

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/gambia-two-journalists-threatened-with-26-10-2012,43595.html>

Africa - Gambia

Watched and threatened

## Thugs threaten to kill journalist, what are authorities doing?

15 November 2012

Reporters Without Borders is very disturbed by an increase in threats and intimidation attempts against freelance journalist **Abubacarr Saidykhan**, who – along with *Daily News* reporter **Baboucarr Ceesay**, the Gambian Press Union's vice-president – already received death threats by email in October.

After talking to Saidykhan, Reporters Without Borders is amazed that the presence of police who are supposed to protect him has had no deterrent effect on those responsible for the threats, and calls on the authorities to accept that they have a duty to take effective action.

Saidykhan has been under close watch for weeks by unidentified men often stationed outside his home. Two days ago, a car pulled up next to Saidykhan as he was standing at this gate, and one of the four men inside addressed him as follows:

"We told you that we would come for you without any further warning. We have learned that you are a very stubborn journalist. The next time we meet you, your head will be hammered by one of our patriotic killers. Just continue to ignore our warnings."

"The increase in the threats received by Saidykhan is symptomatic of the decline in the situation of the media in Gambia since August," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Christophe Deloire said.

"The boldness of these 'patriotic killers' – supporters of President Yahya Jammeh bent on using death threats to terrorize journalists – is indicative of the impunity and protection they enjoy."

Deloire added: "We call on the authorities, who have been given a description of the vehicle and its licence plate number, to take all necessary steps to identify the passengers. A failure to react would show that these thugs were sent by the government and that Saidykhan is on his own and has no effective protection."

Shortly before he was shot dead in December 2004, **Deyda Hydara**, the editor of *The Point* and correspondent of *Agence France-Presse* and Reporters Without Borders, received similar threats to the ones that Saidykhan has been getting.

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### 26.10.2012 - Two journalists threatened with death in hostile e-mails

Reporters Without Borders is deeply concerned by death threats received in e-mails yesterday by the journalists **Baboucarr Ceesay** and **Abubaccar Saidykhan**, [against whom charges of conspiracy and inciting violence were dropped earlier this week](#).

"The conditions that journalists face in Gambia have deteriorated to alarming extent," Reporters Without Borders said. "Since August this year, [Yahya Jammeh](#), a predator of freedom of information, [has been increasing judicial and administrative pressure](#) on journalists working for independent news organizations".

"Encouraged by these methods, the Gambian president's supporters are prepared to resort to murder when journalists dare to criticize the government. We urge the authorities to call a halt to their campaign to undermine the credibility of the media and to guarantee journalists the

safety they deserve, starting immediately by opening a proper investigation into the threats received by Baboucarr Ceesay and Abubaccar Saidykhan".

The two journalists were arrested and charged in early September after calling for a peaceful demonstration against a wave of executions of prisoners ordered by Jammeh in August. Each received the following e-mail yesterday:

*"Unpatriotic Citizens,  
Read this Tobaski warning. It is left to you to make a choice. You choose to live or die. You must take one.*

*I know that you know what my name Mofala means in your own language Mandinka. You are stubborn fucking guys who want to destroy the image of the APRC Government and our affectionate President Yahya Jammeh. You think that you can apply for permit to bring the Tnisian, Egypt, Algeria, Seria and Libya situation here. I will come with my team of patriotic killers who kill for the love of our country and our president.*

*The police are not the best guys to deal with you.*

*I have stepped in voluntarily to kill all of you and if you deny this just ignore my warning.*

*I know that you are dealing with Gambian dissidents abroad, but you will not survive it at all.*

*For the fact that your stupid colleagues who called themselves Journalists give me your email addresses shows that you are easy to finish.*

*[...]*

*We will get all of you and slaughter you like Tobaski Rams.*

*We will come for you without any further information.*

*We will fuck you to death soon. None of you will escape.*

*From Mofala Jato and his team of patriotic killers."*

See below a screenshot of the threatening message.

From: Mofala Jato <mofalajato@yahoo.com>  
Date: Thu, Oct 25, 2012 at 11:58 AM  
Subject: Tobaski Warning - Choose life or death  
To: **To protect the journalists, Reporters Without Borders has chosen to hide their e-mail addresses**

Unpatriotic Citizens,  
Read this Tobaski warning. It is left to you to make a choice. You choose to live or die. You must take one.  
I know that you know what my name Mofala means in your own language Mandinka. You are stubborn fucking guys who want to destroy the image of the APRC Government and our affectionate President Yahya Jammeh. You think that you can apply for permit to bring the Tnisian, Egypt, Algeria, Seria and Libya situation here. I will come with my team of patriotic killers who kill for the love of our country and our president.  
The police are not the best guys to deal with you.  
I have stepped in voluntarily to kill all of you and if you deny this just ignore my warning.  
I know that you are dealing with Gambian dissidents abroad, but you will not survive it at all.  
For the fact that your stupid colleagues who called themselves Journalists give me your email addresses shows that you are easy to finish.  
**Reporters Without Borders has chosen to hide the journalists addresses mentioned by the autors of the threat**  
We will get all of you and slaughter you like Tobaski Rams.  
We will come for you without any further information.  
  
We will fuck you to death soon. None of you will escape.  
  
>From Mofala Jato and his team of patriotic killers.

## Death threats

Photo : Baboucarr Ceesay et Abubaccar Saidykhan

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You can download those documents on our website :

- Death threats PDF, (PDF - 693.1 kb)
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