



WAR ON JOURNALISM IN SOMALIA:  
DEATH, DISPLACEMENT AND DESOLATION

ANNUAL REPORT

**NUSOJ**

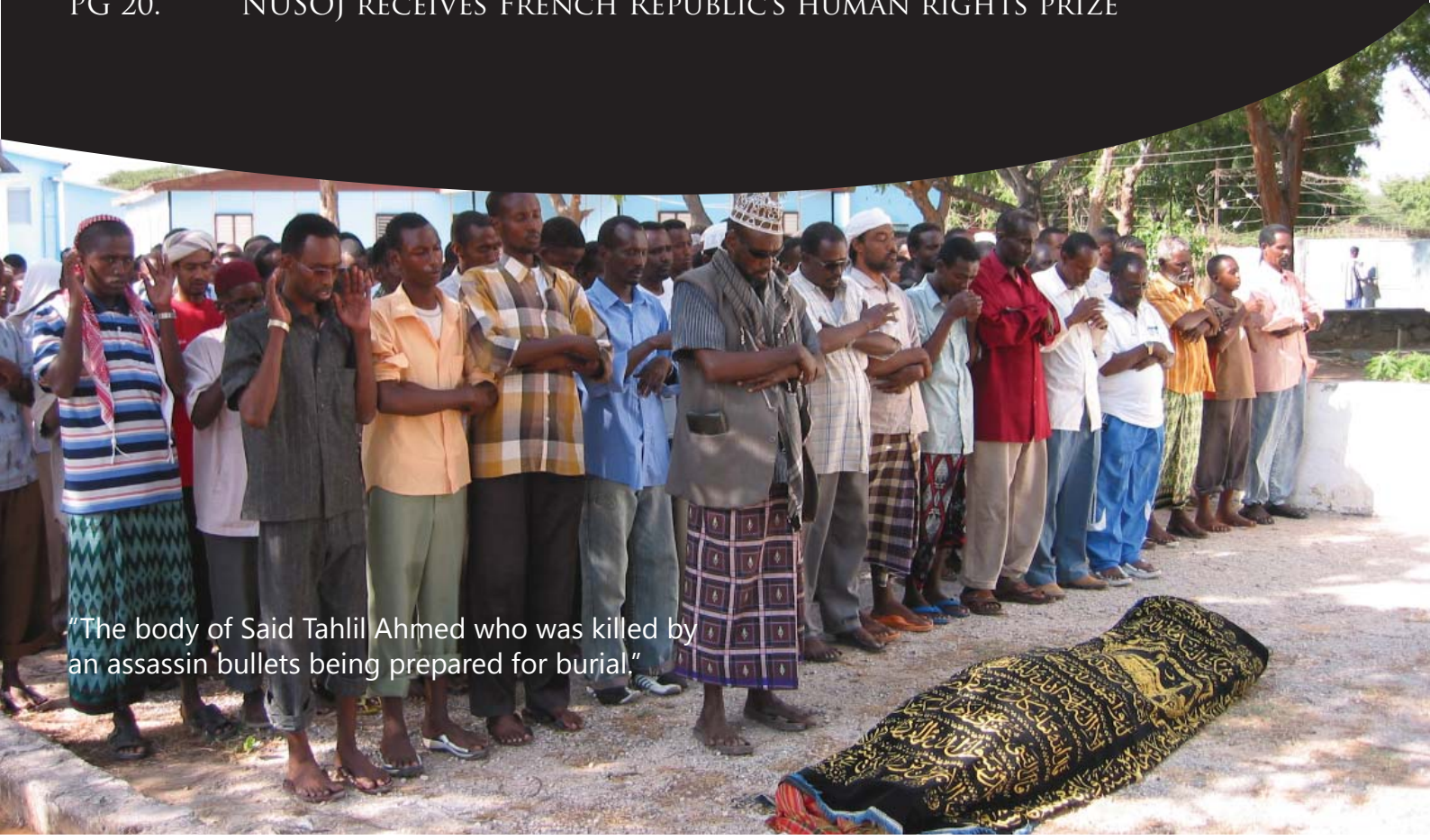
2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF PRESS FREEDOM IN SOMALIA



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ANNUAL REPORT  
OF PRESS FREEDOM IN  
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"The body of Said Tahlil Ahmed who was killed by an assassin bullets being prepared for burial."



Published by the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ).  
Courtesy to journalists who provided pictures for this report.

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## OVERVIEW

The year 2009 opened on an ominous note for journalism in Somalia with the daylight murder of Hassan Mayow Hassan, a radio Shabelle journalist, who sadly, was the first journalist murdered in the world in the year. As in the past, the adversaries engaged in the vicious fight for the control of Somalia continue to deliberately target journalists and other media workers. Assassins' bullets are felling journalists in cold-blooded murder while anger from warring sides is increasingly directed against journalists and media outlets for their coverage of events and issues related to the political and security situation. This has resulted in an unprecedented number of media killings and an escalation of the tragedy afflicting media work in the country.

With such a disheartening start to the year, the end was no better. On December 3, a suicide bomber blew himself up at a university graduation ceremony in Mogadishu, killing three journalists and wounding five others; part of the 25 people killed in the attack, including ministers, medical doctors and students.

In the history of Somalia, the past twelve months stand out as the darkest and deadliest period for journalism in the country. The work and life of journalists have become worthless and dispensable while attacks against journalists continue unrestrained. Many of the killers are known but there is no justice for their victims.

The Somali media's valiant and honest reportage on the current issues and incidents has not endeared it to the armed groups involved. As the security and political crisis worsened, so did the war on journalism intensify. Vindictive killing continued unmitigated leading to the murder of nine journalists over the course of the year, making the country the most deadliest country for journalists in Africa. Independent journalists daily face the risk of murder, physical attack, detention or, at the very least, public denigration by authorities or insurgents.

