

Morocco arrests website editor for airing Qaeda video

Moroccan police on Tuesday, 17 September, arrested the editor of a popular news website for airing a video posted by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb that incites "acts of terrorism" in the kingdom.



Ali Anouzla

Lakome's director Ali Anouzla was arrested mid-morning, according to staff running the popular French and Arabic website, with police also seizing computer equipment from his office.

The arrest follows the publication by Lakome of "a video attributed to Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), containing a clear call and a direct incitement to commit acts of terrorism" in Morocco, the public prosecutor said in a statement.

"Appropriate legal procedures will be applied in light of the investigation," the prosecutor added.

The video in question, posted on the Internet last Thursday by AQIM and entitled 'Morocco: the kingdom of corruption and despotism,' calls for jihad in the north African country and lashes out at King Mohamed VI, who is pictured being engulfed in flames.

It is thought to be the first of its kind singling out Morocco since AQIM, the jihadist network's north African franchise, was formed in 2007.

The YouTube version of the video was removed for breaching the site's policy on violence.

Drawing sharp criticism

Its publication by Lakome had already drawn sharp criticism from Morocco's mostly pro-regime media.

French-language daily L'Opinion called the decision "totally reprehensible," saying that by airing a video message defending terrorism Lakome "guarantees that it receives the widest possible audience."

Morocco has suffered a number of attacks by Islamist militants over the past decade, the worst of which took place in Casablanca in 2003, when 12 suicide bombers blew themselves up killing 33 people.

The authorities frequently announce the dismantling of jihadist cells with links to Al-Qaeda.

Source: AFP, via I-Net Bridge

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