

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/ecuador-opposition-daily-forced-to-close-29-08-2014,46863.html>

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Americas - Ecuador

Blow to pluralism

## Opposition daily forced to close after liquidators intervene

29 August 2014

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**The opposition daily *Hoy* has had to close because the authorities have intervened to liquidate the company that publishes it, Edimpres SA. The Office of the Superintendent of Businesses seized control of the company on 26 August on the grounds that it was unable to pay its creditors.**

*Hoy* had already stopped producing a print version in June because of financial difficulties.

Edimpres received no notification that it was to be liquidated by the Superintendent of Businesses, its lawyer said. Staff learned this from an article in the state-owned daily *El Telégrafo* on 22 August. Just four days later, it was ordered to suspend all operations including publication of *Hoy*.

*"The disappearance of a newspaper such as Hoy is a blow to pluralism in Ecuador,"* said Camille Soulier, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Americas desk. *"We are surprised by the speed with which this has happened. Could the authorities not have found a way to save the newspaper?"*

*"Regardless of the extreme media polarization in Ecuador, the closure of a news outlet is always a loss for civil society and limits the range of opinions to which it has access."*

When *Hoy* announced the suspension of its print version on 27 June for financial reasons, its editor blamed a government advertising boycott. However, as *Hoy* has often run into financial difficulties, it is hard to gauge the level of government responsibility.

Just a few days after that announcement, the Office of the Superintendent of Communication (Supercom) ordered *Hoy* to pay a fine of 57,800 US dollars for having failed to publish the issue number on its front page, as required by the [communications law](#).

Reporters Without Borders does not regard the news media as above the law, but the punishment was clearly abusive and the size of the fine was exorbitant for a newspaper already in financial difficulties.

Many state-owned and pro-government media would also risk bankruptcy without the financial support they receive from the government and state agencies. At the same time, the government actively sidelines critical media. For example, President Rafael Correa often urges his ministers not to give interviews to "mercantilist" news organizations.

The way the government deprives opposition media of funding and denies them access to information constitutes a violation of media pluralism.

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