

Violence against journalists:

# AFP's Management Must React!



On Saturday, April 20, new demonstrations of Gilets Jaunes took place across France and, as is frequently the case, incidents broke out. But this time, to an extent unseen so far, journalists were victims of police violence and said they believe they were intentionally targeted as journalists. Several suffered injuries. Two were held in detention: Gaspard Glanz et Alexis Kraland. The first will be tried in October and has been banned from appearing in Paris on May 1 and all Saturdays.

Several trade unions and NGOs have denounced a violation of the media rights.

## AFP was not spared!

Two AFP reporters suffered serious injuries at the hands of police. **An AFPTV reporter suffered second-degree burns to her foot from a sting-ball grenade.** She was standing at the time with a group of journalists and street medics at the edge of the march, and according to police rules such grenades are only supposed to be used when officers are surrounded. **An AFP photographer was struck by a tear gas grenade in the leg and was hit several times with a truncheon** by a police officer despite having shown his press card.

These are unacceptable acts that must not go unanswered!

Even more so given that a police officer insisted that journalists remove their protective helmets, citing "orders", while they were moving about to cover the demonstration.

**After the long weekend, will AFP's management react with a formal letter of protest to the Paris police or the Interior Ministry to denounce the violence and demand that journalists be allowed to carry out their right to inform the public?**

We can't be satisfied with a couple of lines at the bottom of a short AFP report indicating that our journalists were also victims when we need a loud and clear denunciation of these acts and their intent -- to prevent us from carrying out our jobs.

We can only regret that the last wrap in French on Saturday didn't mention the police violence against journalists, including the violence against our own journalists, or the police violence against demonstrators, when the story gave prominence to several people shouting to police officers they should "commit suicide".

## Echo Chamber Debate

*SUD* also regrets the manner in which the "big debate" on our coverage of the Gilets Jaunes was held on April 15. Not all the journalists who cover the demonstrations were invited to participate.

*SUD* deplores that employee representatives were also excluded from this "debate" and hopes that its conclusions will be rapidly made public.

Paris, April 23, 2019

**SUD-AFP (Solidarity-Unity-Democracy)**

