

Congolese journalist jailed for “insulting” provincial governor



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Reporters Without Borders (RSF) joins Journalist in Danger (JED), its partner organization in Democratic Republic of Congo, in calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Dek'son Assani Kamango, a journalist detained in Kindu, the capital of the eastern province of Maniema, for nothing more than an article containing criticism of the governor.

Kamango, who works for Kindu-based *Radio Omega* and runs the *Actualités Maniema* news website, was arrested on 7 February and was transferred to Kindu's main prison, where he is being held on a charge of "insulting the provincial authority."

According to the [information obtained by JED](#), the governor brought a complaint against Kamango over an article listing a series of criticisms by members of the provincial parliament who elected him governor.

"This latest arrest and prolonged detention of a journalist shows that, without firm measures by the country's most senior political leaders, all the statements in favour of press freedom will not suffice to reduce the still very worrying number of abuses against media professionals in the DRC," said Arnaud Froger, the head of RSF's Africa desk

"We call for the unconditional release of this journalist, who should not be in prison, and we reiterate our call for an urgent moratorium on arrests of journalists in connection with their work, pending legislative reform that abolishes prison sentences for press offences."

In a [report](#) published on 23 January, JED described Félix Tshisekedi's first year as president as "worrying," with nearly 100 abuses of different kinds against journalists and media outlets, including 14 cases of journalists being arrested and held for varying periods. Like JED, RSF regrets that the new government has taken no significant political, judicial or security measures to make journalists' work safer.

When RSF and JED met jointly with President Tshisekedi on the sidelines of the Paris Peace Forum on 12 November, he expressed support for the idea of a [moratorium](#) on arrests of journalists in connection with their work pending an overhaul of the 1996 press law. RSF and JED also urged him to quickly adopt a mechanism to protect journalists, of which the first step would be appointing a network of focal points in government agencies and ministries concerned with press freedom.

The DRC is ranked 154th out of 180 countries in [RSF's 2019 World Press Freedom Index](#).