



The Canadian Association of Journalists
L'Association Canadienne des Journalistes

UNFCCC Secretariat
P.O. Box 260124
D-53153 Bonn, Germany

VIA EMAIL

Oct. 13, 2016

RE: UNFCCC media accreditation for Rebel News Network

Dear sir or madam,

I write to you today in my capacity as president of a leading advocacy group for working journalists in Canada. It has come to the CAJ's attention that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat denied a request for media accreditation to journalists who work at The Rebel—and who wish to report on the Climate Change Conference in Marrakech, Morocco that runs Nov. 7-18.

The CAJ encourages the Secretariat to reverse that decision and grant media accreditation to the two reporters and photographer who submitted applications. We disagree with the apparent rationale for the rejection of accreditation; namely, that The Rebel does not satisfy the four criteria set out for officially accredited online media; and that the organization was denied accreditation on the basis of publishing “advocacy journalism,” a term the UNFCCC website fails to define (which raises a serious concern that the label is provided arbitrarily).

The Rebel is an independent media outlet funded by subscriptions and advertising. The organization employs 21 journalists, consistently publishes original news stories that often go otherwise untold, regularly reports on provincial legislatures across Canada, and counts among its staff an accredited member of the Parliamentary Press Gallery in Ottawa.

The CAJ is a staunch supporter of free expression in Canada and around the world. We believe that The Rebel, a legitimate digital news organization, deserves a seat at the same table as the rest of the traditional, broadcast, and online journalists who will cover the Climate Change Conference in November. We encourage the UNFCCC secretariat to approve The Rebel's application so it can report on issues of significant national and international interest.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Taylor-Vaisey
President, Canadian Association of Journalists