

At least 4,671 Cases of Arbitrary Arrests Documented in 2019

Including 178 in December



SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Thursday, January 2, 2020

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, independent group that is considered a primary source for the OHCHR on all death toll-related analyses in Syria.



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I. Introduction and Methodology

Arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances have been amongst the most widespread violations since the early days of the popular uprising for democracy in Syria in March 2011. These are considered to be the most common and pervasive regime violations against Syrian citizens, affecting hundreds of thousands of Syrians. These violations are carried out by the Syrian security services, as well as their affiliated militias, as part of a deliberate and planned strategy, often in a sweeping indiscriminate manner, in order to instill terror and fear into the largest possible number of Syrian people. Approximately eight months after the start of the popular uprising, other parties began to emerge in Syria, also carrying out arrests and kidnappings. The process of documenting the cases of detention and cataloguing whether detainees are released or join the ranks of the forcibly disappeared has been one of the greatest challenges and difficulties faced by the Syrian Network for Human Rights, as is clarified in our methodology¹.

Since 2011, the Syrian Network for Human Rights has created complex electronic programs to archive and categorize the detainees' data, which the team collects and verifies; this enables us to catalogue the detainees according to gender, the location where each was arrested, the governorate from which each detainee originally came, and the party responsible for their arrest. These programs also enable us to cross-index cases and make comparisons between these parties, as well as identifying the governorates from which the largest proportion of residents have been arrested and disappeared.

¹ "Syrian Network for Human Rights Methodology", Syrian Network for Human Rights, <http://sn4hr.org/public_html/wp-content/pdf/english/SNHR_Methodology_en.pdf>



Given the importance and sensitivity surrounding the violation of arrest of Syrian citizens, the Syrian Network for Human Rights has since its establishment never stopped issuing daily news of arrest incidents, or publishing monthly reports documenting the arrests, enforced disappearances and releases that took place in the preceding month, in addition to issuing an annual report, as well as publishing dozens of other reports on different detention centers run by various parties to the conflict, and additional special reports concerning detainees. Also, the SNHR periodically submits special forms to the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, and the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture.

Most of the arrests in Syria are carried out without any judicial warrant while the victims are passing through regime checkpoints or during raids, with the security forces of the regime's four main intelligence services often responsible for extra-judicial detentions. Every detainee is tortured from the very first moment of his or her arrest and denied any opportunity to contact his or her family or to have access to a lawyer. The authorities also flatly deny the arbitrary arrests they have carried out and most of the detainees are subsequently forcibly disappeared.

The Syrian regime is responsible for no fewer than 89 percent of all the arbitrary arrests that we have documented, and is the first and most prominent of all the parties to the conflict in systematically perpetrating this violation. In most cases, victims' families are unable to accurately identify the body responsible for making the arrest, given the vast array of forces affiliated with the Syrian regime (Iranian militias, the Lebanese group Hezbollah, and others), in addition to the four main regime security agencies and their many branches, all of which are authorized to arrest and torture detainees, and to commit the crimes of enforced disappearance.

The issue of detainees and disappeared persons is one of the most crucial human rights issues in Syria which there has been no progress in resolving despite its inclusion in several resolutions of the UN Security Council, as well as in UN General Assembly resolutions, in Kofi Annan's plan, and finally in the statement of cessation of hostilities issued in February 2016, which states that "all parties undertake to work for an early release of any arbitrary detained persons, particularly women and children", and in Security Council resolution 2254 of December 2015, article 12, which states that all detainees, especially women and children, must be released immediately. Despite all these resolutions and other official statements, no progress has been made on the issue of securing the release of detainees in any of the rounds of negotiations sponsored by international parties regarding the conflict in Syria.



In light of these considerations in regard to this particular issue, we therefore recommend:

- 1- Arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances, which are still ongoing, as detailed in this SNHR monthly report, must be ended immediately. The fates of all detainees must be revealed, and their families' right to visit them must also be ensured immediately.
- 2- All detainees imprisoned for merely exercising their political and civil rights must be released unconditionally. The use of women and children as prisoners of war must be stopped and they must all be released.
- 3- The independent international monitors of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, which was established by the UN, and the International Committee of the Red Cross must be granted access to all official and unofficial detention centers without establishing any prior arrangements or any restrictions or conditions.
- 4- A UN committee should be formed to monitor and periodically assess the release of the detainees according to a timetable that must be presented by all the detaining parties, primarily the Syrian regime forces that are responsible for 89 percent of all detentions.
- 5- All rulings issued by the regime's field military courts and terrorism courts should be suspended or repealed, since they are non-compliant with domestic and international legislation, as well as failing to provide guarantees of a fair trial.

Methodology

This report outlines the record of arbitrary arrests by the parties to the conflict documented in 2019, particularly in December. In addition, it records the most notable raids and arrests at checkpoints that resulted in deprivation of freedom, as well as shedding light on the most notable individual cases and incidents of arbitrary arrest that the SNHR's team documented in 2019 and in December in particular, as well as categorizing cases and incidents of arrest according to the location of the incident.

