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<http://www.rsf.org/djibouti-independent-radio-s-website-editor-13-03-2014,46000.html>

Africa - Djibouti

More harassment

Independent radio's website editor detained again

13 March 2014

Reporters Without Borders is concerned about the detention of **Maydaneh Abdallah Okieh**, the website editor of the independent radio station *La Voix de Djibouti (LVD)*, who was arrested at his home on 9 March and has been held since.

"We demand the immediate release of Okieh, who was arrested arbitrarily for having covered a meeting of the National Salvation Union (USN), an opposition alliance," said Cléa Kahn Sribier, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Africa desk.

"It is the job of journalists to observe and report, and as such they must be free to do their work, which includes reporting dissenting views. Is President Ismael Omar Guelleh's government so fragile that it cannot tolerate the least criticism?"

Okieh was arrested at his home in Cité Maka Moukarama, in the Djibouti City suburb of Balbala, on 9 March by gendarmes from the Balbala-based Sheik Moussa Brigade and was transferred to Gabode central prison the next day, where holding conditions are known to be dire.

The police said they had been looking for him since 4 March, when he covered a USN meeting in Balbala and saw gendarmes use violence to break up the meeting. He appeared in court on 11 March on a charge of disturbing public order. The court is supposed to issue a verdict on 18 March.

Okieh spent two long spells in Gabode prison last year. [He was held for six months](#), from 15 May to 19 October, on charges of "insulting a police officer" and "defaming the police" for posting photos on his Facebook page that showed police breaking up an opposition protest.

Before that, he was held from 4 March to 10 April on charges of inciting a rebellion and inciting illegal demonstrations.

Djibouti is ranked 169th out of 180 countries in [the 2014 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#). This is two places lower than in the 2013 index.

Photo : Maydaneh Abdallah Okieh
