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Ethiopian Consulate General office

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Sverige

**Regarding imprisoned Swedish journalists in Ethiopia**

The Association of Norwegian Editors (NR) organizes about 750 Norwegian editors from all kinds of journalistic media. Freedom of information, freedom of expression and editorial independence are among the main topics of the association.

We are deeply worried over the accusations, trial and imprisonment of the two Swedish journalists Martin Schibbye and Johan Persson in Ethiopia. According to reliable sources and reports, it is obvious to us that they have not been facing a fair trial, according to common and accepted international principals. We have every indication that they where only trying to do their job as independent reporters. If so, the process against them is a strike not only to them, but to the idea of Ethiopia as a democratic society that respects international human rights and the principals of press freedom.

Unfortunately this is not the only example of independent reporters and journalists being harassed in Ethiopia. Reports from international pressfreedom- and journalistorganisations clearly indicates that Ethiopia is gaining a reputation as a nation that is trying to control and suppress reporting that are critical to the government and the political leadership. Media houses that broadcast or print unwelcome news have been banned or suspended or seen signals jammed, websites blocked and copies of publications confiscated or destroyed. Foreign publications and broadcasts have been banned or blocked, and access to social media websites has been temporarily disabled in some cases.

We strongly urge the Ethiopian authorities to release the imprisoned Swedish journalists, and to repeal the suppression of free media and critical journalism.

Oslo, Norway, 2012-01-06

With regards

on behalf of the Association of Norwegian Editors



Harald Stanghelle

President