During the year, 12 journalists were wounded, 15 journalists arrested, 4 media houses closed down, 7 radio stations directly censored and nearly 100 journalists received death threats, some of them receiving threats on a daily basis. As a result, several media houses have taken refuge in entertainment, steering clear of airing news and current affairs programming.

The status of the media in the war-ravaged southern and central regions is cause for grave concern. These regions have suffered a serious clamp down on media freedom on account of the war and the attendant violence. Media houses have been debarred from having the professionals and the skills to provide bona fide reporting and information to the public.



Violations of media freedom and human rights of journalists reached unprecedented magnitude during the year. Continuing fighting between the Transitional government forces and Islamic insurgents, lack of capacity of the Transitional Federal Government to ensure law and order as well as peace and stability; political wrangles within the TFG, elections crisis in Somaliland, selective exercise of rule of law in both Somaliland and Puntland, undue misuse of power by the Puntland administration, the fragmentation of insurgent forces, and Al-Shabaab consolidation of control of at least 10 regions have all contributed considerably to the deepening crisis against media. Many journalists believe that the practice of journalism is a very risky undertaking in Somalia.

In Southern Somalia, journalists are unwilling to step into many parts of the south for fear of their safety. This has blacked these areas from news, allowing untold atrocities to go on unreported. Journalists are exposed to numerous risks in travelling to these areas on authentic reporting assignments.

The majority of media houses in Mogadishu are located in areas that are repeatedly and indiscriminately shelled with little regard for the fact that they are crowded with unarmed civilians. At least two radio stations were bombed, destroying equipment and wounding journalists.

This has resulted in a steady stream of journalists escaping from Mogadishu in search of safety elsewhere. Independent-minded and reputable journalists face a stark choice to either flee the country for their security or risk death for their journalism work.

Physical security remains a burning issue for media professionals in Puntland. Overt and covert repressions against the media in Puntland are well orchestrated. With all the efforts to make peaceful transfer of power to the new president of Puntland, attacks and intimidation remain common in these northeastern regions of Somalia.

Somaliland's lumbering efforts to stifle the media and check the flow of independent information is representative of the discomfited correlation between Somaliland authorities and the free print media that has grown and diversified over the past years. In the year 2009 journalists in various towns of Somaliland faced arrests, physical violence and intimidation. Several journalists have been victimized for their critical reporting by both "government" and "non-government" actors.

Last year's monstrous crimes against journalists in Somalia are a constant reminder to us and to the world community of journalists that we must redouble our efforts in the fight against wanton violence and injustice. We will persevere in our struggle for change, to secure respect for media rights and for the protection of journalists. We will continue to call on governments as well as international and regional partners to take urgent action to stem the tide of severe crimes by pressurising local authorities to recognise and live up to their human rights obligations. Our aspirations are clear – we will continue to rally our journalists, media executives and wider civil society in order to seek justice, challenge repressive acts, name and shame perpetrators and, above all, give a voice to all journalists, in particular those living and working under conditions of unfairness, fear and constant cruelty.

**Omar Faruk Osman, Secretary General  
National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)**



## INTRODUCTION

Journalists faced attacks from authorities, religious fundamentalists, hired criminal gangs, and organised militias. Police and security forces in Somaliland and Puntland also intimidate, arrest, and harass journalists and other media workers. Sadly, the country witnessed political and armed groups who are increasingly impatient to curb media freedom and freedom of expression. The lack of bringing to book the perpetrators of murders, attacks and abductions of media professionals and news media organisations has exacerbated the situation.



The streets of Southern Somalia frequently resemble open battlefields. It is the sniper fire that often leads to the deaths of many journalists”

This 2009 annual report sums up press freedom and freedom of expression situation in Somalia. It reveals systematic and wide-ranging monitoring and analytical work carried out in 2009 by National Union of Somali Journalists, usually in close partnership with the press freedom protectors, union branches, news media houses and other media organizations. The union released 99 alerts, updates, special reports and press releases in 2009.

The report highlights all cases of attacks against journalists and news media organizations which took place in Somaliland, Puntland and South-Central regions such as killings of journalists, wounding of journalists, arresting media professionals, intimidations, closure of media houses, oppressive edicts and other sophisticated tactics to oppress and deny media rights.

**Mohamed Ibrahim Isak**  
**Press Freedom Coordinator**  
**National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)**



## JANUARY

ON 1 JANUARY 2009:

**HASSAN MAYOW HASSAN,**

36, of Radio Shabelle in Afgoye District of lower Shabelle region became the first global victim of violence targeting journalists during 2009, when he was shot dead at 10:50am local time by a member of armed group. Hassan Mayow Hassan, who had been the Afgoye correspondent of Radio Shabelle for 6 years, left behind a wife and five children.

## FEBRUARY

ON 4 FEBRUARY 2009:

**SAID TAHLIL AHMED,**

the Director of HornAfrik Radio, was assassinated in Mogadishu at around 14:45 hrs local time.

Three men armed with revolvers shot Ahmed four times in the head while in Bakara Market where alongside the directors of other Radio Stations in Mogadishu, he had been summoned by the Al-Shabaab Islamic militia for a meeting. The meeting did not place after the killing.



# KILLED JOURNALISTS

## MAY

ON 22 MAY 2009:

**ABDIRISAK WARSAMEH MOHAMED**

of Radio Shabelle was shot dead by one of the sides who were fighting in the neighbourhood of Bakara Market. Mohamed was killed as he was crossing the road at Wardhigley police station, on his way to Radio Shabelle when bullets hit him at the chest. His body was left lying on the road for about 45 minutes as the militiamen continued to shoot at anybody wanted to retrieve it.



ON 26 MAY 2009:

**VETERAN JOURNALIST NUR MUSE HUSSEIN (NUR INJI)**

died from injuries he sustained from a targeted shooting in Beledweyne city of Hiran region in Central Somalia on 20 April 2009. Nur Muse Hussein, 56, was wounded as he covered fighting in Beledweyn between militias loyal to the Hiran Regional Administration that is associated with the Transitional Federal Government and Hisbul Islam, an Islamic movement that operates in the southern and central regions of Somalia.







