



The Death of 108 Victims under Torture in April 2015

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I- Report Methodology:

Since 2011 the Syrian regime has refused to recognize any arrests it had made as it accused Al-Qaeda and the terrorist groups of committing these crimes. Also, the Syrian regime doesn't recognize any torture cases or torturing to death. SNHR acquire its information from former prisoners and prisoners' families where most of the families get information about their beloved ones who are in prison by bribing the officials in charge.

At SNHR, we rely on the families' testimonies we get. However, it should be noted that there are many cases where the Syrian authorities don't give the families the dead bodies. Also, many families abstain from going to the military hospitals to bring the dead bodies of their beloved ones or even their belongings out of fear that they might themselves get arrested.

Also, most of the families assure use that their relatives were in good health when the arrest was made and it is highly unlikely that they died of an illness.

Fadel Abdulghani, head of SNHR, says:

“The principle of “Responsibility to Protect” must be implemented as the state has failed to protect its people and all the diplomatic and peaceful efforts have failed as well. Crimes against humanity are still being perpetrated on a daily basis in Syria mainly at the hands of the state authorities.”





Therefore, SNHR faces serious difficulties in the documentation process because it is banned and pursued. In light of such circumstances, it is difficult to completely verify the number of victims as the process remains mainly based on ongoing documentation and investigation even with taking into consideration families' testimonies. [Please visit](#) the following URL for more information on our methodology in documenting victims

II- Executive Summary:

SNHR documented the death of not less than 108 victims under torture in official and non-official government detention centers or prisons in April 2015, detailed as follows:

A-Government forces killed 104 individuals under torture

B-Extremists Islamic groups:

ISIL: killed one individual under torture

An-Nusra Front: killed 3 individuals under torture

Cases of victims being tortured to death have been recorded ceaselessly since 2011 which clearly reflects the excessive and systematic force that is being used against detainees.

In Idlib province we recorded the highest number of deaths under torture with 19 victims, and the rest of the victims' toll is distributed as follows according to the Syrian governorates:

18 victims died under torture in Hama, 17 victims died under torture in Daraa, 14 victims in Damascus suburbs, 11 victims in each of Homs and Damascus, 8 victims in Deir El-Zour, 5 victims in Aleppo, 2 victims in Al Hasakah, and a victim in each of AL Suwaida, Al Qunaitra, and Raqqa.

The most notable deaths under torture in April are:

4 reporters, 3 teachers, one Red Crescent volunteer, an old man, and one relatives case.





III-The Most Notable Incidents of Death under Torture:

Reporters:

1-On 3 April 3 2015, SNHR recorded the death of Qutaiba Bakou Shikhani, “Head of the Media Office of AL Ansar Party” under torture in a detention center in Damascus, after his family identified his photo through the lately published leaked photos. Qutaiba’s nickname was “[Abu Sheirko](#)” and was from Al Qaboun in Damascus. He also was a member of the leadership council of Al Ansar Party



and a member in the political and media committee in the party; he was arrested from his office in Al Shalaan in Damascus on 31 December 2012.

We were informed that his family identified his photo among the leaked Caesar photos.

2-On 7 April 7 2015, SNHR documented the death of media activist [Ahmad Ibrahim Naqrash](#) under torture in Saydnayah Prison in Damascus suburbs. His family informed us that they went to the Military Justice to visit him when they were told to visit Tshreen Military Hospital in Damascus. There, they were informed of the Ibrahim’s death and burial since 4 months on 9 January 2015. His relatives confirmed to SNHR that his mother had visited him 7 months ago in Sednayah Prison and he was at the time in good health as he was also in good health when arrested.

[Ahmad](#) worked as a media activist in Al Dumayr coordination in Damascus suburbs, and he was one of the first peaceful activists since the beginning of the protests in March 2011. He was arrested by government forces in an armed ambush when he was prompting Al Dumayr residents for the public lockout on 23 December 2011. Also, he was a field member of the coordination

3-On 16 April 2015, SNHR documented the death of a media activist, N M, (We have reservations on publishing the name due to security reasons) under torture in a security branch in Damascus. Security forces informed his parents of his death. He was arrested by government forces from his house in Hama about three and a half years ago, when he was in good health at that time.





4-On 18 April 2015, SNHR documented the death of a media activist (We have reservations on publishing the name for security reasons) in Seydnayah Prison in Damascus suburbs after a court order from the civil court in Damascus. He was arrested by government forces since 3 June 2012.

Teachers:

1-**Abdul Salam Mohammad Al Deikh**, from Talbisah in Homs, a high school principle in Talbisah city, age 41, was arrested by government forces about a month and a half ago. On 6 April 2015, his family informed us that he died under torture in a security branch in Damascus.



2-Bashir Mohammad Al Nassar, a French language teacher, from Al Sanamayn in Daraa, age 60, was arrested by government forces in Daraa about three months ago. His health status was terrible before his arrest. His family informed us on 9 April 2015, the Military Security confirmed them of his death under torture.

3-Munaf Swaydan, religion teacher, from Ma'arba city in Daraa, was arrested by government forces. His family informed us that on 30 April 2015, he died under torture, and the Military Security Branch delivered his ID papers to them.

Red Crescent volunteer:

1-**Basel Najdat Osman Beik**, a volunteer at the Red Crescent, from Deir El-Zour, age 22, was arrested by government forces in Al Joura neighborhood in Deir El-Zour about 8 months ago. On 4 April 2015, his family informed us of his death under torture in a government security branch in Damascus.





Elderly:

1-Hammada Hasan Alkamar Al Hariri, from Busra Al Harir in Daraa, age 75, was arrested by government forces three days ago from Izraa city. His family discovered that he died under torture in Brigade 12 in Daraa.

Cases of Related Individuals:

1-Abdullah Saeed Khnaifes and his brother Abdul Rahman, from Khan Al Sheih in Damascus suburbs, were arrested by An-Nusra Front for about seven months. On 19 April 2015, their family confirmed their death under torture.

[Image](#) of Abdullah Saeed Khnaifes

[Image](#) of Abdul Rahman Saeed Khnaifes

IV-Conclusions and Recommendations:

SNHR notes that this huge number of torture victims who are falling on a monthly basis, with taking into consideration that this number is the minimum we were able to get information about, indicates clearly that this is a systemized policy adopted by the head of the ruling regime and all its parties and branches. This policy was carried out in a widespread manner which is a crime against humanity and also a war crime.

Some of the extremist groups have practiced torture acts that can be classified as war crimes as well as some of the armed opposition factions.

Recommendations

Security Council

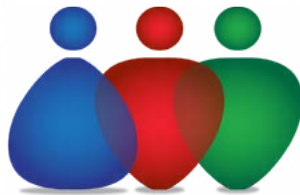
- To transfer the Syrian case to the International Criminal Court.
- To impose sanctions on all the commanders that were involved in torture practices which violate the international criminal law and security council resolutions on Syria especially resolutions 2042 and 2139.
- To bind the Syrian government and the various influential parties to fully cooperate with the Human Rights Council investigation committee in order to conduct a thorough investigation on torture inside detention centers.
- To grant human rights organization access to any location in Syria.





Acknowledgment

We would like to thank everyone who helped to deliver data to SNHR and specifically the activists who cooperated with us. Furthermore, our most heartfelt condolences go out for the victims' families and relatives who agreed to cooperate with us despite their grave losses.



Syrian Network For Human Rights
الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

