



REPORT ON THE SITUATION OF CARTOONISTS WORLDWIDE

2016/2017



RIBER



CARTOONING FOR PEACE
REPORT ON THE SITUATION
OF CARTOONISTS WORLDWIDE
2016/2017

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Foreward

“NEVER GIVE UP”

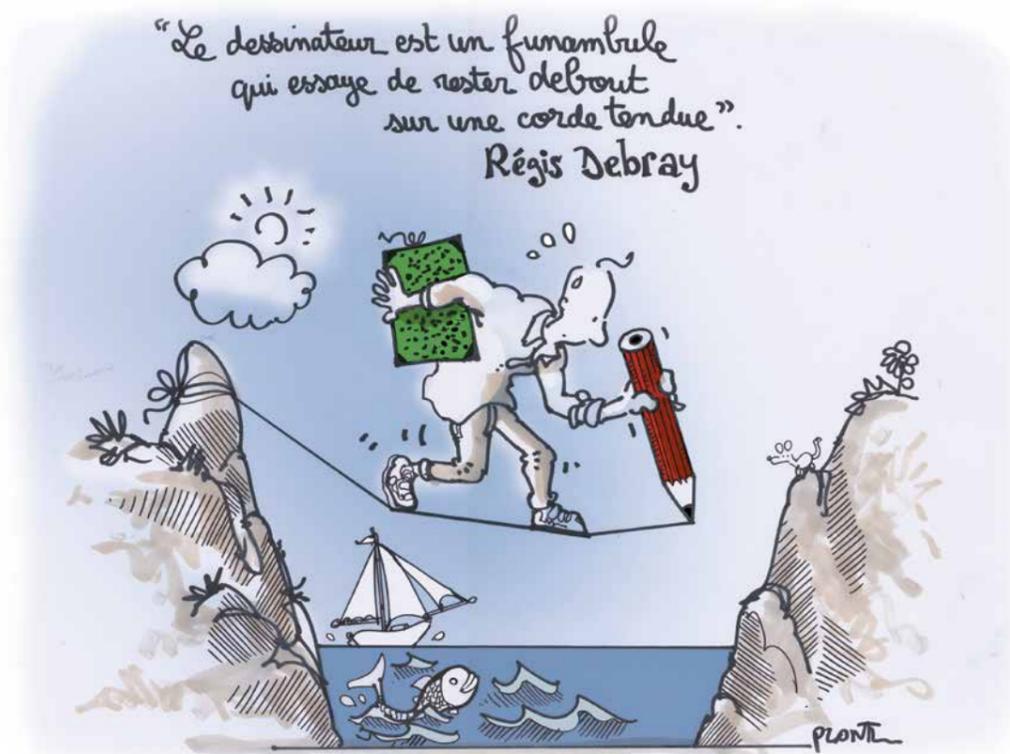
— by [Vladimir Vasak](#), board member of Cartooning for Peace and investigative reporter for Arte

Always in a rush, often overwhelmed, we, the privileged French, informed and used to living in a democracy (it, too, succumbs to its moments of doubt, but remains solid enough), we must not cowardly close our eyes to what is going on in the rest of the world!

Thanks to its work for the past ten years in support of the freedom of cartooning, the association Cartooning for Peace, located in Paris, participates in the very mobilization that this report advocates. For the danger is there: that in the name of everyday life dominated by economic difficulties and terrorist threats, we forget the essential: freedom, ours, yours. Perhaps this is the true meaning of this document that you are about to browse: it will be like a reminder for all of us, who have undoubtedly had over these past years a tendency to forget our fundamental values, or rather, to consider them as a given. Yet, the events over these recent months, from the attack at the *Charlie Hebdo* offices to an electoral turning in on ourselves expressed in many countries, these events show us that nothing is ever a given. Brexit, Trump or Putin, Orbán in Hungary, the PiS party in Poland, Maduro in Venezuela, Marine Le Pen or the AfD party in Germany, all these names and movements (I'm certainly forgetting some), seem to bother us less and less. As if we were getting used to them...

So, isn't it time to return to the fundamentals, the root of our commitments, such as the one we are trying to express to our editorial cartoonists?

“Of above all, never give up,” a magical phrase that we hear all too often, I'm suggesting that we appropriate it for ourselves. Never abandon the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: the freedom of expression is one of its pillars, the freedom of the press, one of its representations. Can this report make us aware of the reality of this battle that we must never stop fighting? We are not safe from a reversal of history. If certain cartoonists choose France to live in exile, it is because our country, in their eyes, still embodies this message of hope. It is up to all of us to thank them for their confidence in our country, it is up to all of us to help them so as to not let them down. For if they fail in their work towards freedom, it will also be our own. So, “above all, never give up.” 🐦



“The cartoonist is a tight rope-walker trying to stand still”, Régis Debray
Plantu (France)



CARTOONING FOR PEACE is an international network of editorial cartoonists, who use humor to fight for the respect of cultures and freedoms. Created in 2006 at the United Nations headquarters, Cartooning for Peace, represented by its foundation in Geneva and its association in Paris, is presided over by *Le Monde's* newspaper cartoonist, Plantu, and placed under the patronage of the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan.

Ten years after its creation, Cartooning for Peace's network includes 162 cartoonists from 58 different countries around the globe.

Thanks to their ability to make people smile, transcend borders and languages and simplify complex political situations, cartoons are an undeniable tool dedicated to tolerance, capable of creating intercultural dialogue and nourishing debate on fundamental notions such as freedom of expression, peace or tolerance. In order to stimulate reflection on humanist values to which it is profoundly attached, Cartooning for Peace does its utmost to:

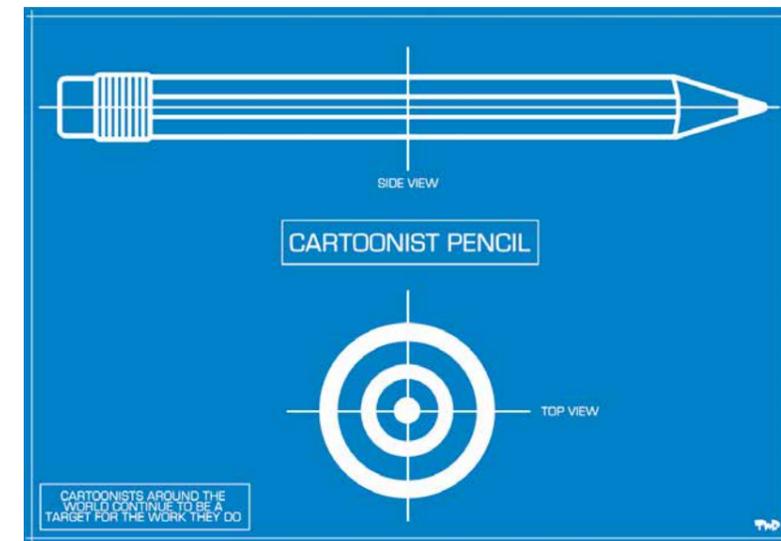
- ⇒ the promotion of the editorial cartoon as a means of defending human rights and freedom of speech through events, publications and exhibitions;
- ⇒ the use of the cartoons' educational value to denounce all forms of intolerance and to raise young and vulnerable people's awareness about major social issues through humour;
- ⇒ providing support and visibility to press cartoonist who are prevented from working freely or under threat.

Whether their cartoons concern politics, the economy, sports or religion, cartoonists are confronted with the same threats as newspaper, radio and

television journalists who cover sensitive subjects. Censorship, legal proceedings, attacks, imprisonment, exile, disappearances and, in the worst of cases, murder: many different acts of violence proving that cartoonists are always on the front line.

Unique witnesses of current events and veritable barometers of the freedom of expression, they defy threats in order to inform us on the state of democracy during periods of insecurity and trouble. In a context where violations against the freedom of expression have worsened, it seems indispensable to give the floor to those who take up the pencil, in order to pay tribute to their backgrounds and struggles.

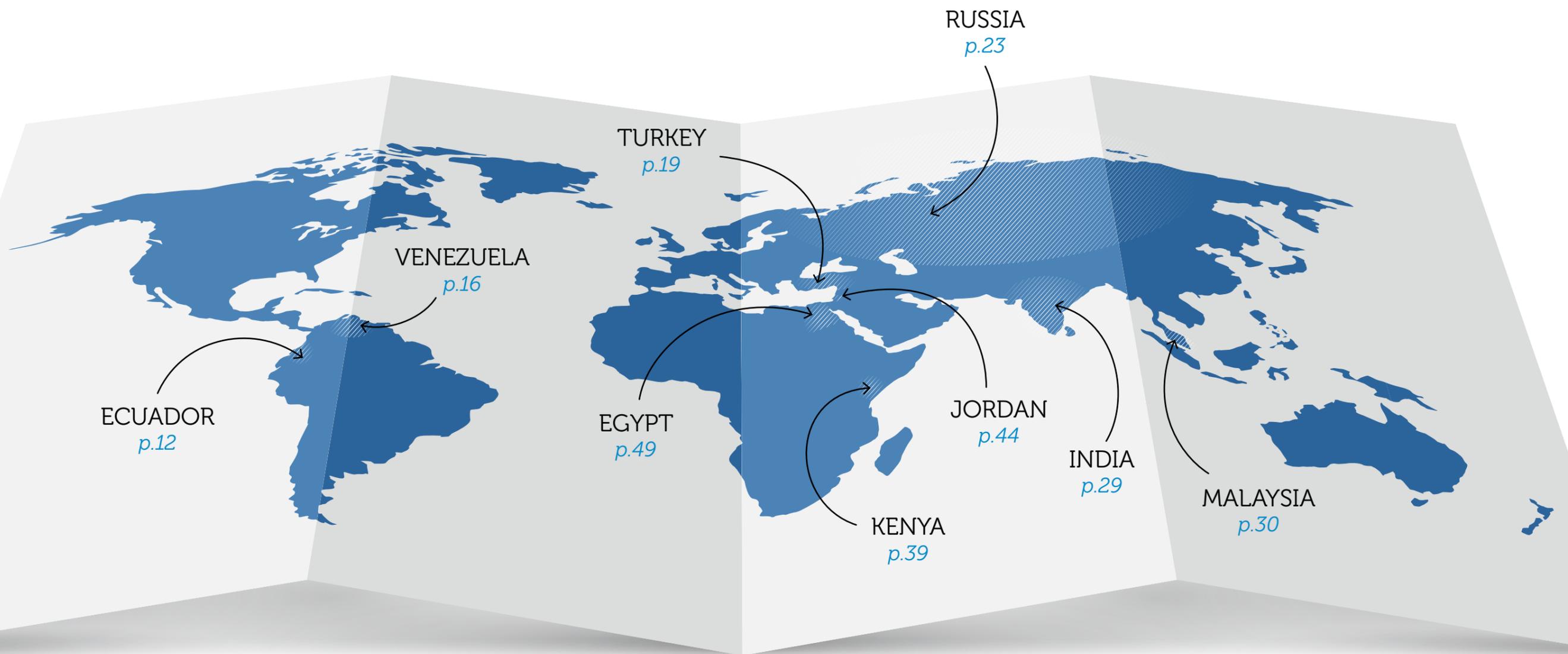
Based on the information collected between 2016 and April 2017 by Cartooning for Peace's watchdog and alert unit, this report attempts to shed clarity on the dangers and threats risked by cartoonists, yet in no way does this represent a scientific and exhaustive list. Depending on the information that the association had in its possession, it chose to discuss the situations in certain countries and of certain cartoonists rather than others. This does not in anyway minimize the difficult situations and contexts in which other cartoonists may find themselves. 🐦



Tjeerd
Royaards
(NL)

MAP OF HOTSPOTS FOR CARTOONISTS

Based on the information collected by Cartooning for Peace's watchdog and alert unit, this map attempts to give an overview of violations against freedom of expression of cartoonists committed between 2016 and 2017.



ECUADOR

KEY FIGURES

POPULATION
16.38 million
inhabitants (2016)

POLITICAL SYSTEM
/PRESIDENT
Presidential system
▶ Rafael Correa

RELIGIONS
Catholicism (74%)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Spanish

LITERACY RATE
93.29%
(UNDP, 2005-2013)

GROWTH RATE
3.67%
(WB, 2014)

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
4.12% (IMF, 2015)

DEMOCRACY INDEX
5.81 "hybrid regime" –
ranked 82nd out of 167
(2016)

CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX
31 – ranked 120th
out of 176 (TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL, 2016)

HDI
0.73 – ranked 88th
out of 187 (UNDP, 2014)

RWB RANKING
Ranked 109th out of 180 in
2016 – 108th in 2015
(WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX)

POLITICAL SITUATION

The Republic of Ecuador has a presidential system in which the President, both the head of state and the government, is elected to 4-year terms by direct universal suffrage. A constitutional reform voted in 2015 allows elected officials to keep running for office indefinitely.

Since 2007, Rafael Correa, a trained economist and fervent Catholic, whose "citizen revolution," a process of social, economic and political transformations, permanently transformed Ecuador, has ruled the country. Between 2006 and 2016, the poverty rate was practically cut in half and the country, whose economy is essentially based on revenue from oil, experienced nearly 4% growth. The many social programs set up and investments in higher education created a consequential reduction in social inequality. Even though the regime was sometimes criticized for its authoritarian deviations, Rafael Correa, who did not run again in 2017, enjoyed a certain popularity with the Ecuadorian population, despite the corruption scandals that also damaged the end of his term.

Ecuador is an active figure in regional integration. Quito houses the seat of the Union of South American Nations (USAN). The Correa regime was also considered ideologically close to the Chavez government and his successor, Maduro, in Venezuela, as well as with Edo Morales's Bolivia and the Cuban Castro regime, particularly regarding the defense of non-interventionism. The country has led a pragmatic foreign policy, with both its neighbors as well as with the United States and China, which represent its principal commercial partners.

The presidential election took place between February and April 2017. After a keenly contested second round, Lenin Moreno, Vice-President of the country from 2007 to 2013 and political heir to Correa, won with 51.55% of the votes against the

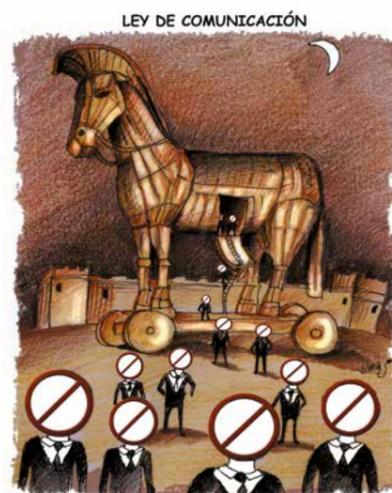
former banker, Guillermo Lasso, a free-market candidate. The latter continues to contest the results and condemns the corruption risks.

This campaign, as well as the last turbulent months of Correa's term, leaves Moreno with a divided and politically tense country, one that will have to face up to a rather poor economic situation following the revaluation of the dollar and the rise in unemployment.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

The year 2016 was marked by a generally hostile climate towards the media, and a deterioration of the freedom of expression in Ecuador. The UN Committee of Human Rights expressed its concern regarding certain legislative measures and practices that "could discourage the expression of critical positions or the publication of essential information in the media and on social media regarding questions of public interest, as well as have a negative effect on the freedom of opinion and expression."

If freedoms of expression and the press are rights guaranteed by the Ecuadorian consti-



tution, these rights have nevertheless been subjected to restrictions.

The Ecuadorian Communication Law (ECL), adopted in June 2013, authorized the implementation of a regulatory framework for the media sector, following the example of other countries from the region like Venezuela and Uruguay. It establishes certain major principles such as the banning of any form of censorship, in theory, by authorities, and even a measure to support equity in the distribution of frequencies between public, private and community media channels; measures perceived as a significant step in favor of media pluralism.

However, the ECL also had controversial effects like the creation of strong regulatory bodies, such as the Superintendency of Information and Communication (SUPERCOM) or the Council on the Regulation and Development of Information and Communication (CORDICOM), closely linked to the executive. Furthermore, the law outlined increasing control over published content, by implementing vague concepts like banning "trial by media," defined as the repeated circulation of information aiming to ruin the reputation or the credibility of a person; and even the obligation to hide "public interest" information.

The Correa administration also displayed aggressive rhetoric towards the media.

In its traditional "sabatinas," exclusive interviews taking place over several hours each Saturday with his fellow citizens, the Ecuadorian President did not hesitate to point out, by name, the media, journalists and cartoonists who criticized, rejected or caricaturized him and encouraged that complaints be filed against them.

Regarding humor, Correa has generally maintained a verbal confrontation with several artists. The example of CrudoEcuador, a webpage of memes dedicated to political news, is particularly revealing: the President directly lambasted it before its administrator received an intimidation letter in February 2015.

In 2016, the Ecuadorian NGO Fundamedios (the Andean Foundation for Social Observation and Study of the Media) listed 491 "attacks on the freedom of expression including 168 cases of newspaper sanctions (fines, warnings, public apologies), nearly one hundred cases of digital rights restrictions, and as many cases of "abusive uses of state power." This last category includes the requirement to publish "official" information, make forced corrections and even the arbitrary deletion of radio or program frequencies. This multiplication of sanctions has caused self-censorship in the media to increase. 🐦



“
The Ecuadorian President did not hesitate to point out, by name, the media, journalists and cartoonists who criticized, rejected or caricaturized him.
”

From left to right
1. "Ecuadorian Communication Law" - Vilma (Ecuador)
2. President Correa - Boligán (Mexico)
3. "Ecuadorian press" - Bonil (Ecuador)



BONIL

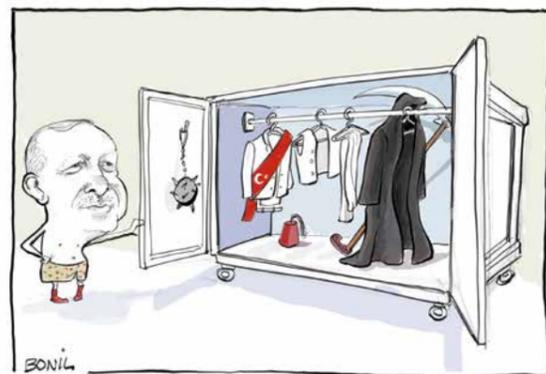
Bonil, alias Xavier Bonilla, an Ecuadorian newspaper cartoonist for *El Universo*, has had a complicated relationship with Rafael Correa's government. His case is emblematic of the progression in restrictions on the freedom of the press in Ecuador. If, at the beginning of his presidency, the President voluntarily recognized the cartoonist's talent, he has since openly criticized him and attacked him on various occasions.