According to the SNHR's database, we can categorize cases of arrest according to the governorate in which the incident occurred, and according to the governorate from which the detainee originally came. In this report and in most of our reports, we categorize the record of arrests according to the place where the arrest took place, not according to the governorate from which the detainee originally came. It should also be noted that sometimes we categorize the cases of arrest according to the governorate from which the detainee originally came in order to show the magnitude of loss and violence suffered by the people of that governorate compared to other governorates, in which case we refer to this in the report.



The report also documents arbitrary arrests that subsequently turned into enforced disappearances. A number of criteria must be met before SNHR will classify a case as an enforced disappearance: the individual must have been detained for at least 20 days without his or her family being able to obtain any information from the relevant authorities about their status or location, with those responsible for the disappearance denying any knowledge of the individual's arrest or whereabouts.

The SNHR team implements strict standards in evaluating and assessing any incident of arbitrary arrest in accordance with principles of the international laws and the aforementioned set of principles on arbitrary arrest.

The Detainee and Forcibly-Disappeared Department at SNHR records cases of arrest which departmental personnel collect from various sources, such as: victims' families, SNHR members in Syrian governorates, cooperating local activists, and former detainees, before diligently working to contact the families of the detainees and forcibly disappeared persons, as well as people close to them and people who survived detention, for the purpose of collecting as much information and data as possible, in light of the extraordinary and extremely complex challenges. We also record eyewitnesses' accounts and track cases of arrest to update these records regularly in order to determine the fate of a detainee, their place of detention, and the circumstances of their arrest. We have created on our website a special form [to document a detainee](#) to facilitate access and contact with victims' families.

The ongoing daily process of documenting detainees also comes with other additional challenges for SNHR, which has been documenting detainees' cases since 2011. One of the most notable challenges amongst these is the reluctance of victims' families to cooperate and reveal or provide details of any information on their family members' arrest, even confidentially, more especially if the arrested individual is female, due to a well-founded fear still prevalent in Syrian society that being discovered doing so would result in more torture and further danger for their loved ones and themselves. Instead, families try to negotiate with security forces which usually blackmail these families and demand cash payments, effectively ransoms, that can amount to thousands of dollars in some cases. Despite the fact that SNHR possesses lists detailing the cases of more than 144,000 detainees, including children and women, we can safely say that our estimate of the actual number of detainees exceeds 215,000.



The failure of the international community and of all the organs of the United Nations to apply pressure on the Syrian authorities to release even one individual (including those whose sentences are completed), even prisoners of conscience, has affirmed the conviction of many within Syrian society that it is useless to cooperate in the documentation process. Most of the releases achieved were part of exchange deals with the armed opposition. The detainee figures included in this report don't include prisoners with a criminal background, but do include cases of arrest that are based on the internal armed conflict, mainly due to opposition activity against the ruling authorities, as well as cases of detention to suppress freedom of opinion and expression.

II. December Outline

In December, Syrian Regime forces continued to pursue and arrest individuals who had already settled their security situation in areas that have signed settlement agreements with the regime; these arrests have been concentrated in the governorates of Damascus Suburbs and Daraa.

In December, we also documented a number of arrests, which included elderly people and women, for expressing opinions and making phone calls to areas outside the Syrian regime's control, either in raids on their homes or while they were passing through the regime's checkpoints and crossings.

In December, we recorded that Syrian Regime forces released 71 detainees from regime detention centers, most of whom from the governorate of Idlib.

Meanwhile, Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces continued enforcing the group's policies of arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance throughout the month of December, targeting activists and members of civil society groups who oppose their policies. These arrests were concentrated in the governorates of Raqqa and Deir Ez-Zour. Also in December, SNHR documented Syrian Democratic Forces targeting civilians, either with the aim of forcibly conscripting them into military service or under the pretext of their cooperating with opposition factions.

In addition to these incidents, December also saw Hay'at Tahrir al Sham arresting activists, media workers and civilians, with most of these arrests occurring due to the publication of reports on social media accounts criticizing the HTS's management of areas under its control, or because of the victims' participation in protests against HTS.



Factions of the Armed Opposition also continued in December carrying out arrests and kidnappings, most of which occurred on a mass scale, targeting members of the same family and including women, under the pretext of cooperating with SDF, which were concentrated in areas under their control in Aleppo and governorate, particularly in Afrin. Most of these arrests occurred without judicial authorization and without the participation of the police force, which is the legitimate administrative authority responsible for arrests and detentions through the judiciary, and were carried out without presenting any clear charges against those detained.

