

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/lebanon-lakome-news-website-still-blocked-20-02-2014,45905.html>

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Middle East/North Africa - Morocco

Deliberate obstruction

## Lakome news website still blocked despite editor's repeated requests

20 February 2014

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Reporters Without Borders reiterates its call for an end to government blocking of the *Lakome* news website, in effect since 17 October, and the withdrawal of all charges against **Ali Anouzla**, the editor of the site's Arabic-language version.

"The authorities are clearly stalling, both by not responding to Anouzla's request for the censorship to be lifted and by repeatedly postponing his appearance before an investigating judge," said Reporters Without Borders head of research Lucie Morillon.

"No one will be fooled by this policy. Morocco manifestly deserves its poor position – 136th out of 180 countries – in the 2014 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index."

*Lakome* was blocked on 17 October, shortly after Anouzla, who had been held since 17 September, issued a statement saying that he was unable to take responsibility for what was posted on the site while he was in detention and therefore requested its "temporary suspension."

The authorities went far beyond what Anouzla requested because access to both the Arabic and French-language versions of *Lakome* has been blocked ever since.

Anouzla has repeatedly sought the lifting of the blocking since his release on 25 October after five weeks in "preventive detention."

On 7 January, he submitted a request to this effect to the National Agency for Telecommunications Regulation (ANRT), which subsequently told him by phone that he should address his request to the prosecutor's office. Anouzla has received no response to the request to the prosecutor's office that he submitted in early January.

At a news conference in Rabat yesterday, a day after his appearance before the investigating judge was postponed yet again, this time until 20 May, Anouzla announced his intention to launch a new news website, *Lakome2.com*.

Anouzla also reported at the news conference that he and Aboubakr Jamaï, the editor of *Lakome*'s French-language version, have been chosen for the Washington-based Project on Middle East Democracy's "Leaders for Democracy" award, which will be presented at a ceremony in Washington on 8 May.

Read these previous press releases:

- Before [King Mohammed travelled to Washington](#) on 22 November
  - Before [US Secretary of State John Kerry's scheduled visit to Morocco](#) on 11-12 November (which was finally cancelled)
  - Before [French foreign minister Laurent Fabius' meeting with his Moroccan counterpart as part of the 5+5 dialogue on 23 October](#)
  - A [joint appeal by 60 human rights organizations](#) on 10 October
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