



No less than 1010 Cases of Arbitrary Arrest in February 2014

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I. Introduction

The ongoing and daily process of documenting detainees comes with additional challenges for SNHR that have been documenting detainees since 2011. One of these most notable challenges is the families’ reluctance to cooperate and reveal any information on their family members’ arrest even secretly and especially if the arrested individual was a female due to a prevalent notion among the Syrian society that doing so would result in more torture and risks. Instead, the families try to negotiate with security forces that usually blackmail these families and demand a cash payment that can amount to thousands of dollars in some cases. Despite the fact that SNHR possesses lists of more than 117,000 detainees, including children and women, it should be noted that we estimate that the actual number of detainees have exceeded 215,000; 99% of them are being detained mainly by government forces. The international community’s and the United Nations’, in all of its organs, failure to apply pressure on the Syrian authorities to release even one case (including those whose sentences are over), and even prisoners of conscience, affirmed that convention within the Syrian society which believes that it is useless to cooperate in the documentation process. Most of the releases were part of exchange deals with the armed opposition.





The Syrian government denies that it made any arrests or executed any abductions when asked by the detainees' families. SNHR obtains most of the information from former detainees.

All the documented detainees in February were arrested without a warrant, which has become a norm and a methodology in 99.9% of the arrests made by government forces in all of its organs and entities (army, security forces, local militias, foreign militias). In all of the many interviews we conducted with thousands of prisoners since 2011, we have never heard of an arrest warrant or a cause. Most of the arrests are either through breaking doors and arresting people from their homes or at checkpoints in the streets. Apparently, government forces follow this method in order to wipe off any evidence that might hold them responsible for these arrests and the torture, physical violence, extrajudicial killing, and the other crimes and violations that follow.

Also, government forces don't allow 99.9% of the detainees to contact a lawyer, their families, or anyone. The people who perpetrate these crimes, or other crimes, have never been punished by government forces and no case involving that have been recorded. Instead, government authorities, itself, encourage and protect the people who perpetrate these crimes.

SNHR has recorded that no less than 117,000 individuals have been arrested since March 2011 (99% have been arrested by government forces) these number don't include prisoners of a criminal background and include arrests cases that are based on the internal armed conflict and mainly due to the opposition activity against the ruling authorities.

The mounting number of arrests is due to a number of reasons:

- Many arrested individuals weren't arrested because of a crime they committed, but because of their relatives' involvement with armed opposition factions or because they provided humanitarian aids.
- Most of the arrests are being conducted randomly and involve people who weren't involved in the popular protests, relief, or even military activity.
- Thousands of detainees are still being detained by the Syrian regime even though a judicial order for their release was issued despite the bureaucracy, corruption, slowness, and limpness that the Syrian judiciary suffers from.
- Government forces control densely populated cities such as the main central cities and it continue to practice its systematic policies of arbitrary arrests against the civilians of these areas.



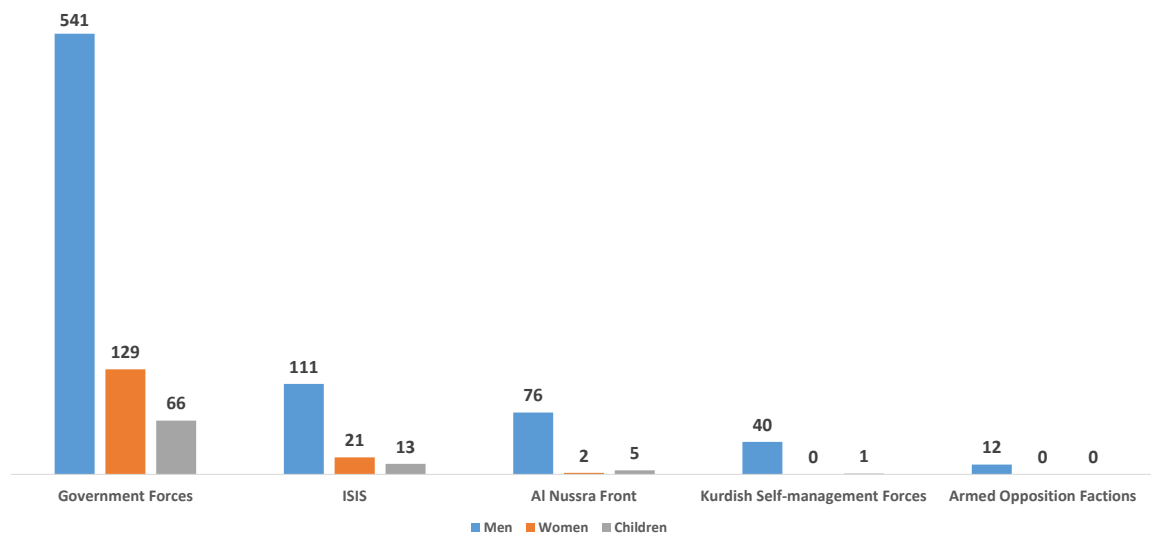


- There are many government forces-affiliated entities that are authorized to make arrests, many of these entities make arrests without checking with government forces or the judicial authorities to which these entities are affiliated. Also, these entities have its own list of detention centers that are not subject to any judicial supervision. The detainees inside these detention centers are not being treated in accordance with the stated Syrian laws.
- A great number of cases are driven by blackmails or sectarian grudges especially in unstable areas that are not held by a specific faction or it is undergoing a power struggle. As a result, many armed militias that have emerged can't be monitored as they don't answer to any particular group.

