

Ugandan media urge court to withdraw injunction



By [Walter Wafula](#)

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The Human Rights Network for Journalists (HRNJ) is urging the government to withdraw a court order that restricts the media in Uganda from writing about police investigations into the July 11 bomb-blast that occurred in Kampala.

"HRN-Uganda calls on government to withdraw the injunction as part of promoting an open and accountable government," said Geoffrey Ssebagala the programme's coordinator, HRN-Uganda on 21 August 2010. "The government should be accountable to its people and the media should be allowed to operate freely," he told journalists in Kampala.

Restrictions imposed

Ssebagala's call comes on the back of a court injunction issued last Monday by the Nakawa chief magistrates restraining print and broadcast media, operating in Uganda, from publishing information and/or police investigation relating to the terrorism case pending before the same court.

The Anti-Terrorism Act, 2002 states that any person who establishes, runs or supports any institution for promoting terrorism, publishing and disseminating news or materials that promote terrorism is also liable to suffer death upon conviction.

The court order means that any journalist operating in Uganda who reports on the police investigation into the terrorists acts, risks being charged with terrorism.

Media houses disappointed

The HRN like most media houses in the country have expresses their disappointment over the way the government has criminalised their work denying the public the right to know the outcome of the investigations.

The injunction comes at a time when there's a power struggle between the police force and the army over who should carry out the investigation. About two weeks ago, the army paraded terrorist suspects before the media while the police General Kale Kayihura held a parallel press conference at the same time at the government's media centre. *The Daily Monitor*, a Uganda private newspaper, highlighted the conflict between the police and army over who had captured the suspects.

ABOUT WALTER WAFULA

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