## JUNE

ON 7 JUNE 2009:  
**MUKTAR MOHAMED HIRABE**

two men armed with revolvers attacked and assassinated Muktar Mohamed Hirabe, a Director of Radio Shabelle. The attackers also wounded Ahmed Omar Hashi (Tajir), the station's News Editor. The late Muktar and Ahmed were walking together in Mogadishu's Bakara market when they were attacked.



## DECEMBER

ON 3 DECEMBER 2009:  
**MOHAMED AMIN ADAN ABDULLE**, 24 years,

who was a reporter with Radio Shabelle, Hassan Zubeyr Haji Hassan, a cameraman working with Al-Arabia TV and Abdigafar Abdulkadir Hassan, commonly known as Yasir Mario, were killed in an explosion at Hotel Shammo in Mogadishu, where a graduation ceremony for the Banadir University was taking place.



## JULY

ON 4 JULY 2009:  
**MOHAMUD MOHAMED YUSUF**,

a journalist for the privately run station Radio Holy Quran, was shot in the stomach twice as he was covering the fighting in the neighbourhoods surrounding the station. Mohamud, 22, died from excessive bleeding after being left on the side of the road for almost three hours as the militia shot at anyone who tried to come to his rescue.



Somalia is today the most challenging environment for journalists and yet hundreds of dedicated men and women keep on telling the story risk their lives to the very end.



# WOUNDED JOURNALISTS

## MAY

ON 10 MAY 2009:

**BASHIR KHALIF GANI,**

Reporter for Radio Shabelle, Mohamed Abdi Nahar, cameraman for Radio Shabelle, as well as Abdinasir Nur Gedi and Abdirisak Mire Dhore, who are respectively a reporter and a cameraman for Horn Cable TV, were wounded by shrapnel after an artillery attack on the venue of press conference called by the Al-Shabaab militia in the Warshadaha neighbourhood in southern Mogadishu. The shelling, which is believed to have originated from forces loyal to the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia also dispersed other journalists who had turned up for the press conference although no one else was wounded in the attack.

## NOVEMBER

ON 17 NOVEMBER 2009:

**MOHAMED YASIN ISAK,**

the reporter of Voice of America (VOA) Somali Service in Mudug region of Somalia was wounded after police officer of the Puntland Semi-autonomous administration opened fire on the journalist's car. The journalist, who was driving to his office in the evening, was shot on the shoulder at a checkpoint after another police man had released the journalist's car from the checkpoint.

18 NOVEMBER 2009:

**ABDIRAHMAN WARSAME,**

correspondent of Xinhua news agency was shot in the shoulder while he was standing before Banadir Hospital in Madina district of Mogadishu city. Abdirahman told NUSOJ that he did not know who shot him and to which armed group he was allied, as there was ongoing fighting between government forces backed by African Union troops against insurgents in the area.

## DECEMBER

ON 3 DECEMBER 2009:

**FIVE JOURNALISTS**

were wounded in a suicide attack in Mogadishu. The five journalists are: Mohamed Aweys Mudey, a reporter for Somaliweyn Radio; Abdulkadir Omar Abdulle, reporter with Universal TV; Mohamed Abdi Hussein, a reporter at Hurmo Radio; Khalid Maki Banadir, a cameraman with Universal TV, and Omar Faruk a photographer for Reuters.

21 DECEMBER 2009:

**ABDIRAHMAN YASIN ALI,**

the director of Hamar Radio and Adan Hussein Da'ud, program producer of the radio, were wounded during a bombing incident at Hamar radio in Mogadishu.



# ARREST AND OTHER ATTACKS

## FEBRUARY

ON 26 FEBRUARY 2009:

**MOHAMED ABDI GULED,**

Editor-in-chief of Somaliland's privately owned weekly newspaper YOOL, was arrested and detained at the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) on charges of publishing a newspaper without permission and spreading lies. On March 17, Hargeisa regional court convicted Guled on the charges and sentenced to a 5-month prison sentence. He was subsequently set free on March 24 after he was given a presidential pardon.

## MARCH

ON 26 MARCH 2009:

**JAMA AYANLE FEYTE,**

who works for News website laasqorey.com, was arrested in Bossasso by Puntland police on the orders of Puntland's Deputy Police Commissioner Mohamed Said Jaqanaf. The deputy police commissioner informed the journalist that he was being arrested for publishing false information. On 30 March, Bari regional court in Bossasso found Feyte guilty of "libel and insulting Puntland leaders," and dissemination of false information on Somali news websites Dayniile.com and lasqoray.com. Feyte regained his freedom on 15 April after the Puntland president pardoned him.

## APRIL

ON 14 APRIL 2009:

**ABDULLAHI HASSAN DARWISH**

who works for Ogaal Newspaper was arrested on the basis of complaint from the Mayor of Erigabo Mr Ismail Haji Nur. The Sanaag Regional Court in Erigabo, which passed ruling on Saturday 25 April 2009, found the journalist guilty of spreading "unsubstantiated information" about corruption in the management of the Water Agency in

Erigabo and political use of the agency by the Mayor of Erigabo. The court slapped a one-year jail sentence on Darwish and a six-month ban from working as a journalist. This was in addition to a fine of four hundred thousand Somaliland Shillings (about US\$60). His family and relatives paid money in lieu of the one-year jail term.

## JUNE

ON 11 JUNE 2009:

**OMAR ABDIRAHMAN MOHAMOUD (JAAJAA) AND**

**SAHRA ALI MOHAMOUD,**

who work for the privately owned Markabley Radio as reporter and newscaster respectively, were seriously beaten by four masked Al-Shabab militias soon after they had left the station after work. The two journalists ran on foot in an attempt to escape their attackers, but were chased and beaten severely with baseball bats.