As of 2014, Bonil thus bore the consequences for a drawing that criticized the government seizure of compromising information, and related to the corruption scandals. After a complaint by the government, SUPERCOM, the official agency of information control in Ecuador, obligated Bonil to change his cartoon.

In January 2016, Bonil illustrated the government's new law proposal giving Ecuadorians the possibility of choosing

their own gender on their identity documents. This time, it was the Ecuadorian LGBT federation, close to the government, who complained to SUPERCOM about the cartoonist and the newspaper *El Universo*. The association affirmed the discriminatory nature of the cartoon, which would incite hatred and transphobia by depicting a pregnant woman who, while someone asks her the gender of her future baby, responds that it would depend on the choice of her child. Bonil, who refuted these criticisms, moreover received support from many other LGBT committees.

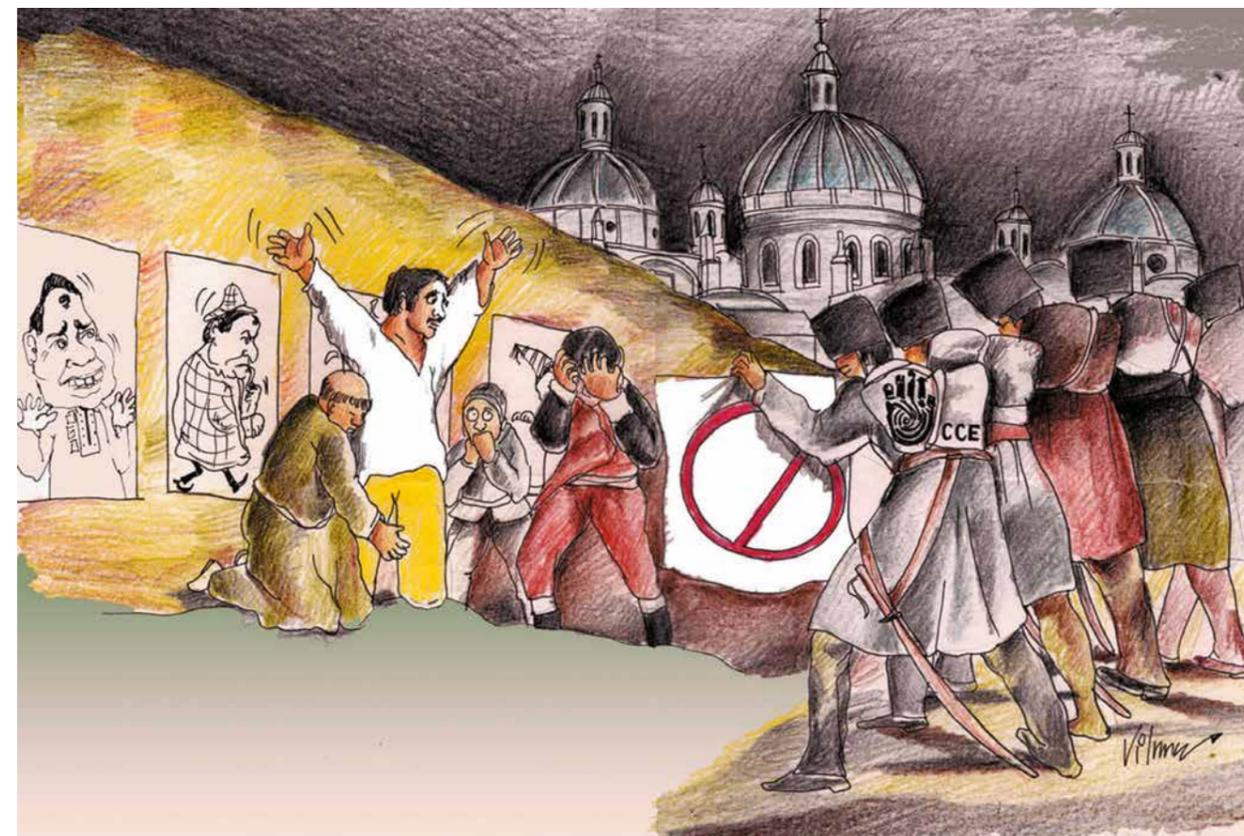
Six months later, following the cartoon of the Turkish President Erdogan, the cartoonist was directly called out in the pages of *El Universo* by the Turkish ambassador. In an opinion column, the latter denounced the cartoonist's hasty conclusions, and ensured that the freedoms of expression and opinion were still respected in Turkey, the veracity of which Bonil continues to doubt...



Accustomed to trials and courtrooms, the Bonil saga is surely not over, especially since the cartoonist continues to work for *El Universo*. The cartoonist enjoys support from a portion of the population who regularly protests in his favor, crying: "Yo soy Bonil" ("I am Bonil"), despite a boycott request invoked by President Correa himself at the beginning of 2016, going so far as to ask Bonil to put down his pencils and give up his career as a cartoonist. 🐦



From top to bottom
 1. Self-portrait - Bonil (Ecuador)
 2. President Erdogan - Bonil (Ecuador)
 3. Bonil (Ecuador)



VILMA

Vilma Vargas is an Ecuadorian cartoonist and painter who has made political cartoons her profession for nearly 30 years. Just like her compatriot Bonil, she has faced a delicate situation while exercising her career in Ecuador, in particular since the arrival of President Rafael Correa.

In May 2016, while she was organizing an exhibit of around fifty of her drawings in collaboration with the Casa de la Cultura

Ecuadoriana (CCE), she saw some of her work taken away from the presentation at the last moment, considered "too political," according to the direction. Supported by the curator, she decided to oppose this decision. During the opening, she chose to present the censored cartoons criticizing Raphael Correa's regime.

Without an official newspaper since 2014, the cartoonist, following these events, obtained a grant from the Artist Protection Fund in order to work for some time in the United States. She went back to Ecuador at the beginning of 2017 in order to continue her struggle and criticize her country's hostile climate towards the freedom of expression. 🐦



From left to right
 1. Based on Goya, *Tres de Mayo* - Vilma (Ecuador)
 2. Portrait of Vilma - Antonio (Portugal)
 3. Vilma (Ecuador)



VENEZUELA

KEY FIGURES

POPULATION
31.1 million (2015)

POLITICAL SYSTEM
/PRESIDENT
Presidential federal republic
▶ Nicolás Maduro Moros

RELIGIONS
Catholicism (96%),
Protestantism (2%),
Other (2%)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Spanish

LITERACY RATE
95.5% (UNICEF, 2008-2012)

GROWTH RATE
-13.7% (FRENCH MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 2016)

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
8.6% (WORLD BANK, 2014)

DEMOCRACY INDEX
4.68 "hybrid regime" –
ranked 107th out of 167
(2016)

CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX
17 – ranked 166th
out of 176 (TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL, 2016)

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX
0.767 – ranked 71st
out of 187 (UNDP, 2016)

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS RANKING
Ranked 139th out of 180
in 2016 – and ranked
137th in 2015
(WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX)

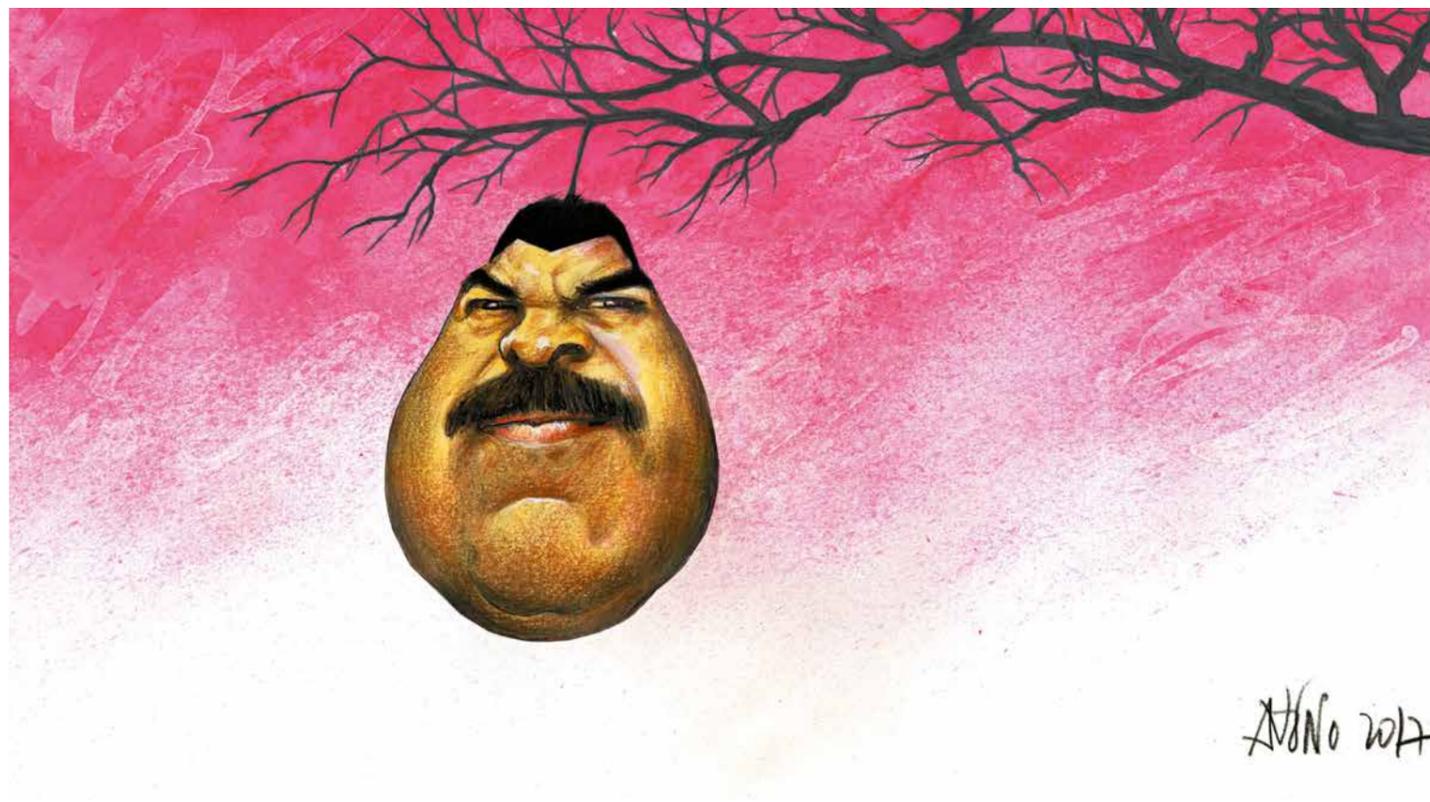
POLITICAL SITUATION

After 18 years of Bolivarian socialism, the Venezuelan situation is rather complex. The profound economic crisis that affects Venezuela, characterized by shortages in basic products and medications, exponential inflation as well as increasing insecurity exacerbate internal tensions even more. The corruption of the new elites, the "boli-bourgeoisie" – the name used to designate Chavez's highest civil servants – has become widespread.

In December 2015, the Venezuelan opposition won their first electoral victory against Chavism during the legislative elections. Nevertheless, Nicolas Maduro, Hugo Chavez's designated successor, bypassed legislative power through governing by decree under the pretext of an "economic state of emergency."

While the president's popularity eroded, in 2016 the opposition vainly attempted to incite a referendum in anticipation of the presidential elections. However, the government did not back down and increased the use of force in a repressive context. Defenders of human rights, as well as political activists are victims of arbitrary detentions while political leaders are imprisoned or exiled.

A real separation of powers does not exist: the government controls the judiciary branch by way of the Supreme Court while blocking the National Assembly's sphere of activity, even though the opposition holds an absolute majority. The Supreme Court, under the orders of the executive office, thus published decisions 155 and 156 on March 28, 2017, giving itself Parliament's legislative powers while simultaneously removing parliamentary immunity from opposition deputies. Furthermore, these decisions give exceptional powers to the president. These events were immediately considered an institutional coup d'état and strongly condemned by institutions such



as the EU, OAS and MERCOSUR. Under international pressure, the Supreme Court backed down two days later. Too late for the Venezuelan people though: the accumulation of economic and political crises started waves of protests across the country. After three weeks of mobilization, governmental repression has already killed 20 people and injured nearly 100 people as of April 23, 2017, while more than 600 have been arrested.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Journalists are also the targets of denigrating and aggressive intimidation campaigns. Reporters without Borders alerted that, since the beginning of 2016, the situation of the freedom of the press has been getting worse. For the organization Freedom House, this fundamental liberty no longer exists in Venezuela.

The government has a grip on paper supplies and applies a form of censorship by controlling the availability of paper.

Several journalists have been thrown out of the country or forbidden to enter it. The country's TV stations, subject to very strict legislation imposed by the Ley Resorte in 2004, do not broadcast national news. The only way for Venezuelans to access information is to turn towards international media: despite encrypted access to the latter, the government forbids the broadcasting of international stations in the country, such as NTN24 and CNN.

Journalists publishing critical content on social media are also regularly sentenced to very heavy punishments, like Braulio Jatar who was imprisoned in September 2016, after having published the video of an anti-Maduro protest. He risks up to twenty-five years in prison, while his loved ones denounce a trial lacking transparency and arbitrary imprisonment conditions – even torture.

Cartoonists are not to be outdone either, like Rayma Suprani, one of the most important editorial cartoonists in Venezuela along with Edo, Bozzone and Weil, who was

fired from her newspaper after 19 years of collaboration. Freely exercising her profession means living a precarious life: remuneration for her work is minimal; most of the cartoons can only be published online, on social media. Threats are also commonplace: Edo, just like Rayma were thus forced to leave the country. Today, Weil lives, like Rayma, in Miami.

While the culture of cartooning is very strong in Venezuela, cartoonists live under constant pressure and are considered by the authorities as political figures dangerous to Chavism. Nevertheless, it must be noted that just like the political polarization of the Venezuelan people, between the pro-Maduro and the anti-Maduro factions, there also exists cartoonists who are pro-regime. 🐦

“ The government has a grip on paper supplies and applies a form of censorship by controlling the availability of paper. ”



From top to bottom
1. President Maduro - Antonio (Portugal)
2. "Feeling freedom" - Weil (Venezuela)



RAYMA

Rayma Suprani, a Venezuelan cartoonist, denounced the poverty, lack of social justice and openly criticized the abuse of power in the Chavez government in the daily newspaper *El Universal*. She had already been subjected to coercion and multiple threats, for example when she published a cartoon of the Venezuelan flag riddled with bullets, but it was in September 2014 that she published the cartoon "that crossed the line": she satirized the public health crisis in Venezuela, linked to petrodollars, by representing a flat-lined EEG, containing the signature of the former President Hugo Chavez – in power from 1999 to 2013.

Even though the latter had been dead for more than a year and a half when the cartoon was published, he enjoyed a particularly effective and official marketing campaign, which resulted in elevating him to the status of "Eternal Commander." If satirizing Hugo Chavez when he was alive was difficult, doing it after his death seemed almost like blasphemy.

The cartoonist, moreover, touched upon a sensitive subject: indeed, Venezuela sends much-needed oil to Cuba, in exchange for friendly services, since Cuba sends doctors en masse to Venezuela. And yet, Venezuelan hospitals and health services continue to sink into dilapidation. A phenomenon that is compounded with the lack of medication and underlines the problems of government corruption, which Rayma criticized in her cartoon.

She was immediately fired by the newspaper for which she had worked for twenty years, shortly after an owner acquired it with close ties to the government.

"The Chavists had started to attack me on social media for several years," Rayma explained to a journalist from *Le Monde* (France). "The newspaper's leadership asked



me to tone down my cartoons. This was no longer the normal process of discussion and negotiation within an editorial board: they criticized the content and demanded that it be toned down. I remained firm in my critical stance. Faced with the cartoon on healthcare, management threatened that I would lose my job. I decided not to sacrifice my credibility as a journalist and cartoonist. The cartoon was finally published, and I was immediately fired. To cap off this pettiness, my lawyer had to intervene so that they would recognize my work contract and my seniority..."

Deprived of her living, Rayma was forced to take refuge in the United States, where she continues to take up her pencils in the fight for the freedom of expression. She publishes on Daryl Cagle's website, is preparing a album of drawings and continues to illustrate her country's current affairs on several websites. 🐦



From left to right
 1. Self-portrait
 - Rayma (Venezuela)
 2. Venezuelan flag
 - Rayma (Venezuela)
 3. "Health / Health in Venezuela" with Hugo Chávez' signature
 - Rayma (Venezuela)



TURKEY



POLITICAL SITUATION

Spanning the continents of Europe and Asia, The Republic of Turkey, boasts one of the most developed scenes of cartooning and comics in the world. At nearly every newsstand in Istanbul and across the country, a dozen or so alt-comic weeklies are available as well as other cultural publications chockfull of illustrations. Their expressions of dissent are sometimes bolder than even the most radical opposition newspapers. About three-quarters of the country identify as Turkish and about 19 percent as Kurdish with the remainder consisting of other minorities groups. Indeed one of Turkey's longstanding conflicts is the Kurdish campaign for independence and sovereignty in the country's east, as well as basic rights. The current government has demonized this Kurdish movement, especially as terror attacks from militant Kurdish groups

and spillover effects of the neighboring civil war in Syria have plagued Istanbul and Ankara.

On July 15, 2016, rogue group within the military launched a failed coup against President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. That night, nearly 300 people were killed across the country. What has followed is a witch-hunt in all professional fields, including academia, government, and the media. This widespread crackdown following the coup attempt has exacerbated the risks for Turkish humorists.

Weakened in his ability to exercise power, Recep Tayyip Erdogan submitted a constitutional reform to the Turkish people in April 2017. This was supposed to reinforce the president's power while allowing him to govern by decree. After an intense campaign, which sometimes encouraged violence in European countries, Turkey appears divided

KEY FIGURES

POPULATION
 92.25 millions inhabitants (2017)

POLITICAL SYSTEM/ PRESIDENT
 Unitary parliamentary constitutional republic
 ▶ Recep Tayyip Erdogan

RELIGIONS
 Islam (99%) ; Christians & Jewish (minorities)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
 Turkish

LITERACY RATE
 94.1% (UNICEF, 2011)

GROWTH RATE
 4.1% (WB, 2013)

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
 10.5% (WB, 2015)

DEMOCRACY INDEX
 5.04 "hybrid regime"-ranked 97th out of 167 (2016)

CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX
 41 – ranked 75th out of 176 (TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL, 2016)

HDI
 0.767 – ranked 71th out of 187 (UN, 2015)

RWB RANKING
 Ranked 151th out of 180 in 2016 – 149th in 2015 (WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX)



The pressures facing cartoonists also come in the form of the tragic events that they confront through their work, including the looming threat of a random attack. It is disheartening and depressing to draw about the seven major terrorist attacks that have occurred since October 2015, which have killed over 200 people in Istanbul and Ankara.

