

Human Rights Commissioner condemns arrest of Syrian opposition member Louay Hussein

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Christoph Strässer, Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid at the Federal Foreign Office, issued the following statement in Berlin today (20 November) on the detention of Louay Hussein, a member of the Syrian opposition:

I strongly condemn the arrest of a prominent member of the Syrian opposition, Louay Hussein, at the Syrian-Lebanese border on 12 November and his subsequent detention by the Syrian Government. The charge brought against him, “weakening national sentiment and weakening the morale of the nation”, illustrates the arbitrary nature of his arrest. And this is not an isolated case.

It is the latest in a long list of politically motivated arrests of members of the opposition and human rights activists by the Syrian Government, whose goal is to silence all critical voices. In countless cases, nothing more has been heard of the detainees. The [UN \(United Nations\)](#) Working Group on Arbitrary Detention recently criticized the Syrian Government for this practice and called for the release of those concerned. I endorse this appeal and urge the Syrian Government to release Hussein and the countless other individuals detained arbitrarily.

Background information:

Louay Hussein, who heads the opposition movement “Building the Syrian State”, was arrested at the Syrian-Lebanese border on the afternoon of 12 November on his way to his family in Spain. It is assumed that he was subsequently taken to Damascus and brought before a judge. His family and Syrian human rights activists say that Louay Hussein was then taken to Adra central prison, in the Damascus district of the same name.

Hussein was previously arrested by the regime on 22 March 2011 after he publicly expressed his support for the peaceful protests in Daraa and called for more freedom of expression. Even after his release in June 2011, he continued his political work and established the opposition movement “Building the Syrian State”.

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