

**WAN-IFRA is the World
Association of Newspapers
and News Publishers**

Its mission is to protect the rights of journalists across the world to operate free media, and provide its members with professional services to help their business prosper in a digital world and perform their crucial role in open societies.

With formal representative status at the United Nations, UNESCO and the Council of Europe, it derives its authority from its global network of leading news publishing companies and technology entrepreneurs, and its legitimacy from its 80 national association members representing 18,000 publications in 120 countries.

www.wan-ifra.org

WAN-IFRA
72 rue d'Hauteville
75010 Paris, France

Rottfeder-Ring 11
60327 Frankfurt a.M., Germany
Phone +46 69 24 0063 0
Fax +49 69 24 0063 300

Chief Executive Officer
Vincent PEYREGNE
vincent.peyregne@wan-ifra.org
Direct +33 1 47 42 85 01
Direct +49 61 51 733 790

Presidency

President
Michael GOLDEN
The New York Times Company
NYC, USA

Vice President
Lisa MacLeod
Tiso Blackstar Group
South Africa

Treasurer
Paul VERWILT
Mediahuis
Antwerpen, Belgium

President World Editors Forum
David CALLAWAY
The Street
NYC, USA

His Excellency Abdiweli Mohamed Ali Gaas
President of Puntland
Garowe, Puntland

12 December 2018

Your Excellency,

We are writing on behalf of the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) and the World Editors Forum, which represent 18,000 publications, 15,000 online sites and over 3,000 companies in more than 120 countries, to express our serious concern at a shooting attack by a police officer on a journalist.

According to reports, on 9 December an unidentified Puntland police officer fired several shots towards journalist Ahmed Sheikh Mohamed, Director-General of Daljir Radio in Bossasso, at close range as he was leaving the radio station's offices. Mr Mohamed escaped unhurt.

When firing the shots, the officer reportedly shouted: "Why do you talk about Asad Diyaana?" Asad Osman Abdullahi, who is also known as Asad Diyaana, is a former head of the Puntland Security Force and a candidate in Puntland's upcoming presidential elections slated for next month. The authorities have neither arrested the police officer nor confirmed a motive for the attack.

We are concerned that this attack is part of a much wider pattern of intimidation of Puntland journalists in the run-up to the election, with media companies reporting almost daily incidents of physical or verbal abuse. Moreover, these acts of intimidation have been carried out with total impunity.

We respectfully remind you that it is the responsibility of the state to provide conditions in which journalists are able to carry out their work safe from violence. The free and independent flow of information is critical if the upcoming presidential election is to be free and fair.

We respectfully ask you to ensure that an investigation is carried out and that the officer responsible for the shooting is swiftly brought to justice. Moreover, we call on you to take all necessary steps to ensure that those who intimidate journalists, or on whose behalf they are acting, are brought to justice, and that journalists are able to work in a safe and secure environment.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Golden
President
World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers



David Callaway
President
World Editors Forum

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