



Statement

A Demand to The Jordanian Authorities That Journalist Ibrahim Awwad Not Be Forcibly Returned to Syria Because It Is an Unsafe Country

Returning Ibrahim Awwad, a Dissident Journalist Who Opposes the Syrian Regime, to the Regime Territory Will Lead to His Torture and Enforced Disappearance, Seriously Threatening His Life

On Wednesday, November 17, 2021, Jordanian authorities arrested Syrian journalist Ibrahim Awwad from his home, based on a warrant issued by the country's general intelligence service, as well as confiscating his equipment. Although no warrant has been issued for his arrest by the Jordanian judicial authorities, he has been transferred to Al Azraq Camp for refugees, which he is not allowed to leave.

We have received information that the Jordanian authorities intend to forcibly return him to Syria, with the Syrian regime controlling all areas adjacent to the Jordanian-Syrian border, except for Al Tanf area, which is under the control of armed opposition factions supported by US-led International Coalition forces.

Ibrahim is from Mzayreeb town in the western suburbs of Daraa. At the end of September 2021, the Syrian regime regained control over the town according to [the agreement concluded between representatives of the regime and dignitaries of the region under Russian auspices](#). Ibrahim, born in 1989, is married with two children. He participated in the popular movement against the Syrian regime as a reporter, then worked briefly as a war correspondent with the First Legion, an armed opposition faction, before seeking asylum in Jordan where he has lived for the past few years. In Jordan, he has worked as a journalist throughout his stay up to the moment of his arrest. In his journalism work, [Ibrahim has appeared](#) in many TV [interviews](#), authored [many reports](#), and reported for numerous media outlets. On his [personal Twitter account](#), he also covered [the most recent](#) Syrian-Russian coalition military campaign on [Daraa governorate](#), as well as monitoring and documenting the violations by these forces.

Based on all the above, his presence in Syrian territory, particularly in areas under the control of the Syrian regime, poses a serious threat to his life, especially when considering the Syrian regime's savage retaliatory policy against its critics, dissidents and anyone opposing it by arbitrarily arresting and torturing them. Most dissidents detained by the Syrian regime are subsequently forcibly disappeared.

In addition to the facts above, the journalist Ibrahim is considered a Syrian refugee; although he has not been granted asylum and Jordan is not a signatory to the UN's Refugees Convention of 1951, his situation meets the criteria for a refugee according to the definition provided by the convention, with the Independent International Commission of Inquiry of the United Nations confirming in [its last report](#) in September 2021 that all of Syria is an unsafe country for the return of refugees, and that the principle of 'non-refoulement of refugees' is a customary law binding for all countries, including those that have not ratified the 1951 Convention.

We note here, that the Syrian regime has killed at least 553 journalists and media workers from March 2011 to November 20, 2021, while at least 358 journalists and media workers are still detained or forcibly disappeared by the Syrian regime. All of them were arrested because of their opinions.

We at the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) call on the Jordanian authorities not to return any Syrian refugees, more especially media, political and human rights activists, because they will be targets of revenge for the perpetrators of violations, especially for the worst perpetrator of violations in the Syrian conflict, the Syrian regime, which over the years has pursued anyone who dared to criticize or oppose it, with thousands of protesters being forcibly disappeared or dying under torture in its prisons and detention centers.