

15th May 2010

Justice for Sardasht Othman and freedom for political activity in Kurdistan

Dear President Barzani

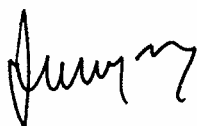
Sardasht Othman, a 23 year old Kurdish journalist working in Erbil was kidnapped on Tuesday 4th of May at 8.30AM outside the language department of Salahadin University in the city of Erbil. His body was found in Mosul on 6th May 2010.

Prior to his death, Sardasht Osman wrote articles for Ashtiname newspaper, which is published in Erbil and other publications. According to Kurdish media websites, he had recently published an article in Ashtiname criticising a senior Kurdish political figure following which he received anonymous threats to his mobile phone.

We join Amnesty International and the International Federation of Iraqi Refugees in condemning the killing. Furthermore, it appears that the abduction and murder of Sardasht Osman may be the latest in a series of attacks that have been carried out against independent journalists in recent years.

The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) calls on the Kurdish Regional Government to ensure those responsible for the murder of Sardasht Othman, and other attacks on journalists are brought to justice.

Yours sincerely



Jeremy Dear
General Secretary of NUJ