

Statement: LCW condemns extrajudicial killings inside an unofficial prison in Benghazi

Libya Crimes Watch (LCW) expresses its grave concern regarding the alarming escalation of human rights violations in Libya, having documented three (3) extrajudicial killings between November 3 and November 25, 2024. The victims – a Palestinian woman and two Libyan men – met their deaths within an unofficial prison operated by the General Directorate for Security Operations (GDSO) in Benghazi, Ras Al-Mangar area.

On November 1, Enas, a Palestinian national, was forcibly detained from her residence in Al-Marj Libya by armed personnel affiliated with the GDSO in Benghazi. She was transferred to an unofficial prison in Ras Al-Mangar area, Benghazi. Two days later, her family received notification of her death and was instructed to collect her remains from Benghazi Medical Centre, with authorities providing no explanation regarding the cause of her death.

On November 8, Otham Hussien Al-Fitoury (66) was detained near his residence in Al-Lathama district, Benghazi. He subsequently appeared in video footage posted on the GDSO official Facebook page, confessing to alleged claims of practicing sorcery, his family received an anonymous call directing them to collect his remains from Benghazi Medical Center, where evident signs of torture were visible on his body.

On November 14, Hussein Salem Al-Fazani (57) was detained from his residence in Ras Obeida district, Benghazi, and taken to the same unofficial prison. On November 25, his family received a call instructing them to collect his remains from Benghazi Medical Center, following his death under mysterious circumstances with no explanation provided.

The GDSO has prohibited forensic medical examinations to determine causes of death and denied victims' families any official documentation from the hospital, including medical reports or burial permits. Furthermore, the families have faced threats and intimidation, preventing them from conducting proper funeral ceremonies or mourning rituals, constituting a flagrant violation of their fundamental rights.

These incidents occur within the context of a systematic arbitrary arrest campaign initiated in early October, during which LCW has monitored the detention of more than 20 individuals, predominantly followers of Sufi orders in Benghazi, Al-Marj, Sirte, and other areas in eastern Libya. The GSOD has charged them with practicing sorcery without referring them to public prosecution or ensuring their right to due process.

Libya Crimes Watch (LCW) condemns the campaign of arbitrary arrests, and the targeting of individuals based on their religious or intellectual affiliations, as well as the grave violations committed within the unofficial Ras Al-Mangar prison, including extrajudicial killings and torture. These crimes constitute serious violations of Libya's obligations under international human rights law, including Articles (6), (7), (9), (27), and (18) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

LCW holds the House of Representatives (HoR) recognized Libyan Government and its Interior Ministry fully accountable for these grave violations and demands immediate action to halt the arbitrary arrest campaign, ensure disclosure of all detainees' fate at the unofficial Ras Al-Mangar prison, and refer them to the public prosecution according to fair legal procedures, in line with national and international human rights obligations.

LCW calls upon the Libyan Attorney General to launch an urgent and transparent investigation into these crimes and take effective measures to hold those responsible accountable according to international fair trial standards to ensure no impunity.

LCW demands the eastern Libyan authorities to immediately close the Ras Al-Mangar prison, as it is an unofficial facility that fails to meet international standards stipulated in the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners "Nelson Mandela Rules" and other international conventions.

LCW urge eastern Libyan authorities to cease all forms of targeting individuals based on their religious or intellectual affiliations, as such conduct represents a flagrant violation of fundamental principles of international human rights law.

LCW calls upon the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) and influential states in Libya to intensify pressure on Libyan authorities to halt these grave violations and ensure perpetrators do not escape accountability.

Libya Crimes Watch
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