

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/syria-trapped-journalists-killed-in-hell-22-02-2012,41920.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Syria

Slaughter in siege city

Trapped journalists killed in hell of Homs bombardment

22 February 2012

Reporters Without Borders learned today of the deaths of the American journalist **Marie Colvin** and the French photographer **Rémi Ochlik**, killed during an intense bombardment of the Baba Amr district of the city of Homs.

Several journalists were wounded, including French freelance **Edith Bouvier**, who works for French news organizations including the newspaper *Le Figaro*. She was reported to be in a serious condition.

Yesterday, **Ramy al-Sayed**, a citizen journalist with the *Shaam News Network*, was killed in the same area. His car was hit during a shelling attack and he died later of his wounds.

"We condemn in the strongest terms this three-fold crime. The Damascus government is persisting in its bloody policy of censorship and suppression of information," Reporters Without Borders said.

"It has decided to punish the entire population collectively and to use the most violent means to silence those journalists who witness its excesses.

"The international community can no longer remain passive in the face of the tragedy sweeping towns and cities that are the strongholds of pro-democracy protests."

U.N. Security Council resolution 1738, passed on 23 December 2006, obliges states to ensure the [safety of journalists in war zones](#). Journalists and media centres are neutral and can in no sense be regarded as targets.

According to information gathered by the press freedom organization, 11 rockets this morning hit the media centre where the journalists were located.

The building was believed to have been deliberately targeted, since it was public knowledge that it was used regularly by journalists.

The city of Homs has been virtually under siege since the start of pro-democracy protests, of which it is a hotbed, preventing journalists from moving around and carrying out their work. The Baba Amr district has been shelled regularly since mid-January.

Reporters Without Borders recalls that since the start of the uprising, seven media workers have been killed in Syria as a result of their activities.

The French journalist [Gilles Jacquier](#) of the *France 2* television station was killed in Homs on 11 January, although he had entered the country legally.

The Syrian journalist [Shukri Ahmed Ratib Abu Burghul](#), who was shot in the head on 30 December, died in hospital on 2 January.

Another citizen journalist, [Basil Al-Sayed](#), was killed in Homs on 29 December, while he was filming the latest bloodbath in Baba Amr. He was shot in the head by security forces and died on the way to hospital. He was 24 years old.

The photographer and video reporter **Ferzat Jarban** was murdered on 20 November last year, a day after he was arrested in Homs.

Finally, [Soleiman Saleh Abazaid](#), who ran the "Liberated people of Horan" Facebook page, was killed by a shot to the head on 22 July last year.

Two other Syrian citizen journalists have also been killed. Ramy Al-Sayed died during a shelling attack. **Mazhar Tayyara**, known as "Omar the Syrian", was killed by shrapnel from a shell while helping to rescue wounded people during a major bombardment in Homs on the night of 3 February. Aged 24, he had been working for the French news agency *Agence France-Presse* for two months. (<http://en.rsrf.org/syria-writer-and-activist-dies-in-prison-10-02-2012,41845.html>)

Reporters Without Borders recalls that journalists and campaigners for freedom of information from the Syrian Centre for Media and Freedom of Expression [were arrested on 16 February](#). The women were freed three days later but nine men, including centre's director **Mazen Darwish** are still held.

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