

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/maroc-rsf-backs-moroccan-ngo-targeted-by-04-06-2015,47969.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Morocco

Unacceptable intimidation

RSF backs Moroccan NGO targeted by interior ministry

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It's ironic. Moroccan journalists and human rights activists who have been the targets of government spying would be justified in bringing complaints against the authorities over the violation their privacy.

Nonetheless, it was the Moroccan interior ministry that announced on 8 May that it has filed a complaint with the public prosecutor against "persons who prepared and distributed a report containing grave accusations about spying practices."

The ministry was referring to "[Their Eyes on Me: Surveillance in Morocco](#)," a report by Privacy International and its Moroccan partner, the [Digital Rights Association](#) (ADN), about the online surveillance methods used by the Moroccan authorities against journalists and information activists.

Coming at a time when [the persecution of journalists is intensifying in Morocco](#), this complaint has just one aim – to intimidate those who have not already been reduced to self-censorship or silence," said Grégoire Pouget, the head of the Reporters Without Borders New Media desk. "There can be no freedom of information without the protection of sources, but there is no way of guaranteeing the protection of sources in a country where such practices are the norm. We call on the Moroccan authorities to withdraw this complaint and to stop intimidating journalists."

Through the stories of a professional journalist and three citizen-journalists, the reports shows how state surveillance has had a terrible impact on journalistic activity in Morocco.

The professional journalist, Ali Anouzla (a Reporters Without Borders "[Information Hero](#)"), describes his many experiences of surveillance and phone tapping and the hacking of his Facebook accounts.

The three citizen-journalists – Hisham Almiraat, Samia Errazzouki and Yassir Kazar – used to be members of Mamfakinch ("We let nothing go" in Arabic), an online magazine collective created in 2011 to cover Morocco's 20 February Movement. They were the [victims of a spyware app developed and marketed by Hacking Team](#), an Italian company that Reporters Without Borders branded as an "[Enemy of the Internet](#)" in 2013.

The reports notes that [the Moroccan government has acquired the Eagle surveillance system \(fr\)](#), the same one that Muammar Gaddafi used to spy on the Libyan population. Capable of intercepting emails and tracking journalists and dissidents on social networks, it was developed and installed by Amesys, a French company also branded by Reporters Without Borders as an "[Enemy of the Internet](#)."

Morocco is ranked 130th out of 180 countries in the [Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).
