

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/guinea-minister-closes-radio-station-22-07-2013,44958.html>

Africa - Guinea

Back on the air

Provincial radio station resumes broadcasting after five days

24 July 2013

Reporters Without Borders is relieved to learn that Liberté FM, a radio station based in the southeastern city of N'Zérékoré, has resumed broadcasting after receiving a verbal go-ahead from communication minister Togba Césaire Kpoghomou.

The station was off the air for five days after the minister accused it of violating professional ethics. Its manager, Mohamed Saliou Diallo, was also accused of disrespect towards a senior army officer.

The lack of any basis for these accusations combined with popular expressions of support for Liberté FM accounted for the lifting of the station's suspension.

Espace TV, a privately-owned TV station that has also been targeted by the communication minister, is meanwhile still awaiting the formal approval it needs to begin broadcasting in the next few days.

22.07.2013 - Minister closes radio station, blocks new TV station

Reporters Without Borders is disturbed by communication minister Togba Césaire Kpoghomou's decision on 18 July to close *Liberté FM*, a radio station based in N'Zérékoré, a southeastern city that has seen inter-ethnic clashes during the past week.

The minister has also refused to give the green light to *Espace TV*, a privately-owned TV station that was to have begun broadcasting on 30 July. The ministry has not offered an explanation for either of these two cases of censorship.

"The suspension of news media is normally a matter for the media regulatory body and cannot be ordered by the government," Reporters Without Borders said. "We are astonished that the communication ministry prefers to silence news outlets instead of guaranteeing pluralism and freedom of information."

Reporters Without Borders added: "His attitude is inappropriate, to say the least, especially at a time of unrest, when the public's need for information is greater than ever."

The head of *Liberté FM* told Reporters Without Borders: "The minister accused me of being the person who is giving information to the national and international media about what is happening in N'Zérékoré."

Following the minister's refusal to allow *Espace TV* to be broadcasted on 30 July, the station's owner, Lamine Guirassy, has appealed to *CanalSat Overseas*, a TV satellite company that operates in most African countries including Guinea.

Although Guirassy signed a contract with *CanalSat*, the operator has finally decided not to carry *Espace TV* without offering any explanation.
