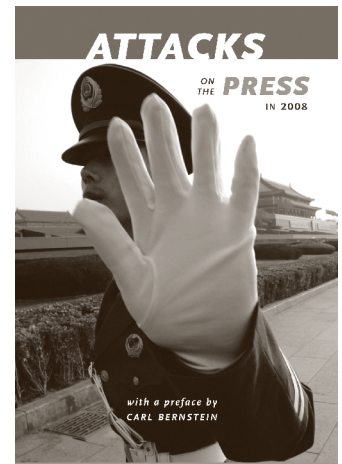
Bernstein noted periods of self-censorship in the United States, which served as a reminder to appreciate the courage of colleagues working under threat worldwide. "The struggle of these journalists is the struggle of all of us," he wrote.

The Tijuana launch helped draw attention to the threats facing journalists in Mexico, one of the most dangerous countries in the world for the press. CPJ board member and *Chicago Tribune* columnist Clarence Page joined Americas Program Coordinator Carlos Lauría for the press conference, held at the headquarters of the newsmagazine *Zeta* in a room lined with bulletproof windows.

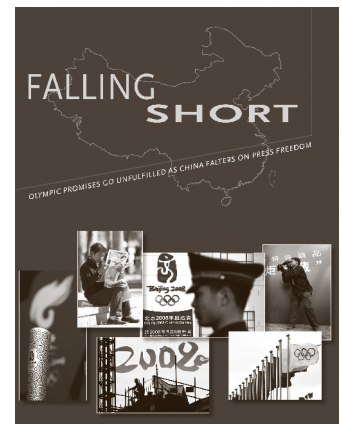
**"The struggle of these journalists is the struggle of all of us."**

CARL BERNSTEIN

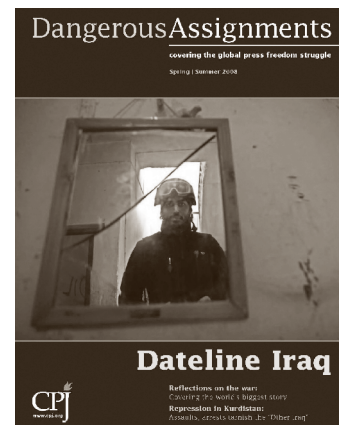
PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR



*Published annually, Attacks on the Press is an indispensable reference guide for journalists.*



*CPJ special reports draw international attention to press freedom emergencies.*



*CPJ's biennial magazine, Dangerous Assignments, features special reports and articles on global press freedom issues.*

## GLOBAL

Getting Away with Murder:  
CPJ Releases Impunity Index (May)

Journalists in Exile ( June)

2008 Prison Census: Online and in Jail  
(December)

Journalists Killed in 2008: For Sixth Straight  
Year, Iraq Deadliest Nation for Press (December)

## AFRICA

Bad to Worse in Zimbabwe (June)

The Gambia: The Witness (October)

## THE AMERICAS

Cuba's Long Black Spring (March)

Mexico: Three Killings, No Justice (June)

The Disappeared in Mexico (September)

## ASIA

Burma's Firewall Fighters (May)

China: Falling Short (June)

Malaysia's Risk-Takers (October)

## EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Azerbaijan: Finding Elmar's Killers (September)

Russia: Into the Ether (November)

## THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Dateline Iraq (March)

The Other Iraq (May)

Tunisia: The Smiling Oppressor (September)



*Adela Navarro Bello (left) and César René Blanco Villalón (far right), co-directors of the newsmagazine Zeta, hosted a press conference for CPJ at the weekly's headquarters in Tijuana, Mexico. Americas Program Coordinator Carlos Lauría (with microphone) and CPJ board member and columnist Clarence Page spoke at the event.*



*Mohamed Abdel Dayem, Middle East and North Africa program coordinator; Gamal Fahmy, board member of the Egyptian Journalists Syndicate; and Kamel Labidi, a CPJ consultant, spoke at a press conference in Cairo.*



