

DIGITAL RIGHTS IN AFRICA 2017 REPORT





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Good for Business: Why Private Sector Must Work With Citizens,
Civil Society for Digital Rights



Trends in Digital Rights in Africa 2017



1. Rise in citizen pushback against digital rights abuses and legal victories



2. Increased recourse to local and/or regional African institutions for digital rights advocacy



3. A renewed focus on the role of business in human rights



4. Increased attacks against press freedom

Journalists, society's bellwethers and conscience, increasingly do their work online to reach larger audiences, and have come under severe attack for it. The Internet has expanded the reach and amplitude of their message, and brought them into conflict with repressive regimes and hostile audiences within the continent. As fittingly expressed by Befeqadu Hailu, an Ethiopian journalist and a member of the Zone 9 blogger collective arrested in April 2014 and charged with terrorism, "the internet for journalism is now like the air you breathe. Without the internet, modern journalism means nothing"¹⁰. All across the continent in 2017, as this report documents, there were numerous stories of arrests, attacks and surveillance of journalists by their fellow citizens and governments. Among the most prominent stories in this regard are the reported mass surveillance of journalists¹¹ and blocking of several news websites¹² in Egypt, and the brutal arrests of citizens covering the Internet shutdown in the Al Hoceima region of Morocco¹³. In Nigeria, there was an unprecedented number of arrests of journalists during the year. In fact, because journalists are probably the most effective users of the Internet as a form of mas



The Human Angle:

**Digital Rights Violations Affect Real
Human Lives**

2017 Digital Rights Violations Across Africa



Central Africa: **Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, The Republic of Congo.**

East Africa: **Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania.**

North Africa: **Egypt, Morocco.**

Southern Africa: **Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe**

West Africa: **Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo**





Conclusion:

**Time To Find A Solution To Internet
Shutdowns Is Now, And Why Internet
Businesses May Hold The Key**

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