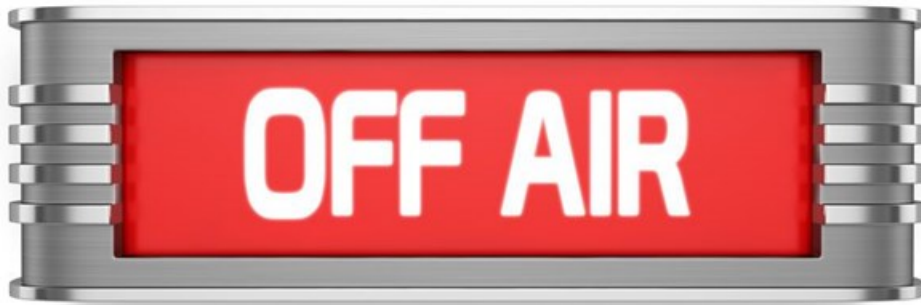


DRC authorities close two opposition radio stations

Authorities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo should immediately reopen two opposition-owned radio stations, Radio Liberté Lisala and Radio Mwana Mboka (Rammbo), and halt the intimidation of journalists, the Committee to Protect Journalists said last week.



© deniskot via [123RF](#)

Radio Liberté Lisala and Radio Mwana Mboka have been off the air since October 9, when police raided their offices, halted broadcasts, ejected employees, and locked the doors, Yannick Makambo, director of Radio Mwana Mboka and Blaise Lukuta, director of Radio Liberté, told CPJ.

Radio Liberté Lisala is owned by opposition politician Jean-Pierre Bemba and Radio Mwana Mboka is owned by opposition politician Crispin Bungdu, Makambo and Lukuta said. Both stations are based in Lisala city, the capital of the DRC's northwestern Mongala province. Long-delayed presidential elections are [scheduled](#) for December in the DRC.

"The closure of Radio Liberté Lisala and Radio Mwana Mboka is a grave act of censorship, which should be swiftly reversed," said CPJ Africa program coordinator Angela Quintal in New York. "Congoese ruling party politicians cannot arbitrarily decide to silence certain media for airing opposition views, especially as the DRC prepares for upcoming elections."

The police acted on orders from Bruce Bika Malambo, mayor of Lisala city and a member of the ruling party, in response

to the stations having aired on October 6 a recorded statement made in an interview with opposition politician Bienvenu Moyengo, president of the provincial assembly, who called for a tax boycott by citizens in protest against poor local services, said Makambo. CPJ obtained a transcript of Moyengo's statement.



DRC newspaper editor detained for criminal defamation

17 Oct 2018



When contacted by CPJ yesterday, Malambo acknowledged ordering the closure of Radio Liberté Lisala and Radio Mwana Mboka, but defended the decision by alleging that the stations were inciting civil disobedience and working to improve the political position of their owners.

"These media are being dictated by [opposition] politicians," he said. Malambo also claimed that the stations would be closed indefinitely in compliance with local regulations, but did not clarify which regulations.

No charges have been brought against anyone associated with the stations, Makambo told CPJ.

According to [Journaliste en Danger](#), a local press freedom group, Moyengo's statement was also broadcast by other radio stations in the province without repercussion.

Over the last year, media outlets in the DRC have been repeatedly [targeted](#) by authorities, according to CPJ [research](#).

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>