



Journalists hold sign saying “the press freedom must not die” in support of British journalist Sally Bowen, who was ordered to pay the former owner of Aero Continente damages for her book called “The Imperfect Spy: The Many Lives of Vladimiro Montesinos.”  
REUTERS/Pilar Olivares

## UNDERSTANDING DEFAMATION LAWS IN PERU

When applied legitimately, defamation laws are intended to protect individuals against false statements that are harmful to their reputation. Yet both civil and criminal defamation laws also have the potential to be misused to prevent open public debate. Peru has a history of such abuse, having “seen the most consistent convictions in criminal defamation cases” among nations in South America, with courts and prosecutor offices often “being used like whips to silence journalists”.<sup>1</sup> According to a survey conducted by El Comercio newspaper, from 2019 to 2022, “at least 74 journalists and news outlets were reported or prosecuted after disseminating information about politicians, businessmen, religious organisations, public officials, and other people in power.”<sup>2</sup>

Journalists play a vital role in holding Government and public bodies to account. For example, the last four former presidents have all faced jail time because of high-profile public corruption that investigative journalists uncovered.<sup>3</sup> It is critical for journalists to be aware of defamation laws and risks, both criminal and civil, as well as other laws and risks that may be used against journalists to silence independent reporting. This Guide provides journalists with a practical understanding of defamation laws and the steps they can take to mitigate defamation liability in Peru. We aim to empower journalists to understand their legal rights and obligations so that they can continue to report on issues of vital public interest in an informed way.

1 J. Turkewitz and M. Taj, *In Peru, Courts ‘Used Like Whips’ to Silence Journalists*, N.Y. Times (Jan. 19, 2022).

2 A. Duchiaide, *Pending vote on ‘Gag Law,’ Peru’s Congress goes on the offensive against press freedom and media react*, Knight Center, <https://latamjournalismreview.org/articles/pending-vote-on-gag-law-perus-congress-goes-on-the-offensive-against-press-freedom-and-the-media-react/>

3 C. Lauría, *Libel Conviction in Peru: A ‘Dagger’ for Investigative Journalism*, Nacla (Jan. 27, 2022), <https://nacla.org/libel-conviction-acosta-peru-dagger-investigative-journalism>



## IN BRIEF: DEFAMATION IN PERU

To reduce the risk of defamation in journalistic work, a journalist must be very conscious of:

- whether the subject of their reporting are public or private individuals,
- whether the published content refers to public or private information about their subject,
- the accuracy of the information provided and the amount of diligence undertaken to ensure its truthfulness, and
- the subjectivity of the reporting and the qualifying terms or adjectives used.

Defamation risk is increased when:

- reporting on individuals considered private (or their close family),
- reporting on matters considered private or those that would impinge on their dignity,
- where less diligence is done, or
- where more subjective opinion is inserted into the reporting.

Below are the key questions a journalist should consider prior to publication:

### **(1) Is the story to be published protected specifically by speech freedom or information freedom?**

There is an important difference between them from the Peruvian legal standpoint: the first one guarantees the right to transmit and spread freely ideas, thoughts, subjective judgements and opinions; while the second one protects the people's right to search, receive and spread truthful information of any kind. As a consequence, the opinions and judgments protected under speech freedom, due to their subjective nature, cannot be analysed under a "veracity" or "truthfulness test". Therefore, it is important to assess whether the words or expressions chosen which might affect someone's dignity are objectively injurious or unnecessary expressions which if not avoided, could risk violating the speech freedom laws. On the other hand, the stories under the scope of information freedom – which implies informative or news dissemination – are subject to a diligence duty in order to ensure that the disseminated information is reasonably verified and supported by objective facts, and that the journalist is not acting with contempt for the truth or spreading simple rumours lacking verification.

### **(2) What type of reporting is being done?**

"Neutral" reporting (reports limited to collecting or gathering data, opinions or statements of external sources of information, so that they are reports of publicly known facts) would be subject to different assessment criteria. The requirements stated by Peruvian Supreme Court jurisprudence regarding "neutral" reporting are the following:

- to verify the objective existence of the recollected data, opinions, or statements;
- to duly identify the source of information; and
- to avoid making subjective commentary to the news.

There is a higher risk if a journalist is engaged in investigative journalism of facts previously unknown to the public with less verification of the facts being reported, or if the journalism includes a mixture of reporting and opinion. The more supported or verified a story is, the more protected it is against a charge of defamation.

