



# Mitiga Detention Center

**Sooq al-Jumu'a - Tripoli - Libya**

**20-10-2018**

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Human Rights Solidarity is registered as a Local None Governmental Organization in Libya, registration number (20160327-01-589)



## Introduction (1/2):

Mitiga Detention Center (prison) is located at Mitiga Airbase, which is about 8 Km to the East of Tripoli City Center, Martyrs Square. The Airbase is currently used as Tripoli's temporary airport, since the closure of Tripoli International Airport in July 2014.

The prison is controlled by a local militia from Sooq al-Jumu'a district. It is called the "Special Deterrence Force" (SDF). The commander of SDF is Abdulmonem Kara, and the SDF is comprised mainly from followers of an ultraconservative religious group, they call themselves Salafi, but many call them Madakhila, because they are followers of a Saudi Sheikh, Sheikh Rabi'a al-Madkhali, hence the name, who lives in Jeddah Saudi Arabia.

The following is based from analyzing Google® Maps satellite images. The prison did not exist before 2011. Up to May 2012, the site, the South West area of the airbase, had 3 old warehouses. Sometime late May and early June 2012, the SDF started refurbishing and adding buildings and a high wall around the site. By end of 2012 the 3 warehouses were turned into a prison by the construction of the wall and adding what appeared as guard or administrative rooms. No more construction was done till February 2015.

From February 2015 the prison expansion work picked up pace, by February 2016 the expansion to 9 cell-blocks was completed. A couple of buildings were added in the north east corner of the prison, the "guesthouse", a holding area with larger cells and less crowded. The guesthouse serves like a rehabilitation area, where detainees are held for a period to recover (gain weight) before being released. Also in the guesthouse they must attend study circles, where they are taught the Madkhali ideology.

In November 2016, work started on the area north of the prison complex, to make an area for the detainees to walk around and catch some sunlight. The area was completed between 5<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> September 2017. A satellite image shows few people in the area.

According to a detainee, released recently from Mitiga, one cell-block, of the 9 cell blocks, at a time is allowed 1 hour in the area, and a detainee gets its chance to breath fresh air and catch a glimpse of sunshine once every 3 days, that is if the guards do not change their mind and for reason or no reason deprive the detainee, or whole group of detainees, to get this "privilege".