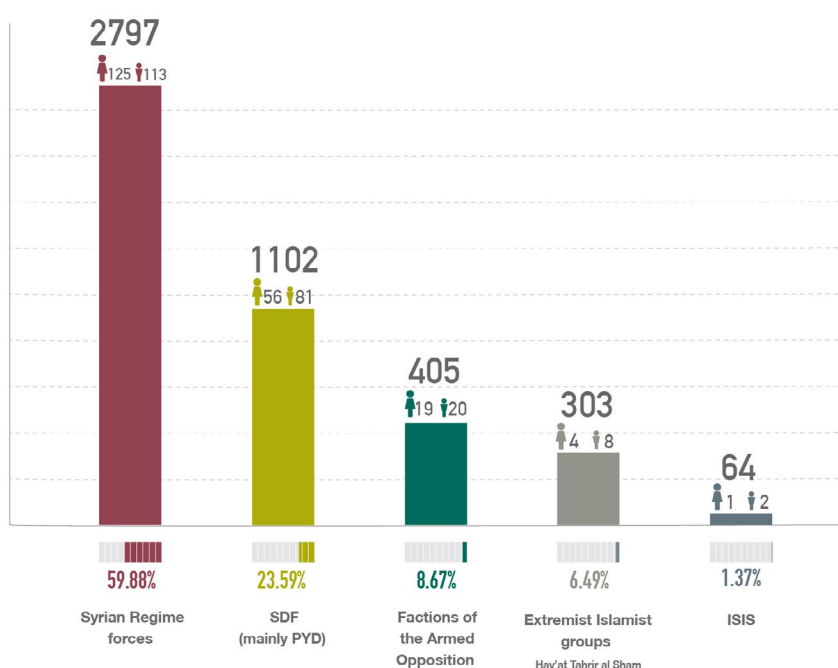
III. Record of Cases of Arbitrary Arrests by the Parties to the Conflict

A. Record of cases of arbitrary arrests in 2019:

SNHR documented at least 4,671 cases of arbitrary arrests in 2019, including 224 children and 205 women (adult female), distributed by the perpetrator parties as follows:



Distributed as follow :



At least
4671
cases of
arbitrary arrest
in Syria by the
perpetrator parties in
2019



A. Syrian Regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias):

2,797 individuals, including 113 children and 125 women.

B. ISIS: 64 individuals, including two children and one woman.

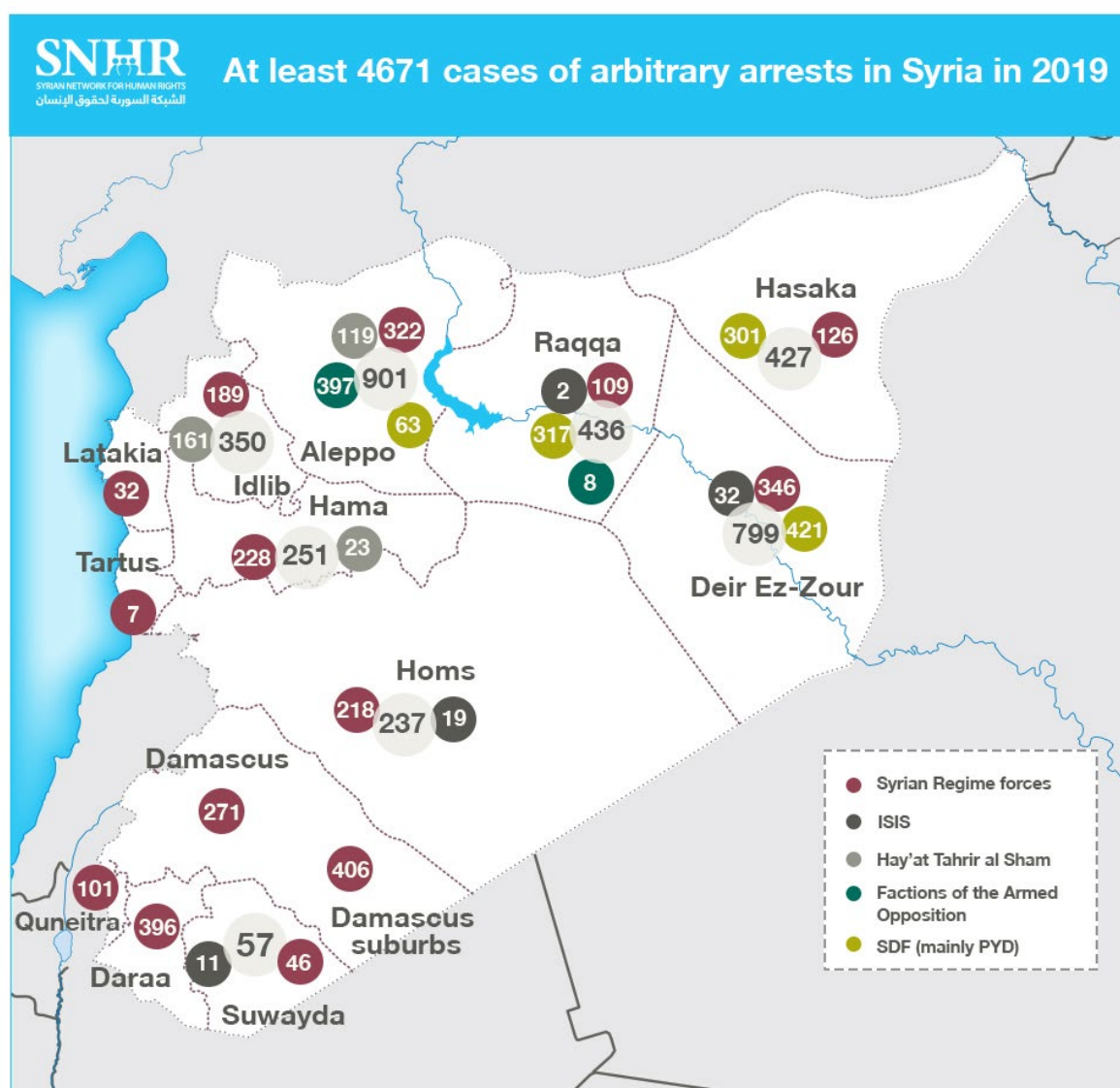
C. Extremist Islamist groups:

- Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (an alliance composed of Fateh al Sham Front and a number of factions of the Armed Opposition): 303 individuals, including eight children and four women.

D. Factions of the Armed Opposition: 405 individuals, including 20 children and 19 women.

E. Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (the Democratic Union Party): 1,102 individuals, including 81 children and 56 women.

Cases of arbitrary arrests in 2019 distributed across all Syrian governorates by the main perpetrator parties as follows:

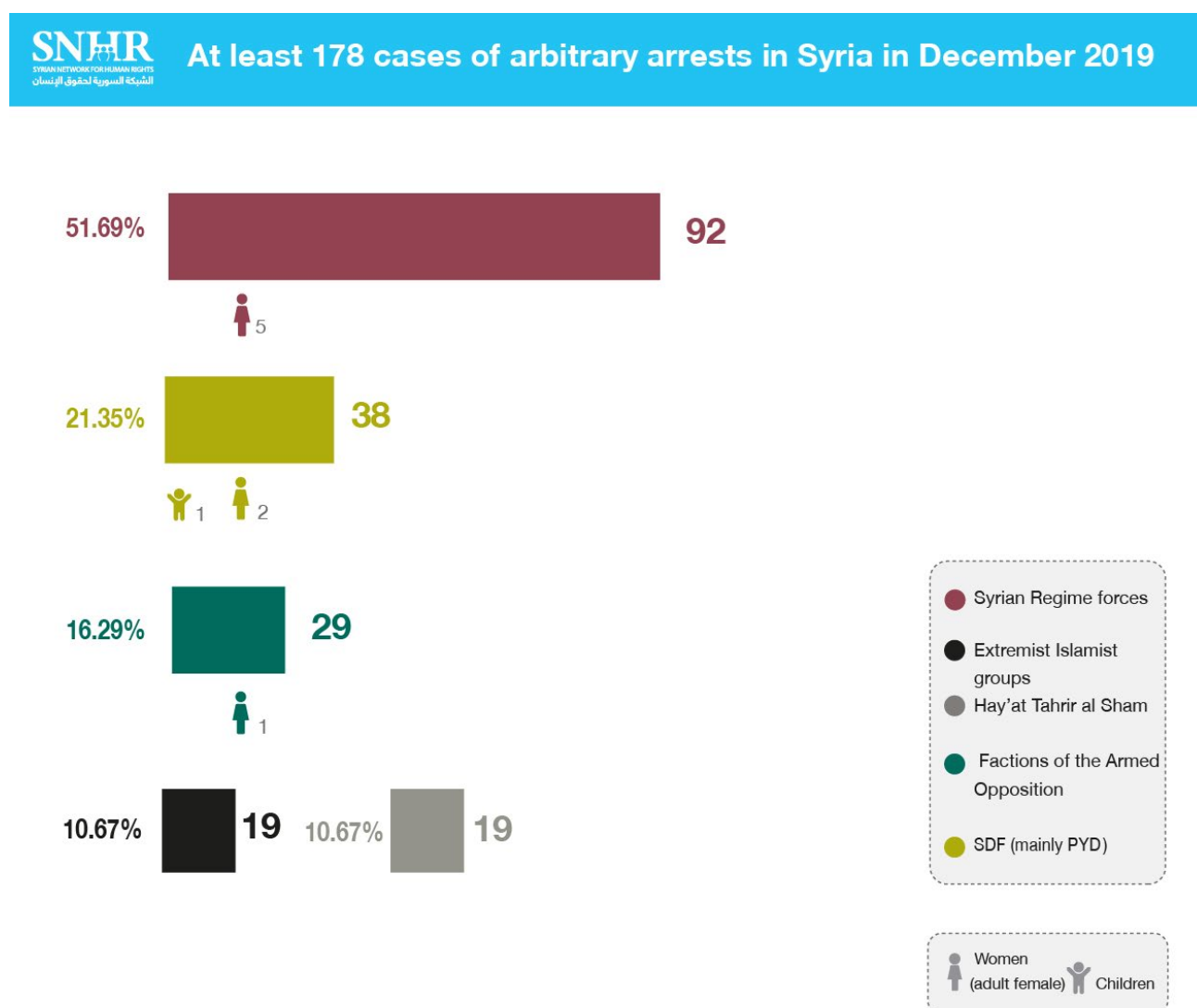


The map above shows that the highest rate of cases of arbitrary arrests was seen in Aleppo governorate due to its unique status compared to other Syrian governorates in having the largest number of the parties involved in the Syrian conflict present there, with control of various parts of the governorate being divided among Syrian Regime forces, Syrian Democratic Forces, factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham.

