

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/iraq-no-independent-reporting-coming-09-01-2014,45715.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Iraq

News blackout

No independent reporting coming out of Al-Anbar province

9 January 2014

Reporters Without Borders is worried by the news blackout on events in the western province Al-Anbar, especially the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi, since 4 January, when government forces began an offensive in the region.

Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki's government is trying to control the production and dissemination of news reports about the fighting in Fallujah and Ramadi between the regular army and militias affiliated to Al-Qaeda and tribal groups. The few reports coming out of the region are all from government sources.

"The deplorable security environment for journalists, who are under threat from all sides, prevents them from working properly," Reporters Without Borders said.

"We urge the Iraqi authorities and the other forces on the ground to give reporters access to the fighting in Fallujah and Ramadi and to provide them with protection. In view of the complexity and impenetrability of the current situation, coverage of the fight by independent journalists is essential."

Although no act of violence against any journalist has so far been reported, journalists in Fallujah and Ramadi are refusing to cover the fighting because they fear reprisals by both government troops and the armed groups.

According to the information obtained by Reporters Without Borders, many journalists and known activists have fled the province for fear of being targeted in connection with their work.

Working as a journalist has again become very [dangerous](#) in Iraq, where about [ten](#) media personnel have been murdered in the past three months.

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