



Special
report:

Violations against Media Activists during February, 2014

7 media activists killed,
4 abducted,
13 injured and
2 media centers assaulted.



This report is prepared by:
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The specialty of the report:

Detecting the most prominent practices and violations against those who work in the field of media in the Syrian arena.

Period covered by the report:

February 1 to February 28, 2014.

The report consists of four major sections:

First: Abstract

Violations against journalists and media activists this month are divided as follow:

First: Killing:

The Syrian Network for Human Rights documented the killing of 7 media activists, journalists and cameramen. They are divided between:

The government forces:

5 were killed by the government forces (one of them was tortured to death).

The Armed groups:

2 were killed by them (one on the hands of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS); the other by unidentified armed group.)

Second: Arrest and Abduction:

SNHR documented four cases of abduction and arrest divided as follows:

Arrest: Two media activists were arrested by the government forces, one of them was released few days later.

Abduction: Two cases of abduction were documented: One on the hands of the ISIS; the other on the hands of some armed groups. The one abducted by the armed group was released a while after.

Third: Injuries:

13 media activists were injured during February divided as follows:

The government forces: 6 media activists were injured by the government forces.

The Armed groups: 7 media activists were injured by the armed groups.

Fourth: Shelling and Destruction: The quarters of Radio Arta was stormed by the government forces. However, ISIS stormed one media centre.

Second: Introduction

Violations against those who work in the field of media in the Syrian arena haven't stopped since the beginning of the Syrian revolution in 2011 until today. Despite the fact that the government forces are taking the lead in the amount and kinds of violations against media activists, areas controlled by the armed groups opposing the Syrian government are witnessing new aspects of oppression and silencing, especially from the side of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). In those areas, media activity became under self censorship; the most dangerous kind of censorship.

After ISIS lost many areas in the last two months to other armed groups, violence against media activists in areas controlled by the armed opposition has decreased. However, taking into consideration the amount and kinds of violations documented this month, and comparing them to the months prior to ISIS coming to the scene, we find that things are not necessarily going to the better. It is worth mentioning here that there are many crimes and violations that have not been revealed yet. The fate of tens of persons is still unknown, whether they are arrested, disappearing or abducted. Among those are: Abdulwahhab Al Mulla, Samar Saleh, Nour Matar, Ubaida Batal, Muaed Salloum, a team of Sky News TV and others. We also mentioned in previous reports that active players in the field of media have been fleeing out of the Syrian lands and ending their careers. Some media activists belonged to fighting battalions in order to protect themselves. This all puts the Syria media in a kind of unhealthy statique where the law of jungle has been forced in a way that the word is politicized and news directed towards fulfilling the interests of the mightiest. This is not an ideal situation for practicing pluralistic and democratic media work.

With those worrying facts that endanger the solid bases for the start of free and professional media work, and taking into consideration the results of blinding facts, distorting events, silencing people, and blocking photos and words SNHR firmly condemns all violations committed against media work and the reporting of truths, regardless of the side responsible for it and the kind and size of the violation. SNHR fervently requests all parties to respect the freedom of the media work and work to guarantee the safety of those who work in the field of media, adding to this holding those involved in the violations against journalists and media activists

as responsible for their deeds. SNHR affirms the need that the international community moves seriously and quickly to press the Syrian government and the armed groups and deterring them in the suitable means.

Third: Details

A: Violations by the Government Forces

SNHR documented the killing of 5 of those who work in the field of media on the hands of the government forces, among them one journalist who was tortured to death in concentration centers. Two media activists were arrested (one was released few days later). 6 media activists were injured by the government forces. One radio station stopped work for three days after being raided by government forces.

Details:

- Prominent media activist Trad Muhamed Aslan Al Zhuri, one of the establishing members of “the Media Center in Al Qusair” in the countryside of Homs was killed after her received a fatal injury during the shelling on Yabroud by the government forces when he was covering fighting there (February, 20).
- Journalist Muhi Eddin Al Khled was killed by the Syrian security forces after he was tortured to death for two years in the concentration centers in Damascus (on February, 20).
- Media activist Ibrahim Muhamed Al Abdullah (killed on February, 7) during his work to cover the bombing of his city Morek, in the countryside of Hama by military aeroplanes.
- Another media activist is Ahmad Abdul Munem Othman, who was killed by a tank shell during his covering of the incidents of Al sheikh Najjar in Aleppo (February, 24).
- Media activist Hani Radwan Al Jabbawi; a member of the media office of Jasem in Dara’a was killed by a barrel bomb that targeted his town Jasem (February, 12).
- Government forces also arrested journalist and former political prisoner Akram Al Bunni in the heart of Damascus (February, 22). The arrest was executed by members of the State Security Apparatus, and Bunni was released two days later.
- Military Intelligence arrested the poet and civil activist Naser Bundok with a group of activists in Sehnaya in the countryside of Damasuc (February, 17).