B. Record of cases of arbitrary arrests in December:

SNHR documented at least 178 cases of arbitrary arrests in December 2019, including one child and eight women (adult female), at the hands of the main perpetrator parties to the conflict in Syria, including 106 which have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

These arrests were distributed by the main perpetrator parties responsible, as follows:



A. Syrian Regime forces: 92 individuals, including five women. 53 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

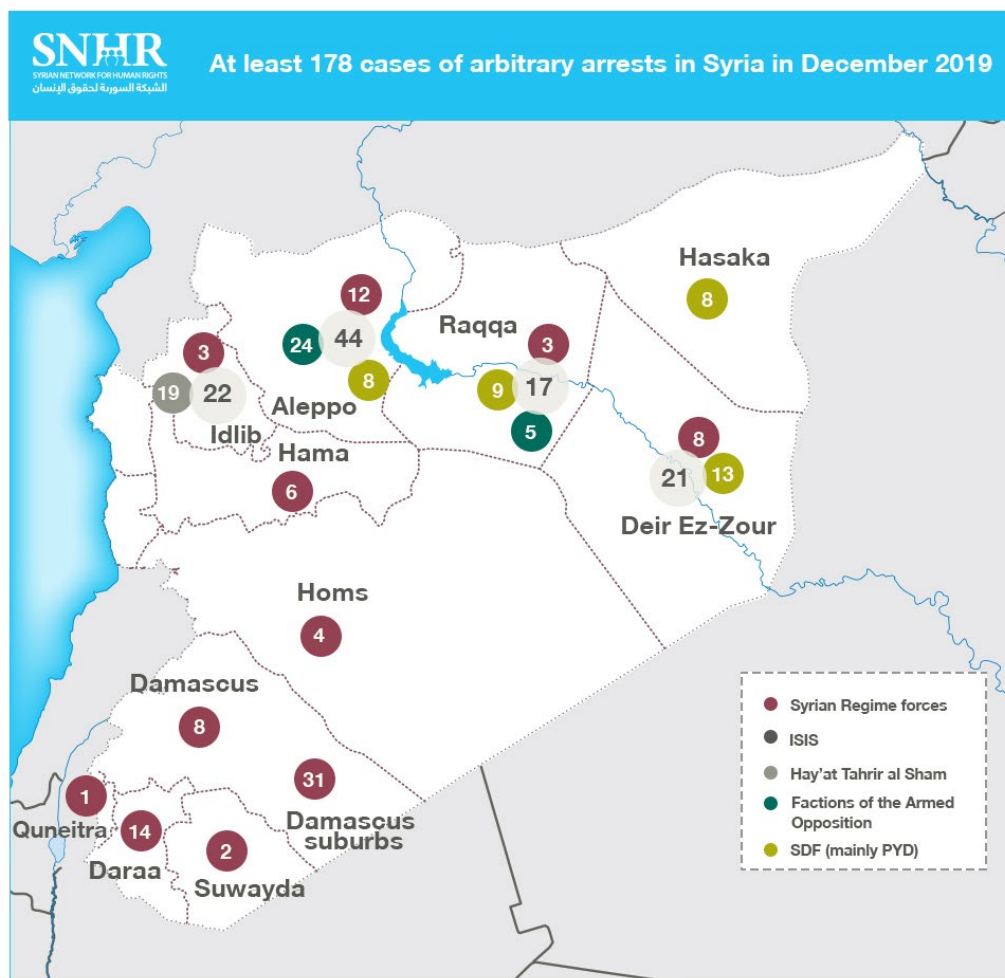
B. Extremist Islamist groups:

- Hay'at Tahrir al Sham: 19 individuals. 15 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

C. Factions of the Armed Opposition: 29 individuals, including one woman. 18 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

