

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

April 29, 2025

I send my warmest greetings to everyone gathered in our nation's capital for the James W. Foley Freedom Awards.

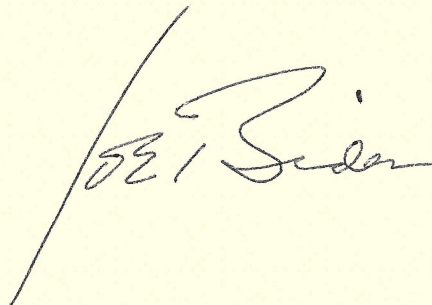
Every day, families across the United States endure another birthday, anniversary, or holiday knowing that their loved ones are unjustly held captive beyond our shores. They are forced to bear the pain of living in limbo, the stress of not knowing, and the sorrow of uncertainty. No one should have to endure this suffering and separation. That is why I made reuniting wrongfully detained Americans with their loved ones a top priority of my Administration from day one.

I am proud of the important progress we made. Thanks to our efforts, more than 70 Americans are reunited with their families today. And less than a year ago, we worked closely with our allies in Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Norway, and Turkey to secure the historic release of 16 people from Russia—including 3 American citizens and 1 American Green Card holder—who were unjustly imprisoned. Among those 16 were journalists—journalists just like Jim: guardians of the truth who dedicate their lives to the vital work of educating, informing, and uncovering.

A free press is an essential pillar of democracy, and we must fight to protect the brave women and men who sacrifice so much to uphold it. That is why I am grateful for the work of organizations like the James W. Foley Legacy Foundation, which has been a champion of this cause since its inception. Advocating for American hostages and wrongful detainees abroad and working to protect and improve journalist safety, the Foley Foundation not only preserves Jim's memory, but continues to inspire people around the globe through his legacy.

As you gather today to remember Jim and his life's work and to recognize those of exceptional moral courage, I am proud to join in congratulating all of this year's honorees—especially Josh Geltzer, a member of my Administration, for his role in securing the freedom of 50 people held hostage by Hamas. As you all prepare for the work ahead and look toward the safe return of even more Americans, I hope you take pride in the impact you have made. You remind us that there is nothing beyond our capacity when we work together. Keep the faith.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Biden". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. A long, thin diagonal line extends from the bottom left of the signature down towards the bottom left corner of the page.