



2010 Press Freedom in Africa

This report is a publication of the Federation of African Journalists (FAJ) which is the African Regional group of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ): allowing the African journalists to take their destiny in their hands by promoting press freedom and freedom of expression in Africa.

This report was published first in 2009

FAJ Headquarters:

3rd floor, Immeuble Seynabou – VDN

BP: 64257 Postefinances – Sacré Cœur III

Dakar, Sénégal

Tel : +221 33 867 95 86/87 Fax : +221 33 827 02 50

Email: ifjafrique.org

Web: www.ifjafrique.org

Compiled by Libasse HANE and Gabriel BAGLO

Design by Mary Schrider

Photos courtesy of: FIJ, NUSOJ, GPU, SNJC, Argotheme, New Vision, deboutcongolais, Burundi Mégainfo, Camer.be, Lindaikeji Blogspot, The Light Bearer, Rwandainfo, CPJ, Cameroun Online, Afriscoop, New Zim Situation, Puis Utomi Ekpei/AFP/Getty images, and Fahem Boukadous's blog

CONTENTS

Acronyms.....	ii
Foreword	iii
Introduction	1
I. Summary of the Facts Reported in 2010	3
II. Press Freedom in the Different Parts of Africa	6
2.1. Southern Africa.....	6
2.1.1 Difficult countries.....	6
2.1.2 Countries to be encouraged	8
2.2. Central Africa	8
2.2.1 Difficult countries.....	9
2.2.2 Countries to be encouraged	10
2.3. Eastern Africa.....	10
2.3.1 Difficult countries.....	11
2.3.2 Countries to be encouraged	12
2.4. North Africa	13
2.5. West Africa	14
2.5.1 Difficult countries.....	14
2.5.2 Countries to be encouraged	16
III. Journalists Killed in 2010	17
IV. Journalists in Prison in 2010	23
The report in pictures: scenes that should no longer exist	26
Timetable of elections scheduled in Africa in 2011	28

ACRONYMS

AFP	Agence France Presse
CAN	African Cup of Nations
CEDEAO	Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
CHU	University Hospital Centre
EAJA	Eastern Africa Journalists Association
FAJ	Federation of African Journalists
IFJ	International Federation of Journalistes
GPU	Gambia Press Union
MPLA	People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NUSOJ	National Union of Somali Journalists
RDC	Democratic Republic of Congo
SLAJ	Sierra Leone Association of Journalists
SMS	Short Message Service
SNJT	National Union of Tunisian Journalists
SNPP	National Union of Media Professionnals
TVT	Togolese Television
UJIT	Union of Independent Journalists of Togo
USYPAC	Association of Central African Media Trade-unions

FOREWORD

Make Press Freedom a Shared Value in Africa

During the last six months of 2010, a number of consultations were engaged with civil society organisations on behalf of the African Union and African Heads of State in order to agree on shared values in Africa. Civil society and media stakeholders during the consultations insisted on press freedom, freedom of expression, and access to information for citizens to be recognised as shared African values in need of protection.

Unfortunately, at the end of the 16th Summit of the African Union on 30th and 31st January 2011, the Heads of State in their final declaration adopted on shared values, simply stated “the need to promote and encourage democratic practices, good governance and rule of law, to protect human rights, fundamental freedoms, respect for sanctity for human life, and international humanitarian law, as part of the efforts for the prevention of conflicts.”



Gabriel Baglo

This shows that for these heads of state press freedom, freedom of expression, and access to information for citizens, are not yet values that they share. Most worryingly, the African Peer Review Mechanism has still not yet been able to concretely put these values as criteria in their review mechanism.

Within the continent Twelve (12) journalists have been assassinated, five (5) killed accidentally , thirty four (34) jailed, while hundreds continued to be

threatened, intimidated , physically attacked, wounded, or forced into exile. Such is the gloomy summary of the state of media freedom in Africa in 2010.

It is obvious that the campaign to make press freedom and freedom of expression shared values in Africa has a long way to go to build an African society where taking our leaders to task in their management does not call for imprisonment, physical assaults, assassination, or forced exile.

Making press freedom, freedom of expression, and access to information for citizens, shared values, and respected principles in Africa, is essential for the long term survival of the independent media and its stakeholders.

By regularly publishing these reports on the state of press freedom in Africa, the Africa Office of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the Federation of African Journalists (FAJ) will continue to engage African leaders in a self-assessment of their performance in a modern world where they keep demanding the fair respect that is due to their rank.

Gabriel Baglo

IFJ Africa Director and Head of the FAJ Secretariat

Introduction

2010 painting a bleak picture of the state of press freedom in Africa, as 12 journalists were assassinated, five were killed in accidents, 34 were imprisoned and hundreds more were threatened, intimidated and assaulted.

By publishing, for the first time in 2009, a report on the state of press freedom in Africa, the Africa Office of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the Federation of African Journalists (FAJ) set themselves a twofold challenge : to produce an account by Africans directly experiencing the different problems, but also and especially to undertake a serious analysis and discussion on the fundamental processes unfolding in our societies in the light of the profound aspiration to enable the media to contribute to a fairer, more humane and more democratic society.

To address these challenges, the first act consisted in the concrete publication of this report, and its regular distribution to ensure that actors have a reference tool about press freedom issues.

This report also clearly shows that today, it is essential to trigger the awareness of the entire society about the particularly important role of the media and their responsibilities in any democracy.

Even though the freedom of expression and of opinion are written in letters of gold in most of the fundamental charters, it is regrettable to observe that in 2010, at the dawn of the 21st century, journalists are imprisoned or killed with impunity only because they air their views, as all citizens are entitled to, about an issue of public interest. Worse, most media practitioners imprisoned for press offences rarely receive a fair trial with for example many being denied legal assistance and defence.

