

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/djibouti-two-ministers-sent-letter-after-14-08-2012,43219.html>

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Africa - Djibouti

Incarcerated

## Two ministers sent letter after journalist's transfer to prison

14 August 2012

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Reporters Without Borders wrote to two government ministers today to protest at the way the authorities have been treating **Houssein Ahmed Farah**, the correspondent of the news website *La Voix de Djibouti*, for the past week. A copy of the letter was also sent to President Ismaël Omar Guelleh.

"Despite all the speculation about the reason for Farah's detention, the authorities have at no time publicly said what he is accused of," Reporters Without Borders director-general Christophe Deloire said in the letter to justice minister Ali Farah Assoweh and interior minister Hassan Farar Houffaneh.

"How is it possible that a journalist and human rights defender has been able to spend a week incommunicado, in what constitutes a flagrant denial of his most basic rights? We are very worried about the conditions in which he is being held and we will hold you responsible, as justice and interior ministers, if anything happens to him.

"If Djibouti's judicial system is unable to produce solid evidence to justify Farah's imprisonment, we urge you to take whatever measures are necessary to ensure that he is released without delay," the letter added.

Farah, who is also a member of Djibouti's Human Rights League and the MRD, an opposition party, was arrested in Djibouti-Ville at around 11 a.m. on 8 August by Col. Abdoukader Ibrahim Gona and Col. Abdillahi Hassan Boulaleh.

After being held for more than 72 hours at Djibouti's police headquarters, he was brought before investigating judge Lamisse Mohamed Saïd on 11 August and was then immediately transferred to the capital's Gabode prison.

Farah was not able to see a lawyer while in police custody and was not represented by one when he appeared before the judge. Nor has he been allowed any visits or medical attention although his health is poor and he needs treatment.

Photo : interior minister Hassan Farar Houffaneh and justice minister Ali Farah Assoweh

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