



10 Media Activists killed, Three Kidnapped, and 12 Injured in May 2015

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First: Executive Summary

Violations against media activists in the month of May 2015 are as follows:

A. killing: SNHR documented the killing of 10 media activists

- 1- Government forces:** killed seven media activists including one media activist who was tortured to death.
- 2- Extremist groups:** Daesh killed two media activists.
- 3- Armed opposition factions:** killed one media activist.

B. Arresting and kidnapping: we recorded three kidnapping cases:

- 1- Extremist groups:** An-Nusra Front kidnapped one media activist.
- 2- PYD** kidnapped two media activists.

C. Injuries: 12 injury cases were recorded

- 1- Government forces:** injured seven media activists.
- 2- Extremist Groups:** An-Nusra Front injured two media activists conjunction with armed opposition.
- 3- We recorded five cases that involved armed opposition factions including two injuries that were caused jointly by An-Nusra Front and armed opposition factions.**

D. Violations against properties

- 1- PYD:** one case was recorded.
- 2- Extremist groups – An-Nusra Front:** one case was recorded.
- 3- Armed opposition factions:** one case was recorded.





Second: Introduction

In order to be a journalist in Syria, you have to be very brave. The difficulties that journalists are facing in Syria made it one of the most dangerous environments for journalism. Citizen journalists have played a major role in covering news for more than four years when the protests started in March 2011 despite the many journalists who were put out of the picture either because they were killed, arrested, kidnapped, harassed, or due to the unsafe security situation especially in the rebel-held areas which are being bombed indiscriminately on a daily basis.

Journalists have become a target not only for government forces but for most of the influential parties in Syria which forced many of them to flee and work from a distance in light of the utter lack of any form of accountability.

SNHR has been working with keen attention on recording the most notable crimes and violations against media activists since the beginning of the Syrian revolution in an attempt to highlight the most major obstacles and variables in the field of media through its monthly reports and studies. Additionally, SNHR emphasized on multiple occasions the necessity to provide a safe and appropriate environment for journalism in order to put an end to the increasingly deteriorated state of media work in Syria. Sadly, there haven't been any noticeable changes on that matter.

Huda Al-Ali, researcher at SNHR, says:

“What we are seeing today is a major concern for us. This violations is a real threat for the firm foundations on which an independent professional form of journalism should be built which would eventually result in obscuring truth, undermining the freedom of expression, and obstructing the picture and the word.”

SNHR affirms the necessity of taking serious and immediate actions to save what could be saved in Syria and renews its condemnation of all the violations against media's freedom and truth-covering regardless of the involved parties and its kind or magnitude. SNHR also stresses the importance of respecting media work, insuring the safety of those who are working in that vital field, and paying them special consideration. The perpetrators of violations against journalists, activists, and media activists must be brought to justice and the International Community, represented by the Security Council, should shoulder its responsibilities and protect media activists in Syria.

Methodology

A citizen journalist is anyone who plays an important role in covering and publishing news even if he is not impartial as opposed to what a journalist should be.

When a citizen journalist carries a weapon and gets involved directly in armed clashes, he is no longer a citizen journalist unless he completely retires from military action.

This report is based mainly on SNHR's archives and investigations in addition to the testimonies of victims' families and relatives, information we collected from local activists,





and the verified pictures and videos we receive and add to our archives that we have been updating regularly since 2011.

It should be noted that these statistics and facts are the bare minimum of the violations and crimes that happened in light of the security and logistic difficulties and challenges we are facing in order to reach the locations where these violations occurred.

Third: Details

A. Government forces

Extrajudicial killing

1- [Hussein Jamal Satar](#) from Aleppo – As-Sukkari neighborhood, born in 1989, he was killed on Sunday 3 March 2015 by government forces helicopters' barrel bombs shelling on Aleppo – As-Sukkari neighborhood while he was covering events in the area.

2- Ammar Al-Eissa, On Monday 4 May 2015 he was killed in an ambush set up by government forces as he was trying to enter Al-Wa'r neighborhood in Homs.

3- Assad Al-Joulani (spokesperson for the military council in Qunietra), on Thursday 14 May 2015 by a tank shell that was fired by government forces while he was covering an area that was bombed by government forces in Qunietra suburbs.

4- Tayem Qebbani “Tayem Al-Halabi”, reporter for Halab Al'an (Aleppo Now) news network, on Saturday 23 May 2015 he died of wounds sustained three days ago during government forces helicopters' barrel bombs shelling on Ash-Sha'ar neighborhood in Aleppo.

5- Mulham Al-Qasem, on Sunday 24 May 2015 he was killed by a barrel bomb dropped by government forces helicopters on Kafrzyta hospital in Hama suburbs after midnight. Also, a number of the medical staff members were killed and the hospital was greatly destroyed.

