

Markus Löning: Gross human rights violations in Syria

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10.08.2012 - Press release 

Markus Löning, Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid, issued the following statement today on the human rights situation in Syria:

Every day we see shocking reports and images from Aleppo and other conflict zones in Syria. Since March 2011, at least 17,000 people have been killed, while hundreds of thousands have fled their homes. We now urgently need new initiatives in the policy on Syria if a political solution is still to be found.

Beyond any public accountability, the Syrian regime is continuing to deploy the police force and intelligence services against the many opposition members in the country engaged in peaceful resistance. We must not forget these courageous people, who are standing up for democracy and human rights and are being persecuted by the Syrian regime for that very reason.

The brutal Syrian police state, which the people have been rising up against since March 2011, has committed gross human rights violations even in parts of the country which have been otherwise peaceful. One example is that of the prominent Syrian human rights defender Mazen Darwish, who was given the Roland Berger Human Dignity Award in November 2011. Together with other members of the Syrian Centre for Media and Freedom of Expression which he heads, Mazen Darwish has been detained at an unknown location since 16 February 2012. There are strong indications that Mazen Darwish was brought before a secret court martial recently and that he faces the death penalty.

I strongly urge the Syrian regime to release Mazen Darwish and all those who have campaigned for democracy and human rights without delay.

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