

# URGENT ACTION

## JOURNALISTS DETAINED AND AT RISK IN LIBYA

**Four Al Jazeera journalists working in western Libya have been held incommunicado since they were detained while trying to leave the country two weeks ago. They are at high risk of torture and other ill-treatment. Many other journalists have been targeted for reporting the unrest.**

The team of four Al Jazeera journalists was reportedly arrested by Libyan authorities near Zantan, close to the Tunisian border. The team consists of two correspondents, Mauritanian **Ahmed Val Wald-Eddin**, 34, and Tunisian **Lutfi Al-Massoudi**, 34, and two cameramen, Norwegian **Ammar Al-Hamdan**, 34, and Briton **Ammar Al-Tallou**. Lutfi Al-Massoudi is believed to have been seen in a Tripoli detention centre by a CNN correspondent who was briefly detained and released on 19 March. However, neither their families nor Al Jazeera have been told of their whereabouts by the Libyan authorities in Tripoli or been able to establish contact with them.

A wave of arrests and enforced disappearances of Libyans and non-Libyans began in eastern Libya in mid-February, starting with the detentions of Libyan writers and pro-democracy advocates who had supported and spread calls for peaceful anti-government demonstrations. Among the missing are six Libyan journalists who spoke critically of the situation in Libya or to international media: Atef al-Atrash, Mohamed al-Sahim, Mohamed al-Amin, Idris al-Mismar, Salma al-Shaab and Suad al-Turabouls are all believed to have been arrested by forces loyal to Colonel Mu'ammara al-Gaddafi. Amnesty International is concerned that those who remain in the custody of the Libyan security forces are at high risk of torture and other ill-treatment. Some detainees are reported to be as young as 14 years old.

Concern for the safety of detained journalists is heightened by reports of severe abuse of other journalists who have recently been released from detention by Colonel al-Gaddafi's forces. Three BBC journalists who were detained close to Azzawiya on 7 March reported following their release on 9 March that they had been beaten and subjected to mock executions. Four New York Times journalists released yesterday were also subjected to serious abuses.

### PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Arabic, French or your own language:

- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Ahmed Val Wald-Edin, Lufi Al-Massoudi, Ammar Al-Hamdan and Ammar Al-Tallou;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure the release of all detained journalists and to ensure that all journalists are allowed to conduct their work freely and without fear of harassment, intimidation or detention.
- Calling on the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all those detained on account of their opinions or peaceful activities in support of the protests
- Urging the authorities to ensure that all allegations of torture and other ill-treatment are fully and independently investigated and those responsible for such abuses are brought to justice.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 3 MAY 2011 TO:

Leader of the Revolution  
Colonel Mu'ammara Al-Gaddafi  
Office of the Leader of the Revolution,  
Tripoli  
Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab  
Jamahiriya  
Email: [info@algathafi.org](mailto:info@algathafi.org)  
Salutation: Your Excellency

Gaddafi Development Foundation  
Executive Director  
El Fatah Tower, 5th Floor B No.57  
PO Box 1101, Tripoli  
Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab  
Jamahiriya  
Salutation: Dear Sir

Secretary of the General People's  
Committee for Foreign Liaison and  
International Cooperation  
Mussa Kussa  
Fax +218 21 340 2921  
Email: <http://www.foreign.gov.ly/online/contactus.php>  
First box: Name; Second box: email; Third box: pick the 1st choice - Minister of Foreign Affairs; Last box: text of message  
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



# URGENT ACTION

## JOURNALISTS DETAINED AND AT RISK IN LIBYA

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since protests began in mid-February and in the unrest that followed, there have been reports that Libyan authorities and those loyal to Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Gaddafi have targeted both international and national journalists.

In a statement made on 23 February, the Libyan Authority for External Communications, responsible for dealing with the international media, said that Libyan authorities are not responsible for the safety of foreign journalists who entered Libya without following necessary procedures such as obtaining government permission and supervision. He further added that journalists who had entered Libya "illegally" would be considered "outlaws" by the Libyan authorities in Tripoli.

In a previous incident, Al Jazeera cameraman Hassan Al Jaber was killed in an ambush close to Benghazi in eastern Libya on 12 March. He was shot when unknown fighters opened fire on the car in which he and his colleagues were travelling. Another journalist Mohammed al-Nabbous, founder of Libya's Al-Hurra TV, is reported to have been shot dead while trying to report on an armed clash between pro and anti-al Gaddafi forces in Benghazi on 19 March.

Others who have been arrested and subjected to enforced disappearance are writers and/or pro-democracy advocates who expressed criticism of the repressive practices under Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Gaddafi's rule and who the Libyan authorities in Tripoli apparently suspected of supporting and spreading calls for popular demonstrations against Colonel al-Gaddafi's rule. Amnesty International has also documented arrests of peaceful protestors, onlookers and fighters.

UA: 82/11 Index: MDE 19/008/2011 Issue Date: 22 March 2011

