

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/djibouti-supreme-court-urged-to-free-31-10-2012,43625.html>

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Africa - Djibouti

Held 84 days

## Supreme court urged to free journalist held without trial

31 October 2012

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Reporters Without Borders and Avocats Sans Frontières (Lawyers Without Borders) call on Djiboutian supreme court president Kadidja Abeba to release **Houssein Ahmed Farah**, a journalist detained without trial for nearly three months.

A correspondent for *La Voix de Djibouti*, an exile news website, Farah was arrested on 8 August and has been held since 11 August in the capital's Gabode prison. After an appeal court rejected his request for a provisional release, he appealed to the supreme court, which began examining his case yesterday and has deferred a decision until 5 November.

"This journalist has been languishing in prison for the past 84 days on the basis of dubious charges," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Christophe Deloire said. "This situation is both irregular and shocking. We ask for Farah to be granted a provisional release so that he can be reunited with his family while waiting for this case to come to trial."

"Farah continues to be in very poor health, and the prison conditions are just making it worse," said François Cantier, honorary president of Lawyers Without Borders-France and head of the Lawyers Without Borders Network Project. "For this reason, we join his lawyer, Zakaria Abdillahi, in requesting his release."

After writing to the Djiboutian authorities, Reporters Without Borders referred the case to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on 18 September, asking it to intercede as a matter of urgency because of the worrying state of Farah's health.

Reporters Without Borders also cited Farah's situation in its submission to the UN Human Rights Council as part of Djibouti's Universal Periodic Review.

Farah is accused of evading the judicial control to which he has been subjected since June 2011 on baseless charges of "participating in an insurrectional movement" (for which he spent four months in preventive detention in Gabode) and distributing "forged" voter cards on behalf of a political party dissolved by presidential decree.

Two people arrested during the Farah investigation that the prosecutor-general began on 15 September subsequently testified to an investigating judge that they were forced to sign statements incriminating Farah that were written in advance by the police. These two persons have since been freed.

[More information on the Farah case.](#)

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