

***Attacks on the Press 2008* report released**

NEW YORK: The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) released the annual global press freedom survey, *Attacks on the Press 2008* on Tuesday, 10 February 2009. The entire book is available online, in both English and French, on the CPJ website.

The 2008 Africa chapter highlights regional press freedom hurdle trends and challenges including:

- A total of 25 journalists were jailed in connection with their work in Africa, over two-thirds held without charge, according to CPJ research. Thirteen journalists were held in Eritrea, which was the fourth jailed of journalists worldwide.
- At least six journalists were killed in 2008 in unclear circumstances with no convictions for their murder. The countries included: the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Nigeria and Somalia.
- Text messaging has become an important tool for African reporters, but the same technology is being used to threaten journalists and undermine the profession.
- Citizen journalism and foreign-based websites are providing timely crisis reporting across the continent and circumventing traditional forms of state censorship. But governments in turn are increasingly targeting such websites and their editors. One online editor remains in jail in Burundi.
- The runoff election period in Zimbabwe was considered “the worst time for journalists in Zimbabwe's history” with a mass crackdown by the state on the press using draconian media laws.
- Criminal defamation and libel laws were used extensively by Francophone African governments to silence critical journalism especially in Niger, Senegal and Cameroon.
- Foreign journalists working in conflict zones within sub-Saharan Africa in 2008 were increasingly targeted in countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia and Zimbabwe.

View the *Attacks on the Press in 2008* report [here](#).