



## War on Press: Another UN Boss Seeks Criminal Charges for Reporter

In violation of the unalienable rights to free speech and freedom of the press, [yet another United Nations agency](#), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), [is again abusing the legal system](#) in an attempt to bring criminal charges against a journalist over his factual reporting. The explosive scandal was outlined in a document this week sent to every UN member state's mission in Geneva, where the scandal-plagued agency and its rogue director-general, Francis Gurry (shown), are based.



The revelations follow another, similar [scandal in which a communist-linked bureaucrat running the UN Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\) in Rome is abusing arcane laws to persecute a local newspaper and its editor](#).

Ironically, despite the developments, the UN itself claims to support the decriminalization of defamation in places where it remains a criminal offense. And yet, the UN allowed the WIPO agency and its leader to host the important UN Chief Executives Board meetings this week.

The most recent attempt by a UN agency to quash free speech surrounds a criminal complaint filed by WIPO boss Gurry against a reporter in Switzerland. The journalist in question, a reporter with World Radio Switzerland, reported on a January protest against Gurry over his alleged corruption, bullying, and abuse of power.

"The [WIPO] organization has also been described as the FIFA of the UN by a U.S. Congressional Committee," the [reporter noted](#). FIFA refers to the corruption-plagued soccer association, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, or International Federation of Association Football. "Staff councils across the UN accuse WIPO management of intimidation, suppressing investigations, interference in the procurement process and even DNA theft. Gemma Vestal, General Secretary of the Federation of International Civil Servants Association says enough is enough, the WIPO head, Francis Gurry, has to go."

None of those statements are even controversial, and every one is demonstrably true, in addition to being widely reported around the world. In fact, it only scratches the surface of Gurry's corruption and wild abuses, much of it documented by members of the U.S. Congress in both parties. Among other concerns, for instance, Gurry was [credibly accused of violating U.S. law and UN sanctions by multiple sources for sending sensitive dual-use technology to the brutal dictatorships ruling Iran and North Korea, reportedly in exchange for the votes of those regimes in his bid to run WIPO](#). When [whistleblowers tried to expose the scandals, Gurry went ballistic, retaliating against the officials and stonewalling the investigations. He even reportedly ordered that DNA be collected from his subordinates in his zeal to unmask anonymous critics within WIPO](#).

And yet, despite all that, Gurry retaliated by filing a criminal complaint over alleged "defamation" with



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Geneva authorities. “The journalist was subject to criminal investigation for reporting allegations, widely spread across the media, that the Director-General in question is corrupt,” explained international lawyer Matthew Parish, who is involved in the case and serves as the managing partner of Gentium Law Group. “Indeed these were not just allegations: a United Nations Office for Internal Oversight Services [OIOS] report had confirmed their veracity in substantial part. Nevertheless reporting upon affirmed conclusions of corruption now appears to be a matter for criminal investigation by the Geneva law enforcement authorities.”

This is not the first time the scandal-plagued head of WIPO has attracted criticism for his attacks on freedom of the press. As *The New American* reported in 2014, Gurry [terrorized and threatened another journalist, patent attorney Gene Quinn, the president and founder of IPWatchdog, with civil and criminal prosecution](#), all using UN resources. The supposed “crime”: Reporting on and publishing [an official report detailing public and extremely serious accusations against the agency chief](#) by a widely respected former deputy director with the outfit, James Pooley. The former WIPO official turned whistleblower noted that Gurry violated the fundamental human rights of WIPO employees, engaged in cronyism, and much more, all in violation of national and international law.

Instead of answering the official complaint against him, Gurry abused WIPO’s public resources in a ham-handed attempt to muzzle the media and keep the information under wraps. “We hereby request that you immediately remove the Report and all its exhibits or annexes from the website,” read the threatening and bizarre letter to the journalist from the UN agency’s attorney, who was acting on behalf of Gurry. “We hereby further request that you publish an apology to the Director General of WIPO for the publication of false and defamatory material on the website. Please be informed that if this request is not immediately acceded to, the Director General and WIPO will seek independent legal advise to bring defamation proceedings against you in any competent jurisdiction.”

Parish, said to be among the most influential 300 people in Switzerland, blasted Gurry and the idea of prosecuting reporters for their journalism. “Acts of journalism, or other expressions of the fundamental human right to free speech, cannot possibly be sanctioned by the criminal law and the coercive forces of the state,” he wrote in a document that was sent to every UN member state’s mission in Geneva, the UN’s second home. “Were such penalties to be applied to legitimate expressions of journalists’ views, the chilling effect of the use of state force would surely render the human right to free speech entirely nugatory.” Indeed, the UN itself has long sought to abolish criminal penalties for journalism and speech — except, apparently, when corrupt UN agency bosses, who are immune from laws, seek to use the law to silence the media and critics.