*Journalist Carl Bernstein, who wrote the preface to the 2008 edition of Attacks on the Press, responded to questions at a press conference held at U.N. headquarters in New York.*

**CPJ publications are available online at [cpj.org/reports](http://cpj.org/reports).**

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PETER THIEL, VENTURE CAPITALIST, ENTREPRENEUR, AND CO-FOUNDER OF PAYPAL  
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# Financial Report

THE COMMITTEE TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS, INC.  
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
DECEMBER 31, 2008, AND 2007

	<u>ASSETS</u>	
	2008	2007
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash & cash equivalents	\$913,074	\$1,242,691
Cash—restricted	215,088	86,137
Grants & pledges receivable, current	681,340	864,834
Endowment pledges receivable	90,000	198,114
Prepaid expenses & other	18,284	6,415
	<u>1,917,786</u>	<u>2,398,191</u>
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Furniture, fixtures & equipment	647,362	640,780
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(559,889)	(515,485)
	<u>87,473</u>	<u>125,295</u>
Grants & pledges receivable, less current	290,000	400,000
Investments, at fair value—restricted	8,193,522	11,696,481
	<u>8,483,522</u>	<u>12,116,776</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u><u>\$10,488,781</u></u>	<u><u>\$14,619,967</u></u>

## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$309,453	\$311,627
Deferred support and revenue, current	584,105	821,679
	<u>893,558</u>	<u>1,133,306</u>
Deferred support and revenue, less current	290,000	550,000
<b>COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES</b>		
NET ASSETS, Restricted, Endowment Campaign	7,992,894	11,461,558
NET ASSETS, Temporarily Restricted and Unrestricted	<u>1,312,329</u>	<u>1,475,103</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<u><u>\$10,488,781</u></u>	<u><u>\$14,619,967</u></u>

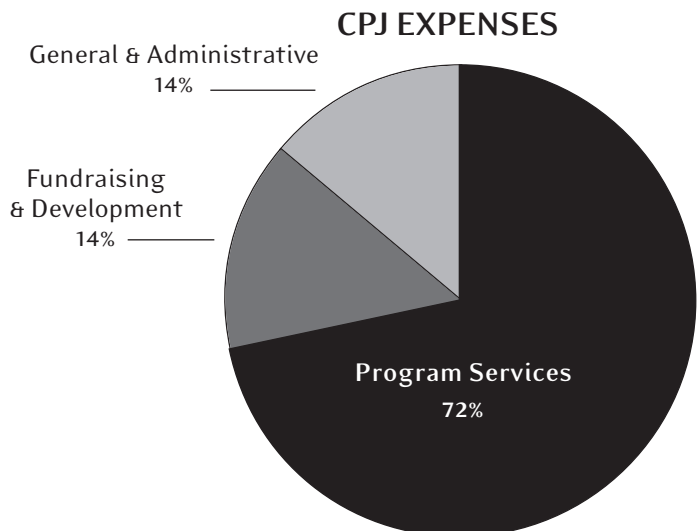
The financial records of the Committee to Protect Journalists are audited annually by an independent firm of certified public accountants. CPJ's 2008 financial records were audited by the firm DeFino & D'Elia. A full, audited financial statement is available upon request.



**THE COMMITTEE TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS, INC.  
STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008**

	Total Program & Supporting Services Expense	Program Services	Supporting Services	
			Fundraising & Development	General & Administrative
Salaries & FICA expense	\$1,674,863	\$1,162,393	\$264,365	\$248,105
Employee benefits	224,291	155,663	35,403	33,225
Rent & related	327,090	227,008	51,629	48,453
Travel & related	46,598	46,598	---	---
Consultants & professional	231,973	160,995	36,615	34,363
Mission-related expenses	304,805	304,805	---	---
Flow-through grants	44,865	44,865	---	---
Board-related expenses	33,501	---	---	33,501
Office supplies, equip. & maintenance	54,413	37,764	8,589	8,060
Telephone & fax	73,596	51,077	11,617	10,902
Publications, printing & postage	130,249	69,617	45,773	14,859
Insurance	17,059	11,839	2,693	2,527
Depreciation & amortization	44,404	30,817	7,009	6,578
Miscellaneous	60	42	9	9
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$3,207,767</b>	<b>\$2,303,483</b>	<b>\$463,702</b>	<b>\$440,582</b>

