

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/gambia-internet-users-targeted-by-changes-05-07-2013,44899.html>

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Africa - Gambia

Repressive amendments

## Internet users targeted by changes to information law

5 July 2013

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Reporters Without Borders is very disturbed by amendments to the 2009 Information and Communications Act – the main law limiting freedom of information in Gambia – which the National Assembly passed on 3 July.

Under the amended law, “spreading of false news against the government or public officials” is punishable by up to 15 years in prison or a fine of 3 million dalasis (64,000 euros). Its main target is Gambians who make fun of government officials online.

“The amendments to the Information and Communications Act that the Gambian parliament has just adopted aggravate what is already one of Africa’s most repressive laws,” Reporters Without Borders said.

“The authorities are using these amendments to target news providers and crack down on the Internet, one of the last spaces for freedom of information in Gambia. We call for their immediate withdrawal and a complete overhaul of the law, which already gags the media in the name of state security.”

The amendments were proposed by information and communication minister Nana Grey-Johnson, who said their aim was the “deterrent punishment” of persons who engage in “treacherous campaigns” at home and abroad and incite “unpatriotic behaviour.”

President Yahya Jammeh is on the May 2013 Reporters Without Borders list of [“Predators of Press Freedom”](#) while Gambia is ranked 152nd out of 179 countries in the [2013 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

Photograph: President Yahya Jammeh (Seyllou / AFP)

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