Opponents have also violently intimidated cartoonists. When the comic weekly *LeMan* published a “Special Coup Issue” on July 17, an angry mob nearly stormed their offices at 4am; that issue was also censored by authorities. It was reminiscent of other such attacks, like when arsonists struck the offices of the comic weekly *Penguen** in May 2012. Similarly, one cartoonist recalled that many times over the years he has seen “shadowy men” waiting for him and his colleagues outside of the office, “stealthily taking our photos.” In Turkey, being a cartoonist is increasingly difficult if not dangerous. “In fear, one cannot make cartoons,” says one prominent illustrator. The cartoonists of Turkey then are fearless. 🇹🇷

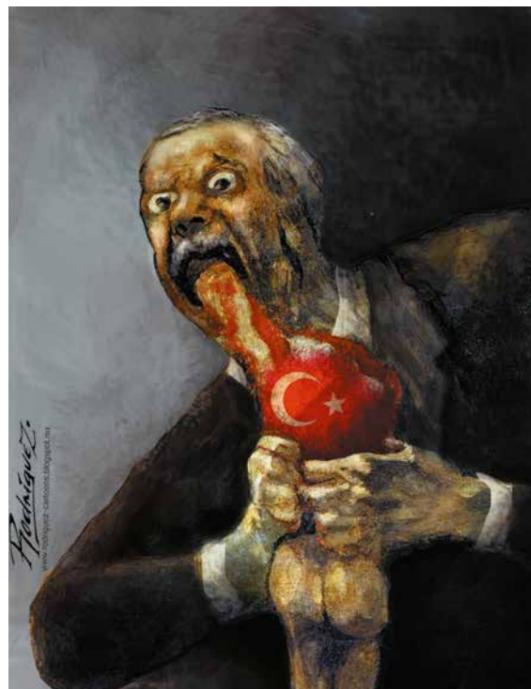
>> in terms of its future: the partisans of the reform highlight the necessity of stable power in a country undermined by terrorist attacks, where the opposition denounces the president’s authoritarian stance.



In the end, the “yes” vote narrowly won out on Sunday, April 16, 2017 with 51.3% of the votes. Thus, Erdogan came out of the referendum strengthened, and will be able to conduct his reforms, with the risk of escalating his authoritarian image in Turkey as well as abroad. Prospects for freedom of the press are evidently negative after this referendum, with the fear that censorship will be intensified, threatening the plurality of opinion and the important culture of political cartoons in Turkey.

PRESS FREEDOM

Yet even before the clumsy military uprising and ensuing government crusade against dissent, the state of affairs was dire. In 2016, being a cartoonist in Turkey has been more difficult than ever. State prosecutors and Erdogan loyalists have used the crime of “insulting the president” to muzzle critics. Over 1,500 people—including cartoonists, celebrities, journalists, private citizens, and even a German comedian (in a case launched in Germany) — are under investigation or prosecution. In spite of the pressures, a cohort of cartoonists continues to boldly caricature Erdogan and his ilk. In Turkey, the long tradition of dissenting cartoonists seems to be matched by an equally long tradition of clampdowns.



*CFP’s note: since this article was written the satirical newspaper *Penguen* announced at the end of April that it would shortly be shutting down.

- From top to bottom
1. (previous page) President Erdogan - Joep Bertrams (NL)
 2. President Erdogan - Khalid Gueddar (Morocco)
 3. Turkey’s referendum - Izel (Turkey)
 4. “Erdogan devouring his children”, based on Goya, *Saturn devouring his son* - Rodriguez (Mexique)



MUSA KART

On October 31, 2016, during the wave of arrests following the failed coup d’état in Turkey, the police arrested approximately ten associates of the principal Turkish opposition newspaper, *Cumhuriyet*. Among them was the cartoonist Musa Kart. This was not the first time that the cartoonist was subjected to the regime’s wrath, like in 2014 when he had risked nine years in prison after criticizing the connections between Erdogan and a money-laundering scheme. His colleagues mobilized around the world in order to support him through cartoons.

“MUZZLING MUSA KART”
— by Jonathan Guyer, member of the Institute of Current World Affairs

“How will they explain this to the world? I am being taken into custody for drawing cartoons,” said Musa Kart on Oct. 31, 2016. The Turkish cartoonist was speaking to reporters amid a raid on the Kemalist newspaper *Cumhuriyet*, where he serves

on the board. Soon thereafter, authorities detained Kart along with at least twelve of his colleagues. His home was searched.

Now Kart, 63, has already served a half-year in prison, along with colleagues from the newspaper *Cumhuriyet*. Following President Erdoğan’s victory at the referendum on presidential powers, Turkish authorities informed the lawyers of imprisoned cartoonist that prosecutors stipulated a maximum sentence of twenty-nine years and his trial date along with his colleagues has been set for July 24th 2017.

Their charge: “committing a crime in support of a terrorist organization without being a member.” It seems that in Turkey, all journalists run the risk of being falsely and maliciously accused of terrorism.

I visited the offices of *Cumhuriyet* for a wide-ranging discussion with the cartoonist Kart on July 8, 2016, but a week before the mucked up coup that has led to an even broader clampdown on freedoms in



>> the country. Upon entering the lobby, the first thing I saw was Kart's caricature of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan beside Hitler—undoubtedly the sort of drawing that offends the very sensitive leader.

Legal threats have failed to upend Turkey's long history of mocking politicians because Turkey's cartoonists feel a deep obligation to castigate the powerful. "In these circumstances for a critic to remain silent would be unheard of," says Kart, a veteran cartoonist who over the past decades has battled several high-profile lawsuits for caricaturing Erdoğan as a kitten and as a bank-robber. "From the perspective of the West, [the legal attacks] are something comical and absurd. But here it is not abnormal. There is no serious journalist or cartoonist who doesn't have a case against him."

"Humor can be a very powerful way to fight the government," Kart told me. "Even if we do not accept the pressure [of government censorship], we have our guards up because we know they're coming." I couldn't help but think of the armed guards at the gate downstairs and in the lobby. "Cumhuriyet is one of the last bastions of resistance," he said matter-of-factly.

Kart, who has cartooned for over two decades, spoke bluntly about the perils of cartooning in Erdoğan's Turkey. "I can say in the more recent period that there has been more pres-



sure than at any other time," he said. As for the battery of legal cases against him, Kart has often said that it's all rather cartoonish. "If I get convicted, it will turn into a tragic comedy," he remarked.

What can be done to draw attention to the unjust incarceration of Kart and his colleagues? The United Nations has sent a special rapporteur to monitor the situation. The British Cartoonist Association has applauded Kart. The Committee to Protect Journalists honored former Cumhuriyet editor Can Dündar. But in the midst of an arbitrary crackdown on the press — Turkey is currently the world's worst jailer of journalists — the case of Kart and his colleagues has fallen off the map.

"Caricature is a way to directly and concisely express a concept," Kart said, "and there's a great need for this kind of communication in this country." For now, we must look back at Kart's archive to fill the void. His daily slot in Cumhuriyet remains empty*.

*Drawings from his colleagues around the world are sometimes published in Musa Kart's cartoon slot.



From top to bottom
3. "Down with Erdogan!" - Vadot (Belgium)
4. "Don't rush our lookout is a hologram" - Musa Kart (Turkey)
5. Glez (Burkina Faso)

RUSSIA

KEY FIGURES

POPULATION
143.5 million inhabitants (2013)

POLITICAL SYSTEM/ PRESIDENT
Parliamentary, semi-presidential
▶ Vladimir Putin

RELIGIONS
Orthodox (66.5%), Islam (10 to 15%)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Russian

LITERACY RATE
99.7% (UNESCO, 2015)

GROWTH RATE
1.3% (WORLD BANK, 2013)

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
5.7% (WORLD BANK, 2016)

DEMOCRACY INDEX
3.24 "authoritarian regime" – ranked 134th out of 167 (2016)

CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX
29 – ranked 131st out of 176 (TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL, 2016)

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX
0.798 – ranked 50th out of 187 in 2014 (UN, 2014)

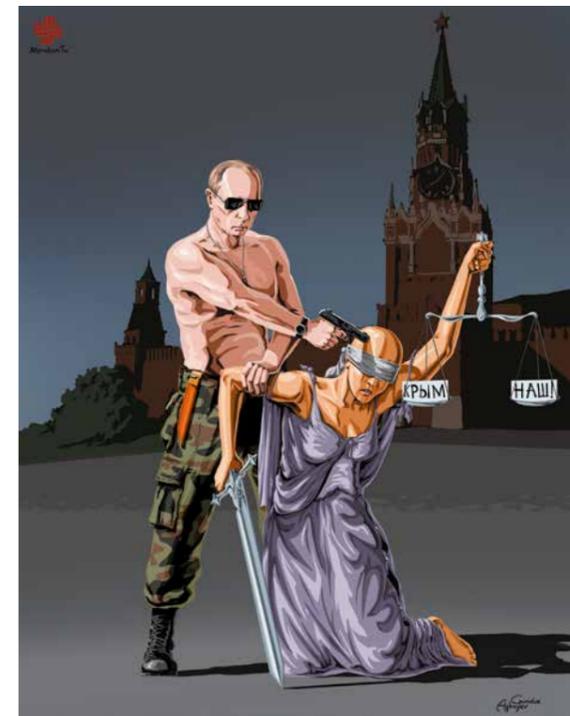
REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS RANKING
Ranked 148th out of 180 in 2016 – and 152nd in 2015 (WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX)

POLITICAL SITUATION

The political situation in Russia has been marked, for several years, by what specialists call an authoritarian stiffening. Since Vladimir Putin's accession to the presidency in 1999 – even if Dmitri Medvedev was president from 2008-2012 – power has been concentrated at the top: it is what has been called since Yeltsin's presidency (1991-1999) as the solidification of a "power vertical." Thus, the head of state's entourage includes businessmen, oligarchs and personalities from the political-media field. Observers call this State apparatus at the service of the executive branch "the Putin system," reinforced by a strong centralization of power in a State that is technically federal.

In parallel, public liberties are considerably restricted. As demonstrated, according to several observers, by the murder of Boris Nemtsov (a figure from the liberal opposition) in the streets of Moscow on February 27, 2015, and even the arrest of Alexei Navalny on March 26, 2017, following the large anti-corruption protests in several Russian cities. In terms of public liberties, a law adopted in 2014 sanctions repeated violations with measures concerning gatherings. On this basis, the activist Ildar Dadine was arrested and then sentenced in 2015 for several solitary protests that he had organized. If he was freed at the beginning of 2017 after experiencing coercion and violence in prison, his case testifies to the progressive restriction of political rights and liberties in Russia.

In this context, opposition in Russia to the executive branch is weak. The *Douma*, the lower chamber of Russian Parliament, was changed during the last legislative elections in September 2016, and the party in power "Russia United" ended up largely dominating it with their number of seats: 344 deputies

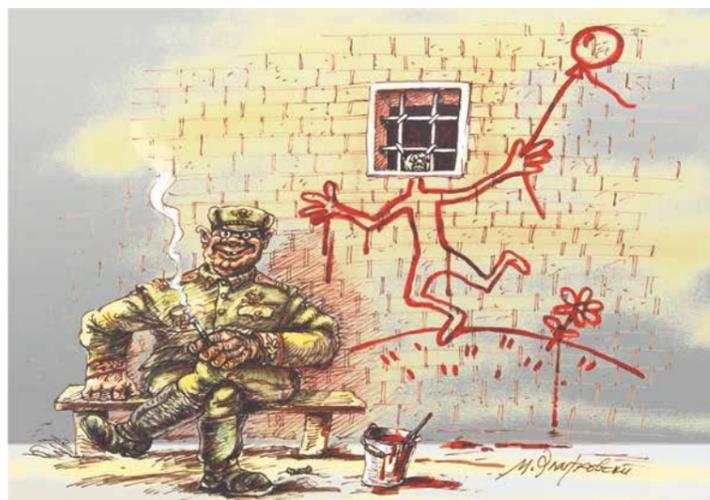


out of 450 total. Consequently, the political opposition denounces it as merely a rubber assembly at the service of the executive branch.

Moreover, with the Ukrainian crisis and the annexation of Crimea (March 2014), Russia has found a way to use external opposition to create "patriotic consolidation" for the regime. While in November 2013 only 26% of Russians were ready to vote for Vladimir Putin again in the 2018 presidential elections, the head of state's popularity reached 88% after the Russian-Ukrainian crisis.

However, the political situation does not seem like it will stay obstructed forever due to weak economic growth and the fact that country is still affected by the economic crisis. The low price of oil – on which the Russian economy largely depends – the difficulties of controlling poverty for a large portion of the population and, especially, the 2018 elections, during which Vladimir Putin will aspire to a fourth presidential term, create uncertainty regarding Russia's political future.

“ Only neutral cartoons or those favorable to the executive appear in the media. ”



>> FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Freedom of the press is constitutionally guaranteed in Russia. The Constitution of the Russian Federation, adopted in 1993, states in chapter 2 that “each person is guaranteed the freedom of thought and speech,” that propaganda or the incitement of hatred is “forbidden” and that “each person has the right to freely research, obtain, transmit, produce and circulate information via all legal means”; from which ensues the guarantee of the “freedom of the media” and the banning of censorship (article 29). These measures, moreover, are in accordance with the international commitments that Russia freely entered into, whether it is the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms from 1950 (article 10 concerns the freedom of expression), or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights from 1966.

However, recent developments in Russia strongly limit the freedom of the press and, more generally, the freedom of information. Among the legislative measures adopted over recent years, the FIDH has noted the federal law “On the defense of children against information that could harm their health and development” (2012), the law against the use of bad language in the media (2013), against Internet pirating (2013), as well as different legislative acts attempting to limit “access to illegal information on the Internet.” Furthermore, a federal service in charge of the “supervision of communication, information technologies and mass media,” called Roskomnadzor, was set up between 2008 and

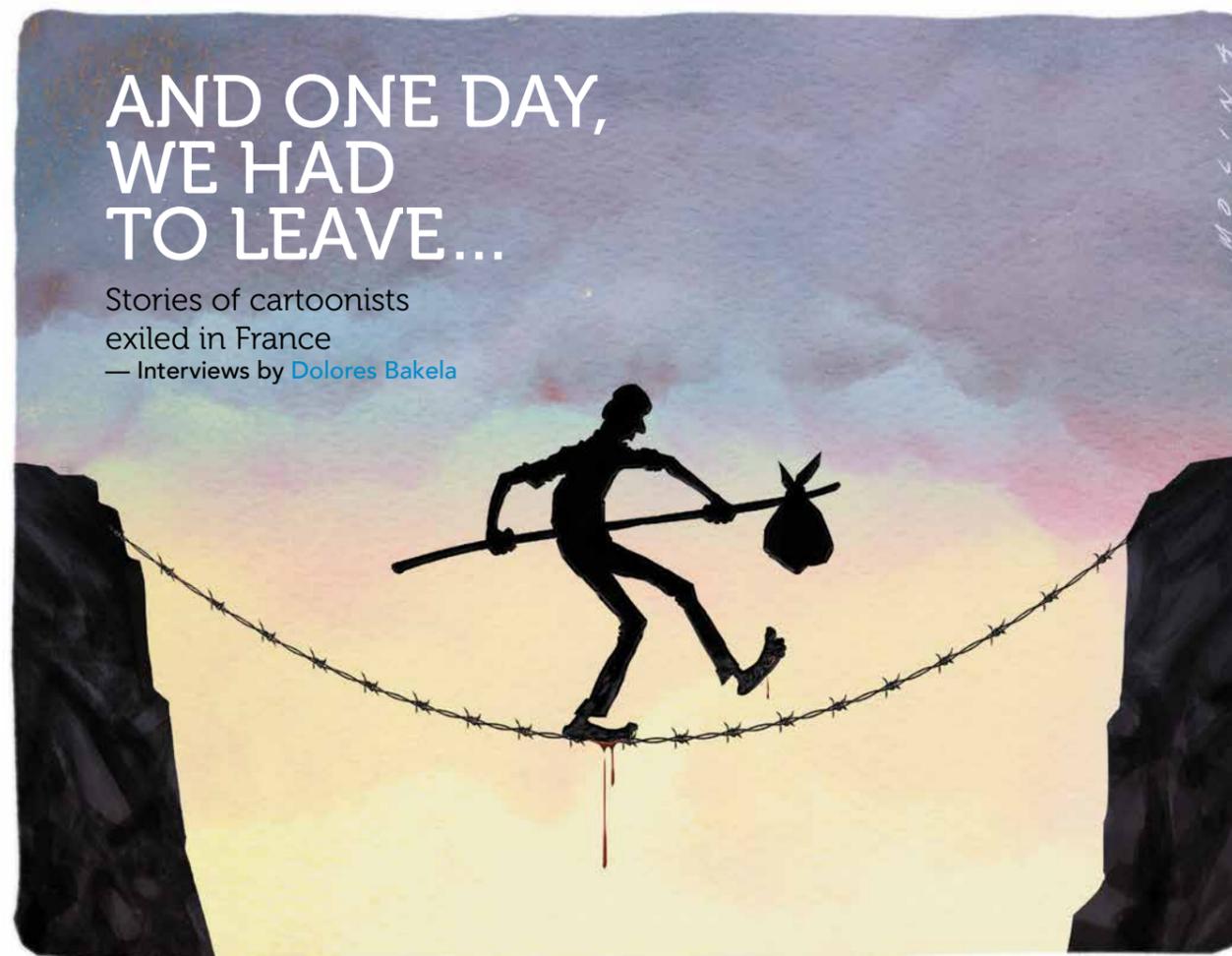
2012; it oversees the closing of websites that are not compliant with the law. This service and the legislative measures adopted in Russia create, according to several observers, a type of censorship in Russia.

Regarding the freedom of cartooning and the status of satire in Russia, the public authorities’ attitude is severe. In the early 2000s, the show *Koukly* (“Marionettes”), broadcast on the TV station NTV, and largely disrespectful in regards to authorities, was forced to stop its activity under pressure from the Kremlin. Indeed, on several occasions it had mocked Vladimir Putin. This example testifies to the relative eclipse of political satire during the first decade of the millennium. In this context, cartooning is relatively underdeveloped in the Russian media. Active cartoonists are few, and those still working seem to practice self-censorship: only neutral satirical drawings (social cartoons) or those favorable to the executive branch appear in the media.

However, the Internet and social media have created a resurgence in graphic satire’s vitality. Numerous pages of the *Vkontakte* network (equivalent to Facebook in Russia) show cartoons denouncing the “Putin System.” *Twitter* also lets many Russians produce and circulate photomontages criticizing Russian power. The most famous Russian cartoonists like Sergueï Elkin and Alexeï Merinov thus publish their drawings on the Internet.