And yet, article 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human and Citizen's Rights stipulates: " the free communication of thoughts and opinions is among the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may therefore speak, write, and print freely (...)". However, when we look at the facts, the year 2010 would have been marked by the further assassination of journalists, their imprisonment for non-objective reasons, recurrent threats, intimidations and attacks against media practitioners.

Notably, as was observed last year, the pre-electoral and electoral periods were also among the most dangerous moments for media workers. There is a

tendency to try, at all costs, to prevent the media from reporting the electoral processes which are part of any effective democracy. Thus, with the exception of some conflict zones like Somalia, most of the serious violations of press freedom occurred within electoral or pre-electoral contexts.

As was the case last year, Eastern Africa was the hottest zone of the continent in 2010 with countries like Eritrea (the largest journalists' prison in Africa) and Somalia, where the belligerents of the unrelenting civil war, seem to have opted for a new strategy of terror consisting of kidnapping, destruction or confiscation of the media. Uganda also suddenly plunged into chaos with a heavy loss of human lives (three journalists killed) and many cases of arrests, threats and intimidation; the same applies to Burundi where the situation changed dramatically, thus provoking the angry reaction of human rights activists.

Central Africa did not register many changes as regards press freedom either. In the DRC, at least one journalist is shot every year in the discharge of his duties, in addition to the repeated violations of press freedom as the elections draw near. Cameroon gave us a surprise in 2010 by setting in motion repressive measures that led to the imprisonment of several journalists, thus diverting the attention of the media from the elections scheduled in 2011, and denying health care to one of the journalists Bibi Ngota, who died in April at the Kondengui central prison in Yaoundé.

In North Africa, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt stood out for their determination to openly punish independent journalism.

In West Africa, Nigeria where three journalists were assassinated, was followed by Sierra Leone where flagrant and repeated violations of the rights of journalists to carry out their professional activities freely were noted in the latter part of last year.

In Southern Africa, a decline in press freedom was observed in South Africa with the harshening of press legislation. In Angola, the demons of civil war seem to have been revived with the assassination of a journalist, the authors of which have still not been identified.

In addition to the regional analysis which ranks countries of each region into two categories : difficult countries and countries to be encouraged, this document contains a summary of information concerning journalists who fell on the field of honour and another concerning those still suffering agonizing torments in prison.

This report is not intended to heap opprobrium on any country. It is especially meant to sound a warning note about the dangers to which press freedom is exposed on the continent in order to draw the leaders' attention to the responses to be made for the improvement of relations with the press on the African continent. One should not either lose sight of the fact that this report is meant to be a tool to document advocacy to policy-makers in African countries.

I. Summary of the Facts Reported in 2010

The compilation of alerts issued by the Africa Office of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) which serves as the Secretariat for the Federation of African Journalists (FAJ), and the Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA) entrusted with the management of an IFJ project on press freedom, financed by the European Union, as well as the IFJ Middle-East and Araba World Office made it possible to identify a total number of 322 alerts. There has been an increase of about 43.16 % compared to 2009, particularly influenced by the inclusion of alerts issued by EAJA; i.e. an average of 6.19 alerts per week, 0.88 alerts per day and 1.23 alerts per working day, which shows an increasingly disturbing situation.

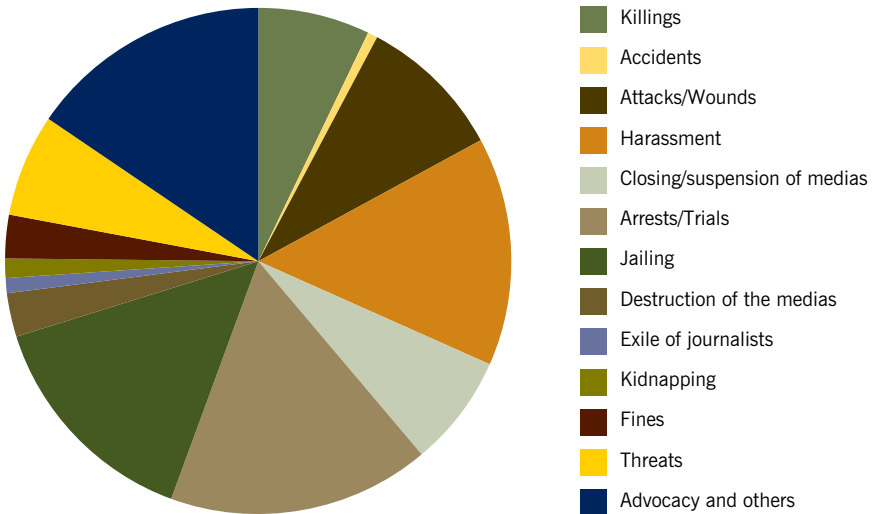
Even though the killings and assassination of journalists have declined compared to last year, 7.14% of alerts issued through the IFJ network related to the assassination of journalists against 0.62% which recounted the death of journalists following occupational accidents that occurred in the discharge of their mission. Physical attacks against journalists (injuries, attacks) increased this year with 9.31% of alerts. In 2010, arrests and intimidation were the most widespread strategy used to prevent journalists and the media from doing their work with respectively 16.77% and 14.59% of alerts issued.

The same applies to the imprisonment of journalists which, with 14.59% of alerts, is among the most serious concerns for advocates of press freedom and human rights. For most of the cases reported, the legal justification for their imprisonment still need to be established.

Other major constraints which the journalists of the continent had to face consisted in verbal or physical threats with 6.52% of alerts, and the closure and suspension of the media which increased this year with 7.14% of alerts issued.

