



**WAN-IFRA is the
World Association of News Publishers**

Our mission is to protect the rights of journalists across the world to operate free media, and provide our members with professional services to help their business prosper in a digital world and perform their crucial role in open societies.

With formal representative status at the United Nations, UNESCO and the Council of Europe, we derive our authority from our global network of leading news publishing companies and technology entrepreneurs, and our legitimacy from our 80 national association members representing 18,000 publications in 120 countries.

www.wan-ifra.org

69 rue du Chevaleret
75013 Paris, France

Rotfeder-Ring 11
60327 Frankfurt a.M., Germany

Phone +49.69.240063-0
Fax +49.69.240063-300

info@wan-ifra.org

15.07.2019

Chief Executive Officer
Vincent PEYRÈGNE
Direct +33 1 47 42 85 01

PRESIDENCY

President
Fernando DE YARZA LOPEZ-MADRAZO
Zaragoza, Spain

Vice-Presidents
Lisa MCLEOD
Johannesburg, South Africa

Stig ØRSKOV
Copenhagen, Denmark

Treasurer
Paul VERWILT
Antwerp, Belgium

WORLD EDITORS FORUM

President
Warren FERNANDEZ
Singapore

His Excellency President Xi Jinping

President of the People's Republic of China

Beijing,

People's Republic of China

15 July 2019

Your Excellency,

We are writing on behalf of the World Association of News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) and the World Editors Forum, which represent 18,000 publications, 15,000 online sites and over 3,000 companies in more than 120 countries, to express our serious concern at the blocking of several major German news outlets and the government's continuing policy of censorship.

According to reports, the Chinese government is extending its crackdown on foreign international news organisations, last week adding the websites of Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Süddeutsche Zeitung and Spiegel Online to its list of blocked domains. The websites of German TV programme Tagesschau, TV channel ZDF and the Swiss Broadcasting Company have also been added to the list of websites blocked by the 'Great Chinese Firewall'.

The blocking of these outlets follows the recent censorship of several individual foreign news articles, including a report by Süddeutsche Zeitung revealing that Chinese border control installed spy software on tourists' smartphones. The blockages also coincide with extensive foreign reporting on mass protests in Hong Kong.

This latest round of censorship comes after various foreign news portals were blocked in early June, including The Guardian, The Washington Post, Mail Online and Singapore's The Straits Times. These closures coincided with the 30th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre.



We respectfully call on you end the crackdown and to immediately lift restrictions on foreign news sites. Moreover, we urge you rethink your wider policy of censorship and to respect international standards of freedom of expression and press freedom, allowing citizens access to free information wherever it comes from.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'F. de Yarza'.

Fernando de Yarza Lopez-Madrado

President

World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Warren Fernandez'.

Warren Fernandez

President

World Editors Forum