## JULY

ON 13 JULY 2009:

**MOHAMED OSMAN MIRE,** widely known as **SIYAD,** and **AHMED SULEYMAN DHUHUL,** Director and News Editor of Horyaal Radio respectively were arrested at 15:40 local time by Somaliland police at the station's premises in Hargeisa. For sometime, the duo was held at the CID headquarters before Hargeisa Regional Court sentenced them to prison terms of six months each and a fine of 300,000 Somaliland Shillings (Approximately US\$45) for each of them on August 9. The court found the journalists guilty of "reporting through a Radio Station, that was unlawfully operating in Somaliland, and disseminating information that resulted in loss of life and property". The journalists were freed after paying a fine of 2,500,000 Somaliland Shilling (approximately US\$373) each.



## JULY

ON 14 JULY 2009:

**AWEYS SHEIK NUR**

of Horseed Media was brutally beaten by five Puntland police in courtroom in Bossasso after he was seen taking pictures in the court.

ON 15 JULY 2009:

Judge Sheik Hussein Warfa Sigad of the Hargeisa Appeals Court issued a judgment banning Horn CABLE TV from operating in Somaliland. This decision reversed a verdict by the Hargeisa Regional Court, which had rejected the Somaliland Attorney-General's request that Horn CABLE TV be banned for "inciting violence" that has existed in Eel-bardale town and "spreading false information".

ON 30 JULY 2009:

**FOWSI SULEYMAN AWBINDI,**

who works for Radio Horyaal, was arrested by police in Buro' for sending "false report" to the Radio station. He was neither brought to court nor charged formally, but was released after 43 days in detention.

## AUGUST

ON 13 AUGUST 2009:

Somaliland police in the port town of Berbera arrested online journalist Yasin Jama Ali for two opinions published on berberanews.com, a website that he works for. The prosecutor charged Yasin Jama Ali and editor-in-chief of the website Mohamed Said Abdullahi (in absentia) for spreading "scandals against the nation". Yasin was arraigned before court on 16 August but the prosecutor asked for more time and the judge accepted. On 23 August, Sahil regional court found Yasin Jama Ali, stringer for berberanews.com and correspondent for Horyaal radio respectively, and Mohamed Said Abdullahi, editor-in chief of berberanews.com, guilty of committing "crimes against the Somaliland nation". The court sentenced Mohamed Said Abdullahi to three years in prison and banned Yasin Jama Ali from practicing journalism until further notice from the court. The verdict also banned berberanews.com from operating in Somaliland for an indefinite period. Judge of the court, Osman Ibrahim read a letter stating that berberanews.com

published articles spreading scandals against governor of Sahil region, Mayor of Berbera, director of Berbera Seaport and other government officials without specifying the said scandals

ON 17 AUGUST 2009:

four armed thugs attacked and inflicted serious injuries on journalist Ali Adan Dahir in Erigabo after beating him. The police arrested the four suspects the same day but suspects were set free the next day on the orders of the Governor of Erigabo.

ON 22 AUGUST 2009:

Al-Shabaab, which established an "Islamic administration" in Bardhere, ordered Radio Markabley to fire two of its journalists. In a written order which was signed by the head of the "Islamic administration" in the region, Abdiwahab Hashi Hassan, the group instructed the management of the radio station to fire Mohamed Abdullahi Farah and Sahro Ali Mohamud. The two who are both newscasters and producers, were accused of airing unspecified "biased reports" and for "overstating the capacity of the transitional federal government and that of Ahlu Sunnah Islamic movement". As a result, Sahro left in fear of her life.

## SEPTEMBER

ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2009:

around 9:00 AM, the Al-Shabaab fighters arrested an independent journalist Mohamed Sheik Isak, when he visited his parents in Daynunay village of Bay region. Isak is a freelance reporter who writes for different news websites. A group of armed men surrounded the car in which the journalist was travelling to Mogadishu from Baidoa and was detained approximately ten hours after searching his luggage.

## OCTOBER

ON 1 OCTOBER 2009:

in a letter issued from the office of the Deputy Minister of Information, Communications and Culture of Puntland State of Somalia, the Ministry suspended the journalistic work of the VOA reporters in Puntland. The journalists who were affected by the order are Nuh Muse Birjeb, VOA Somali Service



Correspondent in Garowe, Mohamed Yasin Isak, VOA Somali Service Correspondent in Galkayo, and Abdulkadir Mohamed Nunow, VOA Somali Service Correspondent in Bossasso. The journalists resumed their work after negotiations ended successfully. Although the letter of suspension, a copy of which is in NUSOJ's possession, did not state the reason behind the suspension, reliable sources confirmed that the journalists were barred from work following an interview the VOA Somali Service aired on Wednesday, 30 September 2009. The interviewee was a man who claimed he was the chairman of Ahlu-Sunnah Waljamaca in Puntland, which the Puntland authorities view as rivals in the power play. On 26 August 2009, Puntland ministry of information issued statement banning Mohamed Yasin Isak from reporting in Puntland, though he was allowed to resume his work after a week.

ON 28 OCTOBER 2009:

A SOMALI WAR  
PHOTOGRAPHER,

**MOHAMED DAHIR,**

who is an AFP photo stringer and Mohamoud Muktar Koofi, a Universal TV cameraman, were kept for 48 hours in a detention centre at Villa Somalia (presidential palace) by the government police after they were seen filming African Union tanks that were shelling Bakara market, following an insurgent attack on the bases of government soldiers and African Union peacekeepers along Maka Al-Mukarama road, the strategic road that connects villa Somalia to the airport.

ON 31 OCTOBER 2009:

**MUHYADIN HUSNI,**

a reporter with Warsan Radio as well as regional correspondent for Shabelle Media Network (Radio Shabelle) in Baidoa was arrested. He was released 4 days after and then fled to Mogadishu.

