

# Zambian security flips over flight

In an apparent case of over-reaction, security personnel prevent journalists from photographing visiting president's stranded airplane.

Livingstone - Security personnel at the Livingstone International Airport attempted to stop Edward Mulenga, a bureau chief of the *Times of Zambia* newspaper, and other journalists, from taking pictures when the aircraft carrying Djibouti's President Ismail Guelleh was unable to take off on July 17. The security personnel also threatened to confiscate Mulenga's camera.

Mulenga told MISA Zambia that security personnel ordered journalists to stop taking pictures. The journalists were at the airport to cover the departure of President Guelleh from Zambia's tourist capital, Livingstone, to Lusaka.

The security personnel also tried to grab Mulenga's camera, but he was able to retain it by assuring them that he would delete the photographs. He did not do so, however, and instead sent them to the *Times of Zambia*, which in any event did not publish them.

Mulenga said that, when the security personnel asked why he was taking pictures, he told them, "Look, I'm doing my job, just like you", and that he was doing his best to capture the events.

He told MISA Zambia that he was not frightened by the incident. "It was one of those things we journalists come across in the course of our day."

In the end, Mulenga was able to reason with the security. "We resolved the whole thing. I made them see we were both doing our jobs," he said.

Father Frank Bwalya, the chairperson of MISA Zambia, said it is understandable that security may be tight since there was a foreign president involved, but as long as journalists identified themselves and stayed behind security barriers, there should be no reason to prevent them from exercising their professional duties.

Source: [MISA](#)