Hamburger Stiftung

—————— für politisch Ver­folgte **Vor­sit­zen­der: Olaf Scholz Ge­schäfts­füh­ren­der Vor­stand:**

**Ole von Beust Ehrenvorsitzender: Dr. Klaus von Dohnanyi**

Hamburg, 26 January, 2015

**Press Release**

**Latest guest with the Foundation: Salah Zater,**

**TV journalist from Libya,**

**arriving in Hamburg today**

**From 2010 to 2014, Salah Zater (28) worked as a reporter for the private Libyan television stations Al-Assema TV und AL-Nabaa. As a result of his coverage on ongoing human rights violations in Libya, such as child labor, sexual abuse, drugs and arms trafficking as well as corruption, he became the target of militias as well as government officials.**

Since the rebellion against Colonel Muammad el-Ghaddafi’s regime and its fall in autumn 2011, Libya has remained in a state of unrest. Repeatedly, TV reporter Salah Zater experienced the dangers of journalism and its goal to remain objective and not take sides. In the past years, his reports on abductions, on illegal and arbitrary arrests as well as on torture and murder of inmates in Libyan prisons earned him and his family death threats on a regular basis. His crew was able to film a direct attack on him by security guards of a former Libyan speaker of parliament, which he presented to the judicial office in charge as evidence. The criminal charge was never pursued.

Instead, Salah Zater was arrested, interrogated and threatened with a weapon several times as a result of his journalistic work. When a secretly filmed TV report on the abuse of a prisoner was found at his home, the reporter was abducted and tortured by militias. In the middle of July 2014, he reported on armed activities of “Axis 11”, an especially infamous militia operating in Tripoli. Following the broadcast, he again received death threats, prompting him to leave the Libyan capital on 23 July, 2014, before fleeing across the Libyan border to Tunisia in autumn.

According to an ai researcher, who met Salah Zater in Tunis, the reporter kept receiving death threats even after the his escape. "Reporters Without Borders" also considers the journalist’s life to be in grave danger.

These facts gathered by ai and RoG greatly influenced the decision by the board of the Hamburg Foundation for Politically Persecuted People to invite Salah Zater to the river Elbe for one year:

Last year, seven journalists were murdered in Libya. During the same period, a total of 127 attacks on media representatives were recorded.

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