

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/libya-two-foreign-journalists-arrested-10-03-2011,39753.html>

Middle East & North Africa - Libya

Free

Brazilian reporter released after eight days

11 March 2011

Reporters Without Borders is relieved to learn that Brazilian reporter **Andrei Netto** of the *O Estado de São Paulo* newspaper has been released after being held for eight days.

"We share the joy and relief of Netto's family and friends, but the situation of journalists in Libya continues to be very worrying," Reporters Without Borders said. "Foreign journalists who enter the country without permits are treated by the Gaddafi regime as Al-Qaeda accomplices."

Netto, who is normally based in Paris, was arrested by pro-Gaddafi forces at the Tunisian-Libyan border as he was trying to resolve problems regarding the way he had entered the country. His newspaper said he was beaten and kept blindfolded during the eight days he was held in Sabratha, a town 60 km west of Tripoli.

10.03.2011 - Two foreign journalists arrested four days ago at Zawiya, still held

Reporters Without Borders calls on the Libyan authorities to immediately release two journalists, **Ghaith Abdul-Ahad** of the London-based *Guardian* newspaper and **Andrei Netto** of the Brazilian daily *O Estado de São Paulo*, who were arrested near Zawiya, 30 km west of the capital, on 6 March.

The press freedom organization firmly condemns their arrest. Journalists should not under any circumstances be made to pay for the fighting between government forces and rebels. They were detained by pro-Gaddafi forces while covering the clashes in the Zawiya area and are still being held.

Luciana Constantino, the editor of Estadão (the online version of *O Estado de São Paulo*), confirmed Netto's arrest to Reporters Without Borders but said he did not know where he is now being held. "We just know that he is physically all right and that the Brazilian ambassador to Libya is there to negotiate his release."

The Guardian said in a statement that it is in touch with the authorities in Tripoli and London in an attempt to obtain more information about its reporter. It confirmed that Abdul-Ahad and Netto were travelling together.

An Iraqi citizen, Abdul-Ahad has worked for *The Guardian* since 2004, covering fighting in Somalia, Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan. He entered Libya from Tunisia. Netto is the Paris correspondent of *O Estado de São Paulo*.

Reporters Without Borders also voices its strong condemnation of the appalling physical violence and intimidation to which three *BBC* journalists – *Firas Killani*, *Goktay Koraltan* and *Chris Cobb-Smith* – were subjected while held by government forces for 21 hours on 7 and 8 March (lire: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12695138>).
