

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/egypt-more-violence-12-08-2013,45043.html>

Middle East/North Africa - Egypt

More violence

## Two journalists held and beaten by pro-Morsi demonstrators

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Reporters Without Borders is appalled to learn that two journalists, **Mohamed Momtaz** and **Aya Hassan**, were held for several hours and beaten by supporters of deposed President Mohamed Morsi while covering a march organized by the Muslim Brotherhood in Cairo on 9 August.

The Union of Journalists told Reporters Without Borders that Momtaz, who works for the newspaper [Veto](#), was accompanying the march towards Al-Nahda Square when several demonstrators grabbed his camera and began to hit him. Then they took him in a car to one of the tents erected by the demonstrators in the square, [hit him again](#), forced him to undress inside the tent, interrogated him and accused him of spying. He had to be taken to a hospital when released three hours later.

Hassan, who works for [Youm 7](#), was photographing Momtaz being attacked when the demonstrators turned on her, seized her camera, and roughed her up. After surrounding her to prevent her from leaving the march, they escorted her to a tent in Al-Nahda Square, where she was interrogated, searched and repeatedly hit while blindfolded.

During interrogation, she was ordered to admit political affiliation and to provide the names of people she knew in the interior ministry, the armed forces and in the opposition to Morsi. Her repeated insistence that she was "just a journalist" did not prevent the mistreatment.

In a video account posted on YouTube and [transcribed by Youm 7](#), Hassan has described the mistreatment she received for more than four hours. *"One of the men dragged me by my hair along the ground into an adjacent tent," she said. "He kicked me in the face until my nose began to bleed. He then gave me a piece of cloth covered in blood, and warned me that I was going to suffer the same fate as the person who had been punished in this place before me."* The Union of Journalists said he was apparently referring to Momtaz.

"What happened to these two journalists on 9 August is intolerable," Reporters Without Borders said. "The Egyptian authorities must deploy whatever resources are necessary to ensure that these abuses do not go unpunished. They must ensure that media personnel are protected."

Although especially violent, these two attacks are unfortunately not isolated. Morsi supporters have repeatedly prevented Egyptian journalists from covering their demonstrations and have deliberately targeted them if they work for media that are not ideologically sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood.

On 8 August, for example, Muslim Brotherhood supporters [interrupted Sky News correspondent Rufayda Yassin](#) while she was covering a demonstration live.

**Mohamed Tarek**, a photographer with the newspaper *Al-Masry Al-Youm*, was surrounded by pro-Morsi demonstrators during a sit-in in Cairo's Raba'a Al-Adawiya Square a few days before that. They grabbed his camera, deleted the content of its memory card, and returned his camera only after expelling him from the sit-in.

The Egyptian authorities have meanwhile been [taking harsh measures](#) against news media that support the Muslim Brotherhood. Reporters Without Borders has registered 52 cases of

journalists being arrested since Morsi's removal as president on 3 July.

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