

Special Report

Significant Media Intercepts about Elizabeth Turskov from the Region and the United States, Selected by ACLS Experts July 6, 2023

- ❖ A Princeton doctoral student, Elizabeth Tsurkov, was kidnapped in Iraq in March 2023 ([*The New Arab*](#)).
- ❖ Iraqi Authorities Arrested Iranian Citizen Mohammad Reza Hussein Nouri for suspected involvement ([*INPPLUSarabi*](#)).
- ❖ Senior Iraqi security sources told *The Cradle* that Tsurkov's kidnappers "were dressed in official Iraqi security service uniforms." Since then, no information about her whereabouts or who may be holding her has
- ❖ Elizabeth Tsurkov, 36, a doctoral student at Princeton University, was kidnapped and held by the group Kataib Hezbollah, an Iraqi militia linked to Iran, after leaving a cafe in Baghdad, the Iraqi capital, in late March, according to her family and people with knowledge of her case ([*The New York Times*](#)).
- ❖ Netanyahu also said that Tsurkov was still alive and that Israel holds Iraq "responsible for her safety and well-being." He said she used her Russian passport to visit Iraq "at her own initiative" in connection with her doctoral work at Princeton University ([*The Hill*](#)).
- ❖ She is "absolutely not a member of Mossad, period, exclamation point, underline," a senior Israeli official said at a briefing with Israeli reporters this Wednesday — denying rumors in Arab media that she was a spy.
"She is an innocent Israeli citizen doing doctoral work in Princeton," the official said. "There is no connection between Israeli officials and Elizabeth." ([*New York Post*](#)).
- ❖ Tsurkov's mother, Irena, said they lost contact two months ago. "From what I had known until today, she was in Turkey, working on her research for Princeton. I didn't even know she was in Iraq...She was kidnapped in the middle of Baghdad, and we see

the Iraqi government as directly responsible for her safety. We ask for her immediate release from this unlawful detention.” ([Al Jazeera](#)).

- ❖ “All of us feel that the United States needs to be involved in helping Liz. She is not a US national, and her disappearance did not trigger the sort of aggressive US reaction that an American’s might,” the outlet’s staff wrote in a statement published on its website on Wednesday. “But Liz is very much a part of America. She works with a Washington think tank, writes for an American magazine and studies at Princeton University. She deserves America’s every effort to bring her to safety.”([New Lines Magazine](#)).
- ❖ “On March 27, the security forces received a notification that a group of armed men had removed a foreign woman in her thirties from a car she was traveling with others in the Karrada area in central Baghdad and taken her to an unknown destination at gunpoint. They were in a white pick-up and a black GMC that accompanied her. Both cars had no registration plates.” Another politician in Baghdad told Al-Araby Al-Jadeed that an armed faction is holding the kidnapped woman allied to Tehran, describing him as an “al-Nafiz.” suspect during the operation. The Iraqi politician considered that where the foreign woman was kidnapped confirms that the kidnapping party was an armed faction with an appropriate security cover. It may be the identities and licenses of one of the factions affiliated with the Popular Mobilization Forces...On the twenty-ninth of last month, Israeli reports claimed that the Israeli Mossad arrested the head of a cell that planned to carry out attacks against Israelis in Cyprus after the Mossad interrogated him on Iranian soil and arrested him later.” ([Sama News](#)).
- ❖ Asharq news quoted Yedioth Ahronoth, who reported that Tsurkov had previously worked as an assistant to Natan Sharansky, an author and former Israeli minister of Soviet descent. Sharansky told Yedioth Ahronoth that Tsurkov was

kidnapped in early March while she was in Baghdad. An Iraqi intelligence source said that Tsurkov was kidnapped as she was leaving a cafe in the Karrada neighborhood of the Iraqi capital. And the agency "Agence France-Presse" obtained from the same source a video clip recorded by a surveillance camera in the cafe, showing a young woman leaving with a man. According to the source, the woman who appeared in the recording is Tsurkov, and the man who accompanied her is the kidnapper, a member of an Iraqi pro-Iranian group. In late May, a member of Iraqi intelligence told AFP his superiors had instructed him to stop the investigation into Tsurkov's disappearance. "Unfortunately, at this moment, the Russian embassies in Iraq and Iran do not have any information about the whereabouts of Elizabeth Tsurkov," the Russian Foreign Ministry told AFP in late April. She said she had not received "information about her possible kidnapping in Iraq." ([Asharq News](#)).

Bring Liz Home

The American Center for Levant Studies Calls for the Immediate Release of Elizebath Tusrkov, an Independent Scholar & Researcher whose mission is to bridge the gaps of understanding.
([Levenat Studies](#)).