

Spotlight on media freedom in Africa - 19 Sep 2016

BY LOUISE MARSLAND

It was not a good week for media freedom in Africa, as several more incidents have been recorded that violate free flow of information and human rights in countries in Africa. [Eritrea](#) is in the spotlight again on the 15 year anniversary of a purge of journalists and politicians who have not been seen or heard of since. The United Nations is calling for their human rights to be respected.

Another week and another internet shutdown - this time [Gabon](#) continues to disrupt internet access following on its disputed election results; in [South Sudan](#), the largest English language daily newspaper has been ordered to close again after reporting on government corruption; and the [Southern African Freelancers' Association \(SAFREA\)](#), is standing in solidarity with Kenyan colleagues in protesting the mysterious deaths of five journalists in Kenya over the past year.

This is a disgraceful litany of attacks on media freedom and journalists.

But thankfully, it really is the last gasp of politicians or partisan groups who think they can control what their electorate thinks and what information they have access to. Free internet for all, available from satellites orbiting our earth or 'balloons' or drones, whichever technology wins, will make short work of any attempts in the near future to disrupt internet access and social media services to citizens around the globe; or to try cover up human rights abuses. It is inevitable, thankfully, that we will have more transparency thanks to such innovation, over time.

Have a great week!

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