Dear MP

You can find out how to contact your local representatives at: <https://www.writetothem.com/>

**I am writing to you as a constituent to invite you to a briefing from the NUJ, including presenters and journalists working on the BBC News Channel and BBC World News at the House of Commons Committee Room 16 from 5pm on Wednesday 19 October.**

**We are calling on Ofcom to hold and inquiry and have a public consultation. This is a major change, and the BBC should not be able to try to do it under the radar and without consultation. It’s an insult to BBC staff and licence fee payers.**

I am very concerned about the BBC’s plans to close the BBC News Channel and BBC News and replace it with one station. This will result in 143 journalism roles and 19 presenter positions being axed. The BBC says the proposals will lead to the loss of around 70 UK posts since new roles will be created at the new channel.

But just as important is the loss to UK viewers of a service which provides up-to-the minute reporting of UK elections, party conferences, by-elections, local events, health and weather warnings and advice and much more. Just one example is its full coverage of the election for the leader of the Conservative Party and it also handles Parliamentary committee reports as they are published, and discusses reports and research by charities and think tanks. It also reports on political stories in the devolved nations. It can go into greater depth in local and regional stories, including the activities of your local sports team.

The NUJ believes such coverage could be lost in a combined channel where global events are competing for airtime.

The BBC World channel is a trusted source of information, with no clearer example than its recent presentation of the war on Ukraine.

The BBC remains the most trusted source of news in this country and the most trusted international news broadcaster. It is a crucial part of the UK’s soft power. It is the UK’s best-known cultural export, with 60 per cent awareness across the world – higher than other UK cultural exports such as British sports, universities and technology.

The BBC has faced year-on-year cuts and now has a budget which is 30 per cent lower than a decade ago, while the cost of TV production is rocketing. The decision to freeze the licence fee will require further savings of £285m by 2027/28.

Netflix and Disney+ will not cover elections, by-elections, floods in Yorkshire, local triumphs or human interest stories. I would like you to raise this issue with the government, the Culture Secretary, Tim Davie, BBC director general, and Richard Sharp, BBC chair, and tell them the closure of the BBC News Channel and BBC World would be a folly.

Can you please:

* Ask parliamentary questions and raise concerns with the BBC about the impact of changes on local news in your constituency and the impact on domestic UK political coverage caused by the closure of the BBC News channel.
* Raise with the Westminster government and BBC the threat the closure will have on coverage of the devolved governments.
* Call on Ofcom to investigate the plans and hold a public consultation.
* Urge government to explore alternative funding routes that sustains the BBC as a world-respected public service broadcaster and enshrines the key principle of universality in any changed funding mechanism.