- From top to bottom
1. (previous page) President Putin - Gunduz Aghayev (Azerbaijan)
 2. Zlatkovsky (Russia)
 3. President Putin - Sergueï Elkin (Russia)
 4. Joep Bertrams (NL)



And one day, we had to leave. For illustrating in a newspaper for Iranian children, like Mana Neyestani. Because of the arrival of ISIS in Iraq for Daban*, a Kurdish cartoonist. For Adjim Danngar, it was because of satirical cartoons published in Chad, then governed by Idriss Déby. Or because Aymen* could no longer stand seeing people die, at home, in Syria.

These cartoonists had to hastily pack up their freedom of expression and their political critiques and leave everything behind. They had to succeed in escaping so as not to die.

LEAVE AND NEVER RETURN

Adjim had only one day to up root his life as a cartoonist in Chad. He was only 22 years old. Death threats, intimidations, physical assaults had already been going on for some time. The day before his escape, he was still drawing for *Le Miroir*, the Chadian equivalent of *Charlie Hebdo*, and

was getting ready to participate in a press fair in France. At the moment of departure, paramilitaries attempted to remove him from his neighborhood. He, who continued to draw loud and clear no matter the cost, had to suddenly shut up. And understand that he needed to leave Chad without drawing attention. “My airplane landed in France on November 24, 2004,” he remembers precisely. A date that symbolized the beginning of his new life.

In 2015, it was Gunduz Agayev’s turn to be thrown out onto the street. Trained to be an artist in Azerbaijan, he started unveiling his satirical cartoons on his Facebook account in 2012. “A citizen’s act considering the prevailing political situation,” he assumes. Then in 2013 a collaboration with *Meydan TV* began, an independent information channel created by a former political prisoner. The authorities did not appreciate that the man had become a whistleblower and started intimidating him by telephone. When we met him in Paris, he recounted with laughing eyes how they tempted to corrupt him: “Make cartoons, but for the government or about the opposition,” they suggested to him. Gunduz refused, still smiling. “The government didn’t



From left to right
 1. (previous page) Molina (Nicaragua)
 2. "As you may have noticed it is in total freedom that we do our job as journalists" / "Say: Goodbye my friends!" / "Goodbye my friends" - Willy Zekid (Congo Brazzaville)
 3. Vilma (Ecuador)
 4. "Cauchy street" Street of the "Maison des Journalistes" - Achou alias Adjim Danngar (Tchad)
 5. Vilma (Equateur)

while working for the Syrian opposition media online since the taste for transgression never leaves these cartoonists. It accompanies them in their luggage, transcends borders. Despite it all, Mana chose to leave again. "Having an Iranian passport was not easy everywhere; I preferred going to a Western country," he recalls. After many unsuccessful attempts to advance his case with embassies and the UN, Reporters Without Borders, via the organization Icorn (International Cities of Refuge Network), allowed him to enter an artist residency in Paris in 2010. It was there, in 2012, that he published *Une métamorphose iranienne* [An Iranian Metamorphosis], since his absurd situation reminded him of Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, a novel on the social exclusion of a man who could not control what happened to him and ended up turning into a cockroach.

For Daban*, who left Iraqi Kurdistan, it was the beginning of a "terrible voyage" to Germany, after first passing through Turkey. "I had to fight to survive. It was every person for themselves," he recounted to us, his tears welling up. "Once in Germany, messages over loudspeakers advised us that we could leave for France," the cartoonist confided. He arrived in a migrant camp just west of Paris before being taken under the responsibility of local organizations.

STARTING FROM SCRATCH

For Sylav, France was at first an accident. An article on religion was found displeasing and the entire editorial board ended up in the government's sights. "Anything could happen to you, your family. You would never have peace again," he told us. He left Iran on foot. His smuggler indicated that he could go to Norway, then England, but it was in France that they ended up dumping him with a fake passport, but not before relieving him of a lot of money. "It is the country of Van Gogh and professional opportunities," he believed. But if the latter existed, they were well hidden by administrative difficulties that accumulated one after another. "For two years, I struggled to understand the bureaucracy. For three months I lived on the street like a dog. My only concerns: finding a place to sleep, eating and staying clean," he confided to us modestly, now living in a small room somewhere in the Parisian region.

“If their work has taken them far from their loved ones, none of them can imagine giving up drawing.”

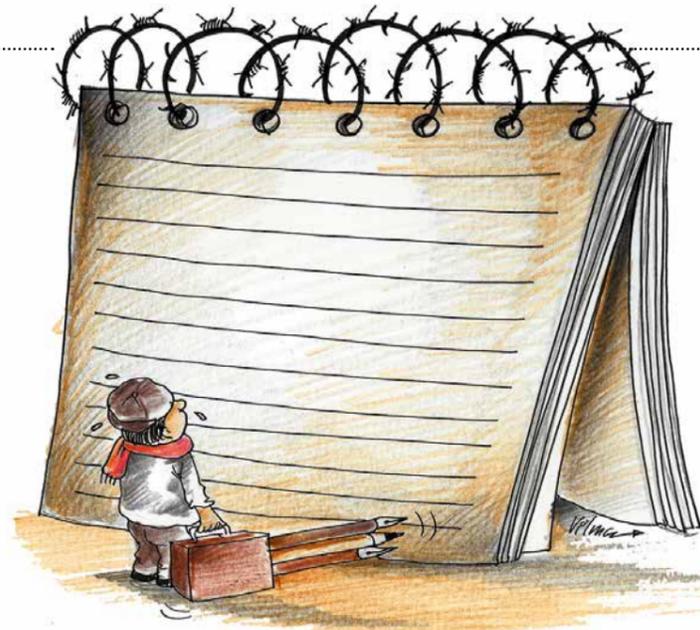
scare me," he underlined. That was up until November 17, 2014, when he was notoriously interrogated for six hours in an office at the Ministry of the Interior and forced to sign a document certifying that he was taking drugs, which was false, in exchange for freedom. And he needed to leave too. But go where? Nothing predestined him to settle down in the Greater Paris. Before arriving here, he stopped in Georgia before spending nearly a year in the Ukraine, where he continued to draw.

FRANCE AT LAST

And he was not the only one to have made a long detour before arriving in France. After Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, Mana Neyestani, a renowned cartoonist in Iran, spent four years in Malaysia, following the misinterpretation of his cartoon that he reproduced in our notebook to underline his innocence. These pencil strokes in a government newspaper fanned the flames of a latent ethnic conflict with the Azeri minority of the country; they participated in protests that were then bloodily put down. Mana was arrested and spent several months in prison. He took advantage of being temporarily released before his trial in order to immediately take flight. In Asia, he studied,

It took Adjim a year and a half to obtain papers, following a refusal from the OFPRA (French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless People) and an obligation to leave the territory. "Reporters Without Borders was able to support my dossier, thanks to their correspondents who confirmed that I was in danger in my country," he emphasized, while confessing to have been undocumented for a few days. "When I think about other cases, it was not that long."

If their work has taken them far from their loved ones, none of them can imagine giving up drawing. They need, for a good number of them, to rebuild professionally, especially



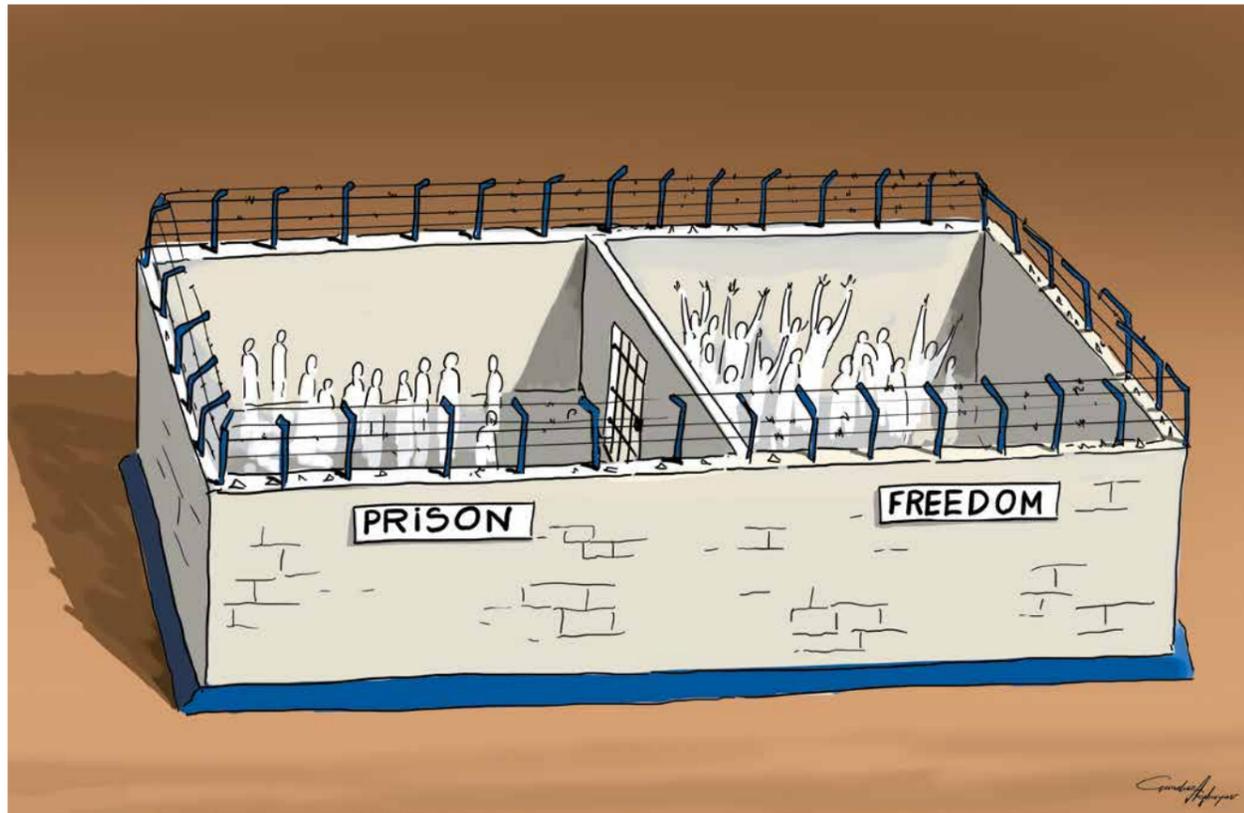
when they are only here for a few years. Without forgetting the language barrier for those who don't speak French. After his documentation problems, Adjim was able to study digital technology, remotely from the other side of the Atlantic at a university in San Francisco, get a multimedia assistant job, publish drawings and works like the recent *Mamie Denis évadée de la maison de retraite* [Grandma Denis Escapes from the Retirement Home]. However, contacts in the newspaper world are lacking for some. Recently, the newspaper Libération handed the editorship of one of its issues over to refugees: Adjim Danngar even drew the cover illustration. "The more time passes, the more confidence I have in what I do; my style asserts itself," he told us. Before our eyes were elegant notebooks made with his own hands that he fills with sketches for future work. In particular, we discovered the new face of Popito, a character that he created as an adolescent. "It was an African superhero that was going to destroy the dictators." For Adjim, the time has come to bring Popito back to life. For Aymen, from Syria, there is a thirst for "self-motivation": he participates in collective works and is looking to exhibit his works. Our interview took some time away from his preparations for an exhibit opening.

THE WEIGHT OF SOLITUDE

Daban, the Kurdish cartoonist, also regularly exposes in his home of adoption. "He draws a lot about pain, war. His drawings are colorful, full of hope," his interpreter whispered to us. But like his Iranian colleague, Sylav, who feverishly awaits his wife to come and join him, he feels isolated. Difficult to imagine the pain they both feel, the pain of not being able to be near their loved ones. "My brothers, my sisters, I miss everyone," Aymen sighed at the end of the interview. "But I cannot say that publicly. It would be considered weak."

Mana fills the void in his own way: "I must rebuild my cocoon with what I need to draw. I don't need anything else." As political refugees, certain cartoonists cannot return to their homeland. However, the current events in their respective countries are never very far away. The body is here,

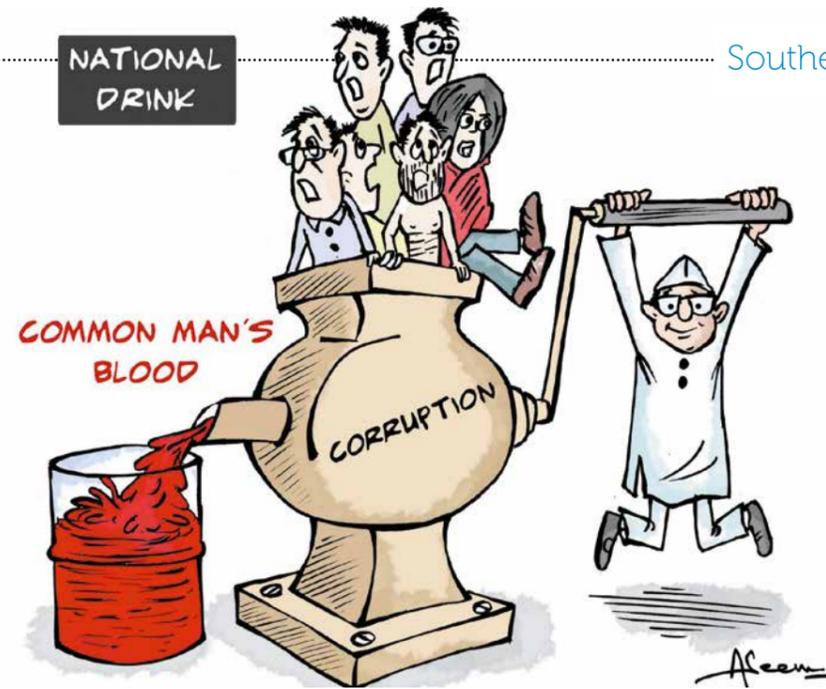
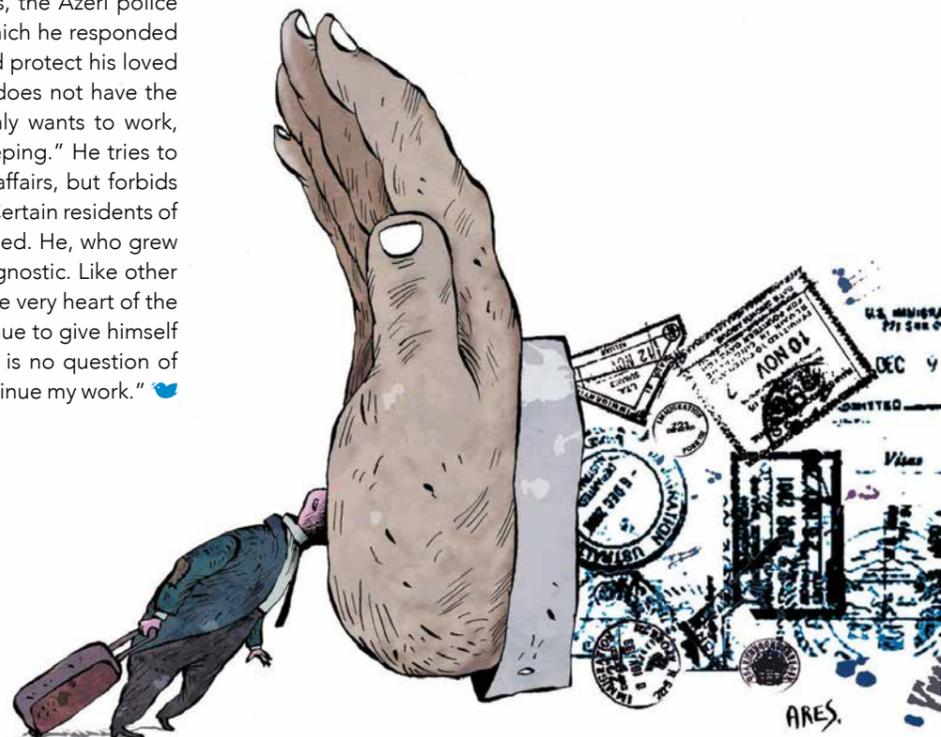




From top to bottom
5. Gunduz Aghayev (Azerbaijan)
6. Ares (Cuba)

>> but the head is there as it were. It is the double penalty of exile: leaving behind loved ones in countries that scorned their rights. Gunduz finally feels at peace in the center for asylum seekers which houses him, surrounded by his wife and son. For only the past several months, the Azeri police had stopped sending him messages to which he responded with emoticons to “pacify the reports” and protect his loved ones, who remain in Azerbaijan. Gunduz does not have the Internet, a handicap for this man who only wants to work, “preferably at night when everyone is sleeping.” He tries to energetically sketch international current affairs, but forbids himself from drawing religious cartoons. “Certain residents of the center do not understand,” he explained. He, who grew up in the Muslim faith before becoming agnostic. Like other colleagues, he sees political cartoons as the very heart of the freedom of expression and wants to continue to give himself the right to break the rules. Clearly, there is no question of putting down the pencil. “I am here to continue my work.”

*first names have been changed



From top to bottom
1. Aseem Trivedi (India)
2. Self-portrait - Aseem Trivedi (India)
3. Aseem Trivedi (India)

ASEEM TRIVEDI

The Indian cartoonist Aseem Trivedi uses cartooning as an activism tool in support of human rights. Each of his drawings is a way to test, criticize and stretch the limits of the freedom of expression and information in India, where self-censorship and an insecure climate for journalists remain concerns.

After having worked for several years for the Indian press, in 2011 Aseem Trivedi launched the national campaign “Cartoons Against Corruption” through which he mocked, with pencil strokes, the generalized corruption of the Indian political elite. The website hosting his cartoons was rapidly shut down by the authorities. Aseem Trivedi then launched, along with other journalists and activists, a campaign to battle against online censorship, “Save Your Voice”.

The 2012 winner of the Courage in Editorial Cartooning Award from the organization



Cartoonists Rights Network International – an award that he shares with the Syrian cartoonist Ali Ferzat – Aseem Trivedi was arrested in Mumbai on September 9, 2012. Accused of sedition and for having broken the law on national symbols as well as the law on information technologies, he thus ran the risk of a life sentence in jail. While certain cartoonists denounced his radicalness, the cartoonist’s indictment provoked a passionate debate on the freedom of expression in India, so much so that a month after his arrest, the sedition charges were dropped. Nevertheless, Aseem Trivedi is still on the authorities’ radar for “insulting a national symbol.”

