

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/egypt-three-journalists-killed-on-14-16-08-2013,45058.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Egypt

Black day

## Three journalists killed on 14 August, many others injured, detained or threatened

16 August 2013

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Reporters Without Borders is dismayed to learn that two Egyptian journalists –reporter **Ahmad Abdel Gawad** and photographer **Mosab Al-Shami** – were also killed while covering clashes between security forces and deposed President Mohamed Morsi’s supporters on 14 August, as well as Sky News cameraman **Mick Dean**.

At least [623 people were killed](#) in the clashes, according to official figures.

Gawad, a [reporter for the Egyptian daily Al-Akhbar](#), lost a lot of blood when shot in the small of the back and died after being taken to hospital.

Shami, a [photographer with Rassd News Network](#) (RNN), an alternative news outlet created during the Egyptian revolution in January 2011, was reportedly killed by a sniper’s shot that hit him in the chest.

“Wednesday 14 August will be remembered as dark day for freedom of information,” Reporters Without Borders said. “With a total of three journalists killed in the course of their work, it was the deadliest day for the media that Egypt has ever experienced.”

At least six other journalists sustained [gunshot injuries](#) on 14 August. They included *Al-Jazeera* journalist **Mohamed Al-Zaki**, who was [shot in an arm](#), and an *Associated Press* photographer who was [hit in the neck](#). It has not yet been possible to say with certainty who fired the shots.

The police also arrested many local and foreign reporters, thereby preventing them from covering the use of force to disperse pro-Morsi sit-ins. They included **Abdallah Al-Shami** of *Al-Jazeera*, photographers **Emad Eddin Al-Sayed** and **Abdulrahman Al-Mowahhed-Bellah** of *Al-Jazeera Mubasher Misr*, **Radwa Al-Selawi**, a reporter for the closed Muslim Brotherhood newspaper *Al-Hurriya wa Al-Adala*, and a journalist with the *Misr 25*, an Egyptian TV station.

An *AFP* photographer was prevented from entering Nahda Square by a policeman who pointed his automatic rifle at him and ordered him to go back. Both the police and Muslim Brotherhood supporters confiscated material from journalists, especially their memory cards.

German freelance photographer **Sebastian Backhaus** was arrested in Cairo on 14 August and is being held in a police station pending a court appearance for allegedly failing to respect the curfew imposed under the [state of emergency](#) proclaimed earlier that day. The curfew now in effect from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. is supposed to exempt doctors and journalists, who just have to submit to ID checks at the many army checkpoints. As a freelancer, Backhaus is not directly affiliated to a particular news outlet, but he is as much a journalist as any other and should be treated as such. Reporters Without Borders calls for his immediate and unconditional release.

Reporters Without Borders is extremely concerned by the current situation of journalists in Egypt. As well as coming under fire, they are being subjected to a great deal of obstruction both by the security forces and demonstrators.

“News providers must be able to cover developments without any threat to their physical

safety,” Reporters Without Borders said. “We urge the Egyptian authorities and protest leaders to adopt whatever measures are necessary to protect journalists.”

The danger to journalists is not limited to political demonstrations. They are also the targets of attack by unidentified armed groups.

A three-member crew with the Russian TV news station *Rossiya 24* [was attacked](#) while on their way to their hotel shortly after landing in Cairo on the night of 14 August. Unidentified individuals armed with knives stopped their vehicle and took all their equipment, including laptops, and nearly 6,000 dollars. The three journalists were not hurt. According to the latest reports, [their attackers were found](#) thanks to information provided by their taxi driver and other witness, and most of their equipment has been returned.

A mainly Egyptian crew working for German public TV broadcaster *ARD* [was attacked](#) on August, 15 in Alf Maskan Square in the district of Ain Shams (North-East Cairo) when conducting an interview on the situation of Christians in Egypt. While their assailants smashed their camera and destroyed their recordings, the crew found refuge with the police, whose only comment – “For love of heaven, how can you walk around with a camera here?” – speaks volumes about the current situation.

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