



Three Media Activists Killed, Five Arrested and Kidnapped, and 15 others Injured, Toll of November 2016

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I. Introduction

Media activism in Syria is continuously deteriorating in light of the lack of attention by many international organizations to what is happening in Syria and the notable decline in media coverage over the last year compared with previous years.

SNHR publishes a monthly report documenting the violations against media activists who play a prominent role in the civil movement and the armed conflict.

It should be noted that a journalist is a civilian according to the international humanitarian law regardless of his nationality. Any attack deliberately directed against a journalist is considered a war crime. However, when a media activist gets close to action-heavy zones, he is responsible for his own actions where targeting him in such case would be seen as collateral damage. Also, he would lose the right to protection if he was involved in military operations. We believe that media activists must be respected whether they have identification papers as media workers or don't considering the many difficulties they encounter to acquire these papers.

Fadel Abdul Ghani, chairman of SNHR, says:

“Media activism is especially important because it often sheds light on a string of various crimes that are taking place on a daily basis. Therefore, we record the violations perpetrated by conflicting parties in our monthly reports on violations against media activists.”





SNHR emphasizes that serious and quick steps must be taken to save media activism in Syria, and renews its condemnation of all violations against the freedom of media activism regardless of the perpetrators. The freedom of media must be respected and the workers in the media field must be protected and particularly considered. All individuals involved in violations against journalists and media activists must be held accountable. The international community, represented by the Security Council, must act upon its responsibilities in order to protect civilians and media activists in Syria.

II. Methodology

According to SNHR's methodology, a civilian journalist is anyone who plays a notable role in reporting and publishing news. He is not necessarily impartial as a journalist should be.

In case a civilian journalist carried a weapon and was directly engaged in offensive military operations, he is no longer deemed a citizen journalist whereas it is possible that he would be referred to as a civilian journalist again provided he retires completely from military action.

The report might include incidents that we believe do not constitute violations of the international humanitarian law. We include it, however, to record it among the incidents that resulted in casualties even though it was within the boundaries that the international humanitarian law allows for.

This report draws upon SNHR's archive and the investigations conducted by the Network in addition to accounts by victims' families, information from local activists, and analyzing the pictures and video footages that we have been receiving and archiving in our records since 2011.

to read more about SNHR [methodology](#) in documenting victims:

In light of the security and logistic difficulties to access all the areas where violations take place, it is worth noting that these statistics and incidents are only the bare minimum of the actual magnitude of crimes and violations that happened.





III. Executive Summary

Violations against media activists during the month of November 2016 are distributed as follows:

A. Killing: SNHR documented the killing of three media activists as follows:

- Government forces: killed one media activist
- Armed opposition factions: killed two media activists

B. Injuries: we recorded 15 injuries as follows:

- Government forces: 11 injuries
- Russian forces: three injuries
- Armed opposition factions: one injury

C. Arrest, release, and abduction: we recorded six cases as follows:

- Self-management forces: we recorded four cases of arrest; the detainees were released later. Also, we recorded one release
- Unidentified groups: we recorded one abduction case where the abductee was released later.

IV. Details

A. Violations by government forces (Army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias)

Killing

Sunday 6 November 2016, journalist [Ammar Mustafa Al Bakkour](#) died of wounds in his chest and neck that he sustained by a missile that fell near him after it was fired by fixed-wing government forces warplanes as he was issuing identifications for Idlib city's health administration employees in Al Dana city, located in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh Al Sham Front "Formerly Al Nusra Front".



[Ammar](#), director of the media office at the health administration in Idlib governorate and a [reporter](#) for Zaman Al Wasl website, from Al Mouzra town in Idlib governorate, born in 1980, has a certificate from the faculty of media in Damascus University, married and a father of one.





Injuries

Sunday 6 November 2016, media activist [Ahmad Abdullah Barbour](#) sustained fractures and bone fragmentation in his left humerus in addition to wounds in both of his feet which were caused by a missile that fell near him after it was fired by fixed-wing government forces warplanes in Al Dana city, located in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh Al Sham Front, as [he](#) was heading to cover the bombing on Darat Ezzeh city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate.

[Ahmad](#), the broadcast engineer at Orient News TV channel in Aleppo governorate and its suburbs, from Ariha city in the suburbs of Idlib governorate, born in 1986, has a certificate in information engineering – OS and networking department, married.



SNHR contacted the media activist [Ahmad Barbour](#) via Facebook:

“I was heading on Sunday 6 November to Darat Ezzeh city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate to cover the bombardment there, and as I was passing through Al Dana city, the main street in the city was bombed by warplanes using thermobaric missiles. One of the shrapnel caused wounds in most of my body and in my left hand which dislocated my shoulder and fragmented the bones. I was taken to Al Dana hospital where I received first-aid and then to Bab Al Hawa hospital to continue my treatment.”