## Introduction (2/2):

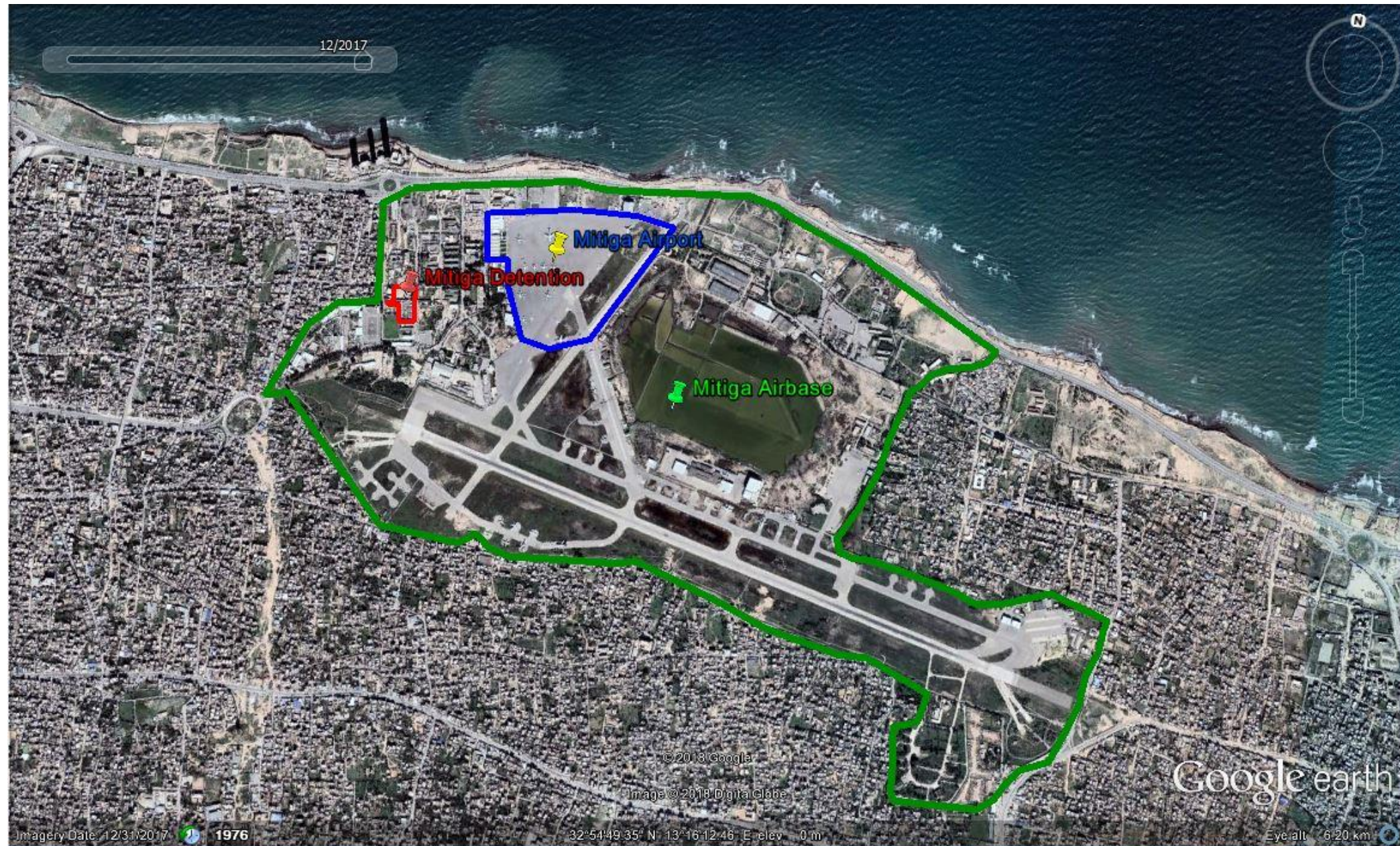
Mitiga Detention Center (prison) occupies an area (100m by 80m) ~8000 m<sup>2</sup>. Its 9 cell blocks holds about 2600 detainees, according to the report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. According to a detainee released recently, typically a cell (5m by 3m) holds more than 30 detainees. So extremely overcrowded that they take rounds in sleeping hours; detainees stand for 6 hours to have space on the floor for a group sleep.

The detainees are literally starving;

- Breakfast: every morning after dawn, a small piece of bread and either a small piece of cheese or a small portion of jam, and once every week a one liter of milk,
- Lunch: after midday a bowl of pasta or rice, without meat or vegetables, for 12-17 people,
- Dinner: Broth (soup) and bread, and
- Breaking fast in Ramadan: one date is shared by three people, and then either pasta or rice.

Because of the overcrowding, lack of fresh air, poor hygiene, and extreme malnutrition, detainees lost weight and became very weak. This exposed them to diseases, infectious ones like tuberculosis and scabies, and chronic diseases. Many lost their lives. At the end of this file, there are slides which show two detainees who died in custody because of the inhumane conditions and lack of medical treatment or care.

Location of Mitiga Airbase, the airport & Mitiga Detention Center (prison) . The airbase is located about 8 Km to the East of Tripoli City Center, Martyrs Square.



