

SOLJA's Media Cases Annual report

2015

Somaliland Journalists are fighting for freedom



SOLJA Somaliland Journalists Association
Ururka Suxufiyiinta Somaliland

DEFEND OUR FREE PRESS.



"Free Media Cannot be Silenced"

Introduction

Somaliland Journalist Association SOLJA is very committed in media development in Somaliland. We as a SOLJA team do not only train journalists to enhance their profession but also strive to uphold their dignity and freedom through raising effective advocacy strategies.



Hence, here is SOLJA's Annual report for the past year 2015 cases and their highlights. The report reveals all journalists arrested, abused and accused of an activity which results these actions. The Somaliland Journalist Association SOLJA is forever stand against journalists all over regions to preserve their right and worthy of dignity. Hence, SOLJA has took a desirable interventions to release those journalists arrested and to heal physically harassed journalists.

Most importantly, we are very successful by maintaining and achieving their releases within a short period of time by developing a vivid Advocacy, lobbying strategies and mediation techniques with the Authority like government official and Police officials which greatly discourages freedom.

Honestly speaking, we as a SOLJA team are proud to reduce the tensions against journalists and their arrests since we were in Office this year 2015.

We have also discussed and agreed with the Judiciary that no journalist will be arrested without a warranty.

Lastly, let me say: There is much more work to do to earn further press freedom “The best is yet to come”

By: Mohamud Abdi Jama

SOLJA: Chairman.



Overview:

With reference to our 2015 Media cases report around 28 journalists are arrested. This came from all Media outlets like TV, Websites and Printed Media plus freelancers.

In fact, SOLJA have succeeded their solutions by taking different approaches and techniques though the organization needs extra help to get ready for these harsh and tough involvements.



However, I would like to stress that the owner of HUBSAD newspaper was arrested by publishing unregistered and unlicensed newspapers, though he is released but his newspaper is still banned. Because it was an illegal act which is against the National constitution and Media law No.27/2004.

Truly speaking, being reliable journalist is not a matter of just life choice in Africa but it needs quite bravery heart and curiosity to come out from the masses and to put you in danger to save others.

In other words, It could be more harsh in Somaliland or other newly developing states that know little about Media and have been stereotyped their attitude towards the Journalists. Luckily, we as a Somaliland Journalist Association is very proud and enthusiastic to be the only non-governmental and non-profit making organization that is working 24/7 to fight for their rights and build their professionalism as well.

One last word “Free Media Cannot be Silenced”

Yahye Mohamed Abdi

Executive Director.

Here is the Time-line of the 2015 cases that happened.

JANUARY

On January, 21st, 2015,

Ali Hajar

Somali Channel TV reporter was arrested in Berbera on charges of participating and organizing a peaceful protest against the coronation ceremony of a famous traditional leader. SOLJA achieved his release two days later by working with the Interior Minister and Police Commissioner,

On 21 January 2015

Ahmed Iil-tire



Reporter from Royal TV was briefly arrested at central police station in Borama. He was arrested while undertaking his daily journalistic duties as he was reporting near Borama Police Station which was attacked by dissident militia overnight. SOLJA achieved

his release few hours later.

FEBRUARY

On 6 February 2015

Mohamed Abdilahi So Fadhiste



Somali Channel TV reporter was arrested by police in Berbera for publishing a false and baseless report about an arms shipment that was allegedly sent directly to the president's office to arm clan militia in eastern Buroa. Subsequently detained for five days, SOLJA managed to successfully arbitrate for his release after a reporter, a new recruit to journalism, admitted the report was false.

On 9 February 2015

Ahmed Muse Mohamed (Sakaro)



A freelance reporter in Hargeisa was **wounded/injured** after engaging a hand fight with a security member for Marodieh region governor. He sustained mouth and teeth injuries. An investigation launched by SOLJA concluded that the reported started the hand brawl.

On 12 February 2015

Barkhad Mohamoud Geedi



Kalsan TV reporter was arrested in Erigavo police on charges of broadcasting and spreading false news against Erigavo hospital. He was released few days later after signing a legal notary papers confessing that the news article was false. The reporter offered his apology and promised not to do it again.

