

# **\* EMBARGOED UNTIL 5:30 PM CET WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2022 \***

Zaragoza, Spain, 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022

## **Golden Pen of Freedom Awarded to Gazeta Wyborcza and the Gazeta Wyborcza Foundation**

The 2022 [Golden Pen of Freedom](#), the annual press freedom award of the World Association of News Publishers ([WAN-IFRA](#)), has been awarded to [Gazeta Wyborcza](#) and the [Gazeta Wyborcza Foundation](#) in Poland.

The award, made during the [2022 World News Media Congress](#) currently taking place in Zaragoza, Spain recognises “a news organisation that stands as a beacon of independence and as a bulwark against authoritarianism; a paper of record that demonstrates its values daily, across its pages, through support to young journalists, in the promotion of local news, and through work across borders in solidarity with colleagues in need.”

“Each of our laureates, stretching back to the very first Pen, embodies a set of values that underpin our industry,” said Warren Fernandez, Editor-in-Chief of the [The Straits Times](#) in Singapore and President of the [World Editors Forum](#), in announcing the award.

“Increasingly challenged, these values are defended worldwide by journalists, editors, and news publishers who recognise the importance of free media... in safeguarding the well-being, and proper functioning of our societies and democracies. These are values that underpin WAN-IFRA and signify the continued importance of upholding, and showing our solidarity with, those on the front lines, wherever they may be. Today’s laureates exemplify this tenfold.”

Facing down numerous challenges to deliver independent journalism and reliable coverage, Gazeta Wyborcza established the Gazeta Wyborcza Foundation in 2019 to safeguard the publication’s future and strengthen quality journalism in Poland. Its projects have denounced neo-fascist organisations, fought disinformation, polarisation, and xenophobia, and supported local and regional media to produce investigative journalism.

Over the past year, the Foundation has been coordinating critical financial and technical support to Ukrainian colleagues from across Europe following the Russian invasion.

“The deteriorating condition of Polish democracy means that civic engagement is needed now more than ever,” said Joanna Krawczyk, Head of Partnerships at Gazeta Wyborcza and President of the Board of the Gazeta Wyborcza Foundation, accepting the award on behalf of the Foundation. “The events of recent months and years have shown with full force the scale of the challenges facing our democracies.

“I thank you for your support, generosity and unity and call on you to be with us, with any media in need in the years to come. We often say nowadays: be brave like Ukrainian journalists, so let’s be brave in our decision not to leave Ukrainian media alone. Let’s not leave any independent media facing oppression alone.”

Accepting the award on behalf of the Gazeta Wyborcza newsroom, Piotr Stasiński, former deputy Editor-in-Chief and current Special Media Advisor to Gazeta Wyborcza Foundation,

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said: “Under PiS rule, media freedom in Poland has been seriously infringed. Already, we see a growing 'chilling effect' and a decreasing number of media outlets that are free and independent. Developments in Poland are in line with how Hungarian independent media were suppressed by Viktor Orban's government. Hungary, like Poland, is an EU member.”

First published on 8 May 1989, under the motto “There is no freedom without Solidarity,” Gazeta Wyborcza initially faced heavy censorship but became a critical player in convincing the public to reject the country’s communist leadership. It also became the first legal publication that was outside of government control.

By the early 2000s, ‘Wyborcza’ had become one of Poland’s best-selling newspapers and has since consolidated its position as a journal of record that keeps a constant vigilance over Polish democracy. Today, as one of the country’s few remaining independent news titles, Gazeta Wyborcza – no stranger to resistance – finds itself under constant attack from a government hostile to independent news.

A systematic effort by the ruling Law and Justice party to capture public service media has led them and their allies to turn their attentions to private media. An onslaught of legal and financial pressures has been brought to bear, targeting Gazeta Wyborcza in particular. The publication is facing some 100 legal challenges.

“A media house that faces down dozens upon dozens of lawsuits from government and its allies, and counters regular efforts to undermine its integrity; one that has established a foundation to ensure a future whereby its work reaches far beyond its circulation - all of this has required leadership, purpose, and courage,” continued Warren Fernandez. “Gazeta Wyborcza and the Gazeta Wyborcza Foundation are showing us the way, providing just that. Showing there is indeed, “no freedom without solidarity.”

“The mission we are committed to is especially important now, in our troubled country, and in the increasingly troubled world,” concluded Piotr Stasiński. “The Golden Pen of Freedom award, which we humbly accept today, helps. Helps us carry on, helps us to persevere.”

