

Reporters Without Borders

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Middle East/North Africa - Syria

Hotspot

Five Turkish journalists wounded in Aleppo, latest danger zone for media personnel

1 August 2012

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Five Turkish journalists were wounded two days ago while covering fierce fighting in the northern city of Aleppo. Three of them, working for the Turkish news agency *Anadolu*, were hit by sniper fire while the other two, employed by the Qatari satellite TV channel *Al-Jazeera*, were hit by shrapnel from a shell that exploded nearby ([video link](#)).

"Journalists are now falling victim to violence in Aleppo, Syria's latest war front," Reporters Without Borders said. "This week's incidents join a long list of attacks and cases of abusive treatment of journalists since the start of the uprising in Syria. They fuel concern about the danger for media personnel in the north of the country.

"The location of the most intense fighting has been moving around for the country for more than a year but one characteristic remains the same: journalists are very exposed and no one seems to be trying very hard to protect them. The safety of these foreign and Syrian news providers – reporters and their support personnel – must be guaranteed not only by the government forces but also by the rebel Free Syrian Army."

Anadolu photographer **Sinan Gül** sustained serious leg injuries from sniper fire while covering the Syrian air force bombardment of the Salah al-Din neighbourhood of Aleppo. ([video link](#)) The two other *Anadolu* journalists with him, reporter **Samet Dogan** and cameraman **Kenan Yesilyurt**, sustained less serious injuries. The three were able to return to Turkey yesterday.

"We went to the region to cover the military operations," Gül said. "When the snipers began firing at us, there were no longer any soldiers from the opposing side with us. I thought the neighbourhood was safe because the soldiers had begun to advance. I nonetheless told Kenan not to move. I crossed the road in order to take cover behind a car and, at that moment, I was the target of intense gunfire. The snipers were aiming at me. I was hit in the foot and leg. They kept on firing at me. As I was protected by the car, I was not hit in the head but I lost a lot of blood."

After being taken to Aleppo's Sifa Hospital, Gul was evacuated to the Sehit Kamil state hospital in the south-eastern Turkish city of Gaziantep, where a bullet was removed from his right leg. Late yesterday afternoon, he was transferred to Istanbul's Bahçelievler Hastanesi medical complex for a tissue graft.

The other two injured journalists, *Al-Jazeera* reporter **Amr Khachram** and cameraman **Hakan Bayginer**, are currently being treated in a hospital on the Turkish side of the border for the injuries they received from a shell while interviewing rebels. Doctors said that their condition was stable and that they would be able to leave the hospital in a few days.

These latest incidents involving journalists came three days after Dutch photographer **Jeroens Oerlemans** and British photographer **John Cantlie** [were released by the foreign "jihadis"](#) who had held them in their camp for a week after kidnapping them in Aleppo on 19 July.

The Free Syrian Army has a duty to protect journalists and their assistants and to ensure that there is no recurrence of the kind of incident experienced by British reporter **Alex Thomson** in June, when he says that rebels deliberately led him and other journalists into an area where the Syrian government soldiers were shooting everyone on sight.

You can download those documents on our website :

- , (JPEG - 93.9 kb)
- Five Turkish journalists wounded in Aleppo, (PDF - 453.4 kb)

