

Advocacy dossier

# Jean Kassir

جان قصير

**At liberty** **Lebanon**

Jean Kassir is a Lebanese journalist who co-founded and runs the independent platform Megaphone. He and the outlet have faced repeated security and judicial summonses and complaints over their reporting since 2023, most recently in November 2025, with no reported charges or ruling.

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# The case at a glance

Jean Kassir is a Lebanese journalist who co-founded and runs the independent platform Megaphone. He and the outlet have faced repeated security and judicial summonses and complaints over their reporting since 2023, most recently in November 2025, with no reported charges or ruling.

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| Status **At liberty** | Country **Lebanon** |

## What we ask

We call on the authorities to:

01 Drop all charges against Jean Kassir related to the peaceful exercise of fundamental rights.

02 End the judicial harassment of Jean Kassir and guarantee a fair process meanwhile.

03 Guarantee that Jean Kassir faces no arrest, travel restriction or other reprisal for peaceful human rights work.

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# How the case unfolded

**1 March 2023**

Other act

### Megaphone publishes 'Lebanon ruled by fugitives from justice'

Megaphone, the independent media platform Jean Kassir co-founded and runs, published an article titled 'Lebanon ruled by fugitives from justice', naming prominent figures accused of crimes. It accused the Prosecutor General at the Court of Cassation, Ghassan Oueidat, of obstructing the investigation into the Beirut port explosion.

**30 March 2023**

Summons

### Stopped in the street by State Security officers and summoned

Two plainclothes State Security officers stopped Jean Kassir while he was driving in Beirut and handed him a summons to report the next day to the agency's Central Inspection Directorate, without giving a reason. He refused to attend, saying State Security has no authority to investigate journalists, and his lawyer, Diala Chehade, attended instead. She learned that the summons concerned the Megaphone publication naming officials, and that it was requested by Ghassan Oueidat, one of those named.

**3 April 2023**

Summons

### Second summons delivered to his parents' home

Hours after a demonstration in Beirut in support of Jean Kassir on 3 April, State Security officers delivered a new summons to his parents' home, ordering him to report on 4 April. He again refused and sent his lawyer.

**4 April 2023**

Case closed or dropped

### Prosecutor General withdraws his complaint

His lawyer appeared and asked for the case to be dropped. Later that day the Minister of Information, Ziad Makari, told Jean Kassir that the Prosecutor General had withdrawn his complaint. Megaphone was not officially notified. On 6 April CPJ and 23 civil society and media organisations condemned the summonses of Jean Kassir and of journalist Lara Bitar.

**March 2025**

Smear campaign

### Coordinated online campaign targets Megaphone and Daraj

The Samir Kassir Foundation found that dormant accounts on X posted similar or identical content against Megaphone and Daraj in late March 2025, around the filing of the complaint, in a pattern that strongly indicated a coordinated campaign. It could not identify who was behind it.

**26 March 2025**

Investigation opened

### Complaint against Megaphone and Daraj referred for investigation

In March 2025 three lawyers filed a complaint against Megaphone and the outlet Daraj, accusing them of undermining the state's financial standing, inciting depositors to withdraw their funds, stirring up strife, undermining the prestige of the state, conspiracy against state security and receiving foreign funding for media campaigns against Lebanon. On 26 March the top public prosecutor referred it to the public prosecutor at the Beirut court of appeal. The same day CPJ joined 59 outlets and organisations in a statement of solidarity with both outlets.

**10 April 2025**

Summons

### Megaphone journalists summoned by the public prosecution

The Cassation Public Prosecution Office summoned journalists from Megaphone and Daraj, by telephone, to investigative hearings on 15 April 2025, without written notice of the charges. Human Rights Watch warned against the use of criminal defamation laws against journalists, and Amnesty International called on the authorities to dismiss the complaint immediately, noting that complaints about journalistic work belong before the Publications Court.