According to Parish, Gurry’s actions are a violation of everything the UN itself purports to stand for. “The very notion of a criminal complaint for defamation being an anathema to the principles and values underlying the United Nations, it is unthinkable improper that a UN agency itself, and its Director-General, initiate a domestic legal procedure so abhorrent to UN values,” he said. And if that was not bad enough, Parish continued, “the criminal complaint was palpable nonsense in its content.” And yet, despite all of that, Geneva authorities processed the complaint more quickly than almost any other case Parish has ever seen. To add insult to injury, the journalist was ordered to appear at a high-security police station where the most dangerous criminals are detained. If convicted on the charges, he could face up to three years in prison.

After being served with a warrant compelling him to attend the high-security facility in Geneva for the most dangerous criminals in the city, it got even more bizarre. “He was thereupon locked in a secure



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part of the police station, placed upon a plastic seat without refreshments, not informed of his right to consular assistance in the event of detention, asked a series of intrusive questions about his personal affairs, and invited to give extensive evidence under deposition justifying the content of his published article lest he be found guilty of criminal defamation, which if willful can carry a sentence of imprisonment of up to three years," Parish wrote. The purpose of the bizarre behavior, Parish suggested, was "raw intimidation."

"The matter is vile," Parish added, noting that the local journalist was simply reporting on allegations against Gurry that have been reported around the world by some of the largest and most prominent media outlets. "One might be tempted to infer that he has no guts." Due to Gurry's selection of a small-time local journalist of comparatively modest means as his target, Parish also said Gurry may have selected somebody he thought he could crush. "If those were his motives, then he is despicable and arguably unfit to hold any international public office," Parish added in the document sent to representatives of governments from around the world.

"There are a number of profound concerns that might arise from the foregoing narrative," Parish added. "Firstly, if Mr Gurry has orchestrated repression of the free media through use of the Geneva criminal justice system, then what does that reveal about his possible personal qualities, his professional sense of balance as opposed to vindictiveness, and his suitability to serve as the leader of a major and important UN agency? Secondly, why did the Geneva Prosecutor's office go along with so undignified a scheme, and what improper pressure if any was brought to bear upon them through the annals of the relevant Swiss Ambassador or otherwise?" The Swiss ambassador reportedly participated in Gurry's scheme to terrorize the journalist.

Noting that Gurry has already attempted in the past to abuse the legal system as a means of silencing the media, Parish said the latest developments are perhaps not surprising. "References to Mr Gurry's alleged corruption are so common in public sources that one might be forgiven for imagining that Mr Gurry's name is nothing more than a linguistic synonym for corrupt behavior," he said, noting that a Google search for Gurry and the word corruption turns up close to 100,000 results. "His name is so dirtied in public media that one might speculate as to whether he achieves some moderate sense of solace or revenge in persecuting individual journalists through what might, upon the foregoing narrative, be inferred as the potentially improper exercise of influence over the criminal justice process."

"In any event, his name is mud. Actions like this will not rub the mud off," Parish concluded about Gurry, who has developed a reputation for corruption in Geneva and capitals around the world. "The mud will stick. It will stick to the end of his days."

Unfortunately, Gurry is not the only UN agency boss abusing arcane laws to shut down the free press and terrorize reporters who tell the truth. In Italy, as *The New American* [reported earlier this month](#), the Rome-based UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and its chief, José Graziano da Silva, are doing the exact same thing in a bid to silence the *Italian Insider* newspaper and its editor, John Phillips. Citing fascist-era laws that make "defamation" a criminal offense punishable by jail time, the UN agency is using American tax money to persecute the paper and its chief editor. And truth is not necessarily a defense in the case, Phillips explained.

"It sounds very much like Gurry is following the example of Graziano in attempting to use antiquated local criminal laws to silence reporting of his dubious activities in connection with North Korea and other skulduggery," Phillips said after learning about WIPO's bid to silence the media. "I also was



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summoned to a police station, in Rome, and questioned about our coverage of FAO before being indicted. Intolerance of legitimate reporting by heads of UN agencies is a disturbing trend while expenditure of donor funds on pursuing such personal vendettas is surely unacceptable to taxpayers from OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] countries who help pay the sky high salaries of the likes of Graziano and Gurry.”

In fact, Phillips noted that there are personnel links between the two agencies implicated in the war on the free press. “There has been evidently interaction between the two potentates as Graziano recently hired to the FAO to head its purported anti-corruption office an official who previously worked at WIPO allegedly intimidating whistleblowers there,” the newspaper editor explained.

Indeed, the *Italian Insider* [reported](#) last month that FAO hired as its inspector general responsible for “protecting whistleblowers” a man named Thierry Rajaobelina. As director of internal oversight at WIPO, he was among those responsible for denying the [whistleblower complaints of well-known WIPO whistleblower Miranda Brown](#) against Gurry. Sources quoted by the *Insider* said that under Graziano, every complaint has been dismissed by the bureaucracy and Graziano — very similar to what happened at WIPO.