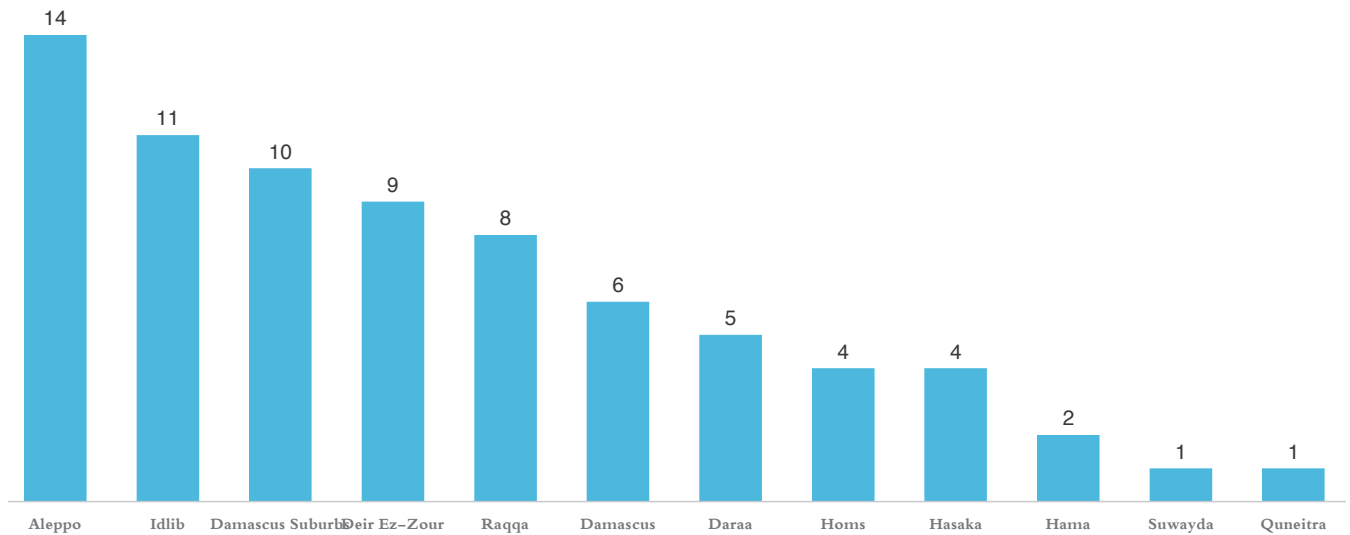
D. Syrian Democratic Forces: 38 individuals, including one child and two women. 20 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

The following map shows the distribution of cases of arbitrary arrests documented in December across all Syrian governorates by the main perpetrator parties:

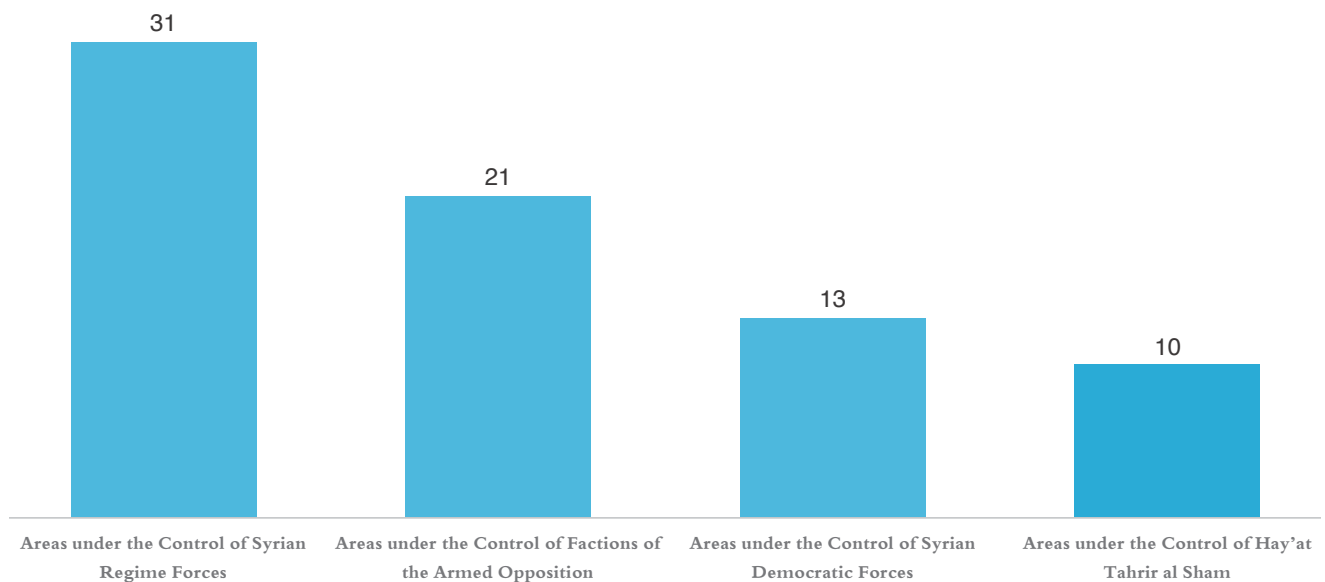


The map above shows that the highest rate of cases of arbitrary arrests in December was seen in Aleppo governorate, followed by the governorates of Damascus Suburbs and Idlib.

We also documented at least 75 raids and checkpoints in December, which resulted in deprivation of freedom. These were distributed across all governorates as follows:



Record of raids and checkpoints, distributed by the responsible party as follows:



IV. Most Notable Cases and Incidents of Arbitrary Arrest in December:

A. Syrian Regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias):

- Most notable incidents:

On Monday, December 9, 2019, Syrian Regime forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in the neighborhoods of al Zebdiya, Bostan al Qasr and Saif al Dawla in Aleppo city. SNHR documented the arrest of six civilians, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Thursday, December 12, 2019, Syrian Regime forces arrested five civilians while they were passing through one of the regime's checkpoints in the vicinity of al Mleiha town in the Eastern Ghouta in Damascus Suburbs governorate, and taking them to an undisclosed location.