After a two-year break, Aseem Trivedi went back to his cartooning work following the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks, convinced that this attack strengthened the ninth art even more. In 2015, he created the online platform *Black & White* dedicated to the art of “resistance” through cartooning, on which he regularly publishes his cartoons, in ten-image series, criticizing the violation of freedom of expression in India, but also in Turkey, Egypt and even Bahrain. The first edition of the online magazine was dedicated to a collection of cartoons called “A Cartoon Against Every Lash” in support of Raif Badawi, a Saudi Arabian blogger sentenced in September 2014 to 1,000 lashes and 10 years in prison. Through *Black & White*, Aseem Trivedi wields his pencil in the battle for justice, equality and the respect of human rights.

MALAYSIA

KEY FIGURES

POPULATION
31.7 million inhabitants
(2016)

POLITICAL SYSTEM/KING
Constitutional monarchy with parliamentary system
▶ Prime Minister Najib Razak (King with symbolic power)

RELIGIONS
Islam (official religion – 62%), Buddhism (20%), Christianity (9.2%), Hinduism (6.3%)
(ESTIMATION BY THE FRENCH MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, 2016)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Malay

LITERACY RATE
93.1% (UNICEF 2008-2012)

GROWTH RATE
4.7% (WB, 2013)

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
3.3% (WB, 2016)

DEMOCRACY INDEX
6.54 “imperfect democracy” – ranked 65th out of 167 (2016)

CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX
49/100 – ranked 55th out of 176 (TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL, 2016)

HDI
0.779 – ranked 62nd out of 187 (UN, 2014)

RWB RANKING
ranked 146th out of 180 in 2016 – 147th in 2015
(WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX)

POLITICAL SITUATION

The Federation of Malaysia is made up of thirteen States and three federal territories. Once a former British colony, Malaysia has been, since its independence in 1957, run by the same National Front coalition government (Barisan Nasional, BN), governed by the principal Malaysian party, the United Malays National Organization (UMNO). In order to explain such longevity, one needs to study the existing divisions between the different ethnic and religious communities in Malaysia. Malaysian society has approximately 55% Muslim Malays, 10% “indigenous” populations, which, along with the Malays, form the Bumiputra community (“children of the land”), beneficiaries of a positive discrimination policy since the 1970s; 26% are Chinese (for the most part Buddhist and Christians) and almost 8% Indians (in large part Hindu). Confronted with a fragile balance between these different communities, Kuala Lumpur has for decades played upon the fear of an inter-ethnic conflict in order to remain in power. The Malaysian authorities also profit from the division of the opposition parties and do not hesitate to lash out at their representatives through legal proceedings of a



political nature. The leader of the opposition, Anwar Ibrahim, already imprisoned from 1998 to 2004 for unproven events, was sentenced in February 2015 to five years in prison under the pretext of “sodomy” – a crime in this country governed by a legal system that mixes common law with Islamic law – leaving the Malaysian opposition weakened and divided.

Najib Abdul Razak has been prime minister since the resignation of his predecessor Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in 2009, and was reelected for a second term in 2013 during controversial elections. His rise to power was marked by increased repression on dissident civil society, and stained by serious corruption allegations. Since 2015, the prime minister has been embroiled in a scandal with international ramifications linked to the embezzlement of almost 700 million dollars of public investment funds from 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB). The citizen movements calling for more exemplary character and transparency on behalf of the government have increased,

and Malaysians are demanding more and more for electoral reforms. Called on to resign many times, Najib Razak responded by toughening repression on civil society and locking down public debate. The president from the Bersih movement, Maria Chin Abdullah, very active in the struggle for the protection of civil liberties, is being investigated for having participated in activities “which harm parliamentary democracy.”

Malaysia is also equipped with an arsenal of draconian laws – such as the Sedition Act, the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act or the Prevention of Terrorism Act – regularly invoked as a pretext for smothering dissent, silencing government detractors, and stopping the population from participating in peaceful protests. Najib Razak, who had promised to repeal the anti-sedition act inherited from the British, has, on the contrary, strengthened it. Henceforth, any person prosecuted for “an uprising against authority” risks up to twenty years in prison, compared to only three before.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

The Barisan Nasional coalition in power enjoys almost absolute control over the media. Private television channels as well as most of the private press belong to parties or groups close to the BN. The State media, on the other hand, is simply the mouthpiece for the government. The only independent media is online, with servers hosted abroad. The Internet has become a privileged space for expression, which welcomes dissident voices from Malaysia. The real political debate now plays out online, which leaves bloggers, for example, particularly exposed.

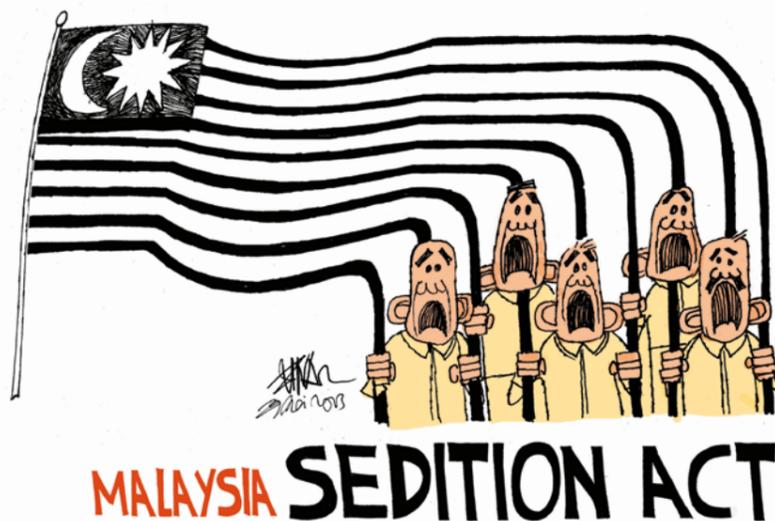
Najib Razak is waging a personal war against any media organization considered too independent and does not hesitate to send in the police. These strong-arm operations result in many arbitrary arrests. Some journalists have even received threats or have been physically attacked.

In the absence of an independent justice system, the government does not hesitate in harassing certain media organizations by dragging them to court. Certain websites like *Sarawak*, *The Edge* or *Medium* were blocked or targeted by cyber attacks for having reported the corruption allegations targeting officials. Najib Razak’s government regularly brandishes the Sedition Act in order to arrest and charge independent journalists. While threats against the media intensify, it is becoming harder for investigative journalists to work and publish on subjects of public interest.

Additionally, Malaysia has the strictest censorship laws in the world. Authorities exercise almost absolute control over the media and can impose restrictions in the name of national security. The media authority, despite Najib Razak’s promise in 2011 to never censor the Internet, regularly blocks information blogs that upset the ruling party.

Since the Malaysian authorities are quick to consider any form of political satire or parody as seditious or defamatory, it is rare that anyone dares use art to criticize power. Since Barisan Nasional has been at the head of the country, the authorities have taken severe measures against political cartoons, musicians, comedians and even Youtubers who have produced satirical works considered as “offensive” and “disrespectful.” If it is permitted to mock members of the opposition parties, challenging representatives of the governing elite can result in arrests and legal proceedings. Artists, and in particular, cartoonists, who have fallen on Najib Razak’s bad side have been subjected to his wrath. For a cartoon of the prime minister drawn with the features of a clown and published on social media, Fahmi Reza was arrested, interrogated, banned from travel and currently faces two counts of sedition. As for the cartoonist Zunar, he risks 43 years in prison for nine drawings posted on Twitter that are judged to be seditious. 🐦

“
Malaysia has the strictest censorship laws in the world.
”



From top to bottom
1. Prime Minister Najib Razak - Fahmi Reza (Malaysia)
2. Zunar (Malaysia)



ZUNAR

Zunar is a symbol of the struggle for freedom of expression in Malaysia, and the regime's pet peeve. In his drawings, he denounces the rampant corruption at all institutional levels of his country.

Imprisoned on several different occasions, he has faced a real governmental lynching for over a decade: forbidden to travel, closure of his website, seizure of his drawings, arrests of his assistants and supporters, forbidden to circulate his publications.

In November 2016, opponents disrupted the opening of Zunar's exhibit. The police came, confiscated his drawings and finally placed the cartoonist in custody. A month later, Zunar was arrested again when he organized a book sale in order to compensate the financial loss due to the cancellation of his exhibit. An investigation was opened for wrongdoing against parliamentary democracy.

Simultaneously, he faces nine charges on the basis of the Sedition Act – a law that restricts freedom of expression by allowing simplified legal proceedings against journalists and cartoonists, forbidding any kind of speech considered seditious – and risks

43 years in prison for having posted critical tweets about the government. His trial has been pushed back several times over the past two years.

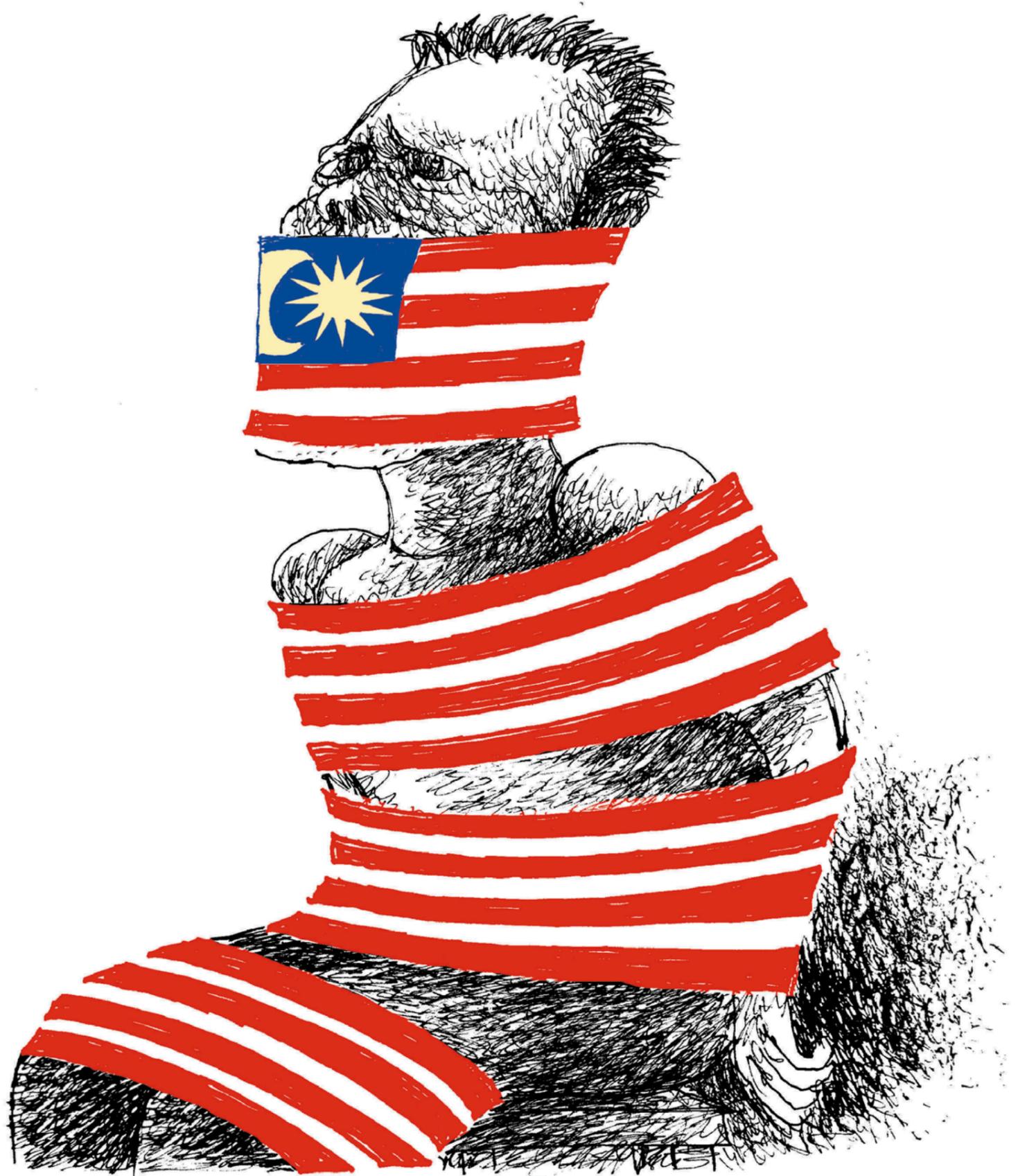
Supported by many international organizations, his cartoonist colleagues and personalities such as the co-founder of Wikipedia, the cartoonist has not stopped fighting in order to exercise his rights. Since the beginning of 2017, he has succeeded in obtaining \$4,000 in compensation from the Malaysian government for the destruction of his cartoons during a police raid at his house in 2010, and is working to remove his travel ban by asserting its unconstitutionality.

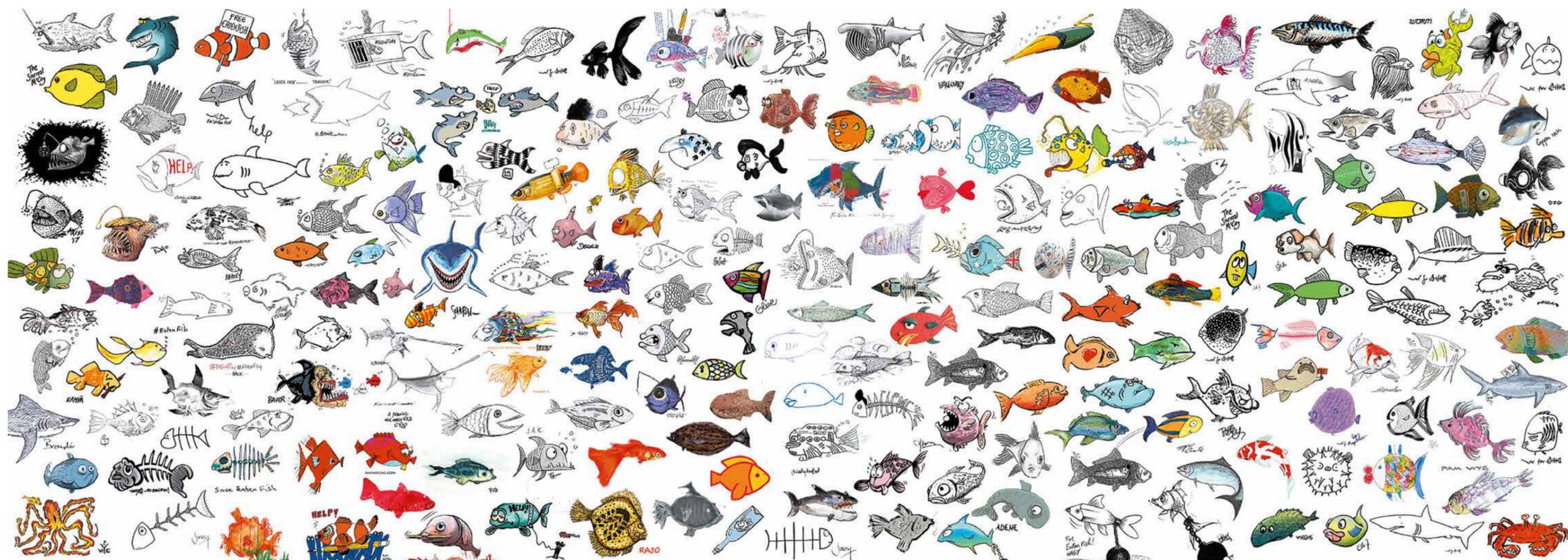
 Zunar received the "City of Geneva – Cartooning for Peace Swiss Foundation Award" last year, honoring his courage and determination. 

From left to right
1. Self-portrait - Zunar (Malaysia)
2. Zunar (Malaysia)
3. Malaysian flag - Zunar (Malaysia)



ZUNAR
16 Sept 2014





EATEN FISH

By **Terry Anderson**, board member of Cartoonists Rights Network International (CRNI) and editorial cartoonist

"Eaten Fish" is the pen name of an Iranian national who sought refugee status in Australia in 2013 and was intercepted trying to enter the country by boat from Indonesia, then taken to the Manus Regional Processing Centre, on Los Negros Island, Papua New Guinea (PNG). Together with another facility on Nauru, this off shore detention of immigrants by the Australian government represents a failure to adhere to international law and obligations with regard to human rights. The International Criminal Court has been petitioned to investigate whether a crime against humanity has been committed. The Australian government have stated that the centre will close by the end of 2017.

Eaten Fish is young, just 25 years old, and suffers from diverse mental health problems all of which have been worsened by his time in the camp and which in turn make him a difficult individual for officials to assess. In addition he has reported victimisation by other detainees and repeated instances of sexual assault and abuse.

During his imprisonment Eaten Fish began to draw cartoons about his experiences. In Australia his case was championed by the Researchers Against Pacific Black Sites campaign group. In 2016 he began a correspondence with cartoonist Andrew Marilton aka First Dog On The Moon. Andrew set up the Save Eaten Fish blog and encouraged local cartoonists and activists to highlight the mistreatment and suffering Eaten Fish was enduring. Eaten Fish's work appeared in the Australian and British press, such as *The Guardian*.

Cartoonists Rights Network International (CRNI) presented Eaten Fish in absentia with their annual Courage in Editorial Cartooning Award, saying that his case was the most complicated and distressing they had encountered in 20 years and that his body of work will in the future "be recognized as some of the most important in documenting and communicating the human rights abuses and excruciating agony of daily life in this notorious and illegal prison camp."

Toward the end of the Obama administration a deal was struck to re-home thousands of Manus and Nauru island detainees in the USA; since his refugee status has never been formally recognised, Eaten Fish does not qualify for consideration in such an arrangement. Early in 2017 he resorted to three weeks of hunger strike, specifically objecting to the failure of the authorities to adequately

investigate and respond to his sexual assault allegations.

The UK Professional Cartoonists' Organisation (PCO) responded to Eaten Fish's plight with the #AddAFish campaign, encouraging artists around the world to create a virtual shoal of fish. The artwork was used in a street protest at the Australian High Commission, London in March and shown again at the Shrewsbury Cartoon Festival, Shropshire (UK) in April.

