

Monthly Report Executive Summary

Press and Cultural Freedom Violations

April 2013

LEBANON, SYRIA, JORDAN, PALESTINE

In April 2013, eight activist journalists were killed in Syria; one of which was murdered in prison. Also, six correspondents, photographers and activists were injured, the arrests continued and six foreign journalists were abducted.

In the West Bank, the Israeli forces attacked Palestinian journalists with rubber-coated bullets; three of them were injured in the line of duty. Also, the Israeli police attacked journalists in the 1948 Territories with sound grenades and beat them with truncheons.

Below is a detailed summary of the violations compiled by the SKeyes Center in all four countries.

In **Lebanon**, photographer Alain Khoury was wounded in the leg, after young Syrians tried to run him over with a car in Hamra (04/18) when they thought he was taking pictures of them, and the editor-in-chief of *Al-Mustaqbal*, Hani Hammoud, received threats through [Al-Khabar Press](#), accusing him of collaborating with Israel and testifying before the Special Tribunal for Lebanon against the four Hezbollah members indicted for the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri (04/12). The Anti-cybercrime office detained and questioned the editor of [Al-Hadath News](#), Abdallah Qameh, for nine hours following an article he published on the website (04/11). Also, soldiers prevented the media “for security reasons” from covering a sit-in organized by the parents of Islamist prisoners detained in the Roumieh prison (04/21).

The Minister of the Interior Marwan Charbel banned the screening of Ziad Doueiri’s movie “The Attack”, because some scenes were filmed in Israel and the crew included Israeli actors (04/26). Also, the website of the [Al-Mustaqbal](#) newspaper (04/09), [Ar-Rouwad](#) (04/11), the [Independence Movement](#) and the official page of the Movement’s president Michel Mouawad (04/19) were hacked.

In **Syria**, eight citizen journalists were killed: the *Watan FM* broadcasting director, Mohammad Al-Ghazali died under torture in Damascus (04/02), Abdel Rahman Al-Khadra’ in Daraa (04/15), Mahmoud Al-Azazu in Idlib (04/03), Ahmad Qoteifan (04/13) and Khalil Al-Hajj in Daraa (04/15), Mohammad Abu Yazan, succumbing to his injuries in Rif Dimashq (04/22) and Youssef Yunis also in Rif Dimashq (04/24); Ahmad Al-Sayeh Taha was executed in the Damascus central prison (04/28). Citizen journalist Mohannad Mahabeddin and Abu Al-Hoda Al-Homsi were injured in Homs (04/13), the correspondent of the Iranian TV channel *Al-Khabar*, Mohsen Khiza’I, in Rif Dimashq (04/14) and the news crew of the Syrian TV, including correspondent Shadi El-Helou and cameramen Yahya Musselli and Ahmad Sleiman were injured in a car bomb attack in Aleppo (04/14).



Abductions increased significantly: four Italian journalists were kidnapped and detained for eight days (04/05): Amadeo Ricucci, the *RAI* channel photojournalist, Andrea Vignali and Elio Colavolpe (independent journalists) as well as Syrian-born Italian journalist Susan Dabbous, who works for the *Folio* daily. Also, Belgian writer and researcher Pierre Piccinin and Italian journalist Domenico Quirico disappeared in the Homs governorate (04/17). The Syrian security arrested the *Sky News* team members after beating them in Damascus (04/08) and the Air Force Intelligence arrested Syrian poet Wael Saadeddin (04/22) and Syrian Kurdish journalist Shyar Khalil in Damascus (04/24). Also, the pro-opposition revolutionary military police in Aleppo arrested activist Aref Al-Kreizi for a period of four days (04/08).

In **Jordan**, a policeman forced the correspondent of [Al-Wakeel News](#) to erase a photo he took while covering a protest organized by the Farmers Union (04/10). Also, the Jordanian security tried to prevent journalists from filming during a pro-reform rally (04/12) and the *Al-Arabiya* correspondent, Ghassan Abu Loz, was threatened and banned from entering the Zaatari Syrian refugee camp (04/19). MP Mohammad Aasha filed a complaint against the *Ammon* agency, after it published an article related to his visit to Israel (04/25). Journalist Walid Hosni was threatened after revealing information about this same visit (04/30).

In the **Gaza Strip**, the Israeli forces prevented journalist Khaled Bolbol from entering the West Bank (04/29) and the *Al-Aqsa* University dismissed writer and lecturer Khodor Mihjez, under the pretext that he used “inappropriate remarks during his classes that women students attend” (04/01). The Hamas Interior Minister also criticized a report published by *Reuters* on the new Education Act and gender separation in classrooms (04/02).

In the **West Bank**, the Israeli violations against Palestinian journalists continued in April 2013; Israeli forces attacked several journalists with rubber-coated bullets: photographer Mohammad Al-Izza was hit by a bullet in the face, which caused facial bone erosion (04/08). Also, journalist Ons Al-Qadi was hit by a bullet in the head (04/04) and photographer Abdel Ghani Al-Natsheh in the forearm (04/02) then in the right hand (04/04).

Also, Israeli policemen arrested the *Al-Khalil* Radio (Hebron) broadcaster, Mohammad Al-Atrash (04/17) and the *Pal Media* agency photographer, Abdel Ghani Al-Natsheh for four hours (04/24). The Israeli authorities extended the administrative detention of writer Ahmad Qatamech for four months, for the fourth consecutive time (04/29) and the Israeli military court sentenced cartoonist Mohammad Sabaaneh to five months of prison and a fine (04/04). Moreover, Israeli forces stormed the house of journalist Raed Al-Sharif in the Hebron region (04/18) and banned journalist Moaz Meshaal from traveling (04/13).

Internally, the Palestinian intelligence detained journalists Tarek Khamis (04/20) and Khaldun Mazlum (04/26) for questioning. Journalist Iman Al-Silawi was threatened with arrest if she did not





shut down her Facebook page (04/07) and journalist Abdel Karim Musaytef was summoned and questioned (04/01). The Ramallah court of First Instance released journalist Mohammad Awad on bail but an hour later, the Attorney General asked the court to reverse its decision, which it did (04/07).

In the **1948 Territories**, the Israeli police arrested the Palestinian Prisoner Club director, Nasser Qaws, after beating him (04/02) and journalist Jawad Siam, who was beaten before being released the next day (04/17). The Israeli Security Minister prevented people from organizing the “Prisoner’s Day Festival” and the “Jerusalem Shopping Spring Festival” (04/18). Palestinian journalists held a meeting to discuss the means of protection in light of the increasing frequency of violations for several months now (04/09). They also launched a petition, through which they asked Palestinian institutions to condemn the violence perpetrated against them (04/14).

The [detailed monthly report for April 2013 \(in Arabic\)](#) is available on the website of the **SKeyes** Center for Media and Cultural Freedom.

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