Thursday 10 November 2016, media activist [Hasan Abu Al Zain](#) -For security concerns, we are not going to mention his surname- in his right loin by a government forces sniper as he was covering the bombardment and sniping operations by government forces in Al Wa'er neighborhood, located in Homs city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.

[Hasan](#), an [independent media activist](#) and photographer and director of the “Coalition of the Syrian Revolution’s Youth”, from Homs city, born in 1986, has a high school diploma, married and a father of three.

SNHR contacted the media activist [Hasan Abu Al Zain](#) via Facebook:

“As I was covering the bombing and sniping in Al Wa'er neighborhood in Homs city by the government forces that was stationed in Al Basatein area, I was hit by a sniper bullet in my right loin. I was rushed to the makeshift hospital in the neighborhood.”





Thursday 10 November 2016, media activist [Ahmad Jomaa Abd Al Aziz](#) was hit by a shrapnel in his right leg after a government forces rocket shell fell near him as he was covering the clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions on Manyan battlefield in Aleppo city.

Ahmad, a reporter for the “Unified Syrian Media Network”, from Al Daqmaq village in the suburbs of Hama governorate, born in 1997, has a high school diploma, single.

SNHR contacted the media activist Ahmad Abd Al Aziz via WhatsApp:

“As I was covering the clashes between the regime forces and armed opposition factions on Manyan battlefield in Aleppo city, a rocket shell fell near me that was fired by the Syrian regime forces which resulted in an injury in my right foot and the camera I was using broke.”

Wednesday 16 November 2016, media activist [Ayham Mahmoud Barazi](#) was injured by shrapnel in his head and left foot after government forces helicopters dropped a barrel bomb near him as he was covering the bombing by warplanes on Al Sha’ar neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Ayham, a reporter for “Al Boraq Media Institution”, from Aleppo city, born in 1996, was a second-year student at the technical engineering faculty, before he transferred as a first-year student at the media institute, single.



SNHR contacted the media activist [Ayham Barazi](#) via Facebook:

“While I was documenting the bombing by warplanes in Al Sha’ar neighborhood in Aleppo city, a barrel bomb was dropped near me by government forces helicopters which resulted in injuries in my head and left foot that were caused by shrapnel. I was taken immediately to Al Bayan hospital in the neighborhood.”





Thursday 17 November 2016, media activist Ahmad Mahmoud Mustafa was injured in most of his body by shrapnel after a rocket fired by government forces rocket launcher fell near him in Al Ansari neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.

[Ahmad](#), a reporter and photographer for Halab Al Yaoum TV channel, born in 1989, has an [intermediate](#) education certificate, married and a father of two.



SNHR contacted [Ahmad Mostafa](#) via Facebook:

“I was on my way to Al Zarzour hospital in Al Ansari neighborhood in Aleppo city as I was preparing a report on the medical situation in Aleppo city and I had an appointment with a doctor for that. As I was nearing the hospital, government forces artillery started shelling the neighborhood. One of the rockets fell near me, and the shrapnel hit me in my right foot, right hand, and most of my body. I was taken to the hospital where I was kept until the bombing intensity decreased.”

Thursday 17 November 2016, media activist Osama Abd Al Hamid Al Mallah was injured by shrapnel in his right foot after a missile bombing by fixed-wing government forces warplanes which fired a missile near him as he was covering the bombing by warplanes on Al Sha’ar neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Osama, a photographer for Al Jesr TV channel, from Aleppo city, born in 1995, has a [high school diploma](#), married.

SNHR contacted the media activist Osama Al Mallah via WhatsApp:

“While I was documenting the bombing against Al Sha’ar neighborhood in Aleppo city, A missile fired by the warplanes on the neighborhood fell near me which resulted in injuries in my right leg and bruises all over my body. These injuries were caused by shrapnel. I received first-aid in Omar ben Abd Al Aziz hospital.”





Saturday 19 November 2016, media activist Abd Al Qader Abd Al Karim Abu Saleh was injured by shrapnel in his back after government forces helicopters dropped a barrel bomb near him as he was covering the bombing by warplanes on Karm Al Maysar neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.



[Abd Al Qader](#), a monitor for Halab Al Yaoum TV channel, from Aleppo city, born in 1985, [has](#) a certificate from the technical institute in mechanical and electrical engineering, married.

SNHR contacted the media activist [Abd Al Qader Abu Saleh](#) via Facebook:

“I was in front of my house in Aleppo city documenting the bombing on the neighborhood and a barrel bomb fell near me. A shrapnel injured my lower back area and I was taken immediately to a makeshift hospital in the neighborhood.”

Saturday 19 November 2016, media activist [Ahmad Al Mohammad](#) was injured in his head by shrapnel after fixed-wing government forces warplanes fired a missile near him in Al Ferdous neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.