The contractors responsible for the running of the Manus camp say they will cease work in October. Recent reports of violent protest inside and gunfire outside indicate a situation deteriorating yet further into chaos. There are also indications that a new facility is being built in Papua New Guinea to jail people like Eaten Fish with nowhere else to go. Now more than ever his life is at stake. 🐟

“ His work will be recognized as some of the most important in documenting the human rights abuses. ”

From top to bottom
1. "Fish shoal"
- cartoonists around the world draw in support of Eaten Fish
2. Self-portrait
- Eaten Fish (Iran)

BURKINA FASO

KEY FIGURES

POPULATION
19 million inhabitants
(2016)

**POLITICAL SYSTEM/
PRESIDENT**
Presidential system
▶ Roch Marc Christian Kaboré

RELIGIONS
Islam (60%), Catholicism
(19%), Animism (15%),
Protestantism (4%)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
French

LITERACY RATE
28.7% (UNICEF, 2012)

GROWTH RATE
4.02% (WB, 2015)

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
3.1% (WB, 2014)

DEMOCRACY INDEX
4.70 "hybrid regime" –
ranked 106th out of 167
(2016)

**CORRUPTION PERCEPTION
INDEX**
42 – ranked 72nd
out of 176 (TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL, 2016)

HDI
0.402 – ranked 183rd out
of 188 in 2014 (UN, 2014)

RWB RANKING
Ranked 42nd out of 180
in 2016 – 46th in 2015
(WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX)

POLITICAL SITUATION

In recent years, the political scene in Burkina Faso has been marked by the popular insurrection of 2014, which led to the fall of President Compaoré, in power for 27 years.

Coming to power thanks to a coup d'état in 1987, Blaise Compaoré remained at the head of the country by modifying the Constitution several times and, in particular, article 37, which defines the length and number of authorized presidential terms. In October 2014, while Compaoré was preparing to modify the Constitution once again in order to seek a new term, a popular insurrection broke out led by civil society. The size of the protest was such that Compaoré resigned on October 31st and fled to neighboring Ivory Coast where he is still in exile.

Following the departure of Compaoré, a transition regime, the National Transitional Council (NTC), led by Michel Kafando, was set up in order to conduct new transparent and democratic elections. In September 2015, while the Transitional was preparing to organize the first post-Compaoré elections, the Regiment of Presidential Security (RPS) kidnapped President Kafando. It announced the dissolution of the government and set up the National Council for Democracy (NCD).

Led by General Gilbert Diendéré, Compaoré's former right arm, the putschists accused the transition regime of being "progressively isolated from the reconstruction objectives for a consensual democracy" and opposed article 135 of the new electoral code, which indirectly made partisans of the former head of state ineligible.

After several national and international mediation sessions, the president of the Transitional Council was finally freed and the NTC was restored. The first free elections were finally organized on November 29, 2015. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, a

former pillar in Compaoré's regime, was elected in the first round.

At the same time, Burkina Faso is also facing a growing terrorist threat: since April 2015, the security situation has considerably worsened. The northern part of the country is regularly the site of attacks targeting defense and security forces, as well as civilians. Between 2015 and 2016, there were approximately twenty attacks, causing the death of more than 70 people.

On January 15, 2016, Burkina Faso was hit for the first time by a large terrorist attack. Claimed by Al-Mourabitoune, the attack of the Cappuccino restaurant and the Splendid Hotel caused 30 deaths and 71 injuries.



MARTO

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

In June 1991, Burkina Faso restored its republic (the 4th), which established freedom of the press. This event was followed, as in many French-speaking African countries, by a period called "Springtime for the African Press." Many newspapers appeared in an environment that would be progressively delimited by a system of regulations. Thus, in 1995, the Superior Council of Information appeared, which would become the Superior Council of Communication (SCC). The progressive march towards absolute freedom of

the press met with several significant pitfalls like the assassination of the journalist Norbert Zongo on December 13, 1998, while he was investigating the death of the driver for François Compaoré, the president's brother.

Today, Burkina Faso is ranked 42nd on the Reporters Without Borders' world press freedom index (2016) and has rose to 5th place among African countries.

As for political cartoons, they have appeared sporadically in several general newspapers. Starting in 1991, they represented the backbone of the *Journal du Jeudi*, a weekly satirical newspaper whose publication was headed by the cartoonist Damien Glez. In September 2016, the publication of the *Journal du Jeudi* was suspended for economic reasons. Since then, political cartoons are practically non-existent in Burkina Faso.

Although we can cite several criticisms levelled from time to time (trials, summons to the Superior Council of Communication), the *Journal du Jeudi* was never officially constrained by censorship. In particular, we can cite the time Burkina's ambassador to France brought a suit against the *Journal* for

“The absence of political cartoons in Burkina Faso is not connected to a form of censorship.”



”

having damaged his reputation in 1992, or the summons in 2006 for insulting the head of state, following the publication of a drawing representing Blaise Compaoré in a soccer uniform saying "I'm a great striker... I strike people down all the time." The case was eventually closed without legal proceedings.

The absence of political cartoons in Burkina Faso is therefore not connected to a form of censorship, but rather to an absence, at the local level, of a political cartoon culture. This is particularly explained by the assimilation, in the collective unconscious, of political cartoons with satire. Thus, classic newspapers, relatively shy when it comes to publishing political cartoons in their issues, have traditionally left this subject to the *Journal du Jeudi*. Its disappearance has thus left around ten Burkinabe cartoonists, including professional cartoonists, without any real prospects in the media. 🐦



From left to right
1. "Make Tô not war" Tô is Burkinabe national dish - Marto (Burkina Faso)
2. Glez (Burkina Faso)
3. Kichka (Israel)



GLEZ

Born in France in 1967, Damien Glez has been a professional newspaper cartoonist since 1992 and a member of Cartooning for Peace since 2006. For over 25 years, he has lived in Burkina Faso where he ran the *Journal du Jeudi*, a satirical Burkinabe newspaper. He regularly collaborates with the international media, like *Jeune Afrique*, *This is Africa*, the website for *Radio Nederland* and *World Policy Journal*.

On February 28th, the article "It's all fun and games, until there's a handbag..." by Damien Glez was published on *Jeune Afrique's* website. The text was based on an incident regarding the Senegalese artist Wally Seck; a few weeks earlier, a photo of the singer carrying a handbag was largely relayed on social media and caused numerous comments. Glez's article evoked the obvious homophobia as well as the invocation, by the blacklisted artist, of his Muslim faith and his fondness for Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba, the founder of the Mouride brotherhood in Senegal.

The satirical drawing accompanying the text turned the tables on the Senegalese's inability to understand a Western fashion: we see a Westerner, conversely, making fun of Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba's caftan (a traditional Senegalese dress), by exclaiming "Hey, why is he wearing a dress?"

The representation of the founder of the Mourides immediately caused an outcry in Senegal. Glez, as well as the newspaper *Jeune Afrique*, were quickly threatened online and protests were organized in several cities across the country.



Called out by the population and media, the government reacted the day after the publication. "The government of Senegal expresses its indignation and firmly condemns this incomprehensible and inadmissible tactlessness on behalf of a newspaper organization in Africa that is meant to understand, defend and promote African culture and values," Seydou Guèye, the government's spokesman, declared.

After having first toned down the cartoon – without the portrait of the religious leader – *Jeune Afrique* decided to finally withdraw it and published the following apology message: "With this drawing, our intention was not to hurt anyone, and even less to damage the figure venerated by Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba's numerous followers, but to criticize the stupidity of those who cannot see the difference between a caftan and a dress, with all the simplistic and unfounded deductions that could result from this. Nevertheless, we perfectly understand that this drawing could be shocking and we present our sincere apologies to those who were offended."

Damien Glez did not apologize, but gave his version of events in a Senegalese newspaper, which came to interview him in Ouagadougou. For him, this polemic highlights the danger of incorrect contextualization – even the manipulative detachment – of an article and its accompanying drawing. 🐦



GADO

Godfrey Mwampembwa, alias Gado, is a Tanzanian cartoonist who has worked for over twenty years in Kenya. He shamelessly portrays politicians in East Africa and, more generally, Africa itself. For him, it is absolutely impossible to stop drawing. However, intimidations and threats have become daily events in recent years. Indeed, the freedom of expression in Kenya has decreased since Uhuru Kenyatta rose to power in 2013.

Since 1992, Gado has worked for the *Daily Nation* newspaper, the principal newspaper of East Africa. After several cartoons depicting Kenyatta and his Vice-President Ruto's shenanigans, in particular, following charges against them with the International Criminal Court, the newspaper's management ceded to governmental pressure in February 2016: Gado was dismissed.

As he says himself, he was not surprised. It was not the first time that the newspaper found itself under pressure from a government. Already in 2015, after the publication of a cartoon representing Jakaya Kikwete, the Tanzanian president at that time, as a Roman emperor surrounded by 7 women representing the seven deadly sins, the publication of the *Daily Nation's* subsidiary

in the neighboring country was suspended. Encouraged to take a sabbatical at that time, Gado's contract was not renewed. The cartoonist is not ready to censor himself in order to reassure the newspaper's owner, a close friend of the government.

Thanks to his provocative nature, which pleases and moves people throughout Africa and the rest of the world, Gado was rapidly hired by the rival newspaper, *Standard*, and promised complete freedom. He thus continues to criticize, with his pencil, the political corruption and scandals that undermine East Africa.

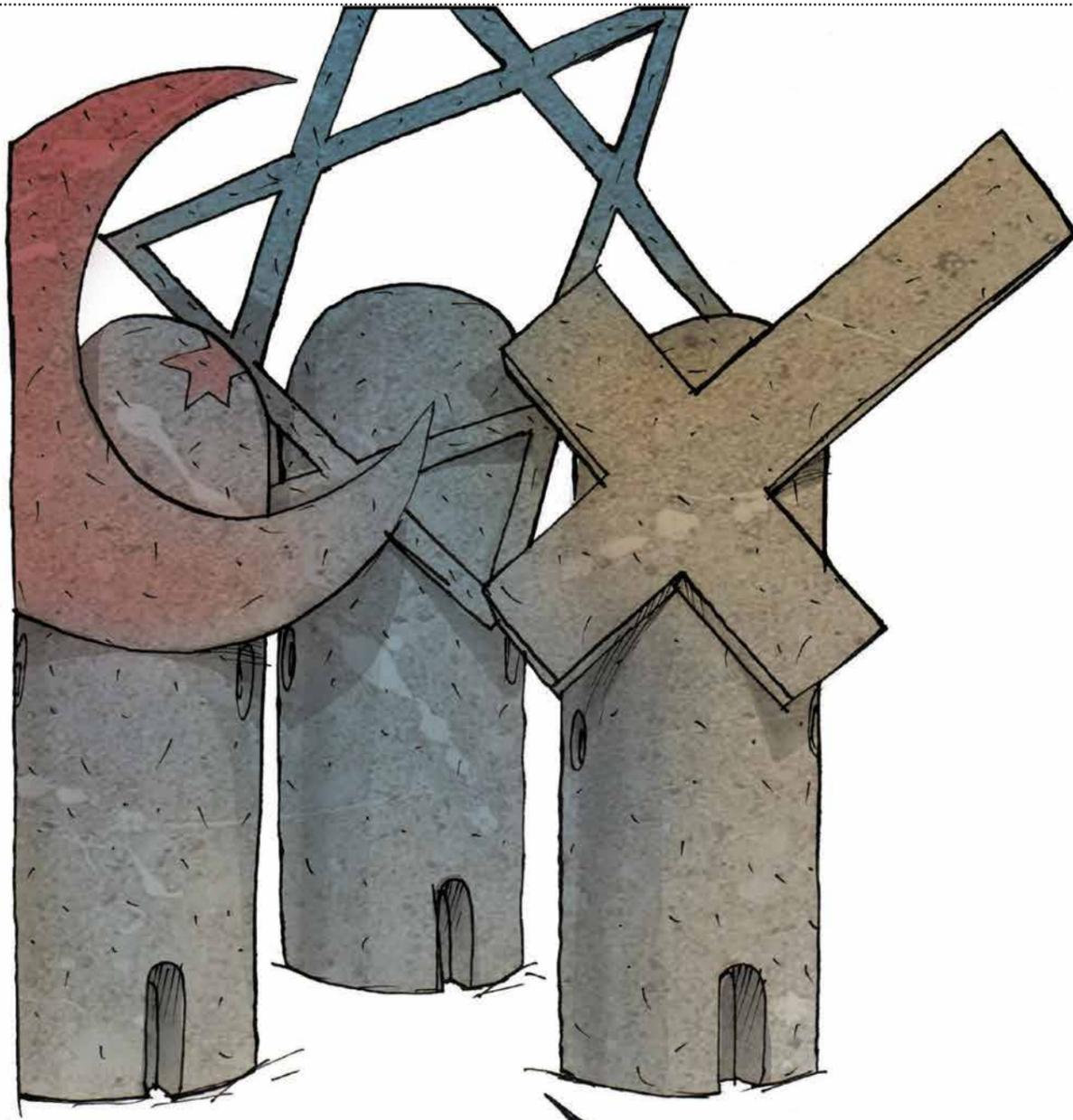
His commitment and determination to draw at all costs helped Gado win the City of Geneva – Swiss Foundation Cartooning for Peace Award, at the same time as his Malaysian counterpart Zunar in 2016. 🐦



DESSINATEUR DE PRESSE...

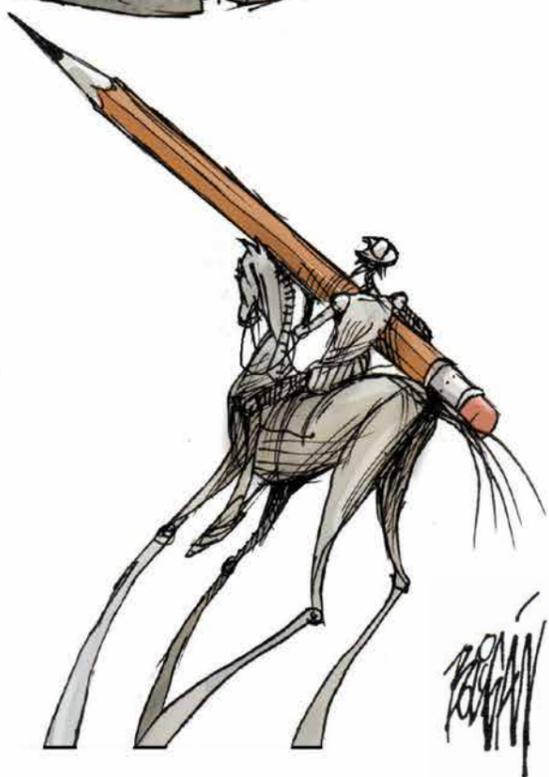


From top to bottom
1. Gado (Kenya)
2. Self-portrait - Gado (Kenya)
3. Former President of Tanzania Jakaya Kikwete JK - Gado (Kenya)



THE "ARAB LEAGUE" OF CARTOONISTS

— by Jonathan Guyer, member of the Institute of Current World Affairs



When Arab leaders convened in the Jordanian capital of Amman in late March to deliberate over the pressing matters of a war-torn region, Arab cartoonists responded in kind. The Saudi illustrator Abdullah Jaber's "The Arab Summit" consisted of six overturned ambulances with a heaping pile of bloodied bodies in the center. The Egyptian cartoonist Makhouf drew the protruding bellies of sheikhs laying atop rolling hills, creating their own mountain range of "Arab Summits." The Jordanian cartoonist Amjad Rasmi illustrated two janitors cleaning up a jumbled conference room, sweeping up empty words.

The daring cartoonists of the diverse region have maintained their hard-won independence at a time when the preponderance of journalists and columnists are part of the popular chorus, singing the praises of the undemocratic governments. Cartoonists are often critics in countries where free expression is not always tolerated, where rulers rule with impunity and debating religion is taboo. The cartoonists working within these confines, where governments gripe and religious extremists growl, continue to lampoon just about everyone. These threats from

within and without exemplify the audacity of cartoonists in the Middle East. In fact, in this tenuous environment, autonomous cartoonists thrive.

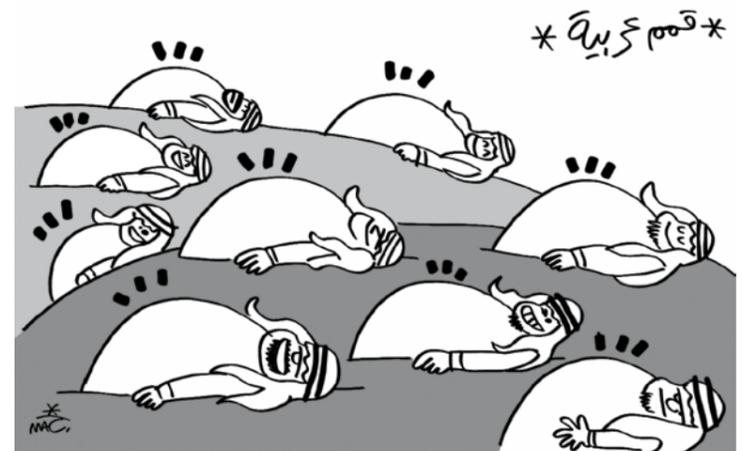
Most governments in the region, from the Maghreb and Levant to the Persian Gulf, retain archaic laws that limit speech, prohibiting "insults" to monarchs or presidents, public institutions or symbols of the state. However the rules are defined and whatever the precedents, authorities tend to haphazardly enforce them against dissidents. Independent cartoonists are well versed in the regulations' vague meanings, and they fearlessly work around them. Of course many have gotten caught in the regime's web of repression. Algerian cartoonists have fled the country after caricatures of long-time President Abdelaziz Bouteflika caused a stir. Meanwhile Egyptian cartoonists, especially in the past decade, have flouted such regulations. In the Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, most cartoonists stick to social criticism or foreign policy, knowing that the dynastic rulers are touchy.

“That leaders shield themselves from satire is an indication of humor’s unifying power.”

It is no coincidence that academics, activists, bloggers, and poets who censured Gulf leaders have found themselves in prison, creating a chilling effect across the board. Authorities use whatever powers they have to limit criticism, like the detention of Palestinian cartoonists at Israeli checkpoints. That leaders shield themselves from satire is an indication of humor’s unifying power: after all, the many protesters participating in the 2011 revolutions gleefully carried placards with cartoons.

Religion delineates another red line, one just as ambiguous and dangerous. When terrorists gunned down the cartoonists of Charlie Hebdo in Paris under the pretext of the French magazine’s blasphemous illustrations, many artists in the Arab world stood in solidarity. They know well the risks of upsetting the sensitivities of religious zealots. ISIS has intimidated an illustrator in Kuwait. Jordanian artists who send up terrorists on a daily basis have likewise received threats.

The most recent episode in this ongoing tragedy occurred on the steps of an Amman courthouse, where a controversial Jordanian writer, Nahed Hattar, was assassinated in broad daylight; he was facing trial for sharing on Facebook a cheeky cartoon about an ISIS fighter speaking to a white-bearded God in heaven, and an extremist took justice into his own hands.



