



Somali Journalists Syndicate

Submission to the call for contributions on the situation of human rights in Somalia -2022

Submission date: 24th April, 2023

VII. Freedom of opinion and expression, assembly and association

KILLED JOURNALISTS 2022

- On September 30, 2022: Somali National Television (SNTV) journalist, Ahmed Mohamed Shakur¹, 26, was killed alongside security officials after an improvised explosive device hit him while walking alongside security officials. The chief-editor of SNTV, Abdullahi Qorshe, told SJS that Ahmed, who was based in Balcad town and embedded with the security forces to cover the ongoing military offensive by the Somali National Army for the state media. Ahmed Mohamed Shakur was a young and professional camera-journalist who despite the risks decided to keep the public informed about the Somali army offensive. He becomes the first journalist killed in Somalia this year and brings the total number of journalists killed in the past five years up-to 14².
- On October 29, 2022: Prominent TV journalist Mohamed Isse Koonaa³ was among killed and Reuters photojournalist, Feisal Omar and M24 TV journalist and Voice of America freelancer, Abdulkadir Mohamed Abdulle were wounded in a terrorist attack 2 in Mogadishu. The three journalists are among confirmed casualties of double suicide car bombings that targeted a government building housing ministry of higher education and other offices located at Mogadishu's KM5 junction on Saturday 29 October 2022. According to colleagues and police, the three journalists were rushing to cover the scene of the first bombing when they were caught by a second suicide bombing.

a) Cases of physical attacks, including killings, harassment and intimidation of journalists, media professionals and human rights defenders;

- On June 27, 2022: Journalists from Hirshabelle State-owned television; Abdikarin Mohamed Siyad and Khalid Mohamud Osman were wounded 3 after a vehicle was hit with a landmine at Qabno locality in Hiiraan region. The two journalists were injured with one of them remaining in critical condition. State media reported that at least three people were killed in the attack including Abdirahman Adow, the driver of the journalists' vehicle.
- On August 21, 2022: Somali Police officer from Haramacad unit shot and wounded 4 M24 TV camera-journalist, Ahmed Omar Nur. The camera-journalist was among a group of local journalists covering the Hayat hotel attack from KM4 junction. Colleagues who witnessed the shooting said a group of the Turkish-trained Haramcad police officers were standing nearby when one of them shot at the journalist. No explanation was provided on the circumstance of

¹ <https://sisyndicate.org/2022/09/30/state-tv-journalist-killed-while-covering-security-operation-on-the-outskirts-of-mogadishu/>

² <https://sisyndicate.org/2023/01/31/sjs-annual-report-2022-state-of-press-freedom-in-somalia/>

³ <https://sisyndicate.org/2022/10/29/prominent-tv-journalist-killed-two-others-injured-in-mogadishu-bombings/>



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the shooting. He was rushed to the hospital where doctors conducted an emergency surgery on his cheek.

- On 10 February 2023, SJS lawyer and legal adviser for the journalists, Abdirahman Hassan Omar sustained multiple injuries⁴ after he was attacked by four armed men while he was heading home from work. Four men (three armed) and one driving a tuk tuk (bajaj) attacked him with several leg and hand injuries. SJS had reported the incident to the police who promised to investigate and we are waiting for more information from them. Despite, his removal from the defense team by the court, which SJS considers weakening their defense, Avv. Abdirahman was part of the defense lawyers of SJS secretary-general, Abdalle Ahmed Mumin in the press freedom case at the Banadir Regional Court⁵.

b) Arrests and detention of journalists, media professionals and human rights defenders;