The subject matter being reported on is also important. Is the story in the public interest or does the reporting involve issues that might be considered to infringe upon the privacy of the individuals being reported on, or those who have a personal and/or close family relationship with them? Would the story be considered humiliating to the subject, even if true? The more private a story is, or the more it might harm the dignity of the subject of reporting, the more likely it is to be considered defamatory.

### **(3) What is the status of the person being reported on and the claims of the story - are they a public official and do the claims relate to an exercise of their public function; or do they have an open criminal charge against them, and the claims relate to that charge?**

Reporting on these two categories would grant extra defences against a charge of defamation.



Signs saying “the tyranny has fallen” and “everything is corrupt” at a protest in Lima following a video surfacing that showed Vladimiro Montesinos allegedly bribing an opposition congressman to switch sides. CD/JP

# 1. WHAT IS DEFAMATION?

## A. WHAT IS CRIMINAL DEFAMATION?

In Peru, journalists can face prosecutions under the criminal charges of insult, calumny, libel, and defamation. Find the definitions below:

### Insult

Under Article 130 of the Peruvian Criminal Code, insult consists of offending or insulting another person with words, gestures or acts and is punishable by community service ranging from 10 to 40 days or with a fine of 60 to 90 penalty-days.



A “penalty-day” is a fine equivalent to the average daily income of the convicted person, considering their overall wealth.

### Calumny

Under Article 131 of the Peruvian Criminal Code, calumny consists of falsely attributing a crime to someone else and is punishable with a fine of 90 to 120 penalty days.

### Criminal defamation

Article 132 of the Peruvian Criminal Code defines defamation as “spreading news [that] attribute[s] to a person, a fact, an event, a quality or behaviour that may damage his honour or reputation.” This action can be by any means or method (for example, in person, virtually or using technology). Criminal defamation becomes “aggravated defamation” if the information was spread widely via public media. Depending on the underlying type of defamation there are different minimum sentences as outlined below at (3).

## B. WHAT IS CIVIL DEFAMATION?

In Peru, there is only a criminal offence of defamation. However, it is possible to sue someone through a civil process and obtain – if the ruling is favourable to the plaintiff – compensation for damage to their honour or image. This is on the basis of “moral harm”, which is a category of “non-pecuniary damage” (meaning a loss that is typically difficult to quantify in monetary terms) in tort law.

## 2. IN WHAT INSTANCES CAN I BE PROSECUTED AND/OR SUED FOR DEFAMATION?

What amounts to “damage to honour or reputation” is left undefined in Article 132 of the Peruvian Criminal Code. In a binding decision issued by the Supreme Court in 2006,<sup>4</sup> some examples of conduct that would meet this threshold are offered:

- offensive expressions that do not belong to the “public sphere” but to the individuals’ personal life;
- objectively injurious expressions or insinuations that are impertinent and unnecessary to a critical or informative purpose; and/or
- spreading of information that lacks truthfulness (which does not have to be the unobjectionable truth, but a plausible one after the journalist has performed minimum acts of diligent verification).

Actual or effective damage to honour or reputation is not required – the possibility of damage is sufficient.

To be sued through the civil process by invoking “moral harm”, it is necessary for the plaintiff to demonstrate:

- the harm produced - did the spread of defamatory information actually occur?
- illegality of the action - was the harmful conduct permitted by some legal standard or regulation?
- the causal connection between the action and the damage - was the damage reasonably caused by the action of the defendant?
- attribution factors - was the harmful action performed with malice or negligence?

4 Plenary Agreement N° 3-2006/CJ-116.

## 3. WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES OF BEING CONVICTED FOR DEFAMATION?

According to Article 132 of the Peruvian Criminal Code, defamation is punishable by a maximum of two years imprisonment and/or a fine of 30 to 120 penalty-days.

If defamation is “calumnious,” meaning that it falsely attributes a crime to someone else, the penalty is between one to two years imprisonment and/or a fine of 90 to 120 penalty-days. If defamation is committed using a publicly available source or media (i.e., through a book, the press or other social media), then it is considered aggravated defamation and the penalty is between one to three years imprisonment and/or a fine of 120 to 365 penalty-days.

If the ruling is favourable to the plaintiff in a civil process, the sanction will be of a pecuniary nature, that is, the payment of an indemnity or compensation to the affected party.