Nevertheless, even though aspects like the abduction of journalists (1.24%), the destruction of the media (2.79%), fines (2.79%) and the exile of journalists (0.93%) are statistically low, they continue to be among the major concerns in the course of 2010.

Distribution of alerts depending on the reason



For this reason, in the light of the recurrent violations of press freedom and freedom of expression, guaranteed by almost all fundamental laws on the continent, advocacy was used to inform and sensitize decision-makers at national, sub-regional and continental levels with 15.52% of alerts issued.

At the regional level, Eastern Africa remained the hottest region of the continent with 198 alerts issued, i.e. about 3.80 alerts per week or 0.54 alerts per day. It is followed by Central Africa with 35 alerts (10.86%) then West Africa with 10.24% and Southern Africa with 9.93%. North Africa brings up the rear with 7.76%, but was among the regions in which press freedom was the most threatened. Actually, the region has only five countries and this makes the frequency rather high. The level of output in East Africa is partly explained by the high levels of violence in the Horn of Africa, but also by the establishment this year of a network of media monitors across the East Africa region that has significantly enhanced the ability of EAJA to monitor all incidents against journalists.

In Eastern Africa, 5 countries stand out in press freedom violations. Some 16.45% of the alerts issued concern Somalia alone. This represents an average of slightly over one alert every week. It is followed by Uganda (12.42%), Ethiopia (9%), Sudan with 7.45% and finally Burundi with 5.59% of alerts.

In Central Africa, the second region with the highest number of alerts, Cameroon's poor performance this year led the IFJ to initiate an international campaign to sensitize the country's authorities about the urgent need to improve the working conditions of journalists. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with 3.72% of alerts is still on the list of the most dangerous countries for journalists.

In West Africa, three countries which behaved quite well in 2009 have stood out by a sudden upturn in violations of press freedom and threats against journalists and the media: Sierra Leone (2.48% of alerts), Togo (2.17%) and Côte d'Ivoire (1.55%).

In Southern Africa, Angola, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and South Africa stood out most with respect to press freedom violations.

In North Africa, as was the case in 2009, Tunisia stood out in the imprisonment of journalists and the efforts it pursued to gag and control independent trade unionism in the media sector. Moreover, the repeated violations of public freedom precipitated the downfall of President Ben Ali.

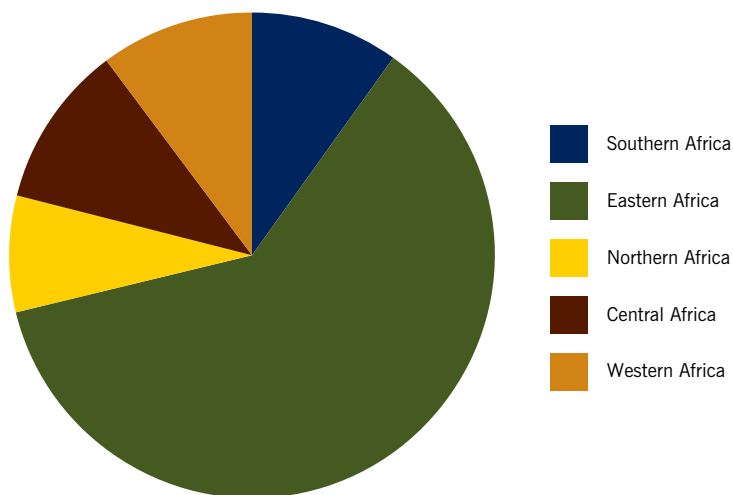
However, one should not lose sight of the fact that the alert system conceals certain realities. For example few alerts concerning countries like Eritrea, Libya, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Swaziland and the Gambia were issued because there is a sort of Damocles Sword hanging over the heads of all those harbouring any thought of independence, particularly advocates of freedom of the press and of opinion. This entails self-censorship by journalists, the media and even citizens. Thus, in all these countries, it is extremely difficult to find sufficiently courageous intermediaries to openly shoulder the responsibility for informing international opinion about what really happens in their countries

II. Press Freedom in the Different Parts of Africa

The analysis of alerts issued in 2010 shows a situation that varies from one region to another. Even though on the whole, the most difficult regions for journalists to exercise their profession are still the same, the analysis should be pursued up to national level to identify the irregularities found in some countries which can, from one year to another, plunge into a situation that is sometimes difficult to handle.

In 2010, the situation remained the same — if not worse — in some countries, where efforts were pursued to gag the free and independent press, while other countries which have hardly been mentioned over recent years, suddenly stood out in 2010 with the firm determination to prevent the media from working freely and safely.

Distribution of alerts by region



For this reason, the tendencies unfolding in each region can be unveiled only through regional analysis which will highlight the country in which journalists had the most difficulties to carry out their work properly.

2.1. Southern Africa

Southern Africa with its 12 countries, concentrates 9.93% of alerts with a tendency to regularize the situation. However, while the situation in Zimbabwe and Swaziland is the same as last year, the behaviour of two southern African countries is surprising: Angola and South Africa.

2.1.1. Difficult country

Angola: the revival of demons?

Last year, Angola was listed among countries to be watched closely in the southern region of Africa because of a relatively troubled recent past. This year, Alberto Graves Chakussanga whose radio was very critical of the government was shot down by unidentified individuals who are still on the run. Many journalists were threatened and this created an unmanageable situation.

It should be recalled that it was during the Africa Cup of Nations in Angola that the Togolese national team's convoy was attacked by rebels of the 'Front de Libération de l'Enclave de Cabinda' (FLEC) instantly killing Stanislas Ocloo, journalist, communication officer of the Togolese Football Federation. This brought to mind the slaughtering of journalists during the civil war.

