

Pressemitteilung

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## The different facets of Africa

Press freedom has many facets in Africa, ranging from the abundance of media outlets in Senegal (73<sup>rd</sup>) and South Africa (35<sup>th</sup>), to the deafening silence of privately owned media in Eritrea (179<sup>th</sup>) and Djibouti (164<sup>th</sup>).

Despite a wave of liberalisation in the 1990s, there are still, too often, cases of arbitrary censorship, especially on the internet with occasional network shutdowns in some countries, arrests of journalists and violent attacks. These usually go completely unpunished, as was the case with the 2016 disappearance of Malian journalist **Birama Touré**, who – as RSF demonstrated – was kidnapped by a Malian intelligence agency and most likely killed while secretly detained.

In recent years, a wave of draconian laws criminalising online journalism has dealt a new blow to the right to information. At the same time, the spread of rumours, propaganda, and disinformation has contributed to the undermining of journalism and access to quality information.

Often poorly supported by the government and still largely dependent on the editorial dictates of their owners, African media outlets struggle to develop sustainable economic models. Nonetheless, the recent emergence of coalitions of investigative journalists has resulted in major revelations about matters of public interest.

Long suffocated by dictatorships, the media landscape has opened up to varying degrees in countries like Angola (99<sup>th</sup>), Zimbabwe (137<sup>th</sup>) and Ethiopia (114<sup>th</sup>) but, in most cases, the repression of dissident journalists persists.

In the Sahel, insecurity and political instability have sharply increased, and there have been recent, major blows to journalism. In 2021, two Spanish journalists were killed in Burkina Faso (41<sup>st</sup>), a French reporter, **Olivier Dubois**, was kidnapped by an armed group in Mali (111<sup>th</sup>) and several journalists were expelled from Benin (121<sup>st</sup>) Mali, and Burkina Faso.