From left to right
1. Boligán (Mexico)
2. "Arab summits"
- Makhlouf (Al-Masry
Al-Youm, Egypt)



القمة العربية



From left to right
1. "The Arab summit"
- Abdullah Jaber
(Saudi Arabia)
2. "Custodians sweep up Arabic letters"
- Amjad Ramsi
(*Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*,
Jordan)

That Hattar was on trial for sharing a blasphemous cartoon shows that governments also censor religious speech and have an ambiguous role in encouraging the silencing of dissenters. In an attempt to suppress anti-religious jokes, states and institutions have brought lawsuits against cartoonists—and the issue transcends Islam. The Catholic Church sued the Lebanese comic collective Samandal for skewering Jesus, which resulted in a drawn out legal proceedings against three artists and a \$20,000 fine for the pioneering alt-comix publication in 2015. Cartoonists in Egypt have also had to fight suits for blasphemy.

Less discussed but equally challenging for cartoonists across the Middle East is the sheer difficulty of making a living off their art. Many struggle to get by on the measly income provided by print newspapers. Some also illustrate for children's magazines or PR companies to make a buck. In the face of economic immobility, a number of regional programs are creating opportunities. The NGO called Correspondents is training North African cartoonists in the emerging form of Comics Journalism. The American University of Beirut's Sawwaf Arab Comics Initiative has brought prestige to the often overlooked art form through its lucrative Mahmoud Kahil Award, named for the late Lebanese cartoonist, which in its second year has honored many emerging comic artists. Similarly, the Cairo Comix Festival, also in its second year, convenes cartoonists from across the region for events and a scholarly symposium that is much more riveting than the sleepy summits of the haughty Arab League leaders. It is in the festivals of Cairo and Beirut that the cartoonists themselves are forging connections that will lay the groundwork for new publications and other forms of collaboration.

That isn't to say that all illustrators in the region are critics and dissidents; plenty of them parrot the talking points of



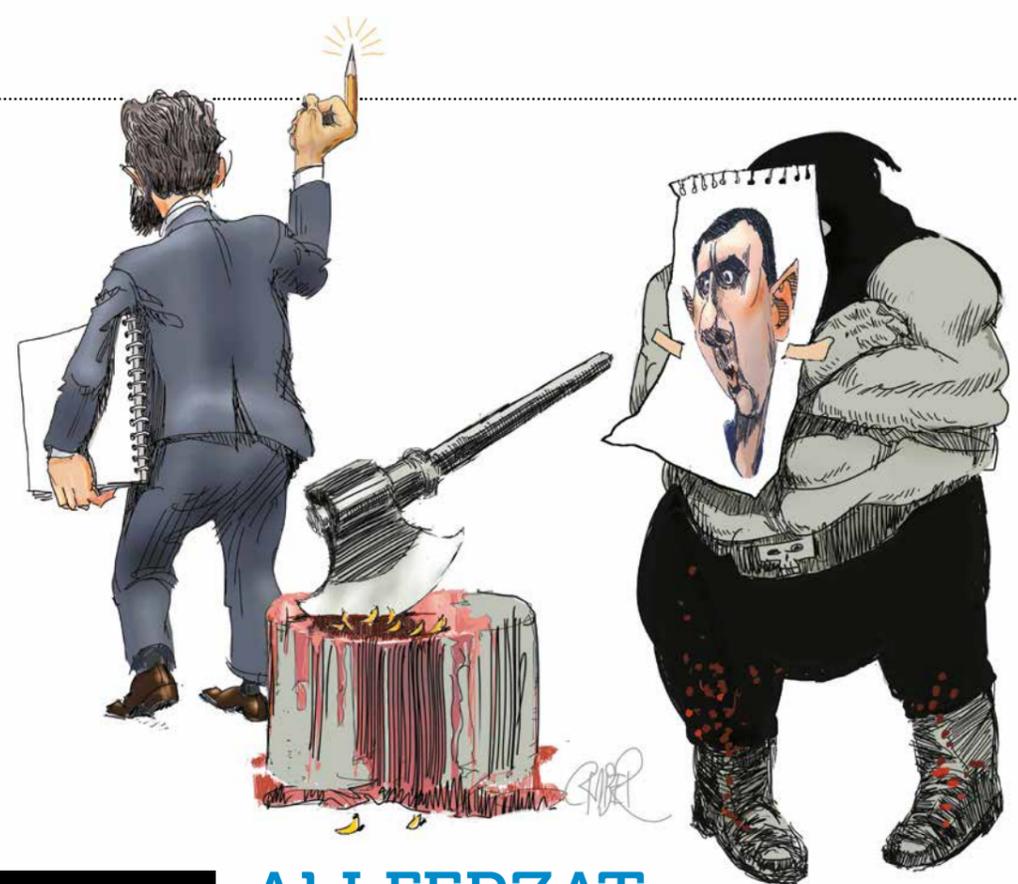
politicians in the pages of state-owned publications. For readers who are jaded by the regime propaganda that fills the columns of many broadsheets, cartoonists offer alternative narratives of the present.

Many would expect doom and gloom in the realm of Middle East publishing, where Western outsiders often demur the lack of free expression. But in fact, scores of cartoonists are experimenting with content and form. Arab cartoonists are injecting vicious black humor

into their frames to address the world's inaction in the face of the Syrian civil war. They are bringing local flavor to the medium of bande dessinée. Drawing on tablets, they are updating the tried and true form of the editorial cartoon through GIFs, memes, animations, and other laugh-lines that go viral.

Few will remember the gathering of kings and presidents held in March, but plenty will continue to chuckle over the cartoons drawn in response. 🐦

“ Arab cartoonists are injecting a vicious black humor. ”



ALI FERZAT



From top to bottom
1. Riber (Sweden)
2. Self-portrait
- Ali Ferzat (Syria)
3. Ali Ferzat (Syria)

Ali Ferzat is undoubtedly the most well known cartoonist in Syria. He drew his first cartoon, published in the newspaper *Al Ayyam*, at the age of 12. In the 1970s, he worked for several media companies including the *Armée du Peuple* in Damascus, where he would eventually move, to then resign and become a cartoonist independent of the official political line. In 2000, he started *Al Doumri*, the first private newspaper in Syria since 1963 – a media platform that allowed him, with pencil strokes, to criticize his country's political situation, and denounce the dictatorship.

airport, and was then driven to the hospital. Nursed back to health in Kuwait where he took refuge, he has since gotten back the use of both his hands and continues to portray the tragic situation in which Syria is mired with markers and paintbrushes

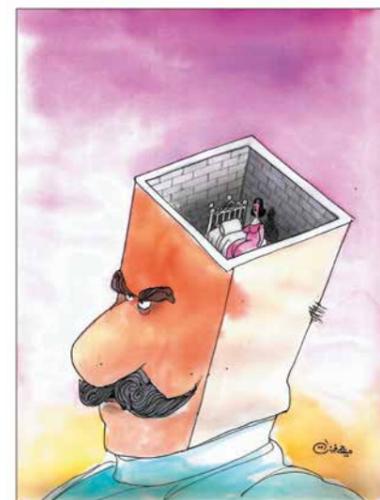
A courageous move for which Ali Ferzat continues to bear the consequences, even in exile: he regularly receives violent and explicit threats for his cartoons criticizing despotism and religious extremists. Residing in a neighborhood known for sheltering supporters of the Bashar el-Assad regime, the cartoonist fears for his safety more and more. His situation is even more precarious since the newspaper for which he worked has now closed.

Risking deportation to Syria, he contacted Cartooning for Peace and Reporters Without Borders, before deciding in 2017 to take refuge in France, this country that he considers as the birthplace of the freedom of expression, in order to continue to do what is so important to him: draw, and denounce.

In 2002, he received the Prince Claus Award, and in 2011, the Sakharov Award for the freedom of thought. In 2012, - Index on Censorship awarded him with the Freedom of Expression Award in the "Arts" category. 🐦

"If my cartoons caused problems for me, I could say that they're about Pinochet or any other dictator, but the people of Syria knew whom I was referencing." The revolution changed all that. "In 2011, I stopped expressing myself with symbols and I started drawing people. Why? Because I needed to shatter people's fear," he indicated in an article written up by the journalist Fanny Arlandis for *Télérama* (France).

That year, armed and masked men assaulted him and broke both his hands. A warning, meant to stop him from sketching "cartoons that disgrace" the leaders of a regime, however contested. Ali Ferzat was found in the road leading from Damascus to the



JORDAN

KEY FIGURES

POPULATION
9.53 million inhabitants
(2015)

POLITICAL SYSTEM/KING
Constitutional monarchy
King Abdullah II

RELIGIONS
Sunni Islam (92%),
Christianity (6%), Druze,
Shiite and other (2%)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Arab

LITERACY RATE
95.9% (UNICEF, 2008-2012)

GROWTH RATE
2.8% (WB, 2013)

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
13.2% (WB, 2016)

DEMOCRACY INDEX
3.96 "authoritarian
regime" – ranked 117th
out of 167 (2016)

**CORRUPTION PERCEPTION
INDEX**
48 – ranked 57th out
of 176 (TRANSPARENCY
INTERNATIONAL, 2016)

HDI
0.79 – ranked 80th
out of 187 (UN, 2014)

**REPORTERS WITHOUT
BORDERS RANKING**
Ranked 135th out of 180
in 2016 – 143rd in 2015
(WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX)

POLITICAL SITUATION

Several international observers consider Jordan, in many respects, a model of moderation and modernity in the Middle East. One of the reasons used to arrive at such a conclusion is the relatively peaceful attitude that the official authorities have showed in their reactions to popular uprisings from the Jordanian Arab Spring.

The anti-establishment's demands essentially touched upon two points: more social justice for the modest social classes and an institutional reform of the legislative process. The authorities reacted by launching, as of September 2011, a constitutional reform proposal before responding to these different demands. The electoral law has since been changed twice and the legislative elections held in September 2016 were considered by the international community as organized, inclusive and credible.

Although Jordan, particularly in regards to its geopolitical situation, can be considered as an example to follow, certain aspects of its regime remain incompatible with numerous democratic founding principles.

Indeed, the essential part of the executive and legislative powers remains concentrated in the hands of King Abdullah II. The latter names judges, the government as well as all the members of the upper chamber of Parliament. He also has absolute royal veto that he can exercise at any time in order to block any law proposal. Even though a two-thirds majority in Parliament can bypass this veto, it does not represent a sufficient counterbalance. Furthermore, any individual found criticizing the king, his government and even religion, is subject to a three-year prison sentence.

Generally, the situation of human rights in Jordan can be qualified as worrisome.

According to the democracy index by The Economist Group, the country is considered an authoritarian regime. The refugee situation is troubling, as well as that for migrant workers, political opponents and women. Several NGOs have blamed a constitutional reform that was only a hollow shell, with many abuses continuing to be perpetrated.

media sector is controlled by the regime and censorship is common. Ironically, a tougher stance was taken, particularly through legislative amendments that cropped up after the Arab Spring. Legislative power has progressively prohibited the freedom of expression on many subjects so much so that journalists are seen as de facto silenced.

“
Cartoonists
deciding to
exercise their
freedom are
much too often
victims of threats
to their physical
integrity.”

In addition to the subjects mentioned above, the amendments to anti-terrorist and anti-corruption laws have extended the scope of motives for incriminating journalists, particularly in regards to how the media treats national security questions. The most worrisome amendment remains the law against cybercrime. Indeed, since it has come into effect in June 2015, journalists can face a prison sentence of up to three years. According to Jordan's Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists, at least seven journalists or activists have been detained since the law went into effect.

Such measures forbid cartoonists from producing and circulating any editorial cartoons of a political or religious nature. Faced with this oppressive climate, censorship is, alas, a sadly common phenomenon. When this is not due to direct intimidation from the Jordanian Press Association, it is the journalists themselves who censor their work for fear of retaliation. In addition to government pressure to which they are subject, cartoonists deciding to exercise their freedom are much too often victims of threats to their physical integrity by members of civil society. The most polemical cartoons are often those on religious topics. 🐦



From top to bottom
1. Emad Hajjaj (Jordan)
2. Emad Hajjaj (Jordan)

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Although freedom of the press is established in the constitution, Jordan continues to be considered as a State that continually denies it. According to the NGO Freedom House, in 2016, the Jordanian press was considered as "not free." Generally, the large majority of the

Alas, political cartoons are not exempt from this phenomenon. Cartoonists, like their other journalist colleagues, are subject to government or civil censorship. First, the law specifically indicates that all journalists expressing an opinion "inconsistent" with Arab-Muslim values, the government or the royal family could be sentenced to pay a fine of up to 40,000 US dollars. This ban is in effect in both the print media as well as on websites.



CARTOONS IN THE AGE OF THE INTERNET: THE NAHED HATTAR STORY

On August 13, 2016, the writer and journalist Nahed Hattar, a controversial figure in Jordan, born Christian but committedly secular and a fervent supporter of Bashar Al-Assad, shared a cartoon on his Facebook page. The author unknown and entitled "Lord of ISIS," it represented a soldier from the Islamic State in paradise. Surrounded by two women, he drinks wine and talks to God, shown as his server. Immediately, social media lit up.

Faced with a surge of attacks that this publication caused, Nahed Hattar withdrew the cartoon, indicating that he had not intended to be disrespectful of the Muslim community, and that he had only wanted to poke fun at the jihadists' vision of paradise.

The death threats continued to rain down. The Jordanian authorities arrested the journalist for what it called "inciting religious discord" and "insulting Islam." This was a violation of Jordanian law subject to a firm prison sentence. Let out on bail, Hattar was assassinated on September 25th on the steps of a courthouse in Amman, as he was arriving for his hearing.

The Jordanian government, while imposing a media blackout on the story, expressed its firmness and intransigence regarding this type of violence via an official memo. As for Nahed Hattar's loved ones, they criticized the authorities' attitude in the management of this case, going so far as to argue that the government encouraged the violence against him by choosing to prosecute him.

At the same time, two Jordanian cartoonists, Osama Hajjaj and Emad Hajjaj, published cartoons criticizing the journalist's murder. Emad Hajjaj explained that the scale of this case had shocked him. From Hattar's arrest up until his death, by way of his imprisonment and the charges brought against him, Emad explains: "All this was rather traumatizing, I remember when he was killed, the blood, the



From left to right
1. Bonil (Ecuador)
2. Hani Abbas (Syria / Palestine)
3. "United Jordan to denounce the assassination of Nahed Hattar / No to murder, no to violence, no to extremism" - Emad Hajjaj (Jordan)

tears of his son, the distressed people all around. That is why I drew afterwards. I knew that my cartoon was going to bother certain people; Nahed Hattar was not very popular given his radical ideas. But we have to say no to terror. No one deserves to die because of their ideas." After the publication of his drawing on social media, Emad received a multitude of hateful and threatening comments, accusing him of supporting Hattar and his ideas, as well as those in support of the blasphemous cartoon shared by the journalist.

Nahed Hattar's case calls for a wide range look at the stakes linked to circulating political cartoons on the web. New technologies have effectively come to revolutionize the former circulation methods for political cartoons. They have particularly contributed to freeing speech that was often silenced in the so-called "traditional" media, such as we see in many countries like Malaysia and Russia, where "free" cartoonists tend to prefer publishing online.

Social media facilitates the circulation and sharing of content, but also its de-contextualization, misappropriation and even instrumentalisation: ideas defended or faults denounced are no longer received solely by sensitive audiences as was traditionally the case in the written press.

This is a case that highlights the contrast between the simple circulation of a cartoon and the disastrous consequences that it can cause: despite the withdrawal of the cartoon a few hours after its publication, the opponents' verve did not decrease. Worse still, the authorities decided to prosecute him even though he had already apologized and clarified his position. Conversely, the Internet users who had threatened him, on the very same platform, were not bothered.

The day after Nahed Hattar's assassination, the Moroccan cartoonist Khalid Gueddar chose to pay homage to the Jordanian journalist by publishing the same cartoon as him, accompanied by a citation from Charb: "I don't feel like I'm cutting someone's throat with a pen. I don't put



“ This case highlights the contrast between the simple circulation of a cartoon and its disastrous consequences. ”

lives in danger. When activists need a pretext for justifying their violence; they always find it.”

Since then, Gueddar, also the director of the satirical magazine *Baboubi*, has not stopped receiving threats and regrets the inaction of the police in the face of the latter: "I'm not asking for private protection or a body-guard; I am only asking that the authorities react and take these threats seriously before someone takes action." The cartoonist, who was convicted to a suspended four years prison term for a cartoon of King Mohammed VI's cousin, criticizes the proliferation of violent speech against those who dare take up the pencil.

Without a doubt, the Internet allows for the circulation of political cartoons on a vast scale, and helps reach new audiences. In this, it is an essential tool for cartoonists. However, it is also taking the risk of coming face to face with a multitude of interpretations, which can sometimes surpass, to a great extent, the author's wishes. The cartoon ends up, given the nature itself of social media, much more easily extracted from its publication context, however

indispensable the latter is to its interpretation. This risk of misunderstanding is even more likely since the sense of immediacy that characterizes the Internet also changes the reader's behavior: they can forget to take the time to understand and reflect when looking at the cartoon, whose objective is simply to create and provoke thought and debate. 🇵🇸



OSAMA HAJJAJ

In May 2015, Osama Hajjaj, a famous Jordanian cartoonist, criticized on Twitter the oppression of women in countries that enforce Sharia law. He immediately received many death threats on social media and by email. The threats continue while the cartoonist still publishes critical works, particularly in *Al Arab Al Youm* where he published the cartoon of a jihadist using his sabre as a selfie stick.

His newspaper closed; the only source of income for Osama now comes from an advertising agency. His employer requested that he no longer draw political and religious cartoons and made him sign a letter certifying it.

"My boss told me: 'Look what they did to Charlie Hebdo. They can come and do the same thing here.'" He explained to *Le Monde*.

If Osama has never given up cartooning and expressing himself through his cartoons, he found himself involuntarily involved in a polemic in 2016. Nahed Hattar, a controversial journalist and writer in the country, published a cartoon in August on his Facebook page, author unknown, which mocks the jihadists' interpretation of paradise and includes a representation of God. Social media erupted; he was arrested and freed two weeks later on bail.

