

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/soudan-du-sud-two-ugandan-journalists-and-local-31-07-2013,44990.html>

Africa - South Sudan

Released

Two Ugandan journalists and local fixer freed after four days

31 July 2013

Reporters Without Borders is relieved to learn that two visiting Ugandan journalists, **Hillary Ayesiga** and **Justine Dralaze**, and their South Sudanese fixer, **Sunday David Tut**, were finally freed today after being held for four days.

The three journalists were arrested shortly after Ayesiga and Dralaze arrived in Juba on 26 July to report for *Feature Story News (FSN)*.

As soon as they arrived, Ayesiga and Dralaze requested permission to do reporting in Juba but they began working without waiting for their accreditation because they assumed they would soon have it. This prompted their arrest.

They said they were not mistreated while detained.

Reporters Without Borders has been told that Ugandan Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi spoke with South Sudanese President Salva Kiir shortly before the three journalists were released.

The two Ugandan journalists were then taken to the information ministry and were due to fly back to Uganda this afternoon.

30.07.2013 - Two Ugandan journalists and local fixer held for past three days

Reporters Without Borders is appalled to learn that South Sudan's army – the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) – has been holding two visiting Ugandan journalists, **Hillary Ayesiga** and **Justin Dralaze**, and their South Sudanese fixer and driver, **Sunday David Tut**, for the past three days.

The three journalists were arrested on the airport road in Juba, the capital, on 27 July, supposedly for filming along the road without permission.

"The government's silence about these three journalists' place of detention and present state of health, and what they are alleged to have done, is unacceptable and worrying," Reporters Without Borders said.

"We condemn the fact that they have had no contact with the outside world since their arrest and we fear that they may have been mistreated. We call on the South Sudanese authorities to release them unconditionally at once and to explain the reasons for their arrest and prolonged detention."

Reporters Without Borders criticized the regime's paranoia and the brutality of its security forces in a 2012 report.

Following their arrest, the three journalists were reportedly taken to National Security Headquarters, which is notorious for the appalling conditions in which suspects are held. According to some official sources, they were arrested for having no documents proving they were journalists.

Ayesiga, who normally works for China's *CCTV*, and Drazeze, a former *Reuters* journalist in Uganda, are on assignment in Juba for *Feature Story News (FSN)* of the United States to cover the security and political situation after President Salva Kiir's decision to fire his entire cabinet on 23 July and impose a curfew in the capital. Tut usually works for the South Sudanese radio station *Liberty FM*.

The Ugandan embassy in Juba said yesterday that a meeting had been scheduled with South Sudanese officials for today to discuss the situation of the journalists. This meeting was cancelled by the South Sudanese authorities at the last minute.

The government has still not provided any information about the journalists, who seem to be facing a fourth night in detention.

In July 2012, one year after South Sudan gained its independence, Reporters Without Borders issued a report about its media entitled: "[World's youngest country yet to embark on road to civil liberties.](#)"

South Sudan is ranked 124th out of 179 countries in the [2013 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#), a fall of 13 places from its position the year before, when it was ranked for the first time.

[More information.](#)

Main photo: National Security Headquarters, Juba



- Hillary Ayesiga in Kasese, Western Uganda



- Justin Dralaze (on the right)
-