[Ahmad](#), a reporter for Halab Al Yaoum TV channel, from Aleppo city, born in 1993, has a high school diploma, single.

SNHR contacted the media activist [Ahmad Al Mohammad](#) via Facebook:

“While I was at home in Al Ferdous neighborhood uploading videos that I filmed of the bombing on the neighborhood, the warplanes carried out another airstrike that targeted my house with a missile. My house was destroyed and my head was wounded and I sustained light bruises in my body.”

Monday 21 November 2016, media activist [Anas Mohammad](#) Al Kharboutli was injured by shrapnel in his left foot after a government forces artillery shell fell near him as he was covering the artillery shelling by government forces on Kafr Batna city, located in Damascus suburbs governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions.



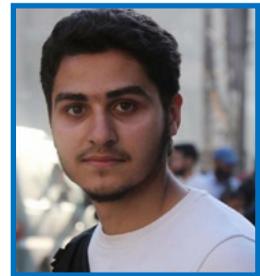


Anas, a reporter for Anadolu Agency, from Kafr Batna city in Damascus suburbs governorate, born in 1991, a university student at the mechanical and electrical engineering faculty – Electrical engineering department, single.

SNHR contacted the media activist Anas Mohammad Al Kharboutli via Facebook:

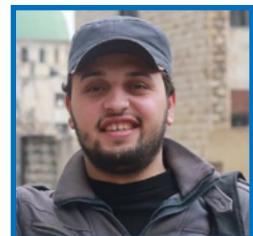
“As I was covering the regime artillery’s shelling on Kafr Batna in Damascus suburbs governorate, one of the shells fell near me in a city market, and a shrapnel injured me in my left foot. I was taken immedicably to Kafr Batna hospital.”

Saturday 26 November 2016, media activist [Mojahed](#) “He didn’t reveal his surname for security concerns” was injured by shrapnel in most of his body after a rocket shell fired by government forces artillery fell near him in Al Haydariya neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.



Mojahed, known as Abu Al Joud, head of the reporters department in Aleppo Media Center, from Aleppo city, born in 1995, a university student at the faculty of Sharia in Aleppo University, single.

Saturday 26 November 2016, media activist [Aref Al Aref](#) was injured in his head and abdomen by shrapnel after a rocket shell fired by government forces artillery fell near him in Al Haydariya neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.



Aref, known as Jawad Al Refa’ie, reporter for Aleppo Media Center, from Aleppo city, born in 1995, has an intermediate education certificate.

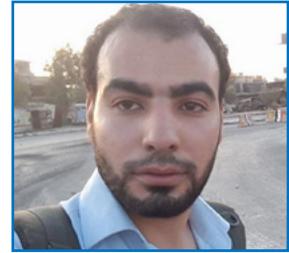




B. Russian forces

Injuries

Tuesday 15 November 2016, media activist [Basel Mo-hammad Al Ibrahim](#) was injured by shrapnel in most of his body after a missile fired by fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fell near him in Al Saliheen neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.



[Basel](#), known as [Abu Hamza](#), reporter for Halab Al Yaoum TV channel, from Aleppo city, born in 1990, a third-year law student at Aleppo University, married. SNHR contacted the media activist Basel Al Ibrahim via Facebook:

“After I was finished filming the Russian bombing on Al Saliheen neighborhood in Aleppo city, I went home to upload the videos I filmed onto the internet. After I got home, the warplanes resumed bombing the area and a missile fell on my house. I sustained bruises in most of my body, especially the head, and I sustained a hairline fracture in the nose. I was immediately taken to Omar ben Abd Al Aziz hospital in Al Ma’adi neighborhood for treatment.”

Tuesday 15 November 2016, media activist [Ahmad Mahmoud Barazi](#) sustained fractures in the left leg and bruises and superficial wounds after a house collapsed over him as a result of a bombing by fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian that fired a missile in Al Salihein neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.



[Ahmad](#), a reporter and photographer for Halab Al Yaoum TV channel, from Aleppo city, born in 1993, a university student -first year- at the institute of media, single. SNHR contacted the media activist Ahmad Mahmoud Barazi via Facebook:

“I was at my friend’s house when fixed-wing warplanes we believe was Russian carried out a missile airstrike on Al Salihein neighborhood. While we were getting ready to cover the aftermath of the bombing, the same warplanes carried out a second airstrike and a second missile fell near us which resulted in the collapse of the house and one of the walls fell over me. Civil defense members pulled me from the rubbles and took me to Al Zarzour hospital where I was diagnosed with two fractures in my left leg and various bruises all over my body.”