- On 16 April 2023, Mogadishu police in Mogadishu arbitrarily [detained](#) four local journalists⁶ covering for Risaala Media Corporation and 5TV [while reporting](#) from the site of [a bomb blast](#) in Hamar Jajab neighborhood. The journalists: Mohamed Said Nur (Risaala TV), Qasim Ibrahim Adan (Risaala TV)⁷, Mohamud Abdirashid Sofeysane (5TV) and Isaq Rashid (5TV) were held at the Hamar Jajab police station before they were later transferred to the regional police headquarters where they were held for half an hour, according to the journalists and two editors of the affected media stations. The Banadir Regional Police Commissioner, Mahdi Omar Muumin (Mo'alin Mahdi), [addressed](#) the journalists to inform them that “the police banned any coverage related to bombing sites in the capital”⁸.
- On 1 April 2023, Deputy minister of information, Abdirahman Yusuf Al-Adaala has ordered a local journalist from [Bandhig Forum](#) to halt “until further notice” a scheduled Twitter Space discussion on press freedom and human rights highlight the attacks and persecution against SJS Secretary-General Abdalle Ahmed Mumin. The journalist was among the organizers of the discussion which was scheduled on 5 April. The discussion [was later held on time](#) despite disruptions by notorious online trolls.
- On 7 April 2023, [Mahad Arab Dhiblawe](#), a national intelligence (NISA) officer operating at the Mogadishu Airport has started targeting SJS Secretary-General Abdalle Ahmed Mumin with threats of physical harm while in Nairobi. Mahad has also threatened journalists at the local media station, Risaala Media Corporation following the station’s broadcast of a lengthy interview with Abdalle Mumin.

⁴ https://twitter.com/sjs_Somalia/status/1624722247838584833

⁵ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2023/02/23/amid-ongoing-crackdown-against-media-freedom-sjs-condemns-recent-arbitrary-arrests-of-journalists-in-mogadishu-and-somaliland/>

⁶ <https://twitter.com/KaabTV/status/1647527009604493313>

⁷ <https://web.facebook.com/risaalatelevision/posts/770751161225187>

⁸ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2023/04/17/attacks-and-threats-against-journalists-and-media-stations-in-somalia-continue-with-impunity/>



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- On 8 April 2023, Somaliland's deputy minister of information, Said Hassan Habane issued [a directive](#) which bans interviews and talk shows, among other issues, contrary to the culture, the good ethics and religion. This vaguely-worded directive which was sent to local media stations not only curtails the press freedom and the freedom of expression but it also instills fear among the journalists who are uncertain on what to report following the directive.
- On 2 March 2023, Somali police at the Aden Adde International Airport, Mogadishu, briefly detained freelance photojournalist Said Yusuf Warsame⁹ who was invited to cover an event to the airport during the arrest. He was arrested at the Airport police station at 10:00am and was released at 1:30pm local time without charges¹⁰.
- On 16 March 2023, al-Shabaab released a video message denouncing independent media, including some local press freedom organizations and journalists. The group described the free press as the “mouthpiece for the enemy propaganda” and blamed the local journalists and press freedom groups as “entities working for the interest of the foreigners”.
- On 12 February 2023, Somali police in Kaaraan district, Mogadishu, detained¹¹ two Risaala Media Corporation journalists Qasim Ibrahim Adani and videographer Abdikarin Mohamud Mohamed who were reporting a protest by the local transporters who were complaining against road closure at Sana'a intersection in Mogadishu's Kaaraan district. At the police station, the journalists were ordered to delete the footage¹² of the protesters and refrain from covering any further protests by the Kaaraan district police station commander, Salaad Arale, before they were freed without charge.
- On Sunday 19 February 2023, Somaliland police in Wajale detained Saab TV reporter Guled Ali Ibrahim a day after he exposed an illegal tax collection by the mayor of the border town of Wajale¹³. The journalist posted receipts showing illegal taxation on his Facebook. According to colleagues, the journalist was held at the police station. He was freed on Tuesday 21 February after he was forced to retract his Facebook post.