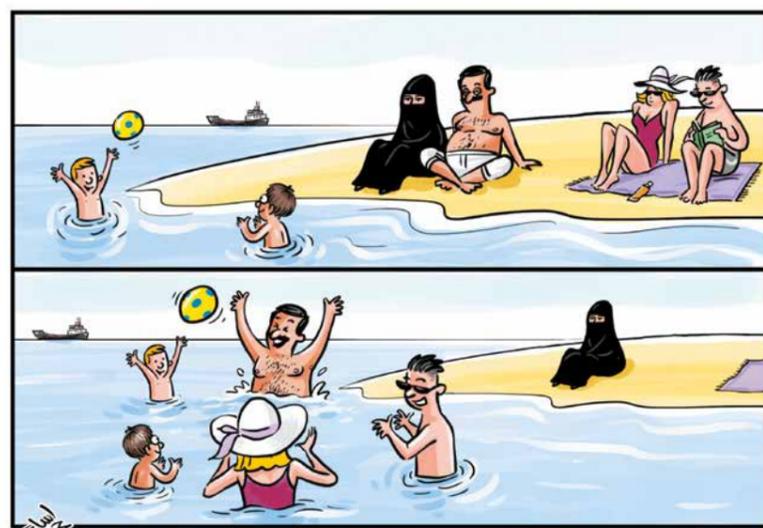
Osama Hajjaj, on his end, also published a cartoon that August, which drew wrath from the Christian communities. They reproached him for mocking God and accused him of blasphemy, just like Hattar. The cartoonist feared for his life, and apologized publicly.

And yet in reality his cartoon has absolutely nothing to do with religion, as it depicts the Olympic Games that were taking place at that time in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in the midst of the Zika epidemic: the representation of God that he was criticized for was only the statue of Christ the Redeemer on Corcovado mountain, which dominates Guanabara Bay, here shown with bug spray in one hand and an Olympic torch in the other.

The polemic died down, but was taken back up again at the end of September: the writer Nahed Hattar was assassinated on the steps of a courthouse in Amman where he was being judged for "inciting religious dissension" and "insults." Osama Hajjaj then published cartoons criticizing the murder and underlining the absurdity of how it was related to the simple circulation of a cartoon, for which Hattar was not even the author. The Muslim communities then accused him of approving the original cartoon and the threats started raining down again. This case spilled a lot of ink in Jordan and underlines the important role of the Internet today in terms of cartooning.



From left to right
1. "One blood", on Nahed Hattar's murder - Osama Hajjaj (Jordan)
2. Osama Hajjaj (Jordan)
3. Osama Hajjaj (Jordan)



EGYPT

KEY FIGURES

- POPULATION**
92.25 millions inhabitants (2017)
- REGIME / PRESIDENT**
Semi-presidential
Abdel Fattah al-Sissi
- RELIGIONS**
Islam (around 90%) ;
Coptic Christians (around 10%)
- OFFICIAL LANGUAGE**
Arabic
- LITERACY RATE**
73.9% (UNICEF, 2008-2012)
- GROWTH RATE**
2.1 % (WB, 2012)
- UNEMPLOYMENT RATE**
13.2% (WB, 2014)
- DEMOCRACY INDEX**
3.31 « authoritarian regime » - ranked 133rd out of 167 (2016)
- CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX**
34 - ranked 108th out of 176 (TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL, 2016)
- HDI**
0,691 - ranked 111th out of 187 (UN, 2015)
- RWB RANK**
Ranked 159th out of 180 in 2016 - 158th in 2015 (WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX)

POLITICAL SITUATION

Cairo, the capital of the Arab Republic of Egypt, is home for over 20 million residents, scores of newspapers and political magazines, and quite a few cartoonists. Since the devaluation of its currency (the Egyptian pound) in November, the country is experiencing rampant inflation and the possibility an extended economic crisis. Meanwhile in the Sinai Peninsula, which connects Egypt to the Palestinian Territory of Gaza and the State of Israel, an insurgency rages, but the reverberations of the conflict are scarcely felt in Cairo.

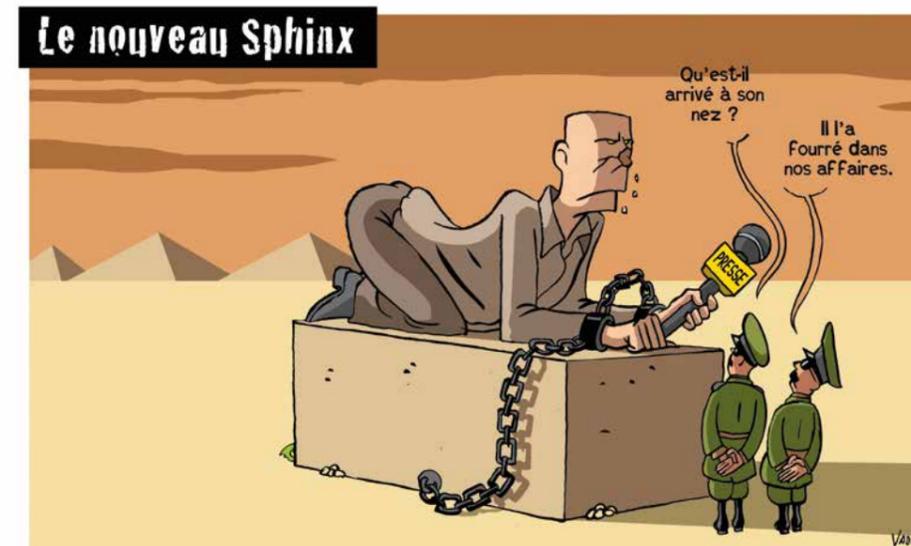
Although Egypt is ostensibly a democracy, the space for free expression has significantly contracted since the summer 2013 military takeover in which General Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi overthrew the Islamist Mohamed Morsi. Thousands of Egyptians are currently in prison on politicized charges. Furthermore, the government has outlawed the Islamist movement Muslim Brotherhood and also secular activist groups, such as the April 6 Movement and soccer fan clubs. Many activists and critics have opted to leave the country.



From top to bottom
1. Anwar (Al-Masry Al-Youm, Egypt)
2. The new Sphinx / "What happened to his nose?" / "He stuck it into our business" Vadot (Belgique)

PRESS FREEDOM

Egypt, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, is the third worst jailer of journalists in the world, clocking in after China and Turkey. And yet, censorship in the country is haphazard. Egypt is a massive country and its bureaucracy incredibly bloated, so the press and especially digital media are relatively free as compared to other countries in the Arab region. Historically, censorship has been the harshest in terms of broadcast media and film. Cartoonists often find ways to break





From left to right
1. Anwar (Al-Masry Al-Youm, Egypt)
2. Anwar (Al-Masry Al-Youm, Egypt)

>> the rules in ways that elicit laughs rather than cause trouble.

Creative dissent is increasingly risky yet a cohort of young activists, artists, and journalists who cut their teeth during the 2011 uprising in Tahrir Square have persevered in the face of repression. Nevertheless, many events in 2016 were disquieting. The wildly popular web cartoonist Islam Gawish was detained overnight by authorities allegedly because he was operating a Facebook page without a license (a signal of increased internet surveillance in the country). The novelist Ahmed Naji served ten months in prison on an obscenity charge. A musical troupe called the Street Children, known for their biting satire, has been incarcerated for insulting the regime. Each of these cases shows how vague laws are often used against dissenters, and the authorities often do so with impunity.

“ A cohort of young activists, artists, and journalists who cut their teeth during the 2011 uprising have persevered in the face of repression.

”



Cartooning remains a vaunted art form in the country, and most newspapers employ several illustrators and caricaturists. Furthermore, comics for adults are the latest trend in Egypt and across North Africa, where many alternative zines, graphic novels, web strips, and independent publications have begun disseminating a range of graphic narratives especially for young readers. This renaissance in cartooning and groundswell of new comic art is consistent with the country's rich history of political cartooning, which began in the late 19th century in the satirical publications of Yaacub Sannu, an Egyptian-Italian Jew who pulled no punches in lambasting the country's ruler Khedive Ismail. 🐦



Islam Gawish Twitter account

ISLAM GAWISH

Islam Gawish, a young, 26-year-old Egyptian cartoonist, publishes his work on the Facebook page “elwarka” (“a sheet of paper”), which is followed by more than 1.5 million people. His satirical cartoons are generally dedicated to societal issues, but sometimes touch on the government and Egyptian politicians.

Abdel Fattah al-Sissi’s government, in place since 2014, has hardened its tone regarding opponents and independent media channels that criticize his policies. Given the success of Islam Gawish and the media organization for which he works, on January 31, 2016 he was arbitrarily arrested at his place of work for the supposed illegal status of his Facebook page. This arrest was accompanied by the seizure of his personal computer. The cartoonist only spent one day in prison, not having responsibility over the management of the website.

A government mistake or an intimidation campaign, the desire to restrict the freedom

of expression in Egypt is undoubted. From the government’s perspective, this event did not produce the expected results: Gawish’s arrest started a campaign of support led by Egyptian cartoonists, who quickly inundated social media with cartoons. The opposition to the government also mobilized, demanding the immediate release of the cartoonist, his arrest being representative of a climate “that restricts the freedom of opinion and expression.” The entire story was relayed in the national and international press.

The world of culture and media has now become the latest victim of an Egyptian government with authoritarian inclinations, as this arrest symbolized, coming only six days after the fifth anniversary of the Egyptian revolution. 🐦



“Sir this is your nuclear briefcase”, says the assistant. “This button is to strike Iran. And that’s for Russia and that’s to strike the Middle East and...” / “Let me try”, says a bug-eyed Trump. He clicks SELECT ALL - Islam Gawish (Egypt)



President Abdel Fattah Al-Sissi “I don’t like being drawn” / “Islam Gawish arrested for drawing the President” - Andeel (Egypt)



“Hey, no, throw away what’s in your hand” - Anwar (Egypt)

Supporting cartoonists

CARTOONING FOR PEACE'S ADVOCACY WORK

CAMPAIGNS TOOLS

THE WATCHDOG AND ALERT UNIT

Cartooning for Peace has a watchdog and early warning committee that monitors violations against the freedom of expression for cartoonists. It handles the cases of cartoonists who are threatened, and sometimes prevented from freely exercising their profession, by documenting their backgrounds and the problems to which they have been exposed, by informing and contacting its partners, and by giving visibility to the different cases, if necessary.

The watchdog and alert unit volunteers are divided up into geographical zones and linguistic competency. Their work provides a significant portion of the information necessary for the drafting of this report. Volunteers have also written up several country sheets related to their geographical zones of expertise. Cartooning for Peace recognize their commitment and would like to thank:

- Vincent Dédré (Sciences Po/ENS): Associate Professor of History
- Jade Dussart (Inalco/Université Aix-Marseille): Research Attaché for the Asian Region – Front Line Defenders
- Alice Gautier (IHEAL/Université de Nanterre Paris X): Reporter for the National Court for the Right to Asylum
- Paula Osorio (IHEAL/Université Panthéon-Sorbonne Paris I): Member of the Diálogo por Venezuela Organization
- Adèle Reiss (Université de Strasbourg/Université de Montréal): Student studying Arabic language and literature

THE SUPPORT FUND

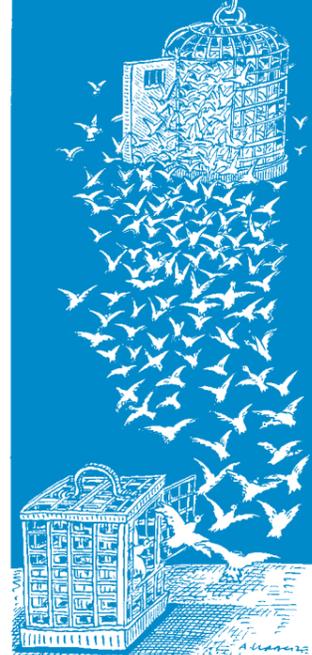
Thanks to the support of the European Union in the development of its advocacy work, Cartooning for Peace provides support to editorial cartoonists requiring urgent help throughout the world.

In collaboration with other organizations that support journalists and human rights activists, Cartooning for Peace, in particular, assists in:

- taking charge of legal fees for newspaper cartoonists who are unfairly prosecuted;
- getting threatened newspaper cartoonists to safety;
- finding appropriate care for newspaper cartoonists who were attacked for their work;
- meeting cartoonists' most urgent needs when they are planning on fleeing their country due to threats and repression.

THE HANDBOOK FOR CARTOONISTS IN DANGER

Cartooning for Peace will publish, in 2017, its first handbook for editorial cartoonists in danger. This handbook will provide cartoonists with necessary information on the protection services for human rights activists to which they are eligible, as well as a list of organizations and partners who can provide them with information and help them cope with potential threats.



Advocacy Krauze (Poland)

EVENTS

MAY 2016, GENEVA

3rd edition of Swiss Foundation Cartooning for Peace – City of Geneva's International Editorial Cartoon Award

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, on May 3, 2016, The international editorial cartoon Award, attributed by the city of Geneva and the Swiss Foundation Cartooning for Peace, was awarded by Mr. Kofi Annan, Honorary President of the Foundation, to the cartoonists Gado (Kenya) and Zunar (Malaysia). This award, handed out every other year in Geneva, awards a cartoonist for their courage, talent and commitment in support of peace, tolerance and the freedom of expression.

NOVEMBER 2016, STRASBOURG

Global Forum on Democracy

Nearly 2,000 political institution representatives, academics, media professionals, figures from civil society, supporters of democratic innovation projects and educators – gathered together in Strasbourg to open up new perspectives and formulate recommendations on two principal questions discussed during this forum: how can education contribute to creating, shaping and strengthening democracy and how can it help reduce inequalities.

Nadia Khiari, alias Willis from Tunisia, was in attendance in order to share her vision of the history of Tunisia through political cartoons and as Cartooning for Peace's ambassador.

NOVEMBER 2016, PARIS

"Cumhuriyet" Assembly, ADHS – The Sorbonne's Human Rights Association

In November 2016, an assembly to pay homage to the freedom of the press and detained journalists from the daily newspaper Cumhuriyet, was organized by Muratcan Sabuncu, the son of the newspaper's editor-in-chief.

Cartooning for Peace was in attendance alongside Amnesty International and Reporters Without Borders in order to support the cartoonist Musa Kart and his journalist colleagues, arbitrarily detained since October 2016.

JANUARY 2017

« Two years after Charlie – A tribute to persecuted cartoonists »

On the day before the second anniversary of the Charlie Hebdo massacre, Reporters Without Borders (RWF) and the cartoonists associations Cartoonists Rights International Network (CRNI), The Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC), Cartoon Movement and Cartooning for Peace (CFP), paid homage to cartoonists who defend the freedom of information through their editorial cartoons, with an internationally-circulated memo.

Read it here: <http://www.cartooningforpeace.org/soutiens/deux-ans-apres-charlie-hommage-aux-caricaturistes-sous-pression/>

APRIL 2017

"Cartoons for Freedom of Expression"

Ahead of May 3rd, World Press Freedom Day, Cartooning for Peace and Unesco launched a campaign entitled "Cartoons for Freedom of Expression."

Created by committed editorial cartoonists from around the world, this online exhibit of 15 cartoons combines humor, satire and tragedy in order to express the cartoonists' perspective on the status of the freedom of the press throughout the world, and the numerous challenges that the media and journalists face in order to communicate information to citizens, and produce critical reports on issues of public interest.

Discover the campaign: <https://unesco.exposure.co/cartoons-for-freedom-of-expression>

JAKARTA, MAY 2017

World Press Freedom Day

With this year's theme being "Critical Minds for a Critical Time: the Role of the Media in a Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Society," World Press Freedom Day organized by UNESCO is the occasion to defend high-quality, free and independent journalism for a better society.

Cathy Wilcox, an Australian cartoonist, will be in attendance in Jakarta in 2017 to propose live drawings and represent Cartooning for Peace.

PARTNERS Cartooning for Peace thanks its partners for their support and assistance in the association's advocacy mission.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report could not have been made without the precious help of the members of Cartooning for Peace's watchdog and alert unit, as well as external volunteer contributors. Cartooning for Peace would like to thank, in particular:

VLADIMIR VASAK, board member of Cartooning for Peace and investigative reporter for Arte

A journalist for Arte since the channel started in 1992, Vladimir Vasak graduated from the Centre de Formation des Journalistes in Paris and has an M.Phil. in Business Law from the Université de Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. He works for different Arte programs, and specializes in Russia, the Balkans, the United States and European questions.



JONATHAN GUYER, member of the Institute of Current World Affairs

Jonathan Guyer is a contributing editor of the *Cairo Review of Global Affairs* and a 2017-2018 fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University. He has written for *Guernica*, *Harper's*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, *The New Yorker*, *New York Times*, *The Paris Review*, and *Rolling Stone*. His research on comics, cartoons, and satire in the Middle East has been supported by fellowships from Fulbright (2012-2013) and the Institute of Current World Affairs (2015-2017).

On Twitter: @mideastXmidwest



TERRY ANDERSON, board member of Cartoonists Rights Network International (CNRI) and editorial cartoonist

Terry Anderson sits on Cartoonists Rights Network International's board of directors and is their regional representative in Northern Europe. For more than fifteen years he produced comics and feature illustrations for *The Glasgow Herald*. He is a co-ordinator at the Scottish Cartoon Art Studio, established in 1999 and a specialist in character design, illustration, cartoon strips and scribing for private and public sector bodies.

In 2014 Terry organized an international cartoon exhibition on the Scottish independence referendum – *The Auld Acquaintance* – that was shown in six venues around Europe. The Scottish Cartoon Art Studio's *Fizzers®* caricatures were the subject of a ten year retrospective exhibition at *The People's Palace & Winter Gardens*, Glasgow in 2016/17.

A former student of The Kubert School of cartooning, Terry is a member of the Professional Cartoonists' Organisation and The Cartoon Movement. For a decade he served on the executive committee and ultimately as President of the Scottish Artists Union, the trade union for all visual artists working in Scotland. He is frequently asked to broadcast, speak publicly and lead workshops on the subject of cartooning."



Cartooning for Peace would also like to warmly thank the cartoonists for their testimonies and works that appear in this report.

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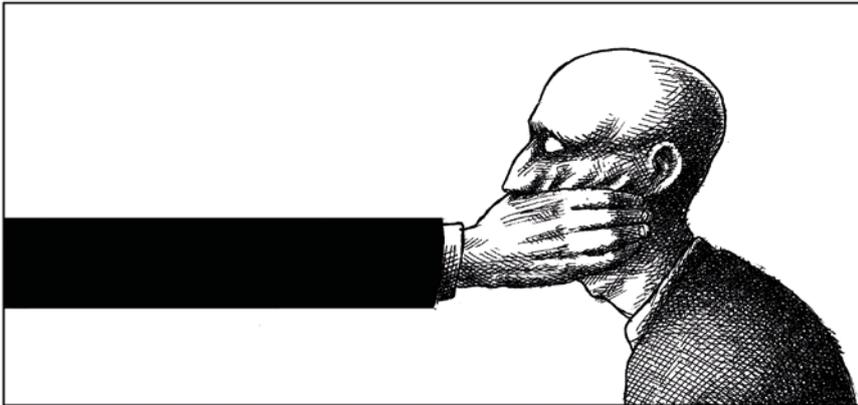
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