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<http://www.rsf.org/morocco-justice-system-still-targeting-21-05-2014,46316.html>

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Middle East/North Africa - Morocco

Judge on vacation

## Justice system still targeting editor seven months after his release

20 May 2014

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**Ali Anouzla**, the editor of the *Lakome news* website's Arabic-language version, continues to be targeted by the justice system seven months after his conditional release.

He should have appeared before an investigating judge today, but the judge's secretary called Anouzla's lawyer, Hassan Semlali, on the eve of the hearing to postpone it without setting a new date. She said the hearing could not be held because the judge was taking a vacation.

Anouzla [was arrested](#) in Rabat on 17 September for posting a link to an article in the Spanish daily *El País*, which in turn had a link to a video attributed to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

He was freed on 25 October after five weeks in "preventive detention" but continues to face a possible sentence of 10 to 30 years in prison on various charges including providing "material assistance" to a terrorist organization and "defending terrorist crimes."

Both the Arabic and French-language versions of *Lakome* have been [blocked](#) since 17 October despite his requests for an end to the blocking.

On 7 January, he submitted a request to this effect to the National Agency for Telecommunications Regulation (ANRT), which subsequently told him by phone that he should address his request to the prosecutor's office. Anouzla has received no response to the request to the prosecutor's office that he submitted in early January.

"We condemn the investigating judge's endless postponement of Anouzla's hearings," said Reporters Without Borders research director Lucie Morillon. "The judicial authorities are deliberately dragging this case out. We call on them to have the courage to drop all the charges and finally close a case that is embarrassing them for good reason. They must also stop blocking his website."

After creating an Anouzla [support committee](#), journalists and media freedom defenders have undertaken all the necessary steps for the creation of a media freedom NGO in Morocco. But the Rabat prefecture has [refused to consent](#) to the NGO's registration twice, on 9 and 12 May.

A staunch media freedom advocate, Anouzla recently received the [Washington-based Project on Middle East Democracy's "Leaders for Democracy"](#) award and was one of the "[100 information heroes](#)" that Reporters Without Borders published on 3 May, World Press Freedom Day.

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