

#FreeFrenchieMaeCumpio: Over 250 journalists call for journalist's immediate release

September 24, 2025 – Ahead of the resumption of the trial of Philippine community journalist Frenchie Mae Cumpio next week, more than 250 journalists and representatives from news and media organisations from around the world call on President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. to [immediately](#) and [unconditionally](#) release her in an open letter coordinated by a coalition of international and local press freedom organizations. Cumpio has been detained for more than five years without [conviction](#).

She faces a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison, and could also face another trumped-up case accusing her of participating in an [ambush](#) that killed two soldiers.

As her [trial](#) nears its conclusion, with the next hearing set for September 29, 2025, urgency to act has never been greater. In a letter addressed to President Marcos, the journalists emphasized that Cumpio embodies the role of a journalist [dedicated](#) to exposing abuses and strengthening democracy.

“Her continued detention is not only a denial of justice but also a contradiction of your stated commitment to press freedom,” the journalists told President Marcos. The letter further emphasized that Cumpio remains the only journalist in the Philippines imprisoned for her work.

With the Philippines set to assume the ASEAN chairmanship in 2026, the signatories stressed that upholding the highest standards of human rights is both urgent and necessary.

Journalists worldwide also echoed the concerns previously raised by the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines and UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression Irene Khan, who denounced Cumpio's prolonged detention.

The #FreeFrenchieMaeCumpio coalition, including the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines and AlterMidya in Manila, along with global press freedom organizations Reporters Without Borders (RSF), the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), and Free Press Unlimited (FPU), has repeatedly raised concerns about Cumpio's prolonged detention and her conditions in prison.

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Spokespeople are available for interviews in English/Filipino:

National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (Manila): Jonathan De Santos, secretariat@nujp.org

AlterMidya (People's Alternative Media Network, Manila): Rhea Padilla, rhea@altermidya.net

Reporters Without Borders (Taipei/Paris): Aleksandra Bielakowska, abielakowska@rsf.org

Committee to Protect Journalists (Frankfurt/New York): Beh Lih Yi, lbeh@cpj.org; press@cpj.org

Free Press Unlimited (Amsterdam): Jos Bartman bartman@freepressunlimited.org



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