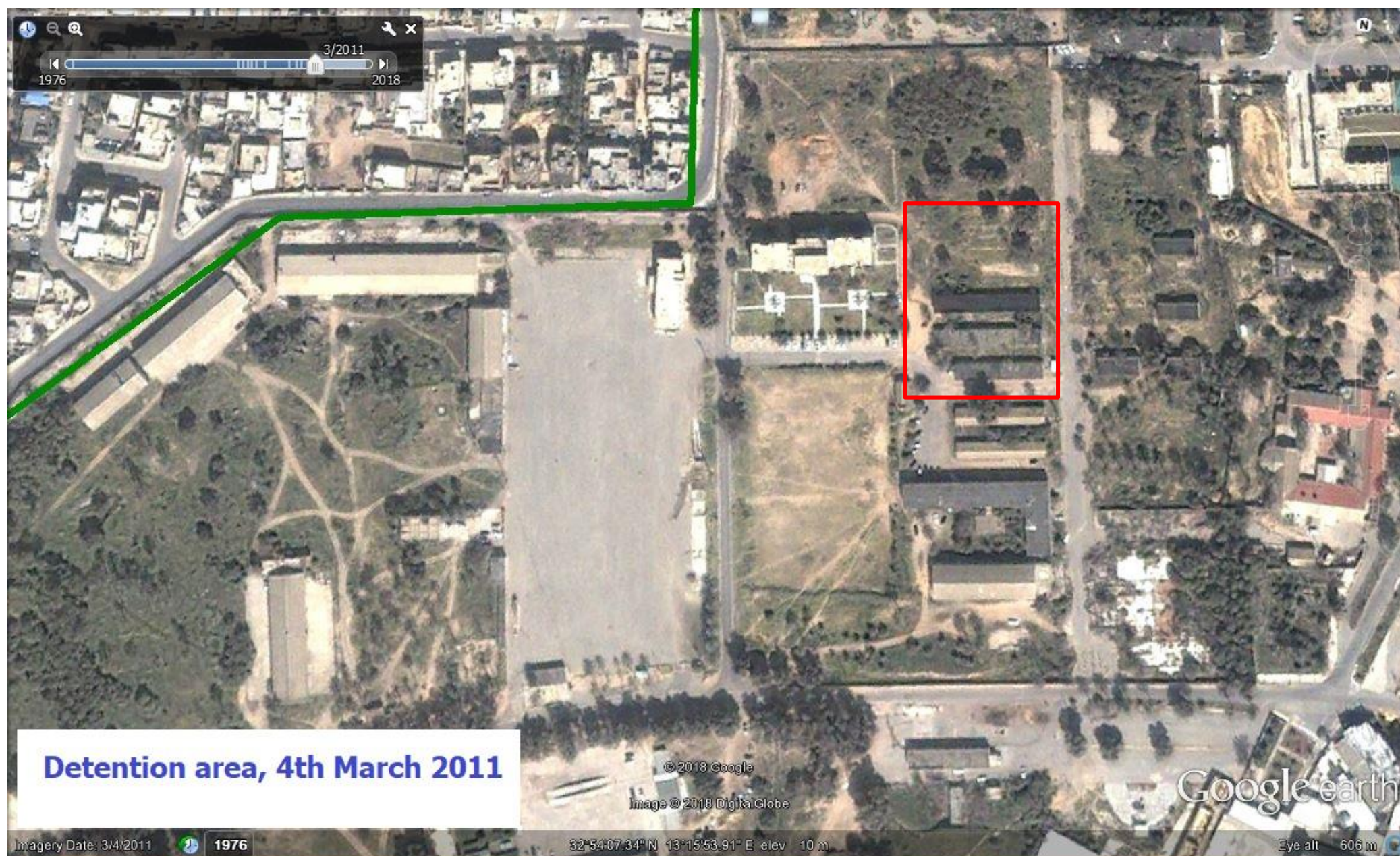
Close up view of the airport & Mitiga Detention Center (prison).



Close up view of Mitiga Detention Center (prison).



Red rectangle is the area of the prison, March 2011.



Red rectangle is the area of the prison, August 2018.







Mitiga Detention Center (prison) occupies an area (100m by 80m) ~8000 m2. Its 9 cell blocks holds about 2600 detainees



The “recreational” area, or as the guards call it “Larea” occupies an area (70m by 100m) ~7000 m<sup>2</sup>. One cell-block at a time, of the 9 cell blocks of the prison, is allowed 1 hour in the area, and a detainee gets its chance to breath fresh air and catch a glimpse of sunshine once every 3 days.









