

Matt Jukes  
New Scotland Yard  
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3 September 2024

Dear Matt,

We write as general secretaries of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) and International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), to express grave concern over the apparent misuse of the Terrorism Act 2000 to detain and arrest journalists, thus undermining media freedom.

The arrest of Richard Medhurst on 15th August and the subsequent seizure of his journalistic equipment including recording devices essential for his work, has shocked both journalists based in the UK and those around the world. Powers contained in anti-terror legislation must always be deployed proportionately, yet actions by police in an apparent crackdown on genuine journalistic activity cause significant cause for concern over efforts to stifle press freedom.

We seek clarity from you on the nature of the investigation into Richard Medhurst and request an urgent meeting to discuss the use of police powers under anti-terror legislation to detain, question and arrest journalists. Without swift action to restore confidence over the treatment of journalists and activists, counter-terrorism policing faces an erosion of public confidence and risks a chilling effect on journalists fearing arrest for carrying out their work.

The NUJ representing journalists across the UK and Ireland, and IFJ representing over 600,000 media professionals spanning more than 140 countries, stress that disproportionate use of powers contained in anti-terror legislation by British police runs contrary to the UK government's commitment to upholding press freedom and ensuring journalists' safety.

We look forward to a meeting at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Stanistreet, NUJ general secretary

Anthony Bellanger, IFJ general secretary