



PRESS RELEASE

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Iraq: Assassination of Mr. Shehab El Tamimi, President of the Iraqi Syndicate of Journalists

It was with great sadness that ARTICLE 19 learned that our colleague and friend Mr. Shehab El Tamimi, President of the Iraqi Syndicate of Journalists, died yesterday. ARTICLE 19 strongly condemns the continuing and blatant attacks on champions of free expression in Iraq and calls on the government and Iraqi Security forces to bring the perpetrators to justice and provide more security to journalists.

“Another senseless murder in Iraq. Another voice silenced forever. Another family in pain. Will it also be another death left unpunished? Will it be another case where powerlessness and injustice will prevail?” asked Dr. Callamard, executive director of ARTICLE 19.

“We are yet again calling on the Iraqi government and the Iraqi security forces to investigate the murder, report on their findings and bring to justice the perpetrators. These deaths and the regime of impunity is a major scar for the country, for its international supporters, and indeed, for the world.”

Mr. El Tamimi had endured serious injuries following the attempt on his life on Saturday in northern Baghdad. The attack was carried out by unidentified gunmen. His death brings the number of journalists killed in 2008 to 15 and at least 200 since the beginning of the war in March 2003.

“Let it be known: This murder, like every other before it, will not be forgotten. It will not be buried in our memory, in our annual reports, and press releases. It will not be drowned by the voices within and outside the country who want us to forget and will push us to forget. There will come a time when those responsible for Shehab El Tamimi’s murder and the some 200 before it will face justice – be it that of a democratic Iraq or international justice.” said Dr. Callamard.

ARTICLE 19 expresses its deepest condolences to the family of Mr. El Tamimi, the Iraqi Syndicate of Journalists and the people of Iraq in general.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- For more information, please contact **Sarah Richani, MENA Programme Officer**, sarah@article19.org, +96170952797

- ARTICLE 19 is an independent human rights organisation that works around the world to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression. It takes its name from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees freedom of expression.