

# JOURNALISTS FREED IN SYRIA



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**We were delighted to hear of the release of Spanish journalists Ricardo Garcia Vilanova and Javier Espinosa in Syria over the weekend.**

Ricardo – a freelance photographer and filmmaker who won the Rory Peck for Features in 2012 with Alberto Arce – and Javier, a veteran correspondent with Spain's El Mundo newspaper, had been kidnapped in September 2013. They were being held in the town of Raqaa by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS), an extreme group who took control of the town last May.

**Read our previous blog about their abduction [here](#).**

Ricardo and Javier were handed over to Turkish authorities on Saturday night near the Syrian town of Tal Abiyad, not far from where they were seized. They are now back home with their families in Spain and understood to be in good health. El Mundo have published [photographs](#) and [video](#) of their homecoming.

*El Club Internacional de Prensa premia a Espinosa, García Vilanova y Marginedas*  
<http://t.co/2000r1Whiu> (Foto: EFE) <pic.twitter.com/AXMkwNINQug> – EL MUNDO

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"What a relief. Who couldn't be overjoyed to learn about Ricardo and Javier's safe return home? And who could fail to be moved by the pictures?", said Tina Carr, Director of the Rory Peck Trust. "It's a wonderful sight and we share the joy of their families and friends. But for others, this will be a bittersweet time - their agony continues. Hold on. Have hope."

We hope that this is a positive sign for the hostages that still remain missing in Syria. The Trust is currently aware of the cases of 8 missing international freelance journalists in the country, including Americans Austin Tice, who went missing in August 2012, and James Foley, who went missing in November 2012.