### PRACTICAL CASE EXAMPLES

#### Leiva Case (2023)<sup>5</sup>

On January 19, 2023, a Peruvian criminal court judge found Milagros Leiva Galvez, a journalist of the broadcast channel Willax Television, guilty of aggravated defamation. Milagros Leiva, during the broadcast of her programme, linked the former Prime Minister, Anahí Durand, to terrorism by using the word “terrucó” (Peruvian slang term to refer to terrorists). For example, she stated: “the facts demonstrate that you are a “terrucó lover” or “who (...) would have a daughter with a terrorist? It is because you share the same thoughts (...) to the “terrucó” (terrorist) it is called “terrucó” (terrorist)”. These, and other expressions, were found not to be protected by freedom of speech. Milagros Leiva received a fine of 20,000 Peruvian soles (approximately USD 5,200) to be paid jointly with Willax Television, and was ordered to comply with certain rules of conduct for a year (with prison sentence imposed if Milagros Leiva did not comply with these rules during the probation period).

#### Ugaz Cases (2018 – 2022)<sup>6</sup>

Since 2018, Peruvian investigative journalist Paola Ugaz has faced repeated lawsuits and a criminal inquiry for aggravated defamation related to her investigations into the alleged sexual and psychological abuse of minors, as well as the alleged financial irregularities of the Catholic congregation Sodalicio de Vida Cristiana. After the airing of a documentary showing the predatory land-grabbing of the Asociación Civil San Juan Bautista in Piura, Ugaz was subject to a defamation lawsuit by the Archbishop of Piura y

5 L.M.S. Cruz, Resolución que impone el pago de 20 000 soles a Milagros Leiva por difamación («terrucó») [Exp. 10191-2021-0-1801-JR-PE-07], *Pasion Por El Derecho* (19 Jan., 2023), <https://lpderecho.pe/condenan-milagros-leiva-delito-difamacion-contra-exministra-anahi-durand-expediente-10191-2021-0-1801-jr-pe-07/>

6 P. Nalvarte, Judge acquits Peruvian journalist who was sued for aggravated defamation, *LatAm Journalism Review* (2 Feb., 2022), <https://latamjournalismreview.org/articles/judge-acquits-peruvian-journalist-who-was-sued-for-aggravated-defamation/>

Tumbes. The basis of the complaint was that these allegations were not true. In 2019, her lawyers were successful in having the proceedings moved from Piura to Lima. Following this, the Archbishop publicly announced his intention to withdraw the legal complaint against Paola Ugaz.

In 2019 and 2020, she had a further five lawsuits laid against her by Luciano Revoredo, the director of the conservative news portal La Abeja. He contended that Paola Ugaz's statements – namely statements in media interviews that La Abeja's coverage of the lawsuits against her was defamatory and misogynistic – amount to aggravated defamation. In 2022, Judge Rómulo Chira of the Ninth Criminal Court of the Superior Court of Lima ruled in favour of Ugaz because of the lack of evidence presented by the Luciano Revoredo.<sup>7</sup>

### **Garay Case (2011)<sup>8</sup>**

Prosecutor Agustín López Cruz filed a defamation claim against a journalist, Mr. Garay. The prosecutor alleged that the journalist had insinuated during a broadcast that the prosecutor was engaging in corruption, that the prosecutor had sexually harassed young litigants, and that the journalist had called the prosecutor an “erotic dwarf.” Mr. Garay denied the voice on the tape was his own, claiming that he did not work at the station at the purported time of the broadcast. Furthermore, the journalist stated that he believed the charges were in reprisal for his reporting on corruption. On April 19, 2011, Mr. Garay was sentenced to three years imprisonment and a fine of US \$7,150. On July 27, 2011, a Court of Appeals upheld the sentence but reduced the prison term to 18 months. In September 2011, chief prosecutor Pablo Sánchez Velarde presented a report to the Supreme Court that found deficiencies in the evidence presented in the case, including a lack of clear proof that the voice on the recording belonged to Mr. Garay. On October 29, 2011, Mr. Garay was released after the Supreme Court overturned the defamation conviction against him.

### **Bowen Case (2005)<sup>9</sup>**

British journalist Sally Bowen was convicted of criminal defamation and ordered to pay 10,000 Peruvian soles (\$3,000 at the time) to businessman Fernando Zevallos in connection with her book *The Imperfect Spy: The Many Lives of Vladimiro Montesinos*. The litigation was about a single sentence in the 493-page book. The sentence quotes an imprisoned U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration informant who stated that Zevallos was a drug trafficker with close ties to Vladimiro Montesinos, a now-imprisoned former intelligence chief. The judge also sentenced Bowen to one year of probation and restricted her movements both within and outside of the country. The appellate court, citing technical irregularities of the trial court judge's handling of the case, overturned the conviction.

