
'We're horrified': Intl media rights group cites 125 VIOLATIONS of press freedom by US police during George Floyd protests

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US police have violated the constitution with arrests and violence against reporters covering the anti-police-brutality demonstrations, a global media rights group has said. The rallies were followed by rioting in major cities.

"We are horrified by the continued use of harsh and sometimes violent actions of police against journalists doing their jobs. These are direct violations of press freedom, a fundamental constitutional value of the United States," Committee to Protect Journalists (CJP) Program Director Carlos Martinez de la Serna said.

Since May 29, the New York-based NGO has recorded at least 125 violations, including 20 arrests, against journalists who were covering the protests, sparked by the death of unarmed black man, George Floyd, in police custody.

Police have hit "dozens more" reporters with tears gas, pepper spray or rubber bullets, even after they had displayed their press cards, the CPJ said, citing various sources. The statement came after local and international media outlets reported that their journalists have been attacked during the protest rallies and the ensuing chaos.

Last week, two members of a Reuters TV crew were hit by rubber bullets in Minneapolis, Minnesota, while a reporter for Russia's RIA Novosti outlet was among those teargassed in the city. A CNN news crew was arrested live on air while covering the unrest there. Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, though, has apologized to CNN for the detention of their team. "I take full responsibility. There is absolutely no reason something like this should happen," he said. The news crew was released shortly after their arrest.