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Benin: Abduction of journalist and human rights defender Hugues Comlan Sosoukpe in Côte d'Ivoire and handed over to the Beninese authorities.

On 11 July 2025, journalist and human rights defender **Hugues Comlan Sosoukpe** was abducted in Abidjan, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, and handed over to the Beninese authorities. Hugues Comlan Sosoukpe is currently being held in provisional detention at the civil prison in Ouidah. On 14 July 2025, he will appear before the Judge for Liberty and Detention (JLD) of the Court for the Repression of Economic Offences and Terrorism (CRIET) in Cotonou, Benin.

[Hugues Comlan Sosoukpe](#) is a journalist, whistleblower, and committed human rights defender. He is the director of the online media outlet Olofofo and was Secretary General and spokesperson for the Beninese Association of Web Activists (ABWA). He has shown a consistent commitment to defending human rights and promoting democracy and good governance in Benin.

On the night of 10 to 11 July 2025, journalist and human rights defender Hugues Comlan Sosoukpe was abducted in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, and handed over to the Beninese authorities. The search began after his family members, who had not heard from Hugues Comlan Sosoukpe since the end of the day on 10 July, raised the alarm.

His abduction occurred while he was responding to an invitation from the Ministry of Digital Transition and Digitalisation of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire to take part in the first edition of the Ivoire Tech Forum, from 9 to 11 July 2025. The human rights defender has been in Togo since 2019, where he was issued a refugee status in 2021. He left Lomé for Abidjan on an Air Côte d'Ivoire flight on 8 July 2025 and was supposed to return on 13 July on the same airline, as evident from his flight ticket.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the abduction and legal harassment against the human rights defender Hugues Comlan Sosoukpe as the organisation believes he is being targeted for his legitimate and peaceful human rights work. Front Line Defenders express its concerns over the hostile environment, restrictions on civic and democratic space, and abductions faced by human rights defenders in the region and strongly condemns the abduction of the journalist and human rights defender.

Front Line Defenders urges the Beninese authorities to:

1. Immediately release Hugues Comlan Sosoukpe and allow him to reunite with his family, lawyers, and colleagues;
2. Cease all investigations and drop all charges that may be brought against Hugues Comlan Sosoukpe;
3. Take all necessary measures to ensure the physical and psychological integrity and safety of human rights defenders and journalists, in consultation with the latter;
4. Cease targeting human rights defenders, journalists, and whistleblowers in Benin and guarantee in all circumstances that they can carry out their legitimate activities in support of human rights without fear of reprisals and without any restrictions, including judicial harassment.

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