

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/somalia-al-shabaab-bans-tv-in-southern-08-11-2013,45445.html>

Africa - Somalia

TV ban

Al-Shabaab bans TV in southern town of Barawe

8 November 2013

Reporters Without Borders condemns the Islamist militia Al-Shabaab's latest attempt to restrict freedom of information, this time by trying to ban television viewing in the coastal town of Barawe, in the Lower Shabelle region of southern Somalia

"This ban's real target is TV news stations, which annoy Al-Shabaab by showing viewers not only its atrocities but also the progress that the population has made in the regions from which Al-Shabaab has been expelled," Reporters Without Borders said.

"This level of obscurantism recalls the worst period of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and just reinforces [Al-Shabaab's image as a predator of freedom of information](#) that tries to turn the areas it controls into news black holes."

Al-Shabaab announced the ban on 28 October, giving the inhabitants of Barawe five days to hand in their TV sets and satellite dishes at the Barawe municipal office for collection by Al-Shabaab representatives.

Residents immediately voiced outrage about the ban. The Sabahi news website quoted one man as saying: "The only channels my family and I watch are the Somali channels, such as Universal TV, Horn Cable TV and Somali Channel TV, so that we can stay informed on global news."

The ban comes just weeks after US Navy SEALs staged a nighttime raid on the Al-Shabaab compound in Barawe.

Last month, Al-Shabaab reportedly imposed a similar TV ban in the nearby town of Bulomarer.

The product of a merger of several Somali Islamist groups, Al-Shabaab was formed in the first half of the past decade, began growing in strength in 2006 and managed to control part of Mogadishu in 2009. Its goal is the creation of an Islamic state based on the Sharia throughout Somalia.

Since being driven out of Mogadishu in August 2011, Al-Shabaab has concentrated on terrorist actions in Somalia and abroad, including suicide bombings, summary executions, and, most recently, the gruesome attack against the Westgate mall in Kenya. Journalists are often the victims of its terror campaign.

Somalia is ranked 175th out of 179 countries in the [2013 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

[More information about Somalia.](#)

Photo : Sabahi/Dahir Jibril

You can download those documents on our website :

- , (JPEG - 61.7 kb)
-