## NOVEMBER

ON 3 NOVEMBER 2009:

**ABDIRAHMAN MOHAMOUD MUSE,** who is reporter for both ETN TV and Horseed Radio, was briefly arrested at central police station of Garowe, the capital of Puntland. He was arrested after he was taking photos from protesting people

against court decision on murder case.

## DECEMBER

ON 19 DECEMBER 2009:

an armed man from Puntland police who was guarding Galkayo Airport opened fire on Hassan Mohamed Jama, Director of Radio Galkayo, but luckily the two bullets passed through his trousers. Mr Jama had gone to the airport to receive a guest when the airport security guard opened fire.

ON 20 DECEMBER 2009:

mortars hit the top floor of the building housing Shabelle Media Network destroying a satellite dish and television antenna which had only recently been installed. The shelling happened around 11:00am and TV station has been off air since the attack.

ON 21 DECEMBER 2009:

Mohamed Yasin Isak, correspondent of Voice of America Somali Service, was taken from his house in Galkayo by the Puntland Intelligence Service (PIS) around 3:00AM. A group of about twenty-five soldiers with two battlewagons from PIS raided the journalist's house. On 22 December, he was transferred from Galkayo to Garowe, the capital of Puntland administration. At the time of writing this report, Isak was still being held in detention at the PIS headquarters in Garowe.

ON 25 DECEMBER 2009:

Two reporters in Kismayo were arrested by Al-Shabaab administration in Jubba regions. Qadar Mohamoud Hared, a reporter for Bossasso-based ETN Television and radio Voice of Peace and Mohamed Abdi Olow, a reporter for Radio Banadir were arrested after they were told to come to the police station and later told that "you are under arrest". The two reporters were released Saturday night, 26 December 2009. Journalist Karar Adan Rukow who is working for Universal TV in Kismayo reportedly fled from the town to Mogadishu for his life after learning that he was also summoned and would be arrested in the same way the two reporters were arrested who all reported armed conflict in Somalia and Kenya border.



# CLOSURE OF MEDIA HOUSES

## APRIL

ON 9 APRIL 2009:

Al-Shabaab forces controlling the south-western regions of Somalia ordered the management of Radio Maandeeq to shut down the FM station around 07:00am. The management of the station were also instructed to report to the headquarters of Al-Shabaab in Baladhawo. According to Radio management, the Al-Shabaab officials stated that the Radio will remain off air for 24 hours and the management of the Radio must present to Al-Shabaab all their programs that they had been airing and the daily program schedule. Management refused to comply with the order and the station was allowed to resume its operation in the next day.

ON 26 APRIL 2009:

"Islamic Administration" under Al-Shabaab that controls Bay and Bakool regions in south-western regions of Somalia ordered the closure of Jubba Radio and also arrested at the same time the Director of the station Mr. Muktar Mohamed Atosh, the Editor-in-chief Mr. Mohamed Adawe Adan and a reporter Mr. Mohamed Nur Mohamed while they were all in studios at the Radio. The Head of Security of Bay and Bakool Regions of Al-Shabaab, Hassan Derow ordered the closure and the arrest of the journalists. The Radio and its journalists were accused of not abiding by unspecified orders of the administration. The journalists were released after one day in detention and the radio was allowed to resume operations after 2 days.

## SEPTEMBER

ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2009:

Al-Shabaab forces in Baidoa got into the premises of Radio Warsan at around 4:00 p.m. (local time) and ordered that the FM station be turned off, an order which was effective immediately. Al-Shabaab also ordered Hilal Sheik Shueyb, director of the radio station, and Mohamed Aden Dhaysane, news editor, to be arrested and immediately taken to jail. The two journalists were released after 48 hours.

## OCTOBER

ON 21 OCTOBER 2009:

Warsan Radio and Jubba Radio in Baidoa were closed for an indefinite period by the Al-Shabaab administration. Al-Shabaab confiscated Warsan Radio equipment and is currently using it to broadcast its programmes in Baidoa. Jubba Radio is still closed.

## NOVEMBER

ON 24 NOVEMBER 2009:

Al-Shabaab forces in Balad-hawo district closed down Maandeeq Radio. Two technical trucks loaded with heavily armed men loyal to the Al-Shabaab administration descended on the radio premises and ordered the journalists to shut down operations at around 12.15 pm local time. They also took away some equipment belonging to the radio. The closure of the radio followed the broadcast of an interview with rival Islamists, Ahlu-Sunna Waljama earlier in the morning. This, the journalists believe, contributed to the closure of the radio station.



# KIDNAP CASES OF JOURNALISTS

## JANUARY

ON 4 JANUARY 2009:

two western journalists Colin Freeman and Jose Cendon of the British newspaper Daily Telegraph, who were kidnapped in Bossasso as they left their hotel on Wednesday, 26 November 2008, were freed. Before the kidnapping, the journalists had been in Bossasso for about a week to report on pirates.

ON 15 JANUARY 2009:

after 146 days of captivity, Abdifatah Mohamed Elmi, a freelance photojournalist, was released with two drivers who were with Canadian journalist Amanda Lindhout and Australian photojournalist Nigel Brennan when kidnapped on 23 August 2008.

## JUNE

ON 2 JUNE 2009:

UNIVERSAL TV Director

Ibrahim Mohamed Ali

was kidnapped in Mogadishu. Ibrahim Mohamed Ali, nicknamed Jeekey, was kidnapped in Garasbaley village by four hooded and armed men on

his way back from Afgoye district to Mogadishu city. He was with Abdirisak Mohamud Jimale, one of the technicians of Universal TV. The kidnapers took him in a sedan after they searched the Universal TV car and told Ibrahim Mohamed Ali that he was the one they were looking for. He was released on 7 June 2009.

## NOVEMBER

ON 25 NOVEMBER 2009,

Canadian female journalist Amanda Lindhout and Australian photojournalist Nigel Brennan were released at 20:40 hrs local time. The two journalists were taken to heavily guarded Hotel Sahafi in central Mogadishu, where they stayed overnight



Abdifatah Mohamed Elmi



For most, kidnapping is no less painful than death but those that do not survive are given dignified burial as a mark of respect for their contribution to making the country stable.