On Monday, 20 February 2023, the Somali intelligence agents in Mogadishu briefly detained¹⁴ Ali Elmi Salaad and Sakariye Mohamed Salad, a reporter and a cameraman for the privately-owned Radio Kulmiye in Mogadishu. According to the Director of Radio Kulmiye Burhaan Diini Farah, the radio journalists were covering a disputed election by the Banadir Truck Owners Cooperative. Upon arrest, they were taken to NISA headquarters known as

⁹ https://twitter.com/sjs_Somalia/status/1631250451201966080

¹⁰ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2023/04/17/attacks-and-threats-against-journalists-and-media-stations-in-somalia-continue-with-impunity/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/RadioRisaala/posts/pfbid02uQ66LAXV6VW8dZ2nrEiWQLiyknu3HSwDC5kB9brDK9HQ1J7AWRDenC2u4HT4PFZtl>

¹² https://twitter.com/sjs_Somalia/status/1624735907042496517

¹³ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2023/02/23/amid-ongoing-crackdown-against-media-freedom-sjs-condemns-recent-arbitrary-arrests-of-journalists-in-mogadishu-and-somaliland/>

¹⁴ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2023/02/23/amid-ongoing-crackdown-against-media-freedom-sjs-condemns-recent-arbitrary-arrests-of-journalists-in-mogadishu-and-somaliland/>



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'Habar Khadijo', where they were held for an hour and after interrogations they were freed without charges.

- On 17 January 2023, Somali police in Kahda district, Mogadishu, arbitrarily detained¹⁵ Kalsan TV journalist Abdihafid Nur as he was covering a public protest by the community members in Kahda who were complaining against the district commissioner. According to Kalsan TV, Abdihafid was freed on the following night without charge¹⁶.
- On 22 January 2023, Somali police officers shot live bullets¹⁷ at two journalists working for Risaala Media Corporation as they were covering a terror attack at the Mogadishu mayor's office. According to the director of Risaala Media Corporation, they were not hurt, however, the journalists were forced to leave immediately the scene¹⁸.
- On 26 January 2023, the Sanaag Regional Court sentenced Horyal24 TV reporter Abdirahman Mohamed Adani with nine months of imprisonment and 900,000 SI.Sh. (USD 105) fine for covering a story the exposed a Somaliland military officer who closed down¹⁹ the only available mother and child health centre in Fiqifuliye, a rural village in the southern Sanaag region which reportedly led to the death of a young expectant mother²⁰ in October last year. A second journalist Jabir Said Duale who covered the story for SomNews TV was also sentenced to a 600,000 SI.Sh. (USD 70) fine. The pair were detained on 17 October 2022 but were freed on bail on the same day. The court freed a third journalist Abdirisak Haji Ahmed who reports for the state-owned Somaliland National TV who was also held for the same case²¹.
- On 25 January 2023, Somaliland police detained two SomNews TV reporter Mohamed Mohamud Koronto and cameraman Mahdi Siyad in Hargeisa on Wednesday following a raid²² by the police on the news station's offices in Hargeisa that day as reported by the station. According to journalists who spoke to SJS, the two journalists are still held in the police custody without charges. SomNews TV representative told SJS that it was not immediately clear the motive of the raid and the detention²³ of their journalists but they

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<https://www.facebook.com/127251944121647/posts/pfbid0hbDdSTjYBJ6VdLr8xwBzuTUUyBzR2WxMSvtAmXrcU4FHaSJUqsnA3nEnYoP1eGqZl/?d=n>

¹⁶ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2023/01/28/amid-deteriorating-press-freedom-situation-journalists-continue-to-face-detention-and-harassment-in-somaliland-and-mogadishu/>

¹⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/risaalatelevision/videos/860490415058522/>

¹⁸ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2023/01/28/amid-deteriorating-press-freedom-situation-journalists-continue-to-face-detention-and-harassment-in-somaliland-and-mogadishu/>

¹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/cadaani1122/videos/5976580509018819/>

²⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/JaabirBulshaawi/videos/1175820106354180/>

²¹ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2023/01/28/amid-deteriorating-press-freedom-situation-journalists-continue-to-face-detention-and-harassment-in-somaliland-and-mogadishu/>

²² <https://www.facebook.com/SOMMNEWSTV/videos/544822087602327>

²³

<https://www.facebook.com/SOMMNEWSTV/posts/pfbid04FNPKsnYWFityYD4b2vzuTqXkJFWgE5onVsoGQwxwAxnSF74Qr6jaZdZpWqyj6iXl>



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suspect that authorities were irritated by the TV's constant coverage on the Laascaanood unrest. At least one of the detained journalists is hailing from Laascaanood town.

