

CPJ calls on Ethiopia to drop case against Zone 9 blogger

The Committee to Protect Journalists called on Ethiopian authorities to drop an incitement charge against Zone 9 blogger Atnafu Berhane.



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Prosecutors told a court on February 14 they planned to drop the charge, but the process was delayed by a paperwork error, Atnafu told CPJ. He added that a judge said today that the case against him will continue if prosecutors fail to present the updated paperwork to the court on February 23.

Also on February 14, prosecutors announced they had dropped incitement charges against two other [Zone 9](#) bloggers, Befekadu Hailu and Natnail Feleke, [according to reports](#). The charges were dropped the same week that authorities [released](#) jailed journalists Eskinder Nega and Woubshet Taye.

CPJ is aware of at least one journalist, [Elias Gebru](#), still facing a [charge of incitement](#). Elias is due in court on April 3, a local journalist, who asked not to be named, told CPJ.

“Ethiopian authorities should end the legal case against Atnafu Berhane without delay, so that he can join Befekadu Hailu and Natnail Feleke in being free to report without the burden of fighting criminal charges linked to his work,” said CPJ Africa program coordinator Angela Quintal from New York.



Ethiopian journalists Eskinder Nega and Woubshet Taye released

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“Authorities should also drop the charge against Elias Gebru and amend the country’s laws so that a free and diverse press can flourish.”

**Members of the Zone 9 blogging collective were [recipients](#) of CPJ’s International Press Freedom Award in 2015.*

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