## JOURNALISTS DEATH ROLL

FULL NAME	DATE KILLED	CITY/TOWN	MEDIA HOUSE
HASSAN MAYOW HASSAN	1-JAN-09	AFGOYE	RADIO SHABELLE
SAID TAHLIL AHMED	4-FEB-09	MOGADISHU	HORNAFRIK RADIO
ABDIRISAK WARSAMEH MOHAMED	22-MAY-09	MOGADISHU	RADIO SHABELLE
NUR MUSE HUSSEIN (NUR INJI)	26-MAY-09	BELEDWEYNE	IQK RADIO
MUKTAR MOHAMED HIRABE	7-JUN-09	MOGADISHU	RADIO SHABELLE
MOHAMUD MOHAMED YUSUF	4-JUL-09	MOGADISHU	IQK RADIO
MOHAMED AMIN ADAN ABDULLE	3-DEC-09	MOGADISHU	RADIO SHABELLE
HASSAN ZUBEYR HAJI HASSAN	3-DEC-09	MOGADISHU	AL-ARABIA TV
ABDIGAFAR ABDULKADIR HASSAN	3-DEC-09	MOGADISHU	FREELANCE

## WOUNDED JOURNALISTS

NAME	DATE WOUNDED	CITY/TOWN	MEDIA HOUSE
HASSAN BULHAN ALI	7-FEB-09	ABUDWAQ	ABDUWAQ RADIO
BASHIR KHALIF GANI	10-MAY-09	MOGADISHU	RADIO SHABELLE
MOHAMED ABDI NUHUR	10-MAY-09	MOGADISHU	RADIO SHABELLE
ABDINASIR NUR GEDI	10-MAY-09	MOGADISHU	HORNCABLE TV
ABDIRISAK MIRE DHORE	10-MAY-09	MOGADISHU	HORNCABLE TV
MOHAMED YASIN ISAK	17-NOV-09	GALKAYO	VOA SOMALI
ABDIRAHMAN WARSAME	18-NOV-09	MOGADISHU	XINHUA AGENCY
MOHAMED AWEYS MUDEY	3-DEC-09	MOGADISHU	SOMALIWEYN RADIO
ABDULKADIR OMAR ABDULLE	3-DEC-09	MOGADISHU	UNIVERSAL TV
MOHAMED ABDI HUSSEIN	3-DEC-09	MOGADISHU	HURMO RADIO
KHALID MAKI BANADIR	3-DEC-09	MOGADISHU	UNIVERSAL TV
OMAR FARUK	3-DEC-09	WMOGADISHU	REUTERS





## ARRESTED JOURNALISTS

FULL NAME	DATE ARRESTED	CITY/TOWN	MEDIA HOUSE
MOHAMED ABDI GULED	26-FEB-09	HARGEISA	YOOL NEWSPAPER
JAMA AYANLE FEYTE	26-MAR-09	BOSSASSO	LASQORAY.COM
ABDULLAHI HASSAN DARWISH	14-APR-09	ERIGABO	OGAAL NEWSPAPER
MOHAMED OSMAN MIRE	13-JUL-09	HARGEISA	HORYAAL RADIO
AHMED SULEYMAN DHUHUL	13-JUL-09	HARGEISA	HORYAAL RADIO
FOWSI SULEYMAN AWBINDI	30-JUL-09	BURO'	HORYAAL RADIO
YASIN JAMA ALI	13-AUG-09	BERBERA	BERBERANEWS.COM
MOHAMED SHEIK ISAK	22-SEPT-09	DAYNUNAY	FREELANCE
MOHAMED DAHIR	28-OCT-09	MOGADISHU	AFP
MOHAMOUD MUKTAR KOOFI	28-OCT-09	MOGADISHU	UNIVERSAL TV
MUHYADIN HUSNI	31-OCT-09	BAIDOA	WARSAN RADIO
ABDIRAHMAN MOHAMOUD MUSE	3-NOV-09	GAROWE	HORSEED MEDIA/ ETN
MOHAMED YASIN ISAK	21-DEC-09	GALKAYO	VOA
QADAR MOHAMOUD HARED	25-DEC-09	KISMAYU	ETN/VOICE OF PEACE
MOHAMED ABDI OLOW	25-DEC-09	KISMAYU	RADIO BANADIR



## DEADLY EDICTS ISSUED AGAINST MEDIA

**A**l-Shabaab administrations in many regions of Southern Somalia have been imposing severe edicts violating press freedom in the regions they control. Some of these edicts constitute a total media blackout. Al-Shabaab convened indifferent occasions meetings with journalists in Baidoa, Kismayo, Bardhere, Beled-Hawo and Jowhar and read to them a list of edicts the Al-Shabaab want to see implemented in the media.

### SOME OF THE EDICTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- ☞ Music should not be aired.
- ☞ All music that has been used to advertise a commercial product or for an advertising program should be replaced by "Islamic songs" or "Anaashid".
- ☞ Al-Shabaab and its leadership have sworn in the name of Allah, that if any journalist or media house airs information against the Islamic administration, they shall be killed.
- ☞ Journalists and media houses must not refer to Ahlu-Sunna Wal-Jama (a rival religious grouping) as religious clerics. The media should, instead, refer to them as "Suufis" or devout worshipers.
- ☞ In the event that the government forces and the Al-Shabaab are fighting, the media should refer to the Al-Shabaab as "Mujaahidiin" or martyrs.
- ☞ The media in the region cannot report any information from outside the border town.
- ☞ The media is not allowed to interview any "Murtad" or "infidel", the Al-Shabaab term for any member of the transitional federal government.

Media professionals are currently concerned about how to meet with these stringent and unreasonable edicts that go against the international norms on freedom of expression.

