

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/egypt-belgian-reporter-arrested-and-02-02-2011,39458.html>

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Middle East & North Africa - Egypt

Foreign reporter accused of spying

## Belgian reporter arrested and beaten, still held

2 February 2011

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Reporters Without Borders firmly condemns today's arrest of Belgian journalist **Serge Dumont** in Cairo. The Middle East correspondent of three newspapers – Belgium's *Le Soir*, Switzerland's *Le Temps* and France's *La Voix du Nord* – was arrested and beaten by men in plain-clothes at midday while in the central neighbourhood of Choubra. He was then taken to a military post, where he was accused of "spying" and was told he would be handed over to the security services

"We urge the Egyptian authorities to free **Dumont** immediately and to return all the equipment seized at the time of his arrest," Reporters Without Borders said. "The accusation of spying is both false and utterly far-fetched. **Dumont** has been a well-known journalist for years, one who is widely respected by his colleagues."

The press freedom organization added: "**Dumont's** arrest is one more example of the way the Egyptian authorities are violating the right to impart information and trying to silence international coverage. Foreign reporters, like their Egyptian colleagues, should be able to work freely. Harassing and arresting journalists is not going to help the Egyptian government to escape the crisis."

In a phone call with *Le Soir*, **Dumont** said: "It was heavy-handed and violent. I was hit several times in the face. They claimed I was pro-Baradei. I was then taken to the military in one of the barracks on the outskirts of the city. I was given a glass of water from the Nile, they told me, so that I would catch diarrhea. I am being guarded by two soldiers with Kalashnikovs and bayonets. They say I will be taken before the intelligence services. They say I am a spy."

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