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Reporters Without Borders

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Middle East/North Africa - Syria

Repression continues

Media workers under constant threat of arrest, torture, death

6 November 2012

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Reporters Without Borders has learned from reliable sources that **Bashar Fahmi Al-Kadumi**, a Jordanian journalist of the *Al-Hurra* network is alive and in good health. His fate had been unknown following his 20 August disappearance in Aleppo. Al-Kadumi had disappeared along with a Turkish colleague, **Cüneyt Ünal**, an Al-Hurra cameraman.

According to information gathered by the press freedom organization, Al-Kadumi had been wounded in the shoulder and was hospitalized in Damascus. This information [contradicts a government communiqué of 4 September](#) in which the Syrian information minister said that Syrian authorities were not holding the journalist.

Reporters Without Borders called on the government to end attempts at disinformation, and to release all imprisoned journalists and media workers.

The press freedom organization reports the 1 November arrest of journalist **Shaza al-Madad** following a summons to appear at the offices of the domestic intelligence agency. She did not emerge publicly from the encounter. Sources report that the arrest was prompted by [an interview she held with a Free Syrian Army](#) commander that was published on social media.

Al-Madad has worked for several private media companies including *Baladna*, the *Al-Watan* daily and the *Kolona Shorakaa* and *Damascus Post* news websites. She had previously been summoned by the intelligence services. The first time followed her return from the United States, where she had participated in a broadcast on journalists' work around the world. She had also been arrested after resigning from the *Damascus Post* in a dispute with editors over coverage of the Syrian conflict.

On the same date as Al-Madad's arrest, security forces in Damascus detained writer **Daher Ayta**. He is known for criticism of the Bashar Al-Assad regime. His friends report [no news of his fate](#). The 46-year-old writer works at the Superior Institute of Arts in Damascus. He is also a playwright and director. Last September, he received an award for a children's play.

Reporters Without Border is also deeply concerned about the fate of lawyer **Khalil Maatouq**, [who was arrested on 2 October](#) on his way to work. The executive director of the Syrian Centre for Legal Studies and Research, and a prominent human rights lawyer, Maatouq suffers from a lung ailment. He is not receiving appropriate medical treatment and visits to him have been prohibited.

Meanwhile, The Syrian Journalists Association has announced the death under torture of **Hisham Moussali**, a video editor for Syrian national television. His remains were [sent to his family on 15 October](#) in Damascus two months after his arrest by the military intelligence service.

Also according to the [SJA](#), two citizen-journalists, **Omar Abdulrazzaq Al-Lattouf** and **Mohammad Jumaa Abdulkarim Al-Lattouf**, were arrested on 20 October at the Ikarda checkpoint near Aleppo. They were returning from Turkey on their way to Homs with six other people (including three family members). They were murdered after being tortured by security forces.

Omar Abdulrazzaq Al-Lattouf, a native of Talbisa, north of Homs, was better known as Omar Al-Homsi. He had regularly been in touch with foreign media and was one of the founders of the Syrian Revolution General Commission, in charge of its media bureau. He had established the "Homs Newsroom". Mohammed Jumaa Abdulkarim Al-Lattouf had been one of the main video cameramen of Talbisa.

Reporters Without Borders has gathered contradictory information concerning the reported death of citizen-journalist **Fatima Khaled Saad**. The organization demands that Syrian authorities make her fate known.

[Saad was arrested on 28 June](#) and transferred on 18 July to military intelligence headquarters in Damascus. The Syrian League for Human Rights announced on 2 October that she had died following torture. But a family member then told AFP that she was still alive.

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