



Detention

Prevention

Objective: reduce the reasons and the exposure that might cause or facilitate the detention of any member of the organisation.

Reaction

Objective: reduce the impact of the detention on the detainee, the organisation, and the detainee's family.

Individual

- Establish checking in routines.
- Agree on steps to be taken in case of a 'no news' situation.
- Make sure you have the contact of a lawyer who would be willing to defend you.
- Memorise your lawyer's number and your security focal point's number.
- Assess the risks of detention, including possible sources, and determine what leverage you could have on these sources to achieve a release.
- Agree beforehand on what you can say and cannot say to those who have detained you.
- Ethical behaviour of individuals and organisation is crucial so as to reasonably exclude personal and organisational breaches of common law.
- What is ultimately needed is a political action strategy aimed at deterring the authorities from arresting.

- The most important consideration is to ensure that outside help is aware of what is occurring.
- Alert your security focal point within your organisation. Communicate as much information as you could gather.
- Alert your embassy or consulate yourself if you can. Communicate as much information as you could gather.
- Identify yourself clearly as a representative of your organisation.
- Wait until your lawyer is with you before answering any question.
- Never sign anything you don't agree with or in a language you don't understand.
- Know your legal rights and be persistent in requesting that you are granted them.
- Emphasise their humanitarian work and the neutral, impartial and independent nature of their organisation and its activities.
- Remain conciliatory; avoid becoming antagonistic.
- Listen to their captors and try to find out what is motivating them and what they want or hope for.
- Do not make promises in order to obtain a quick release, and always be clear that they are not in a position to make final decisions or firm commitments.

Organisational (if applicable)

- Establish an ad hoc working group to react to the detention.
- Determine where the staff member is being held and by whom.
- Determine why he/she is being held.
- Mobilise your lawyer.
- Inform relevant authorities (embassies, consulates, etc...)
- Inform other HRs or humanitarian organisations and ask for advice or support.
- If the defender continues to be detained, try and attend to their personal needs - safety, food, healthcare, contact with their family and the organisation, etc. from the beginning of and throughout the process

Measures aimed at the family and relatives:

- Inform the family and relatives if the person is not going to be released soon.
- Establish and maintain trust.
- Develop a clear approach towards the family. Provide support and keep them informed (appoint a link person for the family).
- The family will want time and attention from the organisation. Expect fluctuating attitudes and initiatives from the family.
- In case of long-term arrest or imprisonment, it is important to plan support for the family of a detained defender.

Medium-term

- If a defender is detained, and we do not anticipate being able to secure their release in the short term, medium-term objectives and steps should be introduced without losing focus on short-term objectives.