

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/syria-targeted-killings-and-forced-04-12-2012,43758.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Syria

More than 60 killed

Targeted killings and forced confessions condemned

4 December 2012

[Read in Arabic \(بالعربية\)](#)

Syria's state-owned national television reports that **Naji Assaad**, a retired journalist who continued to work for the government daily *Tishreen*, was [killed today outside his home](#) in the south Damascus suburb of Tadamun as he was leaving to go to the newspaper.

The TV station described his death as a "terrorist act targeting the nation's lifeblood."

In a separate development, **Mohamed Al-Khal**, a citizen journalist better known as Abu Bilel Al-Diri, [was killed](#) during government shelling of the Hamidiya district of the eastern city of Deir Ezzor on 25 November while [he was covering clashes](#) between government forces and members of the Free Syrian Army.

At least 16 professional journalists and 44 citizen journalists have been killed in connection with their work of gathering and disseminating news and information since the start of the armed conflict in Syria.

The citizen journalist **Mohamed Qoraytem** was killed during shelling of the southwest Damascus neighbourhood of Daraya on 29 November. He was one of the founders of the newspaper [Enab Baladi](#) and was a member of the Media Committee of the Days of Freedom (Ayam Al-Huria) group.

Qoraytem was [arrested in 2003](#) in connection with his activism.

The following three foreign journalists are meanwhile still being held by their abductors or are missing:

- **Ankhar Kochneva**, a Ukrainian journalist who has worked for many Russian news media, especially as an interpreter, was kidnapped by a Free Syrian Army faction on 9 October. She was able to confirm by telephone the same day that she had been taken hostage. And then, on 12 and 13 October, she was able to contact *NTV*, one of the Russian media she has worked for as an interpreter.

A [video](#) was released on 8 November in which she asked the Ukrainian, Russian and Syrian authorities to agree to her captors' demands.

In a [second video](#) posted online by her abductors on 29 November, she said she had worked for the Russian and Syrian intelligence services as a translator. She was almost certainly forced to make this statement.

- **Bashar Fahmi Al-Kadumi**, a Jordanian reporter working for US-funded *Al-Hurra TV*, went missing in Aleppo on 20 August at the same time as *Al-Hurra* cameraman **Cüneyt Ünal**. After Ünal was released, he reported that Kadumi was wounded in the stomach by a shot fired by a Free Syrian Army sniper.
- **Austin Tice**, a US freelancer who worked for the *Washington Post*, *Al-Jazeera English* and *McClatchy*, went missing while reporting in a Damascus suburb on 13 August. A video showing him held by jihadis was posted online on 26 September. The only sign of life since his disappearance, it gave no indication as to where he is currently being held,

exactly who is holding him and what their demands are. His parents gave a news conference in Beirut on 12 November to request his release.

Condemning the use of forced confessions that are filmed and then broadcast or posted online, Reporters Without Borders calls for the release of these three foreign journalists and urges the Syrian authorities to free all the Syrian journalists they are currently holding.

At least 36 journalists and citizen journalists are currently detained in the regime's jails.

You can download those documents on our website :

- , (JPEG - 79.8 kb)
-