Details about detainees can be found through the search engine on SNHR website, you may also add the name and details of any detainee and the concerned team will check the data and upload it if proved accurate.

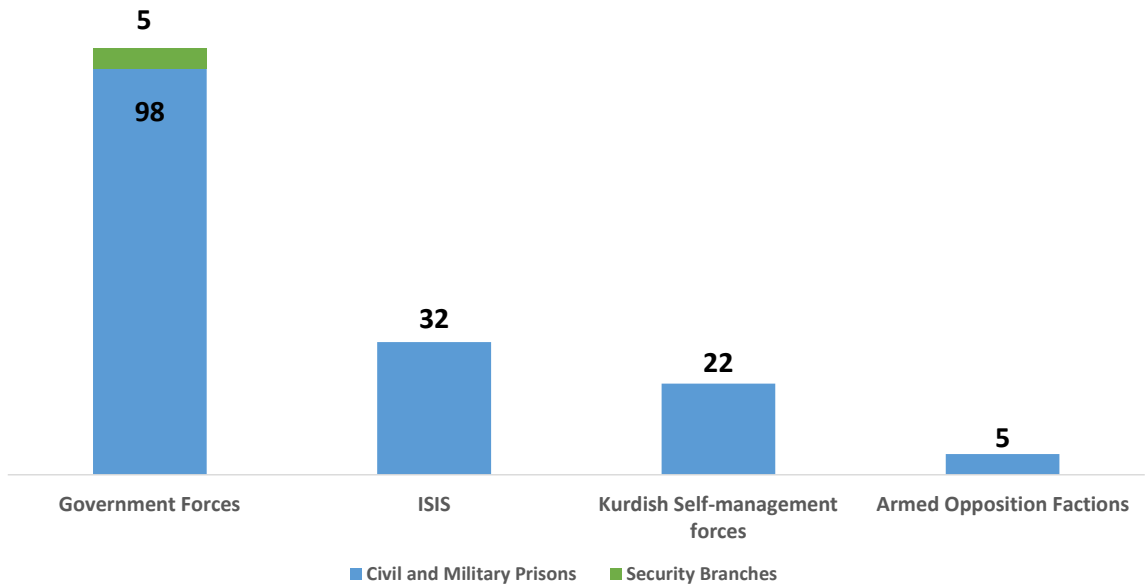
II. Report Details

The following table illustrates the distribution of arrest cases that we were able to record in February 2014. This what we were able to record which is the minimum, due to security and logistic restriction.

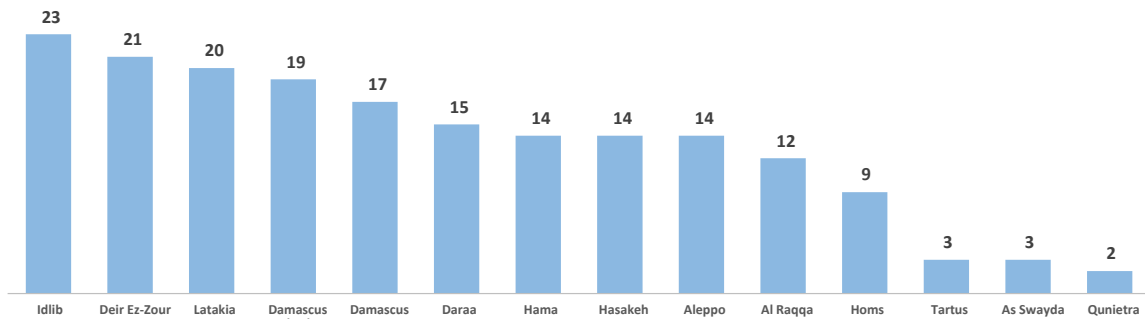




Releases from the various detention centers were as follows:

