

CPJ Blog: A lesson for South African media: Look to Kenya

By [Tom Rhodes](#) 24 Aug 2010

The chorus of voices opposing the South African government's proposed Protection of Information Bill and state-backed ombudsman continue to grow. South Africa's *Business Day* estimates the press produces three articles per day opposing what many journalists see as an attempt by the ruling party to muzzle investigative reporting.

More than 30 editors from major papers published protest messages mid-month calling on the government to abandon the planned legislation. But the South African media has yet to coordinate a mass protest comparable to that successfully orchestrated by Kenyan journalists in 2007 against the country's media bill. And President Jacob Zuma, infamous for issuing defamation suits against a critical South African press, is not back down easily in the face of public criticism.

It took Kenya a mass protest in August 2007 by hundreds of media practitioners to quash an amendment to the 2005 Media Act that would compel editors to reveal their sources. "I never saw so many journalists in Kenya," recalls Sammy Mbau, who helped organize the protests with a group of colleagues.

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