On Wednesday, December 18, 2019, Syrian Regime forces carried out a campaign of arrests at their checkpoints in Douma city in the Eastern Ghouta in Damascus Suburbs governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of 20 civilians, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

- Most notable cases:

Ghada Khader al Idris, from Hatla village in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, was arrested on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, by Syrian Regime forces in a raid on her house in al Joura neighborhood in Deir Ez-Zour city and taken to an undisclosed location.

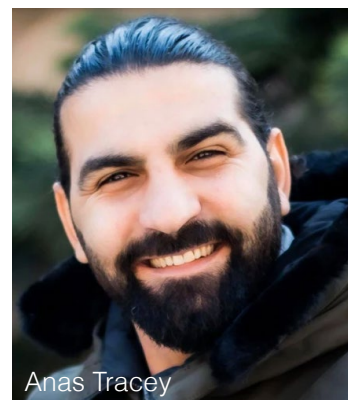
Abdullah Ahmad al Khatib, from Tseel town in the northwest of Daraa governorate, was arrested on Friday, December 6, 2019, by Syrian Regime forces as he was passing through one of the regime's checkpoints in the vicinity of Tseel town and taken to an undisclosed location. We note that Abdullah was among those who had previously accepted a security settlement.

B. Extremist Islamist groups

- Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (an alliance composed of Fateh al Sham Front and a number of factions of the Armed Opposition):

- Most notable incidents:

On Friday, December 20, 2019, gunmen affiliated with Hay'at Tahrir al Sham arrested eight media workers: Anas Tracey, Mohammad Saeed, Ahmad al Ismail, Hafez Saeed, Mustafa Dahnoun, Mustafa Ryad al Swaid, Mohammad Taher al Mustafa, and Adnan Faisal al Imam, while they were covering the popular demonstrations in the Bab al Hawa area of the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate; their equipment was confiscated and they were assaulted by being physically beaten, before being released after a number of hours.

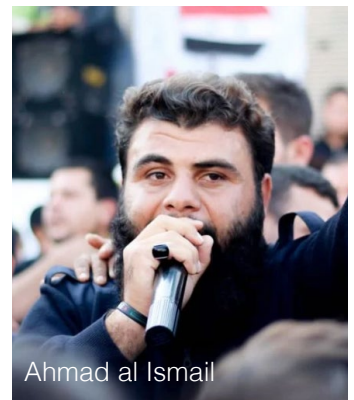


Anas Tracey, a media activist and former correspondent for the Orient Channel, is from Ariha city in Idlib governorate.

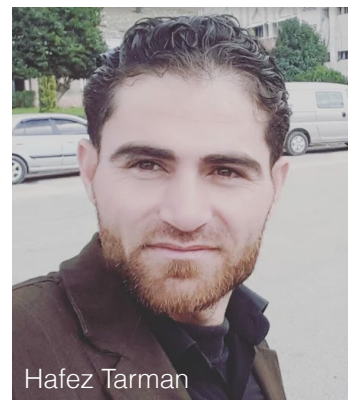
Mohammad Saeed, a media activist, is from Ariha city.



Ahmad al Ismail, a reporter with the Heesh Media Center, is from Heesh village in the suburbs of Idlib governorate.



Hafez Tarman, a media activist, is from Ma'ar Shoreen village in the suburbs of Idlib governorate.



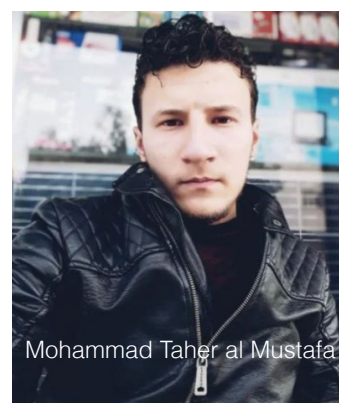
Mustafa Dahnoun, a reporter for al Jisr TV, is from Idlib city.



Mustafa Ryad al Swaid, a reporter for Radio Fresh, is from Kafranbel city in the suburbs of Idlib governorate.



Mohammad Taher al Mustafa, a photographer for the Aleppo Health Directorate, is from Aleppo city.



Adnan Faisal al Imam, a reporter for the Qasioun News Agency, is from Aleppo city.



C. Factions of the Armed Opposition

- Most notable incidents:

On Thursday, December 5, 2019, gunmen affiliated with factions of the Armed Opposition carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in al Qantara village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of 12 civilians, who were taken to an undisclosed location.



On Friday, December 6, 2019, gunmen affiliated with factions of the Armed Opposition carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in Rajo area, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of six civilians, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

- Most notable cases:

Mohammad Ali, Mukhtar, the 'head man' of Haj Khalil village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was arrested by gunmen affiliated with factions of the Armed Opposition on Saturday, December 1, 2019, in Midanki village and taken to an undisclosed location.

Jowan Jabr, a Turkish language teacher from Midanki village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was arrested by gunmen affiliated with factions of the Armed Opposition on Thursday, December 5, 2019, in Midanki village and taken to an undisclosed location.

