

Beninese authorities holding collaborator of detained journalist

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) can reveal that the Beninese authorities have been holding a journalist since 16 July for collaborating with the editor of a banned Beninese media outlet who was abducted and detained after being brought back to Benin on 10 July while on a visit to Côte d'Ivoire from Togo. RSF is alarmed by these clearly arbitrary detentions.

Have Benin's authorities launched a witch-hunt against journalists collaborating with *Olofofo*, the critical investigative media outlet founded and edited by **Hugues Comlan Sossoukpè**, a political refugee in neighbouring Togo since 2021 whose [abduction](#) in Côte d'Ivoire was previously [revealed](#) by RSF? *Olofofo's* dissemination has been banned in Benin since March 2025.

Four months after that abduction and ongoing detention, RSF has discovered that the authorities have also been holding another journalist, **Ali Moumouni**, for allegedly working with *Olofofo* since September 2024.

According to the information obtained by RSF, Ali Moumouni was arrested six days after *Olofofo's* editor without any official reason or arrest warrant. His home was searched and his belongings were confiscated, also without a warrant. He was remanded in custody on 21 July at the main prison in the economic capital, Cotonou, and is facing five charges, including "incitement to violence and rebellion," "harassment via electronic communications" and "apology for terrorism."

A month after the judicial system resumed working on 8 October (following a nearly five-week suspension), Ali Moumouni has neither appeared in court nor even been questioned by any judicial authority. He remains in pretrial detention, based on an arrest warrant issued on 21 July by the Court for the Repression of Economic and Terrorism Crimes (CRIET). The court's special prosecutor did not respond to RSF's questions.

"Ali Moumouni's provisional detention is dragging on. Having gone unnoticed by the media and political establishment, it is one of the many ramifications of the grotesque case fabricated against Hugues Comlan Sossoukpè, a grossly unjust case that is politically motivated. In their witch-hunt, the Beninese authorities seem to forget that simple professional collaboration cannot constitute grounds for detaining a journalist. RSF condemns the arbitrary detentions of Ali Moumouni and Hugues Comlan Sossoukpè and demands their immediate release."

Sadibou Marong

Director of RSF's Sub-Saharan Africa desk

A former journalist with *Canal 3*, which is part of the *Fraternité* media group, Ali Moumouni was beginning his third day of journalism training for students at Sainte Rita College in Cotonou on 16 July when, at around 8:45 a.m., two individuals dressed in civilian clothes signalled to him to leave the room, RSF has learned.

After a ten-minute conversation, these individuals allegedly ordered him to follow them, without providing any official reason or an arrest warrant. A search of his home ensued, again without notification or official documentation, during which his electronic devices were seized, according to the information gathered by RSF.

He was then taken to the National Centre for Digital Investigations, formerly known as the Central Office for the Repression of Cybercrime (OCRC). He spent the day there before being questioned and then transferred to the Cotonou port police station. Five days later, on 21 July, he was finally remanded in custody by the CRIET. Since then, he has been held at the Cotonou civilian prison pending trial.

Hugues Comlan Sossoukpè is meanwhile now held at the civilian prison in Ouidah, near Cotonou, following his [abduction](#) on 10 July in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, which he was visiting in a professional capacity at the invitation of the Ivorian authorities. In recent months, he has told RSF about the threats he had repeatedly received, including in Togo, where he was granted asylum in 2021, two years after having to flee Benin because he had provided critical coverage of the 2019 legislative elections that were held without the opposition.

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