

# URGENT ACTION

## RELEASE ACTIVIST DETAINED OVER SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

On 13 January 2024, the Internal Security Agency (ISA), a security agency allied with the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF), a powerful armed group in de facto control of eastern and southern Libya, arrested the activist and blogger Maryam Mansour al-Warfalli, known as “Nakhla Fezzan,” at ISA’s Sabha office in southern Libya after she was called in for questioning. She was arrested without a warrant after she criticized the LAAF’s management of the distribution of cooking gas in southern Libya. She has been detained in the ISA headquarters in Benghazi for almost eight months without charge.

**TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER**

**Field Marshal Khalifa Belqasim Haftar**  
**General Commander of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF)**

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Dear Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar,

*On 13 January 2024, the Internal Security Agency (ISA), a security agency allied with the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF), which you command, arrested 42-year-old activist and blogger Maryam Mansour al-Warfalli at ISA’s Sabha office in southern Libya, after she was called in for questioning. The arrest occurred shortly after she criticized the LAAF’s supervision of the distribution of cooking gas in southern Libya on Facebook. Maryam Mansour Al-Warfalli, known as “Nakhla Fezzan,” has been a vocal critic of the authorities’ corruption and mismanagement in southern Libya for years.*

*The ISA arrested Maryam Mansour Al-Warfalli without a warrant issued by a competent judicial authority and has been detaining her in the ISA headquarters in Benghazi for almost eight months without charge.*

*On 2 May 2024, the prison authorities referred her to a psychiatrist, who requested that she be admitted to Benghazi Hospital. After five days at the hospital, the ISA returned her to detention at their headquarters in Benghazi without medical approval from the doctor. Throughout the duration of her detention, she has not been allowed any prison visits, putting a severe strain on her mental health. Her family has obtained information about her via phone calls two times, before and after the Adha Holiday. Her mother is currently in critical condition after a car accident two days after her daughter’s detention.*

***I urge LAAF to immediately ensure the release of Maryam Mansour al-Warfalli. In the meantime, the prison authorities must allow Maryam Mansour Al-Warfalli to contact her family and ensure that she has access to a lawyer and to adequate medical care. The LAAF and other armed groups under its command must end their repressive campaign against their critics and opponents, including politicians, activists, poets and bloggers, and release all those arbitrarily detained.***

*Yours sincerely,*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Libya is currently divided between two entities competing for legitimacy, governance and territorial control. The Government of National Unity (GNU) controls Tripoli and most of western Libya, while the Libyan Arab Armed Forces (LAAF), a powerful armed group, is in de facto control of eastern and southern Libya.

On 20 August 2024, 60 Libyan political parties [signed a statement](#) expressing their concern over the continued cases of arbitrary detention, kidnappings and enforced disappearances, as well as the campaign of repression against civil society and activists across the country.

On 10 July 2024, the House of Representatives (HoR) – Libya’s parliament – unanimously approved the 2024 budget for the parallel “Libyan Government,” allied to the LAAF and the HoR, [which totals LYD 179 billion](#) (USD 36.80 billion). This budget earmarks funds for armed groups [with histories of human rights abuses](#), including the ISA. On 6 April 2023, the HoR enacted a [new law on the](#) reorganization of the ISA. Under the new law, the ISA is empowered to establish investment projects and companies and provide security services for a fee, and it is placed under the nominal command of the Ministerial Council, with Benghazi as its headquarters.

In 2017, the LAAF-allied HoR issued a decree bringing ISA forces under the command of the LAAF. Testimonies and [other](#) information collected by Amnesty International point to the cooperation and handover of detainees between the ISA and other LAAF-affiliated armed groups, including the military police, the 128th and the [Tariq Ben Zeyad \(TBZ\)](#) armed group. The [ISA armed groups](#), operating under the de facto authority of the LAAF, each have their commanders, all nominally answering to one top commander, Ousama Al-Dressi, since [his appointment](#) in November 2022 by the then president of the parallel Libyan Government of National Stability (GNS), later renamed to the Libyan Government. Members of the ISA have committed [harrowing human rights abuses](#) to silence critics and opponents, including detaining them arbitrarily and subjecting them to enforced disappearances and torture.

A separate entity, also [named ISA](#), operates in western Libya. It is led by [Lotfi al-Harari](#), nominally under the authority of the Government of National Unity (GNU) Prime Minister.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** Arabic and English.  
You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 31 December 2024.  
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Maryam Mansour al-Warfalli (She/Her).