



Syria Frees Opposition Artist Held for Month

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The Syrian authorities have released painter Yussef Abdelki more than a month after the opponent of President Bashar Assad's regime was arrested, his wife said on Friday.

The security services arrested the Christian artist on July 18 in Tartus, on the Mediterranean coast, along with two members of the banned Communist Labor Party, Alawite Tawfiq Omran, and Druze Adnan al-Dibs.

"Yussef was released on Thursday and I spoke to him on the phone," his wife, filmmaker Hala al-

Abdallah, told Agence France Presse. "For five weeks we knew nothing about him."

The 62-year-old painter is a member of the National Coordination Body for Democratic Change -- the internal opposition which supports the principles of Syria's 29-month uprising but rejects any foreign intervention.

Famous for his black and white paintings, he is a leading artist in Syria and the Arab world, and his arrest was widely condemned.

He was arrested in the late 1970s for membership of a banned communist party, before moving to Paris where he lived for 25 years.

Source [Agence France Presse](#)