Zimbabwe: a country to be watched

Some people hastily believed that with the power-sharing arrangement between Robert Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai, the environment would be conducive for press freedom. But, judging from the alerts issued (3.10%) it can be concluded that the situation of the media in Zimbabwe has been far from brilliant, even though a slight improvement has been noted. Media practitioners are confronted, on a daily basis, with threats and intimidation, attacks, exile and arrests — sometimes arbitrary — as was the case of the arrest of the President of the union.

Swaziland: A monarchy to be quietened

The situation in Swaziland is still the same with a monarchy that threatens and intimidates all those who dare publish information unfavourable to the King and members of his court. The main problem in this small country is that the

professional organizations of the media lack dynamism, and this makes it difficult to regularly receive precise information about press freedom violations.

South Africa: A decline difficult to explain

During the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, many foreign journalists complained about incidents of theft, attacks; etc. during which some of them lost their working equipment Threats and intimidations as well as a few arrests were also reported, without effect.

But the greatest deception of press freedom activists was the controversial reform of the law on information which caused a general outcry within the profession and beyond. The ANC went as far as discussing a “Media Tribunal” project, in September 2010, to be instituted through the creation of an organ responsible for judging journalists’ “ethical wrongdoing” and whose members would be appointed by the government. If the proposal were to be adopted, it would be a very serious step-back for this country which was cited as an example in recent years.

Madagascar: a situation difficult to control

The first half of the year was marked by attacks, threats and media closures in Madagascar. Even though the situation has in the meantime subsided, there is a need to keep a close watch on this country because, unless the period of political instability evolves, it will be too early to draw a conclusion about the state of press freedom.

2.1.2. Countries to be encouraged

Botswana, Namibia, Mauritius, Mozambique, and to a lesser extent, ***Malawi*** and ***Lesotho*** have not been in the headlines much. Isolated incidents have been observed here and there and were rapidly dealt with. Nevertheless the achievements should be consolidated to improve the working conditions of journalists and the media.

2.2. Central Africa

In the eight countries of Central Africa, the situation did not improve much. On the contrary, the situation of press freedom worsened in countries like Cameroon, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea while the DRC maintained the same logic as observed in recent years.

2.2.1. Difficult countries

Cameroon: A stated intention to rein in the press



The year 2010 was among the darkest years for the Cameroonian media because, at the beginning of the year, a group of journalists including the current First Secretary of the National Union of Cameroonian Journalists (SNJC) affiliated to the IFJ, were dragged to court for participating in a televised debate on issues of national interest. Later, other journalists carrying out investigations on the misappropriation of public funds were arrested and put in jail. One of them (Bibi Ngota) died in prison in April in unacceptable conditions because he was denied medical care.

It was said that the legal proceedings against these journalists were meant to gag them with

the approach of the elections scheduled in 2011. In fact, the outcomes of these lawsuits are not yet known.

Many journalists are thus compelled to leave the country. For this reason, the IFJ and FAJ initiated an international campaign to compel President Paul Biya's regime to be more tolerant towards press freedom. Since then the authorities have shown no willingness to ease the situation, other than the release of the two companions of misfortune of the late Bibi Ngota. The 2011 elections will certainly be highly critical for the media.

Democratic Republic of Congo: True to form

With 3.72% of alerts issued in 2010, the DRC continued to stick to its logic of recent years with the assassination of at least one journalist in the performance of his duties. In April 2010, Patient Chebeya Bankome was brutally murdered by assailants in military uniform and so far, as was the case for crimes of the past, the authors of this horrendous act have not been bothered because no serious investigations have been initiated.

Additionally, since the beginning of the year, threats, intimidations and arrests like that of the Secretary General of the National Union of Media Professionals (SNPP/NUMP) affiliated to the IFJ are on the rise, for reasons that are far from objective.

Equatorial Guinea: control the media by all means

Since its creation in 2007, the Union of Trade Unions of Central African Media Professionals (USYPAC), a regional organisation of media trade unions and associations, finds it very difficult to set up an organisation, in the country, capable of reporting the repeated violations of the rights of journalists and the media. Journalists need to have their government's prior approval to participate in regional meetings. The media is reined in because of a constant repression policy adopted by President Obiang Nguéma's regime which forces the independent press into exile.

Gabon : the demons still seem to lie in ambush

The first part of the year coincided with the end of the transitional period resulting in the election of Ali Bongo Ondimba which, in some people's view, heralded a break with the difficult context prevailing under the reign of the late Omar Bongo Ondimba.

Between March and June 2010, journalists like Jonas Moulenda and Césaire Mamboka were arrested, dragged to court and given disproportionate sentences to the point that their colleagues were compelled to raise funds to help them pay their fines.

2.2.2. Countries to be encouraged

Chad, a country widely known for its press freedom stance should open up more, because a visit by the USYPAC and IFJ made it possible to observe that significant progress has been registered, namely the decriminalisation of press offences, effectively providing the press with regular assistance and the existence of a free and independent press. Such progress is periodically interrupted and called into question by armed conflicts and political strife.

Congo also continues to be on the right path with operational regulating and self-regulating organs. For the past few years, relations between the media and the government have been pacified.

In **Central African Republic**, difficulties were observed, with intimidations leading to a huge demonstration for the consolidation of press freedom. This can be explained by the country's "landlocked nature".

Not much information filters about **Sao Tomé and Príncipe**, but this new democracy is going its merry way.

2.3. Eastern Africa: The hell of journalists

As was the case in 2009, East Africa is still the hottest zone of the continent, judging by the number of alerts but also by the high price that journalists and

other media practitioners have continued to pay over the years. While some countries maintain the same situation, others have registered disappointing poor performances this year.

