

Martin Schibbye

Martin Schibbye is a Swedish freelance journalist who was arrested together with his colleague, photographer Johan Persson, in Ethiopia on 1 July 2011 following a battle between Ethiopian forces and the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF). In December 2011, the two Swedish journalists were sentenced to 11 years in prison for entering the country illegally and for 'supporting terrorism'. After 14 months behind bars they were pardoned and released on 10 September 2012.

Schibbye, imprisoned at Kaliti Prison with Ethiopian journalist and 2014 Golden Pen of Freedom laureate Eskinder Nega, says he is honoured to have been asked by Eskinder's family to receive this award on his behalf at the opening ceremony of the 66th World Newspaper Congress: "I know that these rewards are more important than food and water when you are locked up as a journalist. You know that the world is watching. That you are not forgotten."

Schibbye will give the first-hand testimony of a journalist who has been accused of the same charges, has faced the same sentence, and has been imprisoned in Kaliti prison together with other Ethiopian journalists who remain in jail. "When you look back and think of those who are left behind in the chaos, left on the concrete floor, between walls of corrugated steel, I feel sick to the stomach. But then I remember their smiles and their strength and think that it's not us that are fighting for their freedom, but rather the imprisoned journalists who are fighting for ours."ⁱ

Martin Schibbye has worked as a foreign correspondent for newspapers including The Times, Amelia and Proletaren and reported from several countries, including Algeria, Cuba, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Palestine, the Philippines, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam.

ⁱ <http://martinschibbye.se/blogg/christmas-in-kality/>