Activists injured:

- Media activist Ahmad Qtaifa, known as Abu Ja’afar Al Horani, was injured during his covering of the events in Al Munshia district in the city of Dara’a (February, 1).
- Halep News reporter Abu Ahmad Yassin was injured by a tank shell in Sheikh Sa’ad district in Aleppo during his media coverage there.
- Ahmad Lwai, Al Arabia TV reporter was injured during his filming of the initiating of food

aids to besieged Homs (February, 8).

- Media activist Ahmed Al Warda was injured during his coverage of the fighting in Al Bwyda in the northern countryside of Hama (February, 16).

- The correspondent of Aleppo Media Center Abdullah Al Marandi, known as Mukhtar Al Marjeh, was injured by a tank shell during his covering of the incidents in Al Nakkarin in the countryside of Aleppo (February, 25).

- Media activist of Deir Ezzor LCC Muhamed Taha was injured in the shelling that targeted Attakaya St. in the city (February, 21).

On the other hand, forces of Democratic Union Party stormed the office of Radio Arta in Amoda in the countryside of Al Hasake and stopped it from working for three days claiming that there were some unauthorized broadcasting apparatus.

B: Violations by the Armed Groups:

This month witnessed substantive decrease in violations against media activists on the hands of armed groups due to the fact that ISIS lost control on many areas and had been distracted by the fighting it had with other groups. Only one case for abduction has been registered on the hands of ISIS, and another one on the hands of members of the armed opposition. The later victim was released only few days later. SNHR documented two media activists killed by the armed groups and 7 injured. One media center was raided and the house of one media activist was burnt under suspicious circumstances.

Details:

- Media activist Mussab Marwan Alaiwi, member of Rayat Alhaq LCC was killed by a bullet from one member of ISIS in Masaken Hanano district in Aleppo (February, 14). Alaiwi was also a relief activist and head of the relief office in the LCC of his district and manager of “For Free Syria” assembly.

- Kurdish media man Abdul Samad Oso, presenter in Ronahi TV was killed (February, 19) by an explosive bomb that targeted one of the quarters of Kurdish Labor Party (PKK) in Al Hasake. No one claimed responsibility for the attack.

-Media man Abdulrahman Batra, was abducted by ISIS two months earlier. Batra was presenter in Suria Al Sha’ab TV. The management of the TV hid the fact of his abduction all this period in order not to endanger his life.

-Media activist Abu Ali Al Shuati was arrested on one checkpoint by Alhamza brigade in the countryside of Deir Ezzor (February, 10). Al Shuati was beaten and then released four days later.

-Media activist Ukba Alaiwi, member of Rayat Alhak LCC was injured by a bullet from one

member of ISIS in Masaken Hanano district in Aleppo (February, 14).

- Sana news agency cameraman George Orphilian, Al Ikhbariah TV reporter Biniamin Darwish, cameraman George Della, Syrian TV reporter Shade Helwi and cameraman Ahmad Sulaiman were all injured during their coverage of the clashes in Al Ma'asarana district in Aleppo (February, 9).

-Correspondent of Aleppo Media Center Abu Al Khalil was injured during an attempt to abduct him by members of Ahfad Al Mursalin brigade in Al Hullok district in Aleppo (February, 11). He was beaten in the process.

- Hraitan Center of Al Ilam Al Jadid was raided and crushed by ISIS (February, 4).

- The house of media activist Faiz Al Sulaiman "Abu Danial" in Der Ezzor was burnt under suspicious circumstances. Abu Danial is considered as one of the most important cameramen in Der Ezzor and an expert in military filming.

Fourth: Appendixes and attachments:

Pictures and videos of the media activists whose names are mentioned in the report:

A: Those who were killed, injured or arrested by the government forces:

Prominent media activist and photographer Trad Muhamed Aslan Al Zhuri



The poet and civil activist Naser Bundok

The Journalist Muaz Muhi Eddin Al Khaled

Media activist Ibrahim Muhamed Al Abdulla

Journalist Akram Al Bunni

Abdulrahman Batra

Abdulla Al Marandi

Hani Radwan Al Jabbawi

Ahmad Abdumunim Othman

Abu Ahmad Yassin, Halep News reporter

Ahmed Lwai, Al Arabia TV reporter

Ahmed Qtaifan “Abu Ja’afar Alhurani

Abu Al Khalil, correspondent of Aleppo Media Center

**B: Pictures and videos of media activists
killed and abducted by armed groups**

Mussab Marwan Alaiwi

Cameraman and media activist Faiz Al Slaiman

Media activist Abu Ali Al Shuati

Acknowledgments

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