2.3.1. Difficult countries

Somalia: When will the civil war end ?

This year, three journalists (Sheikh Nur Abkey, Barkhad Awale Adan and Abdullahi Omar Gedi) lost their lives in criminal conditions, and the international community hardly reacted. In fact, the parties in conflict seeking to have a stranglehold on the information circulated, seem to have adopted a change in strategy consisting of capturing rather than killing journalists, since there is no legal system to judge them. The sole purpose of this psychology of terror is to scare the media and put pressure on journalists and their families. Several media were also forcibly taken over by Islamist rebels who transformed them into propaganda tools, with complete impunity.

Eritrea: Who will dismantle the biggest journalists' prison in Africa ?

The third prison in the world after China and Iran and the first in Africa, Eritrea currently has more than 20 journalists in prison, some of whom have been in jail for close to 10 years. Since the brutal September 2001 round-ups in Asmara, the Eritrean government continues to suppress all forms of freedom of expression. There is no independent press in the country which refuses to allow foreign journalists in. There is an urgent need to initiate international action to put an end to this climate of hell in which journalists of this country operate.

Burundi: a country to be watched



Jean Pierre Kavumbagu facing life in prison in Burundi. ©Burundi-Megainfo

As the elections-boycotted by part of the opposition — drew near, the authorities of this country undertook a silent intimidation campaign this year to try to gag the independent press. This year, at least two journalists were imprisoned and one of them was charged with treason and faces life imprisonment only because he expressed his views about a topic of public interest. A campaign was organized by the FAJ and EAJA which sent a mission after sending an open letter, jointly addressed to the

President of the Republic by the FAJ and IFJ. Since then, things have not moved in the right direction.

Uganda: a terrible year for journalists

This country was one of the year's surprises with the death of three journalists, two of whom were brutally killed (Paul Kiggundu, Dickson Ssentongo) while the other died accidentally (Stephen Tinka) in a terrorist attack by the Al Shabaab Islamic rebels.

Several alerts reported that journalists have also been attacked, beaten or intimidated. The arrest and imprisonment of journalists have become common practice. The situation of media practitioners in Uganda in 2010 was among the most difficult in recent years. Paradoxically, the situation might worsen at the approach of the presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled in February and March 2011. There is thus a need to focus attention on what is happening in this country.

Sudan: Prison to gag journalists

Attention was also drawn by Sudan this year because of the authorities' clear determination to silence any journalist or media daring to express views that are contrary to those of the government. Three Rai Al-Shaab journalists have been detained for several months, despite appeals by press freedom and human rights advocates. Likewise, journalists have also been jailed in Southern Sudan for demanding payment of their wages. It is worth noting that in this part of the continent, the media have serious difficulties to work independently, especially at the approach of the self-determination referendum of January 2011.

Ethiopia: give concrete expression to the much-heralded willingness to open up

Ethiopia started the year with a note of hope, especially after a joint IFJ-FAJ delegation met with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who reaffirmed his Government's determination to pay greater attention to press freedom. This year was marked by the recurrence of threats and intimidation against journalists with several cases of arrests and trials, which sometimes resulted in jail terms and heavy fines essentially meant to weaken and put pressure on the accused media.

Rwanda : a country to be watched

Jean Léonard Rugambage was shot in June 2010 as he was in the process of publishing a critical article against the regime and this crime has still not been cleared up.

2.3.2. Countries to be encouraged

Despite the gloomy situation in this part of the continent, countries like ***Djibouti, Seychelles, Tanzania*** and, to a lesser extent, ***Comoros*** need to be encouraged in their efforts to create an acceptable working environment for journalists and the media.

2.4. North Africa

Alerts and Press releases on North Africa are produced from the IFJ Brussels where the Middle East and Arab World department monitors the situation.

As the report was in the final stages of editing the entire region had entered a period of dramatic turmoil as the public took to the streets first in Tunisia, then Egypt and finally across the North Africa region in protest against years of authoritarian governments and restrictions of their fundamental rights.

Tunisia: a blatant will to gag the freedom of expression



Fahem Boukhaddous in his hospital bed during his hunger strike. Photo from his blog.

The Tunisian President Zine El Abidine El Ali continued, up until his abrupt departure in January 2011, to constantly repress the independent press. Despite the window dressing liberalisation, the authorities remained intransigent vis-à-vis acceptance of freedom of expression with a fierce determination to subdue the leadership of the national union of Tunisian journalists.

After the famous cases of Ben Brik and Mahlouf, the journalist Fahem Boukhaddous sentenced on appeal in July 2010 to a 4 year jail term, went on hunger strike on 8th October endangering his health which went to a critical stage before he ended it.

At the time this report was going to press, a people's revolution had put an end to the autocratic rule of President Ben Ali who finally fled the country on 16th January, and journalist Fahem Boukhaddous was released.

Libya: a country that is still difficult

This country is known for its iron fist policy against the media. However the liberation of twenty journalists working for the Al-Ghad belonging to Seif Al Islam, son of Libyan President needs recorded.

The Libyan regime had a lot to gain by allowing more openness and promoting a freer and more independent press. Had it took the necessary measures to reform it may have been able to avoid the demonstrations and violence against the regime.

Egypt : a country to watch

Even though the press seemed to gain a certain amount of freedom of expression, it still remained generally under immense strain until the overthrow of Mubarak. During late 2010 it went through great strains particularly during the legislative elections in November 2010. The IFJ observed the suspension of popular broadcasts, the blocking of sending information via SMS as well as forcing foreign

television channels to go through the National Television which made it possible for the State to widely control coverage of the elections.

