

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/france-enraged-hacker-resorts-to-07-08-2014,46775.html>

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Europe/Ex-USSR - France

Hacked off

## Enraged hacker resorts to aggressive methods against French journalist and website

7 August 2014

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Judicial authorities urged to respond firmly to attacks against Rue89 and its reporter

Grégory Chelli, a French hacker living in the Israeli city of Ashdod, has been using extraordinarily aggressive methods to harass Benoît le Corre, a journalist with the French news website Rue89, ever since the site published [Le Corre's profile of Chelli](#) on 29 July.

Known by the pseudonym of Ulcan, Chelli made threatening and aggressive calls to Le Corre and his parents and then posted recordings of the calls online. He also launched DDoS attacks on the Rue89 website.

Reporters Without Borders urges the French justice system to begin proceedings against Chelli, whose actions have combined violence, perversity and foolishness in an attempt to intimidate Le Corre and silence Rue89.

Chelli called Le Corre shortly after the article was posted online and began by demanding use of his right of response, which Le Corre is ready to grant despite the violence of his language. Chelli repeatedly insulted and threatened Le Corre as he dissected the article during the call, which lasted 30 minutes and which he [posted on YouTube the same evening](#).

Immediately after hanging up, Chelli called Le Corre's parents managing to use Le Corre's number. Posing as a police officer, he told them their son had been murdered. "Attacked as a result of one of his articles, he was stabbed in the intestines," Chelli said.

When Le Corre's parents expressed doubt about the veracity of the call, Chelli lost his temper and said: "If you don't want this son of a bitch to end up in a box [...] tell him to shut his mouth," adding that he, Chelli, didn't "give a damn about the police" and was "above the law." He also posted this call on YouTube.

A few days later, on the night of 4 August, Chelli sent around 20 police officers to their home by calling the nearest police station and pretending to be Le Corre's father.

Chelli has meanwhile also been making effective use of the cyber-attack method known as Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) to flood Rue89's servers with connection requests so that the website can no longer respond to connection attempts by its readers.

The first DDoS attack claimed by Chelli was launched on the evening of 29 July. The website was inaccessible during the two or three hours it lasted. Other attacks followed, forcing Rue89 to use a mirror site to remain accessible to its readers. The attacks have also made it impossible for the staff to work and post articles at their usual pace.

These actions are the work of an individual, [backed by a small community](#), who has decided to take justice into his own hands to the detriment of the right of others and freedom of information.

France nonetheless has a media law that penalizes journalists and editors if they are guilty of defamation. It also has criminal code provisions that penalize those responsible for death threats or obstructing the workings of a data processing system, including websites.

Le Corre and [Rue89 have filed a complaint](#). Reporters Without Borders supports this complaint and calls on the French justice system to deal firmly with Chelli's criminal actions against the media.

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You can download those documents on our website :

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