On 5 October, Sheik Hassan Yacquub of the Al-Shabaab group summoned journalists in Kismayo and read a number of edicts to be obeyed. Journalists have been commanded to either join Al-Shabaab and take part in the ongoing "Jihad" (Holy War) in Somalia or side with the opposing faction and leave town.

Independent media professionals continue to be under threat in southern Somalia as a result of a recent outbreak of internal fighting last week between rival Islamist groups, Hizbul Islam and Al-Shabaab, fighting for control of the town of Kismayo, its lucrative port and districts/villages bordering with Kenya.

Several journalists have fled the Islamist-held regions for other parts of the country and even neighbouring regions and countries. Some of the journalists are still in hiding within the country fearing for their lives.

These continued aggressive attacks against the media and the closing down of media stations is a sign of a determined effort to drive the independent media stations and journalists out of their territories so that the enemies of press freedom can install their own media stations.



## WORKING CONDITIONS FOR JOURNALISTS IN SOMALIA

**B**asic working conditions and employment rights in the media are extremely poor. There is widespread exploitation, not least of young journalists. The poor working conditions have negative consequences for the quality of journalism. In addition, many Somali journalists have emigrated to find better job opportunities and safer places in the abroad otherwise abandoned from the profession or accept to receive freebies or bribery due to its very low payment. This is also a major contribution of corruption in the media. More serious violations of human, social and labor rights of journalists even take place within media houses when owners or executive managers of the media houses continue to seriously disregard the human dignity of the media personnel.

Professional journalists are scarce and objective along with relevant reporting is a challenge for almost every Somali media. In spite of the large number of media outlets, media education and training is a seriously neglected area and this result is discouraging. There is arrival of unskilled young journalists joining the journalistic profession regularly, despite the serious working conditions and non-conducive environment in which journalists work in the media.

The awfully politicized atmosphere in Somalia is reflected in the media sector. Most of the Somali media private owned, but are strongly influenced by private interests, which challenge media's role of providing to public impartial, accurate and responsible information. This is putting the status of journalists in the community in a difficult position. One of the main challenges for journalists and other media workers is how to improve the values of decency working conditions and acquire skill training opportunities

to know how to report the conflict. In this struggle for better working conditions, social life and improved job careers. The serious concern is that programmers for quality working conditions and safety are usually not the priorities for the employers of the journalists and media managers in the collective negotiations and career promotion.

Despite all these constraints and circumstances, The National Union of Somali Journalists put in a lot of effort at their strength to address issues of working conditions for journalist in their union activities. Journalists are in many ways denied about opportunities and chances of improving their professional career, safety standards, job security and staff promotion at the space of their performance. The journalists do not typically get their annual and maternity leaves; Lack of requisite needs and skills to do their work is big hindrance to optimize their journalists' status.

The collective bargaining on journalists' labour rights and gender mainstreaming in the media by the National union of Somali journalists (NUSOJ) with private media managers show slight development in some prominent media houses in the country. The levels of collective bargaining on journalists' labour rights with the media owners for the last two years have increased and the private media has made so far slight progress in recognizing the status and importance of journalists' labour rights, their welfare and safety needs. This is going process of long term strategy plan for union activities as a core issue priority.

**Burhan Ahmed Dahir**  
**Puntland Coordinator, National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)**



## NUSOJ RECEIVES FRENCH REPUBLIC'S HUMAN RIGHTS PRIZE

On 10 December 2009, The National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ) was declared the winner of the French Republic's "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" human rights prize in recognition of its courageous pursuit of defending press freedom and freedom of expression, and seeking justice for victims of free speech and free expression violations in Somalia.

The French Ambassador to Kenya, H. E Mrs Elisabeth Barbier, handed over the award to NUSOJ secretary-general Omar Faruk Osman at a ceremony attended by Somali journalists and representatives of the international

community. According to the ambassador, the Somali journalists' union has been playing a leading role in the promotion and protection of



French Ambassador to Kenya speaking at the Award Ceremony to NUSOJ



journalists' rights, freedom of the press, freedom of expression and seeking justice to address extensive impunity that fuels gross human violations in Somalia. The award administrators said NUSOJ was guided by a professional commitment to the journalism profession, solidarity and safety.

"On the behalf of the National Union of Somali Journalists, I feel greatly honoured and humbled that despite the difficulties with which we have often carried out our work, somebody somewhere has been watching and appreciating this work even in the face of enormous challenges, including extremely difficult working conditions and the suffering of journalists," Omar Faruk said.

He said the award was both historic and symbolic for NUSOJ because it was being given on the day the world community was commemorating International Human Rights Day. "It is also historic to us because today marks the 7th day (exactly one week) since three of our journalist colleagues, as well as medical doctors, students and ministers were killed in yet another bloody attack by enemies of human rights and peace in Mogadishu, Somalia," Omar Faruk Osman added.

"We at NUSOJ not only feel emboldened by this gesture to fight harder against rights violations, but also welcome whole-heartedly all the efforts aimed at addressing the problems of impunity in our country, including violations of free speech, freedom of the media, freedom of association and the attendant violence visited upon innocent citizens of Somalia and the state of insecurity our journalists operate in," he said.

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) welcomed the French Republic's liberty, equality, fraternity human rights prize awarded to its affiliate in Somalia, the National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ).

"This is a well deserved prize and we congratulate NUSOJ leadership and members,"

said Aidan White, IFJ General Secretary. "They have been steadfast in the defence of journalists' rights under sustained, often lethal attacks."

The IFJ says the prize is a fitting tribute to NUSOJ members who lost their lives over many years, including its former Vice President, Nasteh Dahir Farah killed in June 2008, for carrying the torch of honest reporting in the face of violence and lawlessness.

