

# 14 Individuals Died due to Torture in March 2017

All of them were at the Hands of the Syrian Regime Forces

**SNHR**

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

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The Syrian Network for Human Rights, founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, non-profit independent organization that is a primary source for the United Nations on all death toll-related statistics in Syria



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### I. Report Methodology

Since 2011, the Syrian regime has been denying executing any arrests and, instead, accuses Al-Qaeda and terrorist groups, such as ISIS, of it. Additionally, the Syrian regime doesn't acknowledge any torture or death-due-to-torture cases. SNHR obtains information from former prisoners or prisoners' families where most of the families get the information they have about their detained relatives through bribing officials in charge.

We, in SNHR, refer to the families' accounts. It should be noted that the Syrian authorities usually don't give back the dead bodies of the prisoners to their families. Also, in most cases, families are scared to go and get the dead bodies of their relatives or even their personal items from military hospitals out of fear of being arrested themselves.

Most of the families we contacted have assured that their relatives were in good health at the time of their arrest and illness couldn't have been the cause of death.

#### **Fadel Abdul Ghany, chairman of SNHR, says:**

"The principle of 'Responsibility to Protect' must be implemented in light of the government's failure to protect its people, and the fruitlessness of the diplomatic and peaceful efforts so far. Crimes against humanity and war crimes are being perpetrated every day in Syria and mainly at the hands of the organs of the state itself."



Therefore, SNHR encounters serious difficulties in the documentation process on account of the ban imposed against it and the fact that its members are being pursued by various parties. In light of such circumstances, it might be difficult to fully verify deaths as the process remains subject to ongoing documentation and verification while taking in consideration families' accounts.

To read more about SNHR documentation [methodology](#).

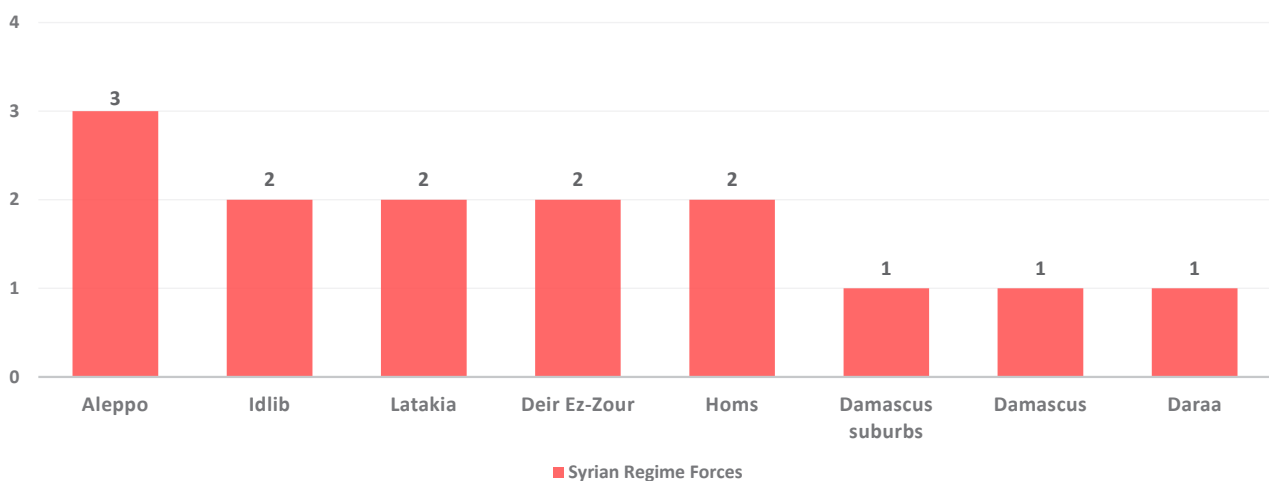
## II. Executive Summary

SNHR documented no less than 14 deaths due to torture inside the Syrian regime's official and non-official detention centers in March 2017.

Deaths due to torture have been an ongoing phenomenon since 2011, this is an explicit indicator on the systematic violence and excessive forces used against detainees.

Aleppo governorate saw the highest toll of death due to torture in March, with three deaths. The remaining death toll is distributed across Syrian governorates as follows: two in Idlib, two in Latakia, two in Homs, two in Deir Ez-Zour, one in Daraa, one in Damascus suburbs, one in Damascus.

**Distribution of deaths due to torture by the perpetrator party across Syrian governorates is as follows:**



**Most notable cases of deaths due to torture in March are:**

Red Crescent personnel



### III. Most Notable Deaths due to Torture

#### Red Crescent personnel

[Mohammad Yousef al Zou'bi](#), a leadership figure at the [Palestinian Red Crescent](#) – Syrian branch, and a medical staffer at Yafa hospital. From al Yarmouk camp in southern Damascus city, Palestinian – Syrian. He was arrested by Syrian regime forces in February 2017, and was released on Sunday, March 5, 2017 from Palestine branch, which is affiliated to the Military Security branch in Damascus city. He died on Wednesday, March 8, 2017, at a hospital in Damascus city after his health deteriorated on account of the torture and negligent health care during his detention.



### IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

SNHR can confirm that this considerably huge number of victims who are dying due to torture every month, with taking into consideration that the actual number of deaths is most likely higher, unequivocally indicates a systematized policy that is being adopted by the head of the ruling authorities. All of the state's organs, branches, and figures are fully aware of these policies. Furthermore, these policies were enforced in a widespread manner which constitutes crimes against humanity and war crimes.

#### Recommendations

##### Security Council

1. The Syrian case must be referred to the International Criminal Court.
- 2- Punishments must be enforced on all the leaders, of any party, who were involved in acts of torture which violates the international humanitarian law and the Resolutions of the Security Council on Syria; particularly Resolutions 2042 and 2139.
- 3- Bind the Syrian government, and the other parties, to fully cooperate with the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, which was established by the Human Rights Council, in order to investigate torture practices inside detention centers.
4. Allow independent human rights organization to access any place in Syria.

#### Acknowledgment and Condolences

Our most sincere thanks to all families, eyewitness, and activists who contributed majorly to this report, and our most heartfelt condolences for the victims' families and relatives.





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