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Africa - Chad

Another conviction

Newspaper publisher gets two-year suspended jail sentence

29 August 2013

Reporters Without Borders condemns the two-year suspended prison sentence and fine of 1 million CFA francs (1,500 euros) that a court in N'Djamena imposed today on newspaper publisher **Moussaye Avenir de la Tchiré** on charges of inciting hatred and inciting a popular uprising.

Treasurer of the Union of Chadian Journalists (UJT) and publisher of the *Abba Garde* newspaper, De La Tchiré was expected to be released later today after nearly four months in detention. He was arrested on 7 May.

"We are relieved by De La Tchiré's release but his conviction, like the recent convictions of his colleagues **Eric Topona** and **Jean Etienne Laokolé**, shows that the authorities are trying to intimidate news providers and force critics to censor themselves," Reporters Without Borders said.

"We should not forget that each of these three men spent at least 100 days in a cell waiting to see a judge. We call on the judicial authorities to overturn their convictions and rescind the excessive fine imposed on De La Tchiré."

Laokolé, a writer, blogger and activist, and UJT general secretary Topona, who used to work for the national radio broadcaster, were given suspended sentences of three years in prison on 19 August on charges of defamation and "abortive conspiracy against public order."

Chad is ranked 121st out of 179 countries in the [2013 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

[More information about the case.](#)

Photo: Moussaye Avenir de la Tchiré

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