During this period the state media went into overdrive refusing the report on the demonstrations in Tahrir Square and holding the foreign media responsible for the unrest. This incitement led to two days of violence by angry pro-Mubarak mobs where journalists were targeted, beaten, and arrested in over 120 separate incidents. Major government newspapers changed their editorial line half way through the demonstrations thereby increasing the pressure that led to Mubarak's eventual departure. Meanwhile journalists protested inside state media and at the Egyptian Journalists Syndicate to end the censorship.

Algeria: a window dressing freedom of the press

Press freedom exists but, the life of the journalist is marked by threats, prosecutions and other intimidations. This state of affairs was even manifested during the World Cup in South Africa when the Algerian footballer Rafik Saifi was said to have brutalized an Algerian journalist without any punitive measure being taken thus leading people to believe that freedom of expression is a mere window dressing.



Journalist Asma Halimi was attacked by footballer Rafik Saifi during the World Cup in South Africa.

Morocco: efforts to be made

This country is endowed with a pluralist and dynamic press with freedom of expression that is rare to stumble upon in Arab countries. Nevertheless, there is censorship and self-censorship and the propensity to tighten the screws against the press in 2009, was maintained in 2010.

2.5. West Africa

Comparatively, it is a region for which few alerts were issued when one takes into consideration the number of countries concerned. But we find countries on the two extremes – those that are registered as consolidating their gains and the others, like Nigeria, where journalists continue to be shot down like rabbits.

2.5.1. Difficult countries

Nigeria: a country that is still difficult

There has been a state of impunity in Nigeria during recent years. This year, 3 journalists (Edo Sule Ugbagwu, Nathan S. Dabak and Sunday Gyang Bwede)

were killed, one in cold blood and two others in the inter-religious violence which continue to ravage the Central-Northern part of the country.

While travelling by road to a meeting of their Executive Committee, board members of the executive the press journalists' union were kidnapped but later released. In most cases, no serious investigation has been carried out to date.

Gambia: a country still difficult



There has been no news of Chief Ebrima Manneh since his arrest in 2006.

In the Gambia, independent journalists continue to experience serious difficulties in carrying out their work. Many journalists have gone into exile, fearing for their lives.

The murder of Deyda Hydara in 2004 remains unresolved. Chief Ebrima Manneh, arrested in July 2006 is still missing and, despite the ruling of the ECOWAS' Court of Justice ordering the authorities to release him, the Gambia Government still denies all responsibility in his disappearance.

Sierra Leone: end of a troublesome year

This country made a surprising entry into the 2010 report on the back of a series of attempts to clampdown on media, particularly during the month of December.. Even more serious, there were arrests of journalists on the simple order of the Minister in total violation of the basic principles of the rule of law. We must count above all, on the determination of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) which has decided to challenge these unacceptable abuses of power.

Côte d'ivoire: a press manipulated by politics

In Côte d'ivoire, in July, while the preparations for the elections were in full swing, journalists were threatened, intimidated and accused of handling "sensitive" information. During the elections, the outcome of which continues to maintain the country in a state of unprecedented political instability, a decision to suspend the transmission of foreign channels engendered the wrath of the advocates of press freedom and free speech. Presently, the division of the country into two has given rise to a difficult situation which places the media between the anvil and the hammer.

Togo: attempts at muzzling the press checked

For the best part of the year, this country had pride of place in the news, in particular following the revelation by the Union of Independent Journalists of Togo (UJIT) of a secret plan to physically eliminate disturbing journalists. There was also the case of the French officer who thought he could lock up a journalist

who took a picture of him during a public demonstration. Since then, thanks to an internal as well as external campaign, things seem to be returning to normal.

2.5.2. Countries to be encouraged

Liberia has been the country most in the limelight notably because of the adoption of a pioneering law on access to information to the great satisfaction of the advocates of press freedom.

Senegal has also improved with the acceptance of a Press Code prepared with professionals and which establishes the decriminalisation of press offences. In the course of 2010, apart from the case against Abdou Latif Coulibaly, no journalist was arrested or imprisoned.

Mauritania is engaged in the process of liberalising the broadcast media promised a long time by President Aziz. Dialogue between representatives of journalists and the authorities have been proactive and dynamic.

In **Guinea**, the press has gone through some shocks notably at the approach of the elections. *The Lynx* newspaper was for some time threatened with suspension but the situation progressively became calm.

Cape-Verde, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, Guinea Bissau and **Ghana** were not targeted since no alert concerning them was issued, even though from time to time, some not too serious events were reported from various sources.

III. Journalists Killed in 2010

Patient Chebeya Bankome alias *Montigomo*

Democratic Republic of Congo • 5 April 2010



Patient Chebeya Bankome (35 years), an independent cameraman very popular and respected who had covered all the armed conflicts which took place in the East of the DRC, particularly in Ituri, was surrounded on the night of 5th to 6th April 2010 in front of his house in Beni, third town of North Kivu in the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo, by armed attackers in military uniform as his wife was opening the door. They took his bag containing his working equipment – some video cassettes, his mobile telephone and money before shooting him six times at close range.

Cyrille Germain Ngota dit Bibi Ngota

Cameroun • 21 April 2010



Bibi Ngota, Publication Manager of the Cameroun Express Weekly, died on the night of 21st to 22nd April 2010 in the Kondegui Central Prison of Yaounde, capital of Cameroun, where he was on remand for two months in the case of corruption implicating the Secretary General in the President's office on which he and some other colleagues were investigating . Bibi Ngota was suffering from hernia and was hypertensive, but despite his state of health which was a matter of concern, a request made by his family for his transfer to hospital was rejected and all medical assistance refused by the prison authorities.

