

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/iraq-visiting-french-reporter-prevented-01-03-2013,44157.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Iraq

Kafkaesque situation

Visiting French reporter prevented from leaving Iraq for past 15 days

1 March 2013

Nadir Dendoune, a visiting journalist with French, Australian and Algerian nationality who was [released](#) on bail of 10 million dinars (6,500 euros) on 14 February after 23 days in detention in Baghdad, is still being prevented from leaving Iraq.

Why hasn't he been allowed to return to France?

1- First of all, it took 12 days for a Baghdad court to close his case.

2- Then his Australian passport and personal effects were returned to him only yesterday (28 February), two days after the case was closed.

3- Finally, today, after he had gone through all the airport controls in the presence of the French ambassador and an Australian diplomat and was within minutes of boarding his plane, he was prevented from departing by the aviation and border police, Reporters Without Borders has learned.

The reason given? His visa had expired.

"It is absurd and Kafkaesque that Dendoune cannot leave Iraq," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Christophe Deloire said. "After spending three weeks in Iraqi jails and then waiting two weeks for a judge to close the case, he has been prevented from leaving on the grounds that his visa had expired. I am outraged.

"The Iraqi authorities' reluctance to let this journalist leave is flagrant and we condemn it with the utmost strength. It is high time this sorry farce came to an end and Dendoune was allowed to recover his freedom."
