

# The Media Crisis

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Source confidentiality

“the nuts and bolts  
of being a reporter”

*Anthony Funnel, ABC*







**International Covenant on  
Civil and Political Rights**

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**General comment No. 34**

**Article 19: Freedoms of opinion and expression**

**General remarks**

1. This general comment replaces general comment No. 10 (nineteenth session).
2. Freedom of opinion and freedom of expression are indispensable conditions for the full development of the person. They are essential for any society.<sup>1</sup> They constitute the foundation stone for every free and democratic society. The two freedoms are closely related, with freedom of expression providing the vehicle for the exchange and development of opinions.
3. Freedom of expression is a necessary condition for the realization of the principles of transparency and accountability that are, in turn, essential for the promotion and protection of human rights.
4. Among the other articles that contain guarantees for freedom of opinion and/or expression, are articles 18, 17, 25 and 27. The freedoms of opinion and expression form a basis for the full enjoyment of a wide range of other human rights. For instance, freedom of expression is integral to the enjoyment of the rights to freedom of assembly and association, and the exercise of the right to vote.
5. Taking account of the specific terms of article 19, paragraph 1, as well as the relationship of opinion and thought (article 18), a reservation to paragraph 1 would be incompatible with the object and purpose of the Covenant.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, although freedom of opinion is not listed among those rights that may not be derogated from pursuant to the provisions of article 4 of the Covenant, it is recalled that, "in those provisions of the Covenant that are not listed in article 4, paragraph 2, there are elements that in the

“Every individual should have the right to ascertain in an intelligible form, whether, and if so, what personal data is stored in automatic data files, and for what purposes”



“The free communication of information and ideas about public and political issues between citizens, candidates and elected representatives is essential. This implies a free press and other media able to comment on public issues and to inform public opinion without censorship or restraint.”

*“Journalism should be more like science. As far as possible, facts should be verifiable. If journalists want long-term credibility for their profession, they have to go in that direction. Have more respect for readers.”*

Julian Assange

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