



Syria

23 March 2011

Syria : underprecedent protests violently repressed

Peaceful protests which occurred during the past four days in several Syrian towns, and more particularly in Daraa, have been harshly repressed. Since the beginning of the ongoing protests, 28 people are reported to have been killed and hundreds arrested.

On 21 March, at least 10000 protesters asking for freedom and democracy gathered in Daraa. These protests, the largest on such a scale, were initiated by the call launched on a Facebook page, « Syrian revolution against Bachar al-Assad », inspired by the recent arab revolutions.

The response of the Syrian authorities to the recent protests was particularly violent. The security forces fired live ammunitions to disperse the crowd and, according to our sources, they also used ambulances and firemen vehicles to run over protesters.

Calls for protests have previously been made in several Syrian towns on the 4 and 5 of February through social networks, but were prevented from occurring. Arrests of people suspected to be involved in these calls were reported in Hassakeh and Aleppo.

FIDH strongly condemns the crackdown against peaceful demonstrators by the Syrian state, in particular since 18 March. FIDH calls the Syrian authorities to end these exactions, and ensure respect for the freedom of peaceful assembly and fundamental freedoms.

<http://www.fidh.org/Syria-underprecedent-protests-violently-repressed>