Solana working towards reporter's release

Written by Chris Perver
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A week has passed since BBC journalist Alan Johnston was kidnapped by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip. The journalist was due to end his posting in Gaza next month, but was captured by an unidentified terrorist group. Information on his well-being has not been released, and the BBC has made several pleas for his immediate release.

Javier Solana, the High Representative for the European Common, Foreign and Security Policy, has stated the European Union will be doing everything in its power to secure the release of Alan Johnston.

Quote: *"Mr Solana told the BBC: "I can tell you that from the very first day we have been doing the utmost, talking to all the leaders, from the Palestinians and to some friends, [and in] civil society that I know and he knew, and to try to see if we can liberate him - the sooner, the better. "I don't have any specific information to be made public now, but the other thing I would like to insist on once again is that we are concerned, that we keep on doing all our efforts every day," he said.*

Foreigners have been kidnapped in Gaza before, and are usually released relatively quickly without harm. That is, as long as you aren't Jewish. Corporal Gilad Shalit, who was kidnapped shortly before the outbreak of the war with Hizbullah, is still being held by Hamas in Gaza. And I presume it is Palestinian terrorists affiliated with Hamas that are also holding Alan Johnston. But it seems Johnston is in good company according to the BBC, who claim that Johnston's job was to highlight the "Palestinian predicament" in Gaza. It is very unlikely then that the Palestinians would harm a reporter that has served their cause.

Quote: *"The BBC described Johnston as a "highly experienced and respected reporter". "It is his job to bring us day after day reports of the Palestinian predicament in the Gaza Strip," said the BBC's diplomatic correspondent, Paul Adams, himself a former Middle East reporter.*

Even members of the Palestinian Authority government have urged the terrorists to release Alan Johnston, lauding him as a " staunch supporter of the Palestinian cause"...

Quote: *""We are opposed to the kidnapping of foreign journalists who serve the Palestinian cause," new PA "minister" of information Mustafa Barghouti said Saturday.*

Source BBC , BBC , Jerusalem Newswire