Edo Sule Ugbagwu

Nigeria • 24 April 2010



Edo Sule Ugbagwu, 42 years, a court reporter working with the weekly *Nation*, was shot at close range several bullets in the head at his residence in the Shasha district of Lagos on Saturday on 24th April 2010 by unidentified armed men. He was taken to hospital where his death was confirmed. No information is available on the real motives of the murderers.

Nathan S. Dabak and Sunday Gyang Bwede

Nigeria • 24 April 2010



The same day, Nathan S. Dabak, 36 years, and Sunday Gyang Bwede, 39 years, respectively editor-in-chief and assistant editor and reporter with Christian newspaper *The Light Bearer* were killed with machetes by demonstrators while they were on the way to work in the town

of Jos in Central Nigeria where the inter community and inter religious violence took place.

Cheikh Nur Abkey

Somalia • 4 May 2010



Cheikh Nur Abkey, veteran journalist working at Radio Mogadishu — radio of the transitional Government who was kidnapped 4 May 2010 by Al Shabaab militia, was found dead, his body mutilated and riddled with bullets in a street in Mogadishu. Some people linked his murder to his work at one of the radios most critical of the Islamists.

Jean Léonard Rugambage

Rwanda • 24 June 2010



Jean Léonard Rugambage, journalist of the independent newspaper *UMUVUGIZI* suspended in Rwanda, was shot on the night of 24 June 2010 in front of his house in Kigali, capital of Rwanda by unidentified armed men. At the time of his murder, he was preparing an article for publication in another independent newspaper, the contents of which were believed to be critical of the government.

Barkhad Awale Adan

Somalie • 24 August 2010



Barkhad Awale Adan, 60 years, Director of Radio Hurma was working in the offices of the radio when he was hit by a stray bullet during an exchange of shots between forces of the Federal transitional government and forces of islamist militants of the Al Shabaab in Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. He was transported to the Madina Hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

Abdullahi Omar Gedi

Somalie • 31 August 2010



Abdullahi Omar Gedi, 25 years, a reporter at Radio Daljir in Galkayo, District of the Mudug Region, was attacked by unknown persons who stabbed him at least six times in the chest and legs in the village of Garsoor. He died on his way to Galkayo hospital. His mobile was stolen during the attack. The motive of his assassination is still unknown and no one has been arrested despite the fact

that the investigation services of Puntland have interrogated some witnesses.

Alberto Graves Chakussanga

Angola • 5 September 2010



Alberto Graves Chakussanga, 32 years, presenter of the weekly programme in the Umbundu language of Radio Despertar which is critical of the ruling MPLA government, was gunned shot down by unknown armed persons at his house in Viana district in Luanda, the Angolan capital. He was found by neighbours with a bullet wound at the back.

Paul Kiggundu

Ouganda • 11 September 2010



Paul Kiggundu was shot dead on Saturday 11 September 2010 in a riot by motor cycle taxi drivers locally known as *Bodabodas* who were demonstrating after the murder of one of their members. While he was covering the riot, Kiggundu was attacked by the crowd accusing him of filming scenes that could be used by the police as evidence. Despite the fact that he showed his identity as a journalist, the crowd continued to brutalise him. His death was later confirmed at

the hospital. Kiggundu was married and left behind a widow and two children ages 3 and 18 months.

Dickson Ssentongo

Ouganda • 13 September 2010



Dickson Ssentongo was caught in an ambush on 13th September 2010 as he was going to work at Radio Prime where he presented the news in Luganda at 7 am. He was severely beaten and his body left in a pool of blood. He died later in Mulago Hospital where he was taken for treatment. The murder of Ssentongo was carried out with premeditation and his personal belongings like mobile

phones were not taken by his assailants.

ACCIDENTAL CASES

Stanislas Ocloo



Togo • 9 January 2010

Stanislas Ocloo, sports reporter working with the Togolese Television (TVT) and in charge of communication in the Togolese Football Fédération, was shot in the attack against the Togolese national football team in the enclave of Cabinda in north West Angola, a few hours before the opening of the Africa Cup of Nations (CAN).

Stephen Tinka

Ouganda • 11 July 2010

Stephen Tinka, sports journalist of Vision Voice radio was killed in a bomb blast while he was commentating the final of the World Cup on Sunday night 11th July. 2010 at the Kyadondo rugby grounds in Kampala, capital of Uganda. The attack was claimed by the Somalian islamist rebels of *Al Shabaab*.



Pius Njawé

Cameroun • 12 July 2010



Pius Njawé founder of the weekly *Le Messenger* and Director of the press group Free Media Group, which publishes the first independent weekly in Cameroun died on 12th July in the United States following a road accident. According to the police, the vehicle in which the journalist was travelling collided with a truck on the highway not far from Norfolk, Virginia. He was known to be one of the most ardent advocates of press freedom and

human rights in his country and in Africa.

ACCIDENTAL CASES

Faustin Yékini Radji

Togo • 9 August 2010



On August 6th 2010, coming back from reporting, the journalist Faustin Abdou Yékini Radji from the thrice-weekly *Golfe Info* was the victim of a car accident in conditions that have still not been clarified. He died three days later on 9th August, 2010 at the CHU of Tokoin in Lome. The other vehicle and the driver have not been identified. This fatal accident took place at a time when he was investigating a sensitive case and people have

wondered whether he was a victim of a simple accident.

Edwin Dube

Zimbabwe • 12 October 2010

Edwin Dube, 37 years, reporter and assistant editor of the *Zimbabwe Independent* was killed in a car accident in the interior of the country towards Gweru in the evening of 11th October 2010. At the time of the accident, he was driving in the direction of Harare coming from Bulawayo. He left behind a widow and three children.

