

## World press condemns threat to press freedom in Estonia

Global and European press and journalist organisations yesterday, 30 March 2010, called on E member Estonia to drop a proposal that they believe would force journalists to reveal their sources, saying the move "poses a serious threat to freedom of the press."



"It would, in particular, have a significant negative impact on investigative journalism and articles based on information provided by whistleblowers," said a letter to President Toomas Hendrik from the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA), the World Editors Forum, the European Newspaper Publishers Association (ENPA) and the European Federation of Journalists.

### Violating treaty obligations

The organisations said the draft law violated Estonia's treaty obligations, international standards of professional practice, and codes of journalism ethics, including The Code of Ethics of the Estonian Press

Estonian Justice Minister Rein Lang introduced draft legislation to parliament last week that seeks to significantly reduce the protection afforded to journalists' sources.

The law, if passed, would enable courts to jail journalists who fail to reveal their sources and to impose fines on newspapers solely on the suspicion that they intend to publish "potentially harmful information".

Six Estonian newspapers published blank pages on 18 March to protest against the draft law.

View the full letter at [www.wan-press.org/article18457.html](http://www.wan-press.org/article18457.html).