Mulham was from Hama suburbs – Kafrnabouda and was working as a media activist at the medical point of Kafrzyta.



Assad Al-Joulani



Mulham Al-Qasem

6- [Mohammad Ahmad Al-Falah](#), on Wednesday 27 May 2015, the authorities informed his family that Mohammad was tortured to death at a government forces detention center in Damascus. The military police asked her family to come to get her I.D. and belongings. Mohammad was arrested about three years ago when his house was raided in As-Sanmien city by security forces. According to a friend of his, Mohammad was in good health at that time and was known as “Al-Arabiya” because he used to contact Al-Arabiya news channel directly.





7- Ammar Ash-Shami, reporter for Qasyoun news agency, on Sunday 31 May 2015 he was killed by government forces warplanes that targeted Damascus suburbs – Marj As-Sultan town with a missile while he was covering events there.

Ammar Ash-Shami, from Damascus suburbs, 33-year-old, he was one of the first media activists in his area.



Ammar Ash-Shami

Injuries

1- Radwan Mahier “Abu-Yazan Al-Homsi”, Smart news agency reporter and member of Binnish coordinate in Idlib suburbs, on Tuesday 19 May 2015 [he was shot in the leg](#) by a government forces sniper while he was covering the raiding of Al-Mastouma military camp by armed opposition in Idlib.



Radwan Mahier

2- [Mohammad Haj Bakri](#), Orient News TV channel reporter in Latakia, on Saturday 9 May 2015 he was injured by shrapnel from a mortar shell that government forces fired on the peak of An-Nabi Younis in Latakia suburbs. The shell fell near him while he was covering clashes there.

3- [Khaled Abo Almajed](#), Orient News reporter, on Friday 22 May 2015 he was injured by a barrel bomb that fell near Maydnat Adnan Mosque in Aleppo suburbs.

4- Tayem As-Sayoufi, Alwan Radio reporter, on Saturday 23 May 2015 he was shot at by a government forces sniper while he was covering the clashes that took place in Damascus suburbs – Eastern Ghouta – Der Salman town. He was recording from the roof of a house when he was shot and consequently fell off the building and had some bruises. He was taken to the nearest medical point in the town.

5- Ahmad Khouja, Al-Itihad Press network reporter, on Sunday 26 April 2015 he was wounded by shrapnel after government forces warplanes targeted a market and school that were being used as shelters for IDPs with missiles in Idlib suburbs – Darkoush town which caused a massacre as SNHR documented the killing of 55 civilians including seven children and 14 women. Ahmad underwent three surgeries afterwards, the most recent of which were on 18 May 2015.



Ahmad Khouja

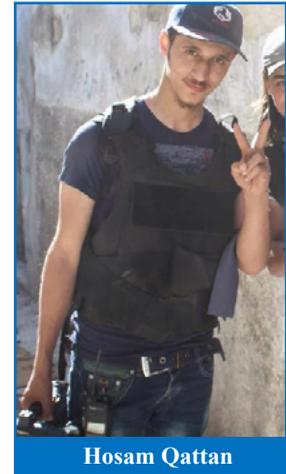




6- Hosam Qattan, Aleppo Media Center reporter and a cooperating photographer with Reuter's News agency, on Wednesday 27 May 2015 he was shot by a sniper in his abdomen while he was covering clashes in Aleppo city – Ash-Shaikh Saeed neighborhood.

7- [Mohammad Al-Hamoud](#), reporter at The Unified Media Office of Ariha Network, on Saturday 30 May 2015, his leg was broken and had bruises all over his body after a missile fired by government forces warplanes targeted a house located near his in Idlib suburbs – Ariha town one day after the armed opposition managed to take over the city.

Mohammad told us that he was going to be interviewed by a TV channel when the bombing happened. Also, his house was damaged partially.



Hosam Qattan

B. PYD

Kidnapping

On Saturday 9 May 2015, PYD Asayesh forces kidnapped Rudaw TV channel reporter [Ethad Jamkari and the photographer Tareq Shukri](#) while they were covering a sit-in coordinated by the Kurdish Women's Union as the sit-in was being halted in Ma'bda "Karki Li" town in Al-Hassaka suburbs. They were released on the same day.

Picture of Ehad Jamkari, Rudaw TV channel reporter

Violations against properties

On Friday 1 May 2015, the reporter [Hassan Shendy](#) called for the Kurdish people and the international organization that defends freedom of expression around the world to intervene after YPG forces seized his father's house and olive grove in Aleppo suburbs – Ifreen where YPG raided their home and gave them a week to evacuate the house and the grove. Shandi talked to the press and said that this assault was retaliatory as it happened a few days after he appeared on Al-Jazeera's famous talking show Al-Itejah Al-Mu'akes (The Opposing Direction) in addition to his critical opinions of the party and its policies and practices. He also said that he has received many threats from the party.