**CPJ is pleased to report that nearly three-quarters of every dollar goes directly to its program activities.**



## CPJ Impact

By the age of 27, Jihad Ali had already cheated death a few times. In fall 2008, he came to the United States with the help of CPJ for rehabilitative surgery to repair a bullet-shattered leg and regain the life he had as a young, energetic cameraman chasing the news.

On the morning of December 27, 2005, he and a colleague were walking from their Sunni neighborhood to the office of Al-Iraqiya, a state-run television station set up with U.S. aid. A car sped toward the two men. “I am not sure whether the gunmen fired two or three bullets into my right thigh,” Ali told CPJ in Baghdad. “I fell to the ground when they fired the first bullet at me. ... I was conscious but collapsed in pain.”

His colleague escaped. An assailant with an AK-47 assault rifle got out of the car and continued to fire on Ali, whose work for Al-Iraqiya had led to repeated threats against his life. Fliers had been handed out at mosques in several Sunni areas where al-Qaeda was known to be active, saying that it was acceptable “to shed the blood” of Ali and two of his co-workers.

Numerous Al-Iraqiya reporters have been targeted because of their work. CPJ research shows that the Iraq Media Network, which includes Al-Iraqiya, has seen 27 of its staffers killed since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion, more than any other news organization.

Ali’s assailants left him for dead on a south Baghdad street. When they realized their mistake, they went looking for the cameraman at local hospitals, but he managed to give them the slip.

Ali not only clung to life but vowed to recover from his crippling injuries and take up his camera again. CBS correspondent Lara Logan, who met Ali in Baghdad, was so moved by his commitment that she began raising funds for his medical treatment and lining up supporters in the U.S. That’s when she approached CPJ. “I was absolutely astounded by the response,” she said. Money poured in from friends, colleagues, and journalists, including big-name news anchors. By late summer, funds stood at around \$50,000.

“I was very proud,” Logan said. “Someone in Iraq

in Jihad’s condition didn’t normally survive. But he had. He had no big network to take him on ... no one to turn to.” (Logan joined CPJ’s Board of Directors in November.)

Even with the funds in hand, it was a long and laborious process to secure travel documents. Ali did not qualify for a U.S. visitor visa because he had no assets in Iraq that would ensure his return home. CPJ secured pro bono legal assistance to help him apply for humanitarian parole, which would allow him to enter the country for medical treatment. Ali had the help of prominent U.S. journalists and lawyers, a guarantee from doctors, and proof of funding for his stay, but his application still took six months to assemble. The Department of Homeland Security eventually approved Ali’s request to travel to the U.S. in August.

“All I am thinking of right now is to get the surgery,” Jihad told CPJ, “and to be able to carry a camera again.”



Courtesy of Jihad Ali

*Jihad Ali with CBS News correspondent Lara Logan, who joined CPJ’s Board of Directors in November.*

**“All I am thinking of right now is to get the surgery and to be able to carry a camera again.”**

**JEHAD ALI, CAMERAMAN, AL-IRAQIYA**



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- Donate to CPJ
  - Subscribe to CPJ News
  - Add your voice to CPJ Advocacy
  - Attend CPJ's annual International Press Freedom Awards dinner
- To make a donation to CPJ or to discuss other ways to contribute to our work, please contact our Development Department at (212) 465-1004 ext. 122 or [development@cpj.org](mailto:development@cpj.org).*

*COVER PHOTOGRAPH: A Reuters news vehicle burns after being hit by an Israeli tank shell in Gaza on April 16, 2008. Cameraman Fadel Shana, 24, was killed and soundman Wafa Abu Mizyed was injured when a tank fired on the crew. The journalists had gotten out of the vehicle to film Israeli military forces. (AP/Wissam Nassar)*