

Murdered journalists symbols of impunity

A day after the 14th anniversary of journalist Norbert Zongo's murder in Burkina Faso and two days before the 8th anniversary of journalist Deyda Hydara's murder in Gambia, Reporters Without Borders accuses the authorities in these two countries of sabotaging the investigations into their deaths and encouraging impunity.

"Will Zongo and Hydara ever be rendered justice?" Reporters Without Borders said. "The authorities in Burkina Faso and Gambia have distinguished themselves in the eyes of their own people and the international community for years by their inertia, lies and absence of any desire to shed light on the murders of these two great journalists.

"As in the Zongo and Hydara cases, the impunity enjoyed by those who murder journalists in Africa is one of the worst scourges for freedom of information in this continent."

The discovery of Zongo's body in a car gutted by fire on 13 December 1998 shocked Burkina Faso and the rest of Africa. Zongo was the editor of the weekly *L'Indépendant* and at the time of his death he had been investigating a murder in which people close to president Compaoré were implicated.

An initial investigation was carried out but in the end the case was dismissed and the authorities have done nothing since then. Zongo's colleagues and Burkina Faso's population are still waiting for justice to be rendered.

Hydara, who was gunned down in Banjul on 16 December 2004, was the co-founder and co-editor of the privately-owned daily *The Point*. He also headed the Gambian journalists' union and was the correspondent of Agence France-Presse and Reporters Without Borders.

The official investigation only came up with improbable theories although it was demonstrated that he was under surveillance at the time of his death. A few weeks after his murder, the authorities adopted media legislation that is among the most repressive in West Africa and has left Gambia's journalists living in terror ever since. More information about media freedom in Gambia and the Hydara case.

The International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX) is currently waging a major campaign against impunity for crimes of violence against those who exercise their right to freedom of expression while the National Union of Somali Journalists has just published a report on impunity in Somalia, Africa's deadliest country for the media.

Against this backdrop, Reporters Without Borders urges the countries of sub-Saharan Africa, especially the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Nigeria and South Sudan, to make justice for murdered journalists one of their priorities for 2013.

Source: [allAfrica](#)

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