## **2 Cases of Death-in-Custody in Mitiga**

**Warning**

**Graphic images, might be disturbing**

**Discretion is advised**

## Salem Buriaga "سالم بوريافة"



Salem Buriaga was injured in the fighting in Benghazi, in the summer of 2014, he became paralyzed from the waist down. He was taken to Misrata and from there to Bosnia for medical treatment.

He was detained early June 2016, with his companion, upon arrival at Misrata airport. The "Office of Security Information", a security agency which was created after the fall of the Gaddafi regime to replace the intelligence gathering section of the dissolved "Internal Security Agency". This Agency transferred Buriaga to SDF in Mitiga.

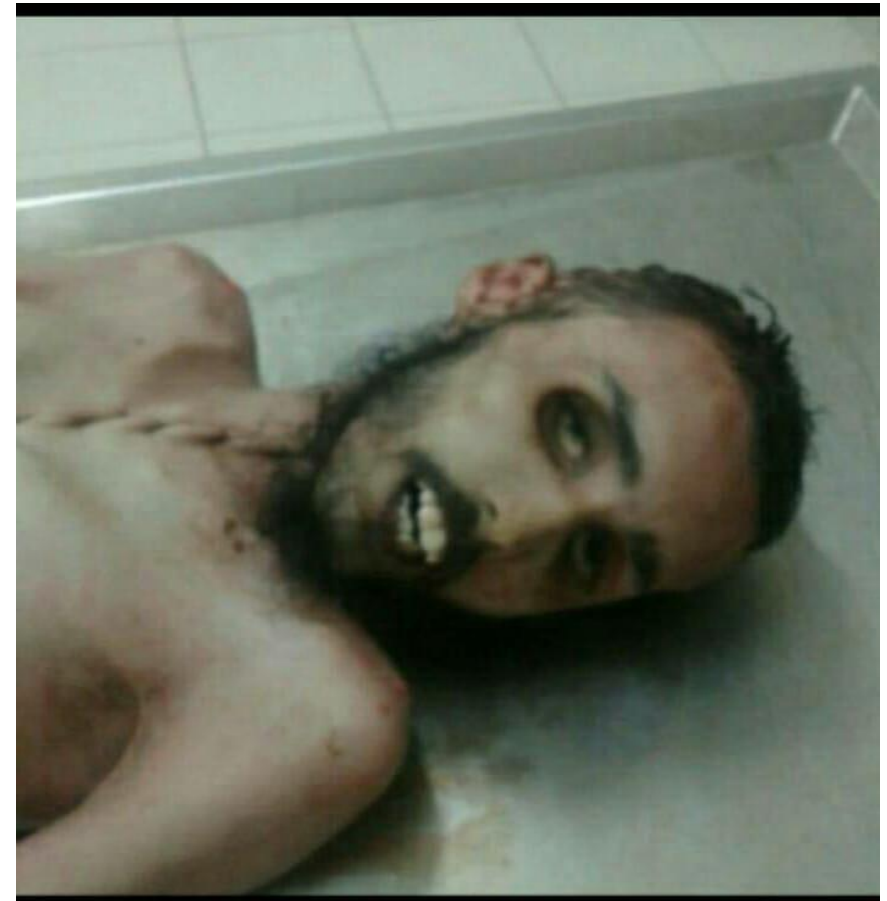
On the 26<sup>th</sup> August 2016, less than 3 months, the body of Salem Buriaga was delivered to the morgue of Tripoli's Central Hospital, also known as "az-Zawiyah Street Hospital".



## Mohamed Mahmoud al-A'baar "محمد محمود العبار"

Mohamed al-A'baar was arrested in September 2015, accused of leading a criminal gang involved in kidnappings & taking ransom money to release the victims. SDF posted on its Facebook page, on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2015, a video recording of "confessions" of al-A'baar.

April 2017 his body was delivered to the morgue of Tripoli's Central Hospital, also known as "az-Zawiyah Street Hospital". He was 25 years old.





# HUMAN RIGHTS SOLIDARITY

منظمة التضامن لحقوق الانسان

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