

Somalia: Government Recognises Media as Essential Service in the Fight Against COVID – 19

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<https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/covid-19-report-safely/article/somalia-government-recognises-media-as-essential-service-in-the-fight-against-covid-19.html>

The National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ) has called on the Federal Government of Somalia on 12 April to classify the media as essential service and open up the operating space for the media during the impending curfew imposed on Mogadishu.



Credit: ABDIRAZAK HUSSEIN FARAH / AFP Somali police officers disperse people from the Lido beach in Mogadishu, on April 4, 2020.

In a press conference held in Mogadishu on Sunday, 12 April 2020, Somalia's Police Commissioner General Abdi Hassan Mohamed (Hajar) said "considering the urgency to minimize the spread of the disease (coronavirus) within the community, the federal government of Somalia announces that a dusk-to-dawn curfew (8 pm-5 am) would be enforced to Mogadishu from the evening April 15, 2020, until further notice".

The police chief further added that “the curfew will affect all businesses, public, and transport movement except health centers and places offering essential food services”, and ordered the people in Mogadishu to adhere to the curfew and to go their homes ahead of the designated times of the curfew.

“In the fight against COVID-19 pandemic, we wish to appeal to the federal government to classify medias as essential services so that media houses are open during the curfew and working journalists are able to pursue their professional duties to discharge a vital public interest mission of keeping citizens informed in line with their right to access to information through provision of current news and enlightening information” said Omar Faruk Osman, NUSOJ Secretary General.

The Somali government decided to classify media as essential service in the fight against #COVID19. Media houses and working journalists shall therefore be able to operate during the curfew.