

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/libya-two-tv-cameramen-abducted-and-held-10-07-2012,42997.html>

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Middle East/North Africa - Libya

Tribal negotiations

## Two Tobacts TV journalists freed after negotiations

16 July 2012

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Reporters Without Borders is relieved that the two *Tobacts TV* journalists who were arrested in Bani Walid on 7 July – reporter **Abdul Qadir Fassouk** and cameraman **Yousuf Badi** – were freed today after being flown by helicopter yesterday to Jadu, in the western Nefusa mountains.

They arrived late today in Misrata, where *Tobacts TV* is based, and were due to give a news conference at 9 pm.

“While their release is a big relief, it is important that the Libyan authorities take concrete measures to ensure that such incidents do not recur. “Journalists must not be the targets of attacks or taken hostage or used as bargaining chips for nefarious ends.”

The journalists’ transfer to Jadu and subsequent release were the result of intense negotiations involving the National Transitional Council, the prime minister and many tribal elders, especially after a Misrata-based militia threatened to attack Bani Walid if they were not freed within 48 hours.

Fassouk and Badi were arrested in Bani Walid at around 8 p.m. on 7 July while on their way back to Misrata from Mizdah, where they had been covering that day’s nationwide parliamentary elections. Four other people from Misrata who were subsequently arrested are still being held.

The people who “kidnapped” the two journalists in Bani Walid had reportedly demanded the release of Bani Walid residents held in Misrata in exchange for their release.

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### 09.07.2012 - Two TV cameramen abducted and held in Bani Walid

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Reporters Without Borders unreservedly condemns the abduction and continuing detention of Libyan cameraman **Abdelqader Fosouk** and **Youssuf Badi** in Bani Walid (150 km southeast of Tripoli), one of the last pro-Gaddafi strongholds to fall to the rebels during last year’s war.

They have been held since 7 July, the day of nationwide parliamentary elections which they had gone to cover in Bani Walid for *Tobacts TV*, a station based in Misrata, 100 km north of Bani Walid.

*AlWadiTV* showed [footage](#) of the two cameramen, in apparent good health, saying they were arrested for entering Bani Walid illegally and for filming military areas without permission.

Mohammed Al-Swehili, the head of one of the Misrata militias, told the *Associated Press* he was setting a 48-hour deadline for their release. If they were not freed, “forces from all over the country would attack Bani Walid,” he added.

“As well as being unjustified and constituting a serious violation of freedom of information, their abduction and detention have exacerbated the already marked regional tensions,” Reporters Without Borders said. “We would condemn any use to force to obtain their release, especially as a military assault on the town would put their lives in danger. We appeal to all sides to show restraint and we call for their immediate release.”

Fosouk and Badi were reportedly kidnapped at around 5 p.m., as they were about to leave Bani Walid and return to Misrata in order to vote there before the close of polls. According to information that Reporters Without Borders obtained from some sources, their abductors demanded the release of certain detainees in Misrata in return for their release.

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#### Other images



PNG - 327.5 kb  
582 x 395 pixels

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