

URGENT ACTION

JOURNALIST CHARGED WITH SPREADING FALSE NEWS

Casimir Kpedjo, the managing editor of the newspaper 'New Economy' (Nouvelle Economie), was charged with publishing "false information" on 23 April. The charge is in relation to articles from the New Economy newspaper that Casimir shared on Facebook about the economic situation in Benin. He has been released on bail pending his trial which begins on 2 May.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

*President Republic of Benin
Patrice Talon
Palais de la Marina
Cotonou, Benin
Email : communicationdigitale@presidence.bj
Twitter: @PresidenceBenin*

Your Excellency Patrice Talon,

*I am concerned about the situation of **Casimir Kpedjo**, the managing editor of the newspaper 'New Economy' (Nouvelle Economie).*

Casimir Kpedjo was arrested by the police on 18 April at his house in Cotonou as a result of a complaint from the State Judicial Officer, after he shared articles from the New Economy newspaper on Facebook regarding the economic situation of Benin. He was detained at the Central Office of Repressions against Cyber Crime (Office Centrale des Répressions contre la Cyber-criminalité).

On 23 April, he was charged with publishing "false information" by the Court of Repression of Economic Offenses and Terrorism. The same day he was released on bail pending trial.

His trial begins on 2 May.

I urge you to ensure that:

- *The charge of publishing "false information" against Casimir Kpedjo is dropped immediately as he has been charged solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression;*
- *The right to freedom of expression is fully respected, protected, promoted and fulfilled in Benin.*

Yours sincerely,

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Casimir Kpedjo was arrested by the police on 18 April after he shared some articles from the New Economy newspaper on Facebook. The newspaper articles allege that Beninese authorities had contracted a debt of nearly 725 million USD (428 CFA billion) in breach of the 2019 finance law.

His laptops and mobile phones were confiscated when he was arrested.

Benin has adopted several repressive laws in recent years which are now being used to crackdown on dissent, including a Code of digital law (Code digital) adopted in 2017 which criminalizes publication of false information, press offenses online and incitement to rebellion online.

The Beninese authorities shut down the Internet and social media on 28 April during the legislative elections.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: French

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: [10 June 2019]

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Casimir Kpedjo (he/his/him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: [N/A]