And while Gurry is [accused of helping the world’s most brutal communist dictatorship acquire sensitive technology](#) with potential military applications in violation of the law, Graziano has his own scandalous links to communist criminals. Before taking his job at FAO, Graziano was a minister in disgraced former Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s cabinet.

Lula, of course, is [implicated in the Operation Car Wash scandal that has ensnared much of Brazil’s communist movement](#), and he is being prosecuted for his role in it. The ex-Brazilian president [also was a founder, along with Fidel Castro, the Sandinistas, and the Marxist narco-terror group FARC, of the Foro de São Paulo \(FSP\)](#), a vast and powerful network of communist criminals that [the U.S. government knows is working to take over governments across Latin America](#). And Graziano, in his post at the top of FAO, has been abusing the UN agency and its diplomatic immunity in a bid to shield FSP operatives from criminal prosecution, and much more.

Despite the growing stench of scandal swirling around WIPO — just this week the various staff associations representing international civil servants sent a letter denouncing Gurry to UN boss António Guterres — the UN agency was selected to host a key UN meeting in Geneva. The first day of the UN Chief Executives Board (CEB) meeting, basically a gathering of the chief bureaucrats running the various UN agencies ([including multiple Chinese Communist agents](#)), is being hosted by WIPO and Gurry. Next they will be meeting in Montreux, Switzerland. But the agenda has remained shrouded in secrecy.

One of the leading journalists covering the UN, Matthew Lee of Inner City Press, asked Guterres’ spokesman last week about the UN secretary-general’s views on Gurry’s retaliation against whistleblowers considering his important role hosting the CEB event. “Again, no answer,” [reported](#) Lee, who has [also been attacked by the UN because of his reporting](#).

A [UN transcript](#) featured the spokesman saying, “I think everyone is aware of the issues that have taken place in WIPO.” Later on, instead of condemning the corruption and efforts to shut down whistleblowers and journalists, Guterres, [the former leader of the Socialist International](#), had nothing but praise for WIPO and its leader. “Your organization can be a central tool of the UN to be able to cope with these challenges, to provide us with the knowledge about what is happening, to give us the ideas, the



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suggestions of how we can organize ourselves at different levels to be able to cope with these challenges,” [Guterres said Wednesday](#), seemingly oblivious to the growing scandals.

Edward Flaherty, an international lawyer in Geneva who represents international civil servants, expressed outrage about the developments and said it was time for draining the swamp. “The ever worsening level of corruption in international organizations, and the concerted, sustained attack on whistleblowers throughout the UN system, virtually unchecked under the Obama State Department, is conclusive evidence that President Trump, beyond Washington DC, must accelerate his diplomatic appointments in order to allow his new emissaries to start draining the burgeoning [international organization] swamps in Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi,” said Flaherty, who has been involved in a number of cases linked to WIPO. “It’s that, or junk the entire UN system and start over.”

WIPO and Gurry, Flaherty said, are “exhibit A for the proposition that UN organizations must never be allowed an independent revenue stream while retaining immunity from local anti-corruption laws — the immunity and piles of cash soon morph into impunity, and leave behind a trail of broken and discarded whistleblowers.” WIPO is one of the few UN agencies that collects its own money —generally from inventors — rather than relying on national governments for funding. Flaherty pointed to U.S. Representative Brad Sherman (D-Calif.), who last year said “WIPO is the FIFA of the UN” during a public meeting on the “disastrous fate” of UN whistleblowers within the global organization. “Sadly, unlike FIFA, WIPO remains today beyond the criminal dock,” Flaherty added.

“The Swiss government should also be ashamed at its own complicity in the most recent attack by WIPO on a journalist reporting about the efforts of staff representatives and whistleblowers to hold its senior officials to account,” the Geneva-based attorney continued. “Instead of prompting freedom, openness, and the rule of law, purportedly held near and dear by the UN, these latest follies recall the worst elements of Europe during the 30’s and 40’s. The rogue mismanagement of UN organizations like WIPO requires the complete reformation of the UN system, including a zero tolerance for corruption, and the overhaul of UN immunity.”

While Trump [regularly ridiculed and dismissed the UN](#) on the campaign trail, [this week he suggested the UN may be a useful tool in dealing with North Korea](#). Considering the [UN WIPO role in illegally transferring dangerous technology to the rogue regime there](#), and then viciously persecuting those who blow the whistle and report on it, the president would be wise to reconsider that approach. Instead, defunding and eventually withdrawing from the UN using the American Sovereignty Restoration Act would ensure that American tax dollars are no longer used to bully the press, enable mass-murdering dictatorships, and wreak havoc on human rights around the world. In the meantime, legal experts said, lifting the immunity of UN bureaucrats would also help drain the swamp and hold UN criminals accountable to the laws that apply to everyone else.



Photo: AP Images

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