**November 2025**

**Summons**

## Summoned again over two video reports

In November 2025 Jean Kassir and Megaphone's editor-in-chief, Samer Frangieh, were summoned over two video reports. One concerned excavation work for a private villa of a television presenter at an ecologically sensitive coastal site; the other concerned the exploitation of public maritime property and led MP Gebran Bassil to file a complaint against both men before the Court of Appeal prosecutor. We found no report of the outcome.

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# The full story

**Update, 12 November 2026:** Jean Kassir continues to run the independent platform Megaphone in Beirut. Since 2023 he and the outlet have faced repeated summonses and complaints over their reporting, most recently in November 2025; we found no report of charges, a trial or a ruling against him.

### Background and Work

Jean Kassir is a Lebanese journalist, co-founder and managing director of Megaphone, a Beirut-based independent media platform that tracks local news, produces explanatory multimedia content for digital platforms and publishes critical opinion pieces. Megaphone has reported on Lebanon's financial collapse, alleged corruption and the obstruction of the investigation into the Beirut port explosion of August 2020. Its editor-in-chief is Samer Frangieh. The Gulf Centre for Human Rights lists Jean Kassir as a human rights defender.

### The 2023 Summonses

On 1 March 2023 Megaphone published an article titled "Lebanon ruled by fugitives from justice", which named prominent figures accused of crimes and accused the Prosecutor General at the Court of Cassation, Ghassan Oueidat, of obstructing the port explosion investigation. On 30 March 2023 two plainclothes officers of the General Directorate of State Security stopped Jean Kassir as he drove through Beirut and handed him a summons to report the next day, without giving a reason. He refused to attend, arguing that State Security had no authority to question journalists and that complaints about journalistic work belong before the Publications Court. His lawyer, Diala Chehade, attended in his place and learned that the summons concerned the Megaphone publication and had been requested by Ghassan Oueidat.

After a demonstration in his support in Beirut on 3 April, officers delivered a second summons to his parents' home, ordering him to appear on 4 April. He again sent his lawyer, who asked for the case to be dropped. Later on 4 April the Minister of Information, Ziad Makari, told him that the Prosecutor General had withdrawn his complaint; Megaphone was not officially notified. Reporters Without Borders called the summons unlawful, and on 6 April CPJ and 23 civil society and media organisations condemned the summonses of Jean Kassir and journalist Lara Bitar.

### Legal Proceedings in 2025

In March 2025 three lawyers filed a complaint against Megaphone and the independent outlet Daraj, accusing them of, among other things, undermining the state's financial standing, inciting depositors to withdraw their funds, conspiracy against state security and receiving foreign funding for campaigns against Lebanon. On 26 March the top public prosecutor referred the complaint to the public prosecutor at the Beirut court of appeal. At the same time, the Samir Kassir Foundation documented what it described as a coordinated campaign on X against both outlets, run largely from long-dormant accounts.

On 10 April 2025 the Cassation Public Prosecution Office summoned journalists from Megaphone and Daraj, by telephone, to investigative hearings on 15

April, without written notice of the charges or their legal basis. Amnesty International said this breached the Code of Criminal Procedure and called for the complaint to be dismissed immediately. We found no report of the outcome of that complaint.

In November 2025 Jean Kassir and Samer Frangieh were summoned again over two video reports, one on excavation for a private villa at an ecologically sensitive coastal site and one on the exploitation of public maritime property. MP Gebran Bassil filed a complaint against both men before the Court of Appeal prosecutor over the second report. Sources differ on which summons fell on which date, and we found no report of the outcome.

## International Response

Reporters Without Borders, CPJ and the Gulf Centre for Human Rights raised the 2023 summonses. In 2025 CPJ joined 59 outlets and organisations in a statement of solidarity with Megaphone and Daraj, Human Rights Watch urged Lebanon's parliament to repeal criminal insult and defamation provisions, and Amnesty International called on the authorities to protect press freedom rather than undermine it.

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**Latest updates on this case** Scan the code or visit: https://humena.org/defenders/jean-kassir/

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