

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/djibouti-repeated-arrests-used-to-hound-18-12-2013,45644.html>

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Africa - Djibouti

Mistreatment

## Repeated arrests used to hound independent journalists

18 December 2013

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Reporters Without Borders is alarmed by a wave of arbitrary arrests of journalists working for *La Voix de Djibouti*, an independent news website, and the increasingly violent methods that the police are using with journalists.

Four journalists have been arrested in the past 10 days, some of them have been mistreated, and two of them are still being held in a completely illegal manner.

"The way this systematic harassment is conducted would be absurd except that journalists are being deprived of their freedom and their health is being threatened," Reporters Without Borders said. "A journalist has been released one day and arrested again the next, without reason.

"President Ismael Omar Guelleh's government is no longer even trying to hide its determination to persecute the country's only independent news outlet. We call for the immediate release of Moustapha Abdourahman Houssein and Mohamed Ibrahim Waiss, who are being held in illegal and dangerous conditions."

**Houssein** was re-arrested yesterday as he was going to Hodan police station, where he had previously been held, to recover personal effects. He is now being held at Nagad detention centre, where he has reportedly been tortured and is now on hunger strike.

Houssein was previously arrested together with **Sahal Elmi Talan**, a young reporter, as they were covering the eviction of street vendors by police from Djibouti City's central market on 14 December. They were released two days later.

While detained, Houssein was hit with force on the ear by the police director-general, Col. Abdillahi Aldi Fara, in person. A medical certificate confirms that the blow ruptured his eardrum. Houssein had also been arrested and roughed up on 4 December.

**Waiss** was arrested on 12 December while covering a demonstration by women demanding that the government keep its promise to rehouse them after their neighbourhood was demolished.

He was transferred to the capital's main Gabode prison on 16 December on an order issued by the state prosecutor.

**Farah Abadid Hildid**, a journalist with *La Voix de Djibouti* who is also vice-president of the Djibouti Human Rights League (LDDH) and a member of the opposition MRD party, was arrested on 7 December and released on the evening of the same day.

Djibouti is ranked 167th out of 179 countries in [the 2013 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#) établi par Reporters sans frontières].

*Photo : Moustapha Abdourahman Houssein*

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