

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/morocco-refugee-journalist-in-danger-in-03-08-2012,43159.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Morocco

Threatened refugee

Refugee journalist in danger in Spanish enclave

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[Read in Arabic \(بالعربية\)](#)

Reporters Without Borders is very concerned about the safety of **Hamid Naïmi**, a Moroccan journalist and opposition activist now based in Melilla, a Spanish enclave in northern Morocco. After obtaining political asylum in France in 2005, Naïmi is now the target of threats of presumed Moroccan origin because of his journalistic activities in Melilla.

"As Naïmi is on Spanish territory, we appeal to the Spanish government led by Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy as well as the local authorities in Melilla to take whatever measures are necessary to protect this journalist," Reporters Without Borders said. "He is the target of almost constant harassment and has been getting death threats although his only crime has been to keep on exercising his right to free expression."

Naïmi participates in a programme on *Popular TV Melilla*, in which he reports on cases of alleged corruption and embezzlement by senior Moroccan officials, especially in the Rif region adjoining Melilla. The programme also covers cases of robbery, kidnapping and prosecutions of members of the Berber ethnic group in the border area.

He has received telephone threats and has been followed by unidentified persons ever since the programme broadcast on 6 July and he is planning to file a complaint against persons unknown with the Spanish police in Melilla.

Naïmi used to be based in the nearby Moroccan city of Nador, where he created and edited the newspaper *Kawalis Rif* and reported for various media including *France 24* and the news website *Maghreb.info*. The justice ministry closed his newspaper in 2006.



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Abdelwafi Hartit, the head of *Popular TV Melilla's* Berber programmer Amazigh, gave a news conference on 18 July in which he voiced his support for Naïmi and blamed the Department for Territorial Surveillance (DST), Morocco's main intelligence agency, for the threats and attempts to curb freedom of expression.

The Moroccan government's offensive against journalists, bloggers and netizens since the start of the year is an additional reason for being concerned about Naïmi, whose history and current activities expose him to real danger. His case shows how difficult it is for Moroccan journalists to openly criticize the government and DST, which are determined to suppress all dissent.

(Photo : MELMOTH, AFP)