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**ANNEX 9.83**

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March 18, 2011

# Qaddafi Son Says Libya Will Release 4 Journalists

By DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK

TRIPOLI, Libya — Four New York Times journalists missing in Libya since Tuesday were captured by forces loyal to Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi and will be released, the Libyan leader's son Seif al-Islam el-Qaddafi told Christiane Amanpour in an ABC News interview early Friday.

Like many other Western journalists, the four had entered the rebel-controlled eastern region of Libya over the Egyptian border, without visas, to cover the insurrection against Colonel Qaddafi.

"They entered the country illegally and when the army, when they liberated the city of Ajdabiya from the terrorists and they found her, they arrest her because you know, foreigners in this place," Mr. Qaddafi said, according to the transcript of the interview, which took place shortly after the United Nations Security Council approved military action against Libyan government forces. "But then they were happy because they found out she is American, not European. And thanks to that, she will be free tomorrow."

Mr. Qaddafi was apparently referring to Lynsey Addario, a photographer, but Libyan government officials told the State Department on Thursday evening that all four would be released.

The Libyan government allowed the journalists to call their families on Thursday evening.

The journalists are Anthony Shadid, The Times's Beirut bureau chief and a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning foreign correspondent; two photographers, Tyler Hicks and Ms. Addario, who have extensive experience in war zones; and a reporter and videographer, Stephen Farrell, who in 2009 was captured by the Taliban in Afghanistan and rescued by British commandos.

"We're all, families and friends, overjoyed to know they are safe," said Bill Keller, the executive editor of The Times. "We are eager to have them free and back home."

After The Times reported having lost contact with the journalists on Tuesday, officials with the Qaddafi government pledged that if they had been detained by the government's military forces they would be located and released unharmed.

LBY-OTP-0007-0057



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