7 Human Rights Council, UN General Assembly, Visit to Peru: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, A/HRC/46/35/Add.2 (22 Dec., 2020), <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G20/353/29/PDF/G2035329.pdf?OpenElement%20https://www.mediadefence.org/news/paola-ugaz/>

8 In Peru, journalists convicted of criminal defamation, Committee to Protect Journalists (5 May, 2005), <https://cpj.org/2005/05/in-peru-journalists-convicted-of-criminal-defamati/>

9 In Peru, journalists convicted of criminal defamation, Committee to Protect Journalists (5 May, 2005), <https://cpj.org/2005/05/in-peru-journalists-convicted-of-criminal-defamati/>



## 4. PROCEDURE FOR INSTITUTING DEFAMATION

### A. WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR INSTITUTING CRIMINAL DEFAMATION?

Anyone, including private citizens, can file and bring a criminal defamation claim against another, without the participation of a public prosecutor, by filing a case in a relevant court with jurisdiction. A claim for defamation must be brought within three years of the event, or within four and a half years if in the aggravated form.

Once a defamation charge has been filed, a journalist should retain a specialised criminal law attorney to navigate the Peruvian defamation law and the Peruvian legal system. It is possible to appeal the first-instance court's decisions, and a lawyer can assist with this process.

### B. WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR INSTITUTING CIVIL DEFAMATION?

In Peru, anyone, including private citizens, can file a civil action for "moral harm", requesting the payment of compensation, against a journalist and/or media company before a civil judge.

Once a civil action for damages has been filed, a journalist should retain a specialised attorney to represent them in the process. If the civil lawsuit is established, the sanction is always the payment of civil damages or indemnification. It is possible to appeal the first-instance court's decision, and a lawyer can assist with this process.





Peruvian journalists Paola Ugaz and Pedro Salinas, who exposed a web of abuse in an elite Catholic society and are being sued for defamation by a local bishop, talk during an interview in Lima, Peru October 16, 2018. REUTERS/Mariana Bazo

## 5. WHAT ARE THE DEFENCES AVAILABLE?

### A. HOW CAN I DEFEND MYSELF IF I AM CHARGED WITH CRIMINAL DEFAMATION?

Most journalists defend defamation claims by alleging that they have exercised their constitutional right to freedom of expression. The Peruvian Supreme Court has established a balancing test to weigh the protection of a person's honour under the criminal defamation laws with this constitutional right to freedom of expression:

*"Journalists who (i) comply with a minimum standard of care; (ii) refer to public figures or government officers (i.e., have a public interest component); and (iii) have credibility should be protected by the right of freedom of expression and not be prosecuted under the defamation laws."*

A defendant can also raise a defence of truth against a claim of defamation. The burden is on the defendant to demonstrate that its investigation and allegations are true or that, at the time the information was spread, the allegations were truthful, meaning other information available would not prove the statement as false.

The truth defence is only applicable in cases where the facts considered as defamatory are related to public interest matters, namely:

- when the defamed person is a public official and the facts, qualities or behaviours that have been attributed to him refer to the exercise of his functions (i.e. their public work);
- when a criminal proceeding is still open against the offended person related to the alleged facts (for example, in the case the allegations made by the journalist were about the possible commission of a crime);

- when it is evident that the defendant has acted in the interest of a public cause or in self-defence; or
- when the complainant requests that the facts are fully investigated to determine if the defamatory allegations are true or false.

The truth defence does not apply where the alleged act would have led to an acquittal in Peruvian courts as is often the case when the accusation is of a personal, family privacy or a sexual freedom violation matter.<sup>10</sup>

There are three instances where speech is protected from a charge of insult or defamation:

- when the offence is committed as part of a defence in court by a litigant, attorney in fact, or other counsel before a judge,
- when it is part of literary, artistic, or scientific criticism, or
- when the offence was conducted by a public official in compliance with their obligations.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, a complete defence also exists if the claim for defamation concerns alleged acts filed outside of the statutory time limit, namely three years or four and a half years (if in aggravated form).

## B. HOW CAN I DEFEND MYSELF IF I AM CHARGED WITH CIVIL DEFAMATION?

The defendant can challenge the evidence, or lack of evidence, provided by the plaintiff to prove the elements of "moral harm", namely:

- the harm produced - did the spread of defamatory information actually occur?
- illegality of the action - was the harmful conduct permitted by some legal standard or regulation?
- the causal connection between the action and the damage - was the damage reasonably caused by the action of the defendant?
- attribution factors - was the harmful action performed with malice or negligence?

