



2 November 2023

His Excellency Suleyman Mohamed Maohamud
Office of the Attorney General
Xamarweyne District
London Road
Mogadishu, Somalia

Dear Sir

Ref: Progress in addressing crimes against journalists and curbing impunity

Today, on the occasion of International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists, the International Press Institute (IPI) and the Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS) are writing to you to express our grave concern about crimes against journalists in Somalia and the proliferation of impunity.

Article 18 of [Somalia's Federal Constitution](#) provides for the right to freedom of opinion and expression which includes freedom of speech and of the media. In addition to being a constitutional right, media freedom is also guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, other international treaties, and regional and global conventions to which Somalia is a member.

Somalia is a signatory of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, Article 9 of which provides for media freedom. The Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information also reconfirms the provisions of the Charter on ensuring press freedom and the protection of journalists.

The Somali government therefore has a responsibility to protect journalists and to investigate and prosecute crimes against them. It is in this regard that we are engaging your office to express our concern for the safety of journalists in Somalia and follow up on cases of crimes against them. [From our monitoring](#), we have noted an upsurge in cases of press freedom threats and violations including unlawful arrest and detention, raiding of media outlets, physical assault of journalists, and forced closure of media outlets among others, all pointing to the deteriorating press freedom situation in your country.

We also note that in 2020, a [special prosecution unit was established](#) to investigate and prosecute crimes against journalists. In particular, we are concerned about cases of journalists who were killed while undertaking their professional duties or as a result of their work as journalists.

Several cases remain unresolved some dating back to 2016 and below we highlight some of these cases:

- Somali National Television (SNTV) journalist [Ahmed Mohamed Shakur](#) was killed on September 30, 2022
- Radio Mogadishu journalist and director [Abdiaziz Mohamud Guled](#) was killed in Mogadishu on November 20, 2021
- Independent journalist [Jamal Farah Adan](#) was killed in Galkayo on March 1, 2021
- Freelance journalist [Abdiwali Ali Hassan](#) was killed in Afgoye on February 16, 2020
- Daaru Sunna radio journalist [Abdullahi Mire Hashi](#) killed in Ceelasha Biyaha, Mogadishu on October 27, 2018
- Radio Codka Nabadda journalist [Abdirisak Said Osman](#) was killed in Galkayo on September 19, 2018
- SBS TV cameraman, [Abdirizak Qasim Iman](#) was killed in Mogadishu on July 26, 2018
- Kalsan TV journalist [Mohamed Ibrahim Gabow](#) killed in Mogadishu on December 11, 2017
- Codka Hiiraan/Jubbaland TV journalist [Abdullahi Osman Moalim](#) was killed in Beledweyne on September 13, 2017
- Radio Shabelle journalist [Abdiasis Mohamed Ali](#) was killed in Mogadishu on September 27, 2016
- Radio Mogadishu journalist and producer [Sagal Salad Osman](#) was killed in Mogadishu on June 5, 2016

We remain deeply concerned that there has been no apparent progress with regard to these cases. The failure to investigate crimes against journalists is not only a grave injustice toward these killed journalists and their families, but it also creates a climate of fear and intimidation, which makes it difficult for journalists to do their work freely and safely. We therefore urge your office to prioritize the safety and security of journalists and address the issue of impunity, beginning with swift, transparent, and comprehensive investigations into these cases that will result in the arrest and conviction of those responsible.

We further note that some of the cases involving the killing of journalists were as a result of bomb attacks or suicide bombings hence we also call on your office to ensure that the overall operating environment for journalists in Somalia is conducive for media freedom to thrive.

We remain available to engage with your office, and we look forward to a favorable response from you regarding our request for an update on the status of investigations into the above cases. We would also welcome the opportunity to meet directly with you on this matter and can avail ourselves for a meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Nompilo Simanje
IPI Africa Advocacy and Partnerships Lead

And

Abdalle Ahmed Mumin
Secretary General, Somalia Journalists Syndicate

Cc. Ministry of Information