

Journalist Erick Kabendera abducted in Tanzania

The Committee to Protect Journalists is concerned for the safety of investigative reporter Erick Kabendera who was forcefully removed from his home yesterday, and called on Tanzanian police to disclose whether they have him in custody.



A local market in Dar es Salaam, pictured in May. A group of armed men forcefully took an investigative journalist, Erick Kabendera, from his home outside the city on July 29. Credit: CPJ/AFP/Said Khalfan.

Kabendera's wife, who was cited in [The Citizen](#), said that about six people who claimed to be police took her husband from their home in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam. The men said they were taking the journalist to the Oysterbay police station, but they did not wear uniforms and refused to identify themselves when challenged, *The Citizen* said. The men also took away phones belonging to Kabendera, his wife, and neighbours who recorded and took pictures of the incident.

When colleagues and a lawyer from the Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition went to the police station to check on the journalist, Kabendera was not there, according to Watetezi TV, a news outlet associated with the coalition, and Ansbert Ngurumo, a Tanzanian journalist who runs the news blog [Sauti Kubwa](#) from exile, and who is following the case. Watetezi TV reported that police at the station referred the lawyer to the Central Police in Dar es Salaam.

Dar es Salaam's police chief, Lazaro Mambosasa told *The Citizen* that the case had not been reported to them. [Millard Ayo](#) and [Jamii Forums](#) later reported that police in Kinondoni, which is also in Dar es Salaam, said they were interrogating the journalist. CPJ could not confirm that the journalist was detained by police. A call late today to the police inspector general Simon Sirro went unanswered.

"The manner in which this journalist was taken, by men claiming to be police, is very ominous and further evidence that the press is not safe in President John Magufuli's Tanzania," said CPJ Sub-Saharan Africa representative Muthoki Mumo. "Authorities must immediately disclose if they are holding Erick Kabendera, and for what reason, and ensure the journalist is returned safely to his family."

A journalist who speaks with Kabendera and who asked not to be named for fear of retaliation, told CPJ that Kabendera had earlier today expressed concern for his safety.

Kabendera's work has appeared in *The Citizen's* sister publication [The East African](#), the website [African Arguments](#), and the British newspaper [The Guardian](#).

Press freedom has deteriorated drastically in Tanzania under the presidency of John Magufuli, [CPJ has found](#). In 2017, freelancer [Azory Gwanda](#) disappeared in the country's Coast Region and has not been heard from since.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>