In addition, the above defences to criminal defamation are also available for the civil process. The amount of the compensation decided can also be challenged via an appeal.

<sup>10</sup> Title II, Article 134-35.

<sup>11</sup> Title II, Article 133. Atypical behaviors.

## PRACTICAL STEPS JOURNALISTS CAN TAKE TO MITIGATE THE RISK OF DEFAMATION LIABILITY IN THEIR WORK

### Summary

It is worth remembering that truth is a complete defence to a defamation action. There may be other limitations on publishing information, but to the extent that the information is and can be proved to be true, a defamation action will not be successful. A good rule of thumb is to only report what you are confident you can prove.

A rigorous focus on fair and accurate reporting at each stage, and verifying the truth of the matters reported will put you in the best possible position if faced with legal threats or claims. The suggestions below are intended to help you to think about practical means of achieving this. There are also other defences to a defamation claim which may be available to you depending on the jurisdiction, some of which are mentioned below.

### Gathering Information

- Gather information early - as time passes and memories fade, information and sources can become less reliable.
- Use confidential sources with caution – if you are reliant solely on information from a confidential source in respect of certain allegations or statements in your reporting, be aware that the truth may be more difficult.
- Do not make promises to confidential sources that are not within your power to keep.
- Be careful with legal advice. In particular, do not claim a (false) legal fact in order to get information from a source.
- Nondisclosure agreements are permissible and effective to protect journalists from disclosing their source. If you do not conclude such an agreement – expressly or impliedly – you are not contractually (although you may be ethically) obligated to protect sources and maintain confidentiality.
- If you anticipate needing releases, obtain them early.
- Use public records to your advantage. You can use them to verify information you received from other sources.
- If you choose to utilise audio or visual recording, always pause to consider whether you can record without permission, or whether permission is required. When in doubt, ask for consent.
- When putting something in writing, know that should you be sued, you may be required to disclose sources and means of obtaining information.
- Keep a good record of your notes, meetings, etc.
- Research carefully. Verify sources and double-check your facts to ensure accuracy. Generally, you may only adopt communications from authorities and recognized agencies without further verification where you clearly attribute the source of the information.

## Drafting and Vetting the Article

- Familiarise yourself with defamation law in the countries you're working in (see above). Be aware that there may be more restrictive laws in some countries – for example in some countries it is easier for a company to bring a defamation challenge than in others.
- Familiarise yourself and comply with your news organisation's ethics guidelines and policies.
- Use credible sources to verify the accuracy of any potentially defamatory statements.
- Ask yourself whether there are any statements directed to identifiable individual(s) or companies that could be reputationally damaging. Confirm accuracy, and if doubt remains, weigh the benefits of keeping the statement in versus taking it out.
- Make your reliance on trustworthy and non-confidential sources transparent (for example, by hyperlinking to or otherwise disclosing the relevant reports or public records).
- A cornerstone of responsible journalism is seeking comment from the subject(s) of the reporting you intend to publish, in particular where you intend to make allegations about them or their conduct – you should clearly put the substance of allegations to the subject in advance and invite their response.
- Ensure, especially where you are engaging in investigative reporting, the subjects of your reporting have sufficient time to respond and have enough information to respond adequately. You should not show them a draft of your intended reporting but you should be prepared to share the substance of the intended publication.
- Reflect the comment /response in the article (you may use your editorial discretion in doing so). Even noting "no comment" or source "did not respond to requests for information" will go a long way in showcasing the steps the journalist took to report factual information.
- Be precise with your language and the meaning you intend to convey. Avoid any ambiguity, over-exaggerations or speculations. To the extent that you've made any assumptions, disclose them clearly as such.
- Always reproduce quotations correctly and attribute them clearly.
- Consider exculpatory circumstances and avoid one-sided reporting. Reporting should be balanced and not create a distorted picture of reality.
- Do not spread mere rumours, whether about public or private matters. Report only when a minimum body of evidence is available and feel comfortable in saying what you don't know, where applicable.
- Consider how litigious and risky the subjects of your reporting are, and plan accordingly. If it is someone with a history of litigious activity toward the press, engage your news organisation's legal/compliance team early.
- Consider whether you are making an assertion of fact or a potentially protected opinion. There must be sufficient evidence for a statement of fact. If there is any uncertainty or doubt, consider formulating it as an expression of opinion (based on true facts) or presenting it as an assumption.
- Beware of republication liability. If you take information from another medium for your reporting, you assume responsibility for its content. Always do your own research.