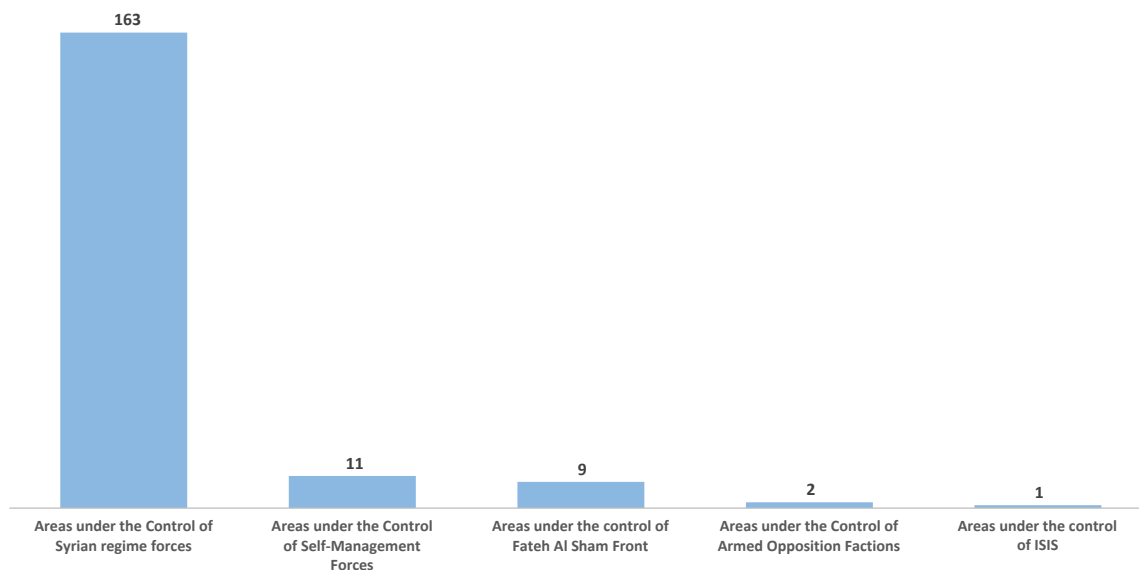


Raids and inspection points that resulted in detention:

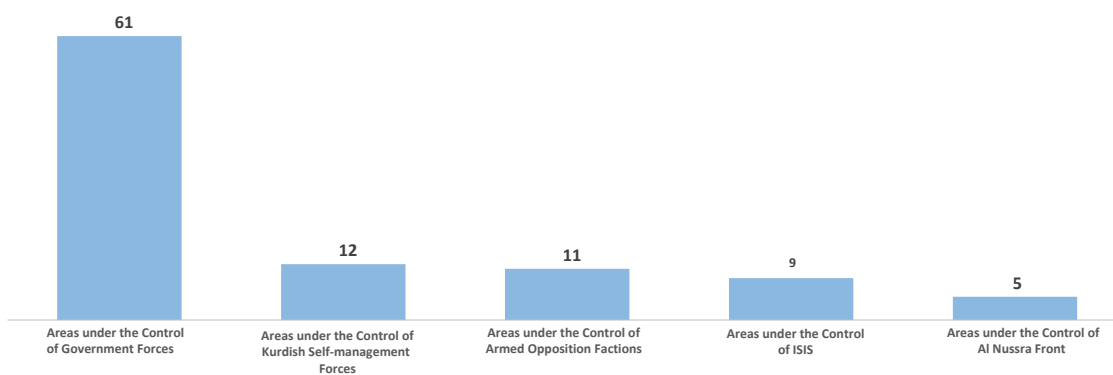




Parties responsible for raids



Abduction cases by unidentified groups:





III. Most Notable Cases of Arbitrary Arrest in February

Government forces

University student Batoul Manhal, female, from Hama city, 23-year-old, a student at the literature and human sciences faculty in Al Baath University in Hama city. On 8 February, she was arrested from the campus of the literature and human sciences faculty in Al Murabet neighborhood in Hama city. She was taken to the Military Security branch in Hama city on the same day. Since then, we haven't received any information about her fate or where she is being kept. Her fate is still unknown to her family as well as SNHR.

University student Heba Qazlbash, female, from Hama city, 24-year-old, a student at Damascus University. On 17 February, she was arrested at a checkpoint for government forces in Dahyat Abu Al Fedaa neighborhood in Hama city. She was taken by government forces to the Military Security branch in Hama city on the same day. Since then, we haven't received any information about her fate or where she is being kept. Her fate is still unknown to her family as well as SNHR.

Teacher Belal Eyoun, from Douma city in Damascus suburbs governorate, 36-year-old. On 4 February, he was arrested by government forces at a checkpoint on Damascus-Homs highway. His fate is still unknown to her family as well as SNHR.

IV. Recommendations

- 1- Security Council must monitor the implementation of the following resolution: Resolution 2042, adopted on 14 April 2012, Resolution 2043, adopted on 21 April 2012, and Resolution 2139, adopted on 22 February 2014 which states that the crime of enforced-disappearance must be ceased.
- 2- The United Nations and the international community must uphold their responsibilities with respect to hundreds of thousands of detainees and forcibly-disappeared individuals in Syria.