MARCH

On 8 March 2015

Abdirahman Mohamed Ige and Mubarik Osman Saed (Nirig)



Respectively reporter for Royal TV and a reporter for Star TV were arrested by Berbera Police on the orders of Sahil region governor for allegedly spreading a false report against the governor. The two journalists were accused of airing a false report alleging that Sahil governor joined the Waddani political party. They were released on the same day after that which SOLJA made certain efforts



successfully arbitrate for their release.

On 25 March 2015

Abdisamad Mohamed Abdullahi

Reporter for Universal TV in Harirad town in Awdal region was arrested after brawling with members of Harirad resident. The reporter's brawl with the local residents that led to his subsequent arrested begun after the reporter failed to air a paid story that he agreed with the Harirad residents. As a result both sides were sent to prison and kept in custody for a while. A police officer who is in charge of that prison has contacted to SOLJA and informed the case.

On 25 March 2015

Mohamed Adan Dirir and Khalid Hamdi Ahmed

Respectively reporter for Somali Channel TV and a reporter for Gobanimo news website were arrested by police officers in Hargeisa on charges of secretly filming the police officers stationed in Hargeisa central police station. The two journalists were mistakenly arrested after police officers in pursuit of youth gangs and criminals accused them of secretly filming. SOLJA demanded for their quick release and after an investigation to their arrest, the police commissioner apologized for their arrest and soon released the reporters.

APRIL**On 1 April 2015****Ahmed Saed Mohamed**

Kalsan TV reporter was in Berbera while police charges of publishing news article relating an employee who was dismissed from the port but later appointed by the Ministry of Finance. SOLJA urged security personnel to respect rights of journalists when arresting them and not trump on freedom of expression enshrined in the country's constitution.

MAY**On 12 May 2015****Sulaiman Kalshale and Abdirahman Ali Duale**

Respectively reporter for Yool Newspaper and a cameraman for one of the local Televisions were arrested by police during the House of Elders session which the House made an extension to the parliamentary and presidential elections which is slated on March, 2017. SOLJA managed their immediate release.

On 14 May 2015

Mohamed Adan Dirir and Khalid Hamdi

Respectively reporters for Somali Channel TV and Gobanimo News Agency website were briefly arrested after interviewing and filming a video of three civil registration employees complaining of lack of payment.



On 16 May 2015

Mokhtar Abdirahman

A member of SOLJA board of directors was arrested on the orders of Sahil region Deputy Police chief after he dismissed media propaganda against SOLJA orchestrated by an illegal organization launched in Berbera.

SEPTEMBER

On 1 September 2015

Manager of Ogaal Newspaper



Marodijeh Regional Court summoned the General Manager of Ogaal Newspaper after he was being sued. The case was closed few days later after plaintiffs failed to present their case before the court.

On 20th September 2015

Mohamed Abdi Barre, Ahmed Mohamed Elmi and Mohamed Sulaiman Ahmed

Respectively reporters for Star TV, Horn Cable TV and Universal TV were arrested in El-Afweyn district on the orders of El-Afweyn mayor. They were arrested after they allegedly blamed El-Afweyn mayor for corrupting food aid.

On 20th September 2015

Abdirahman Mohamed Ege



Royal TV reporter was briefly arrested in Berbera on the orders of Sahil region Deputy Police chief. He was arrested after interviewing people about the government's efforts of privatizing Berbera Oil Terminal.

OCTOBER

On 7th October 2015

Ahmed Saed and Abdirahman Mohamed

Respectively reporter for Kalsan TV and Som News TV were arrested while undertaking their daily duties. They were arrested on allegations of reporting a chaos that took place in Berbera after several Ministers visited Berbera to take celebrate Eid occasion with Berbera residents.



NOVEMBER

On 28th November 2015

Kadar Abdirisak



Reporter for Hadhwanaag news website was briefly arrested in Buroa on the orders of Buroa Mayor. He was immediately released after SOLJA negotiated with the mayor.

On 30th November 2015

Abdirashid Nur Wa'ays and Said Khadar

Respectively the chairman and Editor-in-chief of Hubsad daily newspaper were arrested on the orders of the Somaliland Attorney General. They were arrested on allegations of publishing unlicensed and unregistered

newspaper. They were released after few days and the legality of the newspaper is still under investigation.

DECEMBER

On 21st December 2015

Ahmed Saed Mohamed and Abdirahman Ege Ali

Reporters for Kalsan TV were briefly arrested by security forces.