



## **Petition from international journalists to the Dutch parliament**

Recently, young people all over the world have begun calling for more democracy, measures to tackle corruption, justice and transparency as well as respect and dignity for ordinary citizens. Modern technology has been instrumental in feeding new generations with international information: the world has become a village to many people all over the globe. A free stream of news and information has been key to this development.

In 'old' Europe, governments have been preoccupied with getting their finances back under control after the worldwide economic crisis. Huge cuts are being made in all sectors. As a result, public broadcasters in the Netherlands are being asked to do their bit to help get the nation's finances back in order. The oldest international public broadcasting organisation, Radio Netherlands Worldwide, will also be expected to make sacrifices for this purpose.

International media organisations have been inspiring and informing people everywhere for many years. In doing so, it has been the content and not the means of distribution that matters. This has been done through independent journalism, impartiality and respect for diversity in various cultures.

While elsewhere the spring appears to be blossoming, in Europe there seems to be a prolonged winter: more and more societies are becoming inward-looking. Politicians are preoccupied with national problems and are judged on national solutions. Terms such as human rights, respect for an individual, press freedom and freedom of speech are no longer thought to be universal values, which everyone has a right to and that should be pursued in every corner of the Earth.

In addition, it seems to have been forgotten that democracy, press freedom and free speech are not just valuable, but also expensive. And that a country like the Netherlands has a responsibility towards the people in countries where these freedoms are limited.

***We, the signatories of this petition, are asking the Dutch parliament to accept the responsibility it has towards international press freedom and freedom of speech. We are asking you to recognise the importance of international media in general and of Radio Netherlands Worldwide in particular.***

**If you support the petition, please email staff at Radio Netherlands Worldwide by 23 June at the latest (mail to: [iede.devries@rnw.nl](mailto:iede.devries@rnw.nl)) and pass the text with a recommendation on to your own network of media organisations.**

