

British government calls for world-wide media freedom

[4 May 2011] To mark World Press Freedom Day on 3 May, the British government issued statements supporting the rights to freedom of expression and calling for an open and free media in all countries. Tibet supporters are asked to write to the Foreign Office to encourage them to act on their words, by urging China to allow international reporters access to Tibetan areas, in particular the Ngaba region which is under a military crackdown (see action below).

In a written statement on 3 May, Foreign Secretary William Hague said, "Governments need to respond to legitimate aspirations with reform not repression. Encouraging an open and effective press will only help improve the environment for long-term social, political and economic stability."

Jeremy Browne, Foreign Office Minister with responsibility for human rights, recorded a four minute video message to mark the occasion, saying, "We [the British Government] believe that a free, open media is essential to having free open societies." He clarified that the British government promotes the democratisation of the media whereby "everybody can have an opinion and everybody can be somebody who searches for truth and exists within an open and free and fair society."

Mr Browne concluded by stating, "The British government sees freedom of expression, freedom of media as being absolutely central to the task of emancipating people and making sure that we live in a more harmonious and prosperous world in the future."

Further reading: [William Hague's statement](#) | [Jeremy Browne's video](#)

TAKE ACTION

In light of the statements made on World Press Freedom Day, Tibet Society encourages supporters to write to Jeremy Browne, Foreign Office Minister with responsibility for human rights. Ask him to call on China to allow the international media the freedom to report from all Tibetan areas, in particular the Ngaba region of Sichuan province, where a military crackdown is currently in operation and both foreign media and tourists have been banned indefinitely. Also urge the Minister to call on the Chinese government to release all Tibetan political prisoners who have been imprisoned for simply expressing their opinions or for sending information by email or text message about protests in Tibet.

Write to Jeremy Browne, using the FCO's online feedback form or send a letter to:

Foreign Office Minister Jeremy Browne

Foreign & Commonwealth Office

King Charles Street

London SW1A 2AH

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