

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/libya-gunmen-slay-young-journalist-in-23-09-2014,46994.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Libya

Another murder

Gunmen slay young journalist in Benghazi, the security chaos continues to pose a grave danger to Libyan news providers

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Reporters Without Borders condemns the murder of Tawfiq Faraj Ben Saud, a young Libyan journalist and activist, in the eastern city of Benghazi on the evening of 19 September.

Tawfiq Ben Saud was driving home when gunmen in a black 4WD Hyundai "Santa Fe" riddled his car with bullets in the middle of Al-Wikalat Street in the west Benghazi neighbourhood of Al-Fuwayhat at around 9:30 pm.

Sami Al-Kawafi, a young friend of Saud's who was with him, was killed immediately. Saud died shortly after being rushed to hospital with gunshot injuries. A third passenger, Mohamed Bouszriba, who was in the back, was spared.

Aged only 18, Saud presented a programme called "Ishah bi Jawuha" (Live your Life) on the privately-owned and popular radio station *Libyana Hits*. He and Kawafi had also created a local human rights organization, [Al-Rahma](#) (Mercy Foundation) and had openly opposed armed extremist groups, organizing and participating in protests against their terrorist activities.

Reporters Without Borders is shocked and appalled by this latest tragic death in a country that is now clearly governed by the "law of terror," a country where news and information providers are targeted if they cover the realities of the prevailing chaos.

Many news providers are fleeing abroad. According to a Reporters Without Borders tally, more than 20 Libyan journalists have gone into self-imposed exile since June. As a result, the violence is increasingly depriving the Libyan population of access to reliable reporting.

Flight abroad, the constant acts of intimidation and the increasing frequency of targeted murders are all making fair, balanced and objective news coverage more and more difficult and complex. Reporting has become an arduous battle.

According to two of his friends, Saud had been receiving threats for the past month. One acquaintance had advised him to flee Libya because the "Shura Council of the Benghazi Revolutionaries" had reportedly drawn up a hit list that included Saud and other Libyan journalists and activists.

The "Shura Council of the Benghazi Revolutionaries" is a coalition of radical Islamist militias that was created in July to resist Gen. Khalifa Haftar's offensive.

After the recent months of political and security unrest and fierce fighting in Tripoli and Benghazi mostly, but also in other parts of the country, the new parliament declared on 28 August that, *"the groups calling themselves 'Libyan Dawn' and 'Shura Council of the Benghazi Revolutionaries' are outlawed as terrorist groups undermining the state's legitimacy."*

Reporters Without Borders reminds all armed groups that, under the Geneva Conventions, they must respect the civilian status of journalists. [As recently reminded by the US human rights organization, Human Rights Watch](#), failure to respect the laws of war, when committed with criminal intent, may constitute war crimes whose perpetrators, or those who command them, could be prosecuted before national courts or the International Criminal Court.

Under [UN Security Council Resolution 1970 of 26 February 2011](#), the ICC has jurisdiction over war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed in Libya since 15 February 2011.