The persecution, attack and harassment against SJS secretary-general Abdalle Mumin

- On 13 February 2023, the Banadir regional court sentenced SJS secretary-general, Abdalle Ahmed Mumin to two months in prison²⁴. That was after five months of continued harassment, threats and intimidation against Mr. Mumin and the SJS member journalists in Mogadishu. However, Mr. Mumin was freed the same day on 13 February because the prison officers described the decision as “illegal” according to the Somali law. The prison officials referred the Somali prison law which cites that “the detainees’ term of jail starts from the first day of detention” therefore Mr. Mumin has been under house arrest, arbitrary detentions since 11 October 2022 meaning that he had served more than five months in jail. Unfortunately, the threats against Mr. Mumin continued.
- On Thursday 23 February 2023²⁵, members of the national intelligence and police led by the following officers: Col. Said Baryare (the deputy police commander of the Banadir region), police Captain Nuradin Mohamed Hussein, police officer Mr. Faratol and national intelligence officer Abdiqani kidnaped Mr. Mumin while attending a parliamentary-civil society discussion at Mogadishu’s Jazeera Hotel. The armed officers threatened hotel guards and even caused tension inside the hotel as they cloaked their guns before taking Mr. Mumin out. According to the officers and other government sources, the order of the raid and Mumin’s arrest was given by the **Banadir police chief Mr. Mahdi Omar Muumin (popularly known as Moalin Mahdi)** and the Justice Minister Mr. Hassan Sheikh Ali. Mr. Mumin was held in a private house in Mogadishu’s Bondhere district the same day. Mr. Mumin was put in a police Toyota pick-up vehicle escorted by two machine-gun-mounted police vehicles with more than 10 armed men- all in the uniform of the Haramcad police unit. The officers did not have any court warrant and did not explain the detention. Mr. Mumin was locked in a room inside the two-story building where other detainees were also held. Mr. Mumin was physically tortured after his arrest and inside the private house for 24 hours without food and water.
- On the afternoon of Friday 24 February 2023, police officers led by the **Banadir police chief Mr. Mahdi Omar Muumin (popularly known as Moalin Mahdi)** came at the private house in Bondhere and took out Mr. Mumin from the room where he was held. He was transferred at the Mogadishu central prison where Mr. Mumin faced severe human rights violation. He was held in cell number 6 at the Biyo Mundo section next to the seaside for 33 days. He was held incommunicado and had no access to family, lawyer or relatives. He was not allowed to get food or clean drinking water. Mr. Mumin’s deteriorated while in detention and developed severe allergic and infections. Mr. Mumin also witnessed the death of at least one inmate inside the cell number 6 who died due to illness. When he was freed Mr. Mumin on 26 March 2023, he was very ill and needed to see a doctor and therefore got a plane ticket to travel to Nairobi for treatment but was again blocked²⁶ on 27 March 2023 by the Mogadishu airport immigration and police officers²⁷. After the pressure of the members of the parliament and

²⁴ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2023/02/13/in-a-sham-trial-banadir-regional-court-sentences-sjs-secretary-general-abdalle-mumin-to-two-months-in-jail/>

²⁵ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2023/02/24/sjs-secretary-general-abdalle-ahmed-mumin-re-arrested-and-faces-government-persecution/>

²⁶ https://twitter.com/sjs_Somalia/status/1640321760737259520

²⁷ <https://twitter.com/US2SOMALIA/status/1640694608744132609>



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calls by the international community, Mr. Mumin was allowed to travel on 28 March 2023. He was able to see his doctor in Nairobi (photos attached).

c) Measures taken by the government to protect journalists, media professionals and human rights defenders from such acts and bring perpetrators to justice;

There are no measures taken by the government to protect journalists, media professionals and human rights defenders

d) Measures taken by the government to enhance civic space and promote the participation of civil society.

There are no measures taken by the government to enhance civic space and promote the participation of civil society.