Shendy worked in the field of journalism and media and published a number of books. He has been political oppositionist to PYD in Syria since 2005 when he fled to Kurdistan. He has always criticized the party on media and in his journalistic works.

C. Extremist groups

1- Daesh

Extrajudicial killing

1- [Mohammad Suliman Al-Manbjji](#), reporter for Menbej Al-Hadath webpage, On Tuesday 19 May 2015 he was executed by Daesh in Minbij city.





2- Hosam Hassan Suliman Al-Awni, 19-year-old, he was a reporter for Menbej Al-Hadath webpage and the page administration said that Hosam used to give them news from inside the city, he was arrested by Daesh over accusation of working for the armed opposition and he was executed by Daesh on 21 May 2015.

2- An-Nusra Front

Kidnapping

On Monday 18 May 2015, [Ahmad Al-Abdou](#), Al-A'an news TV channel, was kidnapped by An-Nusra Front fighters after they raided his home in Idlib suburbs – Al-Ya'qoubiya village.

It should be noted that An-Nusra Front raided his house again two days later and took all of his devices (Laptop, Camera, and Mobile). His fate remains unknown.

Injuries

On Sunday 10 May 2015, Al-Ikhbariya As-Surriya reporter [Abdou Zammam](#) and The News Center reporter [Ja'far Younus](#) were injured by an artillery shell that was fired by Al-Fath Army (An alliance formed by a number of armed opposition factions and An-Nusra Front) near the sugar factory in Idlib – Jesr Ash-Shoghour suburbs. The two reporters were with government forces to cover clashes in the area.

Abdou Zammam, reporter for Al-Ikhbariya TV channel

[A video footage](#) shows the moment when the two reporters were injured in Jesr Ash-Shoughor suburbs

D. Armed opposition factions

Extra judicial killing

On Friday 1 May 2015, the killing of the journalist [Abdullah Al-Meqdad](#) “Abu-Ya'rab” at the hands of an armed opposition faction in Damascus suburbs – Eastern Ghouta was documented. His family was informed by credible leaks by some of the fighters who work with the kidnappers. His family was told that Abdullah was killed a few days after he was kidnapped in light of his critical health condition at the time of his kidnapping.

Abdullah's family told us that Abdullah was sick when he was kidnapped by the armed opposition faction. The kidnapping was during the raiding of Adra Al-Ummaliya city in 2013. During that time the kidnappers blackmailed his family by calling them via his mobile phone and telling him that he recovered without letting him speak directly to him. The kidnappers asked his family to send credit to his phone so they can keep calling Abdullah's family.

Abdullah was from Daraa – Ghasam town, 60-year-old, a journalist and a member of the Syrian Journalists Union's executive office in Damascus.





Injuries

1- On Thursday 30 April 2015, Akhbar Idlib reporter “[Abulbaraa Al-Idelbi](#)” was assaulted by an armed opposition faction in Idlib suburbs – Saraqeb while he was covering news in the area and was prohibited from working there.

2- On Sunday 3 May 2015, Karim Ash-Shibani, a reporter for the official media’s News Center, was wounded by shrapnel from a shell that was fired by the armed opposition in Damascus suburbs – Eastern Ghouta. Karim was injured while he was with the media team that was accompanying government forces to cover clashes in Eastern Ghouta.



Karim Ash-Shibani

3- On Sunday 10 May 2015, On Sunday 10 May 2015, Al-Ikhbariya As-Surriya reporter [Abdou Zammam](#) and The News Center reporter [Ja’far Younus](#) were injured by an artillery shell that was fired by Al-Fath Army (An alliance formed by a number of armed opposition factions and An-Nusra Front) near the sugar factory in Idlib – Jesr Ash-Shoghhour suburbs. The two reporters were with government forces to cover clashes in the area.

[A video footage](#) shows the moment when the two reporters were injured in Jesr Ash-Shoghhour suburbs

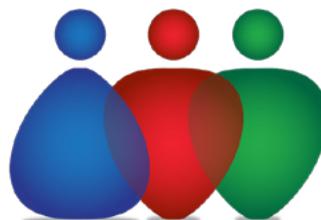
4- On Saturday 30 May 2015, Fadi Al-Halbi, Aleppo Media Center reporter was [assaulted](#) by fighters from Ahrar Ash-Sham Movement in Aleppo city – Al-Firdous neighborhood while he was covering a massacre that happened in the neighborhood. One of the fighters broke Fadi’s camera. The assault on Fadi



Fadi Al-Halbi

Acknowledgment

We would like to sincerely thank the victims’ families and relatives and all the media activists who contributed majorly to this report and our most heartfelt condolences go out for the victims’ families.



Syrian Network For Human Rights
الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

