

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/djibouti-former-journalist-freed-after-20-08-2013,44872.html>

Africa - Djibouti

Released

Former journalist freed after nearly six weeks in jail

20 August 2013

Reporters Without Borders is relieved that **Daher Ahmed Farah**, an opposition activist and former journalist, was finally released on 14 August after being held since 2 July on a charge of refusing to comply with a judicial order.

Farah has been imprisoned repeatedly since the start of the year. This time he spent six weeks in the capital's Gabode prison.

Djibouti's supreme court still has to rule during the coming weeks on Farah's failure to comply with a court decision ordering him to pay 500,000 Djibouti francs (14,500 euros) in damages and a fine of 20,000 Djibouti francs (100 euros).

02.07.2013 - Former journalist jailed again, second time in two months

Reporters Without Borders is appalled by government opponent and former journalist **Daher Ahmed Farah's** incarceration today in Djibouti's Gabode prison to begin serving a two-month jail sentence on a charge of "refusing to comply with a judicial order." An appeal court upheld the sentence on 26 June.

After reporting to the authorities at 8 a.m. in response to a summons, Farah was immediately imprisoned, without being taken before a judge or prosecutor. It was the second time he has been jailed in the past two months.

"The arbitrary nature of the judicial proceedings in the Farah affair is unjust and unacceptable," Reporters Without Borders said. "These developments contradict the start of a dialogue with the opposition that President Ismail Omar Guelleh announced on 27 June."

"We condemn the government's strategy of harassing news providers and opposition activists and we call for this former journalist's immediate and unconditional release."

More information on the [Farah affair](#)

28.06.2013 - Courts step up pressure on opposition journalists

Reporters Without Borders firmly condemns the oppressive treatment that outspoken journalists and media continue to receive from the Djiboutian authorities.

"The politically-motivated judicial harassment of the past few months aimed at discouraging criticism and gagging opposition media constitutes a flagrant violation of freedom of information," Reporters Without Borders said.

"In a country that already shows little respect for freedom of expression, the recent court decisions have created an oppressive environment that marred yesterday's celebration of the 36th anniversary of Djibouti's independence."

Opposition leader and former journalist **Daher Ahmed Farah** received another two-month jail sentence from a Djibouti appeal court on 26 June for "refusing to comply with a judicial order." The appeal court's decision overrode an earlier supreme court decision quashing his July 2003

conviction for an alleged media offence.

Farah is now waiting to be arrested at any moment. He has already been arrested several times since the start of the year and even [spent three weeks in Gabode prison](#) on charges of "being in contact with a foreign power" and "undermining the army's morale."

During the 26 June hearing, the appeal court also extended the 45-day jail sentence that *La Voix de Djibouti* news website editor, **Maydaneh Abdallah Okieh**, is already serving to five months and upheld a court decision ordering him to pay 2 million Djibouti francs (8,600 euros) in libel damages to police chief Elmi Daher Miguil, also known as Elmi Gess. [Okieh has been held since 15 May.](#)

Finally, four *La Voix de Djibouti* contributors who were [released provisionally on 23 June](#) – **Farah Abadid Hildid, Houssein Ahmed Farah, Moustapha Abdourahman Houssein** and **Mohamed Ibrahim Waïss** – have been ordered to appear in court again on 8 July because the charges against them have been changed.

The initial charge of "participating in an insurrectional movement" has been changed to "inciting public order disturbances," which carries a heavy sentence. Charges have been dropped against two colleagues who were detained in 2011 – **Houssein Robleh Dabar** and **Abdillahi Aden Ali**.

Djibouti is ranked 167th out of 179 countries in the [2013 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

Photo : Djiboutian President, Ismail Omar Guelleh (Simon Maina / AFP)

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