

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/ethiopia-state-broadcaster-fires-20-30-06-2014,46550.html>

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Africa - Ethiopia

Mass firing

## State broadcaster fires 20 journalists for "narrow political views"

30 June 2014

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Reporters Without Borders condemns last week's politically-motivated dismissal of 20 journalists from Oromia Radio and Television Organization (ORTO), the main state-owned broadcaster in Oromia, Ethiopia's largest regional State.

The 20 journalists were denied entry to ORTO headquarter on 25 June and were effectively dismissed without any explanations other than their alleged "narrow political views," an assessment the management reached at the end of a workshop for journalists and regional government officials that included discussions on the controversial Master Plan of Addis that many activists believe is aimed at incorporating parts of Oromia into the federal city of Addis Ababa.

The journalists had reportedly expressed their disagreement with the violence used by the police in May to disperse student protests against the plan, resulting in many deaths.

It is not yet clear whether the journalists may also be subjected to other administrative or judicial proceedings.

*"How can you fire journalists for their political views?" said Cléa Kahn-Sriber, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Africa desk. "The government must provide proper reasons for such a dismissal. Does it mean that Ethiopia has officially criminalized political opinion ?*

*"In our view, this development must be seen as an attempt by the authorities to marginalize and suppress all potential critiques ahead of the national elections scheduled for 2015 in Ethiopia. These journalists must be allowed to return to work and must not be subjected to any threats or obstruction."*

Ethiopia is ranked 143rd out of 180 countries in the [2014 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

*(photo : Muktar Kedir, President of the Oromia regional state)*

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