Munir Izzat and Mohammad Hamid Jafar, both from Ba'denou village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, were arrested by gunmen affiliated with factions of the Armed Opposition on Monday, December 23, 2019, while on their way to Afrin city, and taken to an undisclosed location.

D. Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic forces (mainly PYD)

- Most notable incidents:

On Friday, December 6, 2019, Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in Khwaitlet al Jawwalah village, which is administratively a part of al Qameshli area in the northeastern suburbs of Hasaka governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of eight civilians, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Tuesday, December 10, 2019, Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in Darnaj town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of seven civilians, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

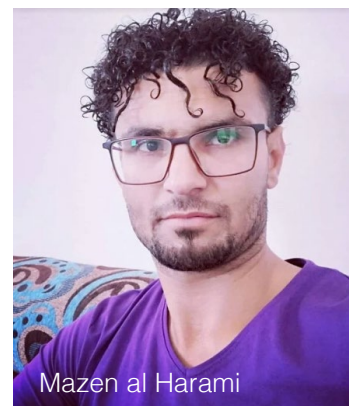


- Most notable cases:

Ali al Mejhem al Ali al Bashir al Hwaidi, a pharmacist from Raqqa city, was arrested on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, by gunmen affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces in Raqqa city, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Mazen al Harami, the monitoring and evaluation officer of the 'We'am' Program in Raqqa city, from Raqqa city, born in 1984, was arrested on Tuesday, December 17, 2019, by Syrian Democratic Forces in al Nour Street in the city while on his way to his workplace, and taken to an undisclosed location. We note that Mazen was previously arrested by Syrian Democratic Forces on Wednesday, November 6, 2019, before being released on December 5, 2019.



Hamzah al Mahmoud, from al Asfouriyeh village, which is administratively a part of Tal Tamer town in the eastern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, was arrested on Monday, December 23, 2019, by gunmen affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces in a raid on his house in al Asfouriyeh village, and taken to an undisclosed location.

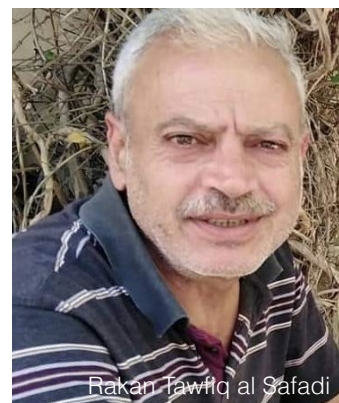
V. Most Notable Cases of Arbitrary Arrest in 2019:

A. Syrian Regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias):

Kamal Saltali al Qaderi from Um al Mayathen village in eastern Daraa governorate, who formerly worked as the director of the Syrian Civil Defense's eastern section in Daraa governorate, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces on August 17, 2019, at Damascus International Airport upon his return from the United Arab Emirates. We note that Kamal was among those who had previously settled their security situation with Syrian Regime forces. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.



Rakan Tawfiq al Safadi, a Syrian poet and researcher, holds a PhD in Abbasid literature from Damascus University. Born in 1962, Rakan, from al Ghariya village in the southern suburbs of Suwayda governorate, is a university professor at al Qalamoun University in Deir Atteya town in Damascus Suburbs governorate. On August 26, 2019, Syrian Regime forces arrested him while he was passing through one of the regime's checkpoints at the entrance to Damascus, before releasing him on Saturday, August 31, 2019.



Dr. Bassam Swaidan and paramedic Hayyan Swaidan, brothers, from Daraa city, who were working in the former Daraa al Balad field hospital in Daraa city, were arrested by members of the Syrian regime's Air Security Force on Wednesday, September 25, 2019, in Aleppo governorate, while they were on their way from Daraa city to areas controlled by factions of the Armed Opposition in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate, before being released on Tuesday, October 15, 2019.

Ayham al Shahbani, known as Abu al Yaman, a former Imam and preacher at al Nour Mosque in Seyda town in the eastern suburbs of Daraa governorate, from Ibta' town in the northern suburbs of Daraa governorate, was arrested on Thursday, September 5, 2019, by Syrian Regime forces in a raid on his house in Ibta' town, before being released on Friday, September 20, 2019.



Mustafa Hamdan al Khalaf, a 70-year-old doctor specializing in the treatment of internal diseases, from al Sheikh Maskin city in northern suburbs of Daraa governorate, was arrested on Monday, October 7, 2019, by members of the Syrian regime's Air Security Force in a raid on his house in al Sheikh Maskin city, and taken to an undisclosed location. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.



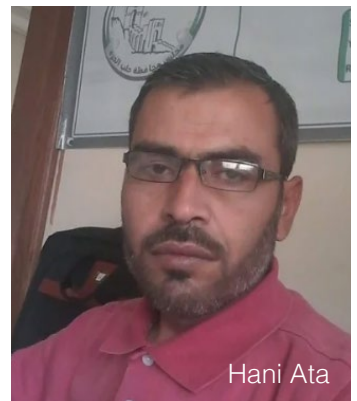
B. Extremist Islamist groups

- Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (an alliance composed of Fateh al Sham Front and a number of factions of the Armed Opposition):