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*The Golden Pen of Freedom is WAN-IFRA's annual award recognising individuals or organisations that have made an outstanding contribution to the defence and promotion of press freedom. One of the objectives of the Golden Pen is to turn the spotlight of public attention on repressive governments and the journalists who fight them.*

*The laureate is nominated from a shortlist of candidates by the board of the World Editors Forum. The first Golden Pen of Freedom was awarded in 1961.*

**For more on the Golden Pen of Freedom, visit [www.wan-ifra.org/golden-pen-of-freedom](http://www.wan-ifra.org/golden-pen-of-freedom)**

**For more background on Gazeta Wyborcza, visit <https://wan-ifra.org/2022/09/gazeta-wyborcza-stands-strong/> and <https://wan-ifra.org/2021/01/no-freedom-without-solidarity/>**

**For more background on the Gazeta Wyborcza Foundation visit <https://wan-ifra.org/2022/09/gazeta-wyborcza-foundation/>**

**Warren Fernandez’s award speech: <https://wan-ifra.org/2022/09/2022-gp-award-speech-warren-fernandez/>**

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Joanna Krawczyk's speech: <https://wan-ifra.org/2022/09/golden-pen-speech-joanna-krawczyk-gazeta-wyborcza-foundation/>

Piotr Stasiński's speech: <https://wan-ifra.org/2022/09/golden-pen-speech-piotr-stasinski-gazeta-wyborcza/>

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**Golden Pen of Freedom 1961-2021**

- 2021 [Jimmy Lai](#), Hong Kong
- 2020 [Jineth Bedoya Lima](#), Colombia
- 2019 [Jamal Khashoggi \(posthumous\)](#), Saudi Arabia
- 2018 [Maria Ressa](#), Philippines
- 2017 [Can Dündar](#), Turkey
- 2016 [Dmitry Muratov](#), Russia
- 2015 [Journalists killed in the line of duty](#), Worldwide
- 2014 [Eskinder Nega](#), Ethiopia
- 2013 [Than Htut Aung](#), Myanmar
- 2012 [Anabel Hernández](#), México
- 2011 [Dawit Isaak](#), Eritrea/Sweden
- 2010 [Ahmad Zeidabadi](#), Iran
- 2009 [Najam Sethi](#), Pakistan
- 2008 [Li Changqing](#), China
- 2007 [Shi Tao](#), China
- 2006 [Akbar Ganji](#), Iran
- 2005 [Mahjoub Mohamed Salih](#), Sudan
- 2004 [Ruslan Sharipov](#), Uzbekistan
- 2003 [Belarusian Association of Journalists](#), Belarus
- 2002 [Geoffrey Nyarota](#), Zimbabwe
- 2001 [Win Tin, San San Nweh](#), Burma
- 2000 [Nizar Nayouf](#), Syria
- 1999 [Faraj Sarkohi](#), Iran
- 1998 [Doan Viet Hoat](#), Vietnam
- 1997 [Naša borba, Feral Tribune, Oslobođenje](#), Bosnia-Herzegovina
- 1996 [Yndamiro Restano Díaz](#), Cuba
- 1995 [Gao Yu](#), China
- 1994 [Omar Belhouchet](#), Algeria
- 1993 [Pius Njawa](#), Cameroon
- 1992 [Dai Qing](#), China
- 1991 [Gitobu Imanyara](#), Kenya
- 1990 [Luis Gabriel Cano](#), Colombia
- 1989 [Sergei Grigoryants](#), Soviet Union
- 1988 [Naji al-Ali \(posthumous\)](#), Palestinian territories
- 1987 [Juan Pablo Cárdenas](#), Chile
- 1986 [Anthony Heard](#), South Africa
- 1985 [Joaquin Roces](#), Philippines
- 1982 [P. Joaquin Chamorro Barrios](#), Nicaragua
- 1981 [José Javier Uranga](#), Spain
- 1980 [Jacobo Timerman](#), Argentina

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1979 [Claude Bellanger](#) (posthumous), France  
1978 **Donald Woods, Percy Qoboza**, South Africa  
1977 **Robert High Lilley**, Northern Ireland  
1976 **Raul Régo**, Portugal  
1975 **Sang-Man Kim**, South Korea  
1974 **Julio de Mesquita Neto**, Brazil  
1973 [Anton Betz](#), Germany  
1972 [Hubert Beuve-Méry](#), France  
1970 [Alberto Gainza Paz](#), Argentina  
1969 [The Czechoslovak press](#), Czechoslovakia  
1968 [Christos Lambrakis](#), Greece  
1967 [Mochtar Lubis](#), Indonesia  
1966 [Jules Dubois](#), USA  
1965 **Esmond Wickremesing**, Sri Lanka  
1964 **Gabriel Makoto**, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
1963 [Guardian Sein Win](#), Burma  
1961 [Ahmet Emin Yalman](#), Turkey

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The [73rd World News Media Congress \(WNMC\)](#), taking place 28th-30th September 2022 in Zaragoza, Spain is organised by WAN-IFRA - the World Association of News Publishers, in collaboration with the [Henneo](#) publishing group, the [Government of Aragón](#), and [Zaragoza Turismo](#). WNMC is the leading annual event for media leaders, bringing together 1,000 editors and media executives to discuss challenges and opportunities for the global news media industry. Over three days, the [programme](#) includes forums such as the World Media Leaders Summit, the World Editors Forum, the Women in News Summit, and the [Golden Pen of Freedom](#) award.

[WAN-IFRA](#) is the global organisation of the world's press, comprising 3,000 news publishers and technology companies and 60 national publishers' associations representing 18,000 publications in 120 countries. With a mission to protect the rights of journalists and publishers around the world to operate independent media, WAN-IFRA provides its members with expertise and services to innovate and prosper in a digital world and perform their crucial role in society.