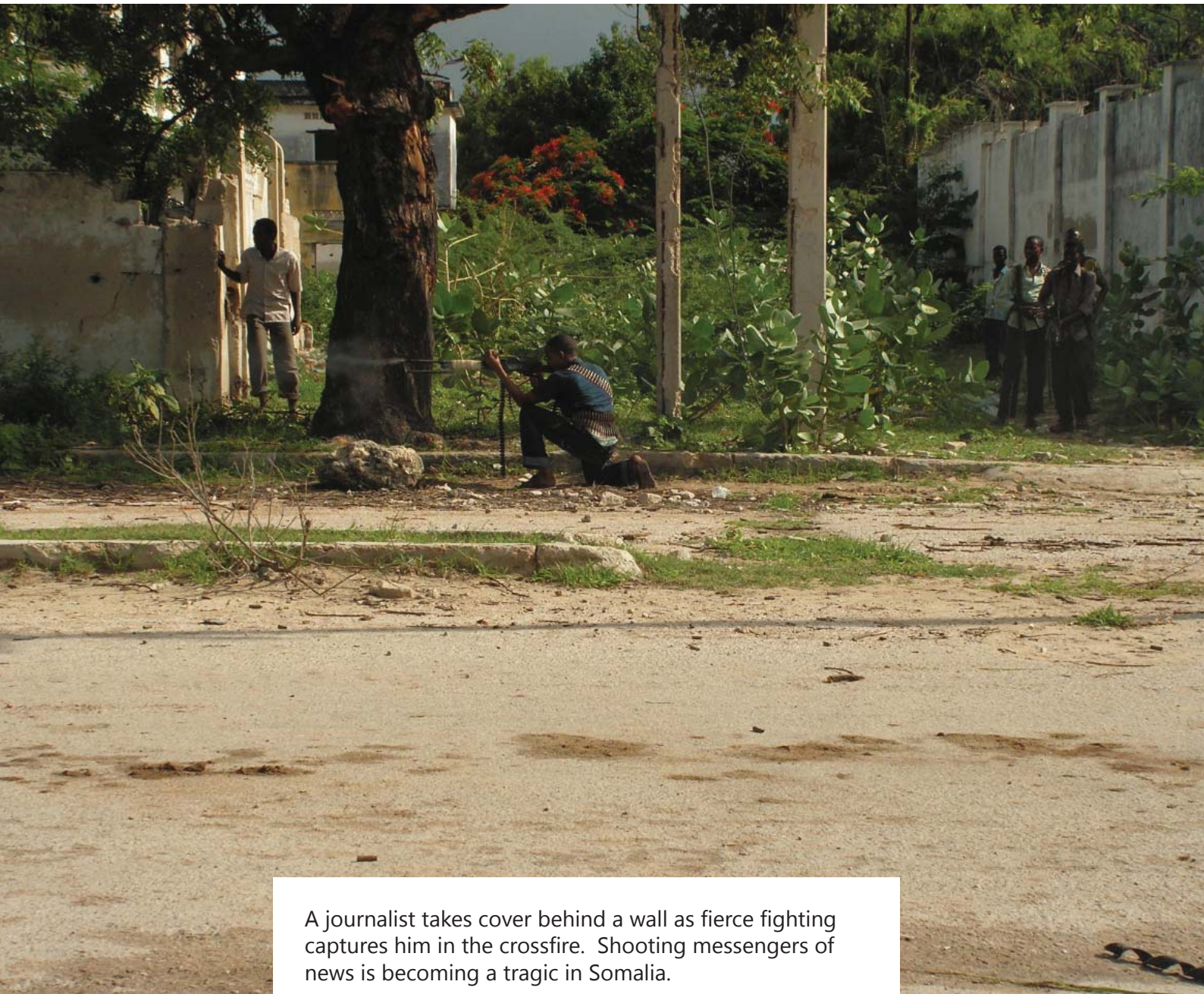
"This year alone, nine journalists were killed in violent attacks in Somalia, including three in a bomb blast at a hotel in Mogadishu last week," added White. "The work of NUSOJ for a safe journalism and the acclaim it is receiving will ensure their deaths were not in vain."

The French Republic's liberty, equality, fraternity human rights prize, established in 1988 and endowed by the Prime Minister of the French Government, is awarded annually by the National Consultative Commission of Human Rights. It is conferred in Paris, or as appropriate in the prize winner's home country, on 10 December each year on the occasion of Human Rights Day, proclaimed by the United Nations.

The prize distinguishes field work and projects dealing with the practical defence and furtherance of human rights, in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Five winners are chosen every year by an independent jury.



Italian and French Ambassadors confer with the NUSOJ Secretary General



A journalist takes cover behind a wall as fierce fighting captures him in the crossfire. Shooting messengers of news is becoming a tragic in Somalia.

The National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ) is a fervent champion for media freedom, the rights of journalists, workers' rights and for social justice in Somalia. Member journalists work across the whole industry as reporters, editors and sub-editors and photographers. Members work in broadcasting, newspapers, magazines, and in the new media. NUSOJ systematically monitors and conducts investigations into violations of press freedom and human rights of journalists. The union provides accurate, prompt and impartial information concerning attacks on journalists such as killings, arrests, death threats and harassments, as well as acts of aggression against media organizations. NUSOJ is a member of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Federation of African Journalists (FAJ), and Eastern Africa Journalists Association (EAJA). It is also a member of International Freedom of Expression eXchange (IFEX) and partner with Reporters without Borders.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [WWW.NUSOJ.ORG](http://WWW.NUSOJ.ORG)



YEAR UNDER REVIEW - PICTORIAL



1

1. Journalists with bulletproof jackets. A discomfort that saves lives in conflict torn Somalia.



2. Late Hassan Zubeyr Haji Hassan receiving bulletproof jacket before being killed.

3. Late Muktar Mohamed Hirabe

4. Late Mohamud Mohamed Yusuf



3



4



WAR ON JOURNALISM IN SOMALIA:  
DEATH, DISPLACEMENT AND DESOLATION

2009 ANNUAL REPORT OF PRESS FREEDOM IN SOMALIA

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