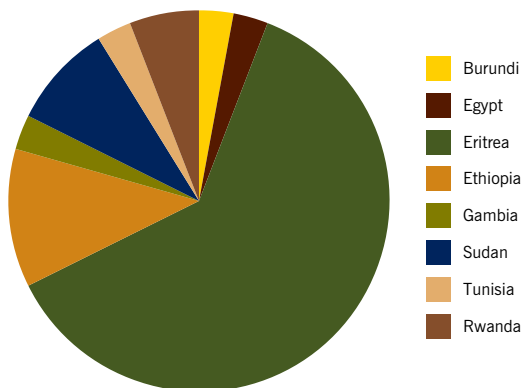


IV. Journalists in Prison in 2010

COUNTRY	NAME AND SURNAME	YEAR	STATUS	MEDIA	CHARGES
Burundi (1)	Jean-Claude Kavumbagu	2010	Editor	Net Press	High treason
Egypt (1)	Magdy Hussein	2009		Al-Shaab	Criminal libel
Eritrea (21)	Zemenfes Haile	1999	Director of publication and owner	Tsigenay (weekly closed)	
	Ghebrehiwet Keleta	2000	Journalist	Tsigenay	
	Said Abdelkader	2001	Journalist	Admas	
	Dawit Isaac		Journalist	Setit	
	Seyourm Tsehaye		Independent journalist	—	
	Mattewos Habteab		Journalist	Meqaleh	
	Dawit Habtemichael		Journalist	Meqaleh	
	Amanuel Asrat		Journalist	Zemen	
	Yusuf Mohamed Ali		Journalist	Tsigenay	
	Temesken Ghebreyesus		Journalist	Keste Debena	
	Medhanie Haile		Journalist	Keste Debena	

COUNTRY	NAME AND SURNAME	YEAR	STATUS	MEDIA	CHARGES
Eritrea (21)	Hamid Mohamed Said	2002	Journalist	ERI TV	
	Saleh Aljezeeri		Journalist	Radio d'Etat	
	Meles Nguse	2009	Journalist	Radio Bana	
	Mulubruhan Weidegebriel		Journalist	Radio Bana	
	Bereket Misguina		Journalist	Radio Bana	
	Yirgalem Fesseha		Journalist	Radio Bana	
	Isaak Abraham		Journalist	Radio Bana	
	Ghirmai Abraham		Journalist	Radio Bana	
	Said Abdulhai	2010	Journalist	Eritrea Profile	
	Eyob Kessete	2010	Journalist	Radio Dimtsi Hafash. Service Amharic	
Ethiopia (4)	Saleh Idriss Gama	2006	Journalist	ERI TV	
	Tesfalidet Kidome Tesfazghi	2006	Journalist	ERI TV	
	Haileyesus Worku.	2010	Editor	Ethiopian Radio and Television Agency	Smuggling station material to an unidentified third party
	Abdulsemed Mohammed		Producer		
Gambia (1)	Chief Ebrima Manneh	2006	Journalist	Daily Observer	
	Rwanda (2)	Agnès Uwimana Nkusi Saidath Mukakibibi	2010	Editor Reporter	Umurabyo (weekly)

Countries where journalists are imprisoned in 2010



As shown in the chart to the left, Eritrea takes the lead as Africa's biggest prison for journalists, some of whom have been rotting in jail since the mythical September 2001 round-up. Most of these journalists were simply suspected of providing information to foreigners or Eritreans based abroad.

It is strange that, contrary to the much-heralded opening, Ethiopia continues to be seen as a country where imprisonment is

used as a strategy to rein in journalists, particularly those of the independent press.

Sudan, with 3 journalists in jail, also stood out as a difficult country because, despite ceaseless calls by press freedom and human rights advocates, President Omar Hassan El Bechir's regime is still intransigent in the continued detention of Rai Al-Shaab journalists accused of damaging relations between Sudan and USA.

In Burundi, even though only one journalist is in jail, his case is very serious since Jean Claude Kavumbagu faces life imprisonment for giving his views about the risk of Al Shabaab threats to Burundi, following the deadly terrorist attacks in Kampala, Uganda. Here again, despite the calls from everywhere, President Nkurunziza's regime remained intransigent.

THE REPORT IN PICTURES:

Scenes that should no longer exist



Funeral ceremony in tribute to Stanislas Ocloo (Togo).



Parents and relatives of Patient Chebeya Bankome (DRC) indignant as they stand by his remains.



Remains of Bibi Ngota (Cameroon): he entered prison on foot and leaves tied and about to be buried.

Women organizing a protest march against inter-religious violence in Jos, central Nigeria during which two journalists were assassinated. © Pius Utomi Ekpei/AFP/Getty Images



Parents of Stanislas Ocloo (Togo) express their dismay after his cowardly assassination.

Timetable of Elections Scheduled

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	JUNE
Sudan 9 to 15 Referendum in Southern Sudan	Chad 6 Parliamentary	Benin Presidential	Nigeria 2 Parliamentary	Sao Tomé Principe Presidential
Central African Republic 23 Presidential and parliamentary	Cape Verde 6 Parliamentary		Chad 3 1st round Presidential	Chad 26 Local
Niger 31 Presidential and parliamentary	Uganda 18 Presidential		Nigeria 9 Presidential	
			Nigeria 16 Governors	
			Djibouti Presidential	

Special attention should be paid to these countries where the situation of press freedom can change dramatically at any time.

in Africa in 2011

JULY	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	UNCLEAR
Seychelles Presidential	Egypt Presidential	DR Congo 27 Presidential	Gabon Parliamentary	Madagascar No precise date
	Liberia Presidential and parliamentary		Cameroon No precise date	
	Zambia Presidential and parliamentary			Zimbabwe No precise date