- Consider whether any available defences to defamation – for example truth, public interest reporting, qualified or absolute privilege, fair and accurate reports of certain proceedings – apply.
- There are several defences to a defamation action other than truth / justification, some of which may be particularly applicable to journalists – for example in some countries there is defence for reporting in the public interest. There may also be defences available where an article expresses an opinion and are written in public interest. However, these defences are not full-proof and will usually involve satisfying a number of requirements. If you intend to rely on a defence, consult your legal team or research precedent to ensure that the defence is likely to be available.

### **After Publication**

- Stay informed of any developments in the subject matter that might change, call into question, or shed new light on the published information. Originally permissible reporting may generally be kept in the online archive. You typically have no active duty to investigate or update the reporting. Only if an affected party raises a qualified complaint about the reporting, you may be required to add supplementary information or take reasonable precautions to prevent the reports from being found in search engines in name-related search queries (“right to be forgotten”).
- Consider whether to keep your notes and relevant communications and, if so, for how long – knowing the limitation period for defamation claims in the relevant jurisdiction may assist.
- Be willing to correct or retract your mistakes and issue an apology to the extent necessary for the justification/truth defence. You may be required to correct factual allegations that have subsequently proven to be incorrect and have a lasting effect on the personal rights of the person concerned. This is usually done via a supplement/correction in the next issue or on the website.

*Please note that journalists must also remain cognisant of emerging trends in other areas of the law that place their wellbeing at risk, or which could create legal risk – such as applicable privacy laws.*

## ABOUT US

### The Legal Network for Journalists at Risk (LNJAR)

The [Legal Network for Journalists at Risk](#) (LNJAR) was founded by the Committee to Protect Journalists, Media Defence and the Thomson Reuters Foundation to meet the growing need for legal support among independent journalists and media outlets. The LNJAR is a network of expert member organisations who have come together to create a single access-point to an ecosystem of legal support. Journalists facing legal attacks can contact any one of the member organisations individually, or can [email the Network directly](#). LNJAR members will work together to combine the different support available, tailoring its response to each case. This ensures that member organisations make the best possible use of limited resources and avoid duplication when providing legal support. To strengthen the legal environment for media freedom, member organisations will also collaborate on capacity building initiatives and advocacy.

### Committee to Protect Journalists

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) is an independent, non-profit organisation that promotes press freedom worldwide. We defend the right of journalists to report the news safely and without fear of reprisal. Every year, hundreds of journalists are attacked, imprisoned, or killed. For more than 40 years, CPJ has been there to defend them and fight for press freedom. With a team of more than 50 experts based around the world, CPJ documents and denounces press freedom violations, meets with heads of state and high-ranking officials, spearheads or advises on diplomatic efforts, and works with other organisations to ensure that justice prevails when journalists are jailed or murdered. CPJ also provides comprehensive, life-saving support to journalists around the world through up-to-date safety information and rapid response assistance.

### Media Defence

Media Defence provides legal help to journalists, citizen journalists and independent media across the world, in the belief that a free press is essential in realising the right to freedom of expression. We support journalists who hold power to account by working to ensure the legal protection and defence of journalists and independent media so they can report on issues of public interest. We do this by providing assistance to journalists, citizen journalists and independent media through an emergency defence fund, by taking strategic cases to challenge unjust laws and protect freedom of expression, and through developing a worldwide network of partners and specialists to provide legal defence, which we support through grant making, training and information sharing. Since our founding in 2008, we have supported over 1,300 cases, helping hundreds of journalists in 117 countries. Our work has helped prevent over 350 years of detention for media workers and avoided over \$700m in damages. We have supported 40 partners and, thanks to our train-the-trainer program, have fostered specialist media defence expertise in over 300 lawyers.

### Thomson Reuters Foundation

The Thomson Reuters Foundation is the corporate foundation of Thomson Reuters, the global news and information services company. The organization works to advance media freedom, raise awareness of human rights issues, and foster more inclusive economies. Through news, media development, free legal assistance, and convening initiatives, the Foundation combines its unique services to drive systemic change. Its mission is to inspire collective leadership, empowering people to shape free, fair, and informed societies. TrustLaw is the Thomson Reuters Foundation's global pro bono legal programme, connecting high-impact NGOs and social enterprises working to create social and environmental change with the best law firms and corporate legal teams to provide them with free legal assistance in order to produce ground-breaking legal research and offer innovative training courses worldwide.



REUTERS/Thomas Peter

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