Monday 21 November 2016, media activist [Mohab Abd Al Salam](#) was injured in his back and left hand by shrapnel after fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired a missile near him as [he](#) was covering the bombing in Al Mwasalat neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions. Mohab, a reporter and photographer for Theqqa Agency and Enab Baladi journal, from Aleppo city, born in 1992, has an intermediate education certificate, single. SNHR contacted [Mohab Abd Al Salam](#) via Facebook:

“On Monday 21 November, as I was covering the bombing on Al Mwasalat neighborhood in Aleppo, a missile fell near me, one of the shrapnel got into my back while other shrapnel caused wounds in my left hand.”

C. Armed opposition factions

Killing

Saturday 12 November 2016, media activist [Mohsen Khaza'ie](#) was killed by shrapnel that hit his head after a mortar shell, fired by armed opposition factions artillery, fell near him as he was covering the clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions on the battlefield of Manyan in Aleppo city.



[Mohsen](#) a [reporter](#) for the Islamic Republic of Iran News Agency (IRINN)

Thursday 24 November 2016, media activist [Ahmad Ibrahim Shikhou](#) was killed after an armed opposition factions checkpoint, in the suburbs of Hama governorate, opened fire on the car he was riding due to the car not stopping at the checkpoint. Ahmad, known as Abu Ibrahim, a media activist at the Ahrar Al Sham Movement media office, an armed opposition faction, from Kousniya village in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate, born in 1994, has a certificate in intermediate education, single.





Injuries

Thursday 3 November 2016, media activist [Mohammad Joulaq](#) was injured by shrapnel in his left thigh and left loin after an artillery shell, fired by armed opposition artillery, fell near him as he was covering clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions on the battlefield of Manyan in Aleppo city.



[Mohammad](#), a reporter for Al Alam TV channel, born in Damascus city, born in 1980, married.

D. Self-management forces (Primarily consisting of the Democratic Union Party – branch for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party)

- Arrest and release

Wednesday 16 November 2016, Self-management forces arrested the media activist [Afa Khanou](#) from the Kurdish party Yekiti office in Amouda city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate and detained her in an undisclosed place for hours before releasing her in the same day.

Afa, a program host at Amouda FM radio and a member of the Kurdish party Yekiti, from Amouda city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate.

Wednesday 16 November 2016, Self-management forces arrested the media activist [Nourshien Ahmad](#) from the Kurdish party Yekiti office in Amouda city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate and detained her in an undisclosed place for hours before releasing her in the same day.

Nourshien, a program host at Amouda FM radio and a member of the Kurdish party Yekiti, from Amouda city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate.

Wednesday 16 November 2016, Self-management forces arrested the media activist Seban Haj Qasem from the Kurdish party Yekiti office in Amouda city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate and detained him in an undisclosed place for hours before releasing her in the same day.

[Seban](#), a technician at Amouda FM Radio and a member of the Kurdish party Yekiti, from Amouda city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate.





Wednesday 16 November 2016, Self-management forces arrested the media activist [Bashjnik Khani](#) from the Kurdish party Yekiti office in Amouda city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate and detained him in an undisclosed place for hours before releasing her in the same day.

Bashjnik, a technician at Amouda FM Radio and a member of the Kurdish party Yekiti, from Amouda city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate.

Wednesday 23 November 2016, Self-management forces released the media activist [Barzan Hussein Shikhmous](#) who has been arrested since Tuesday 16 August 2016.

Barzan, a reporter for Yekiti Media agency, from Amouda city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate, born in 1980.



E. Unidentified groups

Abduction and release

Tuesday 22 November 2016, a masked armed group raided Lavin net café in Al Mufti neighborhood, located in Al Hasakeh city and is under the control of Self-management forces, and abducted the media activist [Serdar Dari](#) and took him blindfolded to an unknown location. On the next day 23 November 2016, he was found tossed near Al Khama'el village in southern Al Hasakeh after he was severely beaten and stabbed with a knife in his back. He was taken to Al Hekma neighborhood in Al Hasakeh city for treatment.



[Serdar Dari](#), a reporter for Wlat FM radio, from Amouda city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate, born in 1992.

V. Recommendations

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Condemn the targeting of media activists in Syria and sheds light on their sacrifice and suffering.

Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic

Conduct investigations that focuses on the targeting of media activists given their vital role in recording incidents in Syria.





The Security Council

Work on fighting the policy of impunity by referring the cases in Syria to the International Criminal Court.

International and Arabic media institutions

Advocate their colleagues in the field of media by publishing periodic reports that shed light on their daily suffering and memorialize their sacrifice. Also, they must contact their families to console them.

Finally, all parties have to respect the international humanitarian law with respect to the protection of civilians and especially media activists and their equipment.

Acknowledgment

Out most heartfelt condolences go out for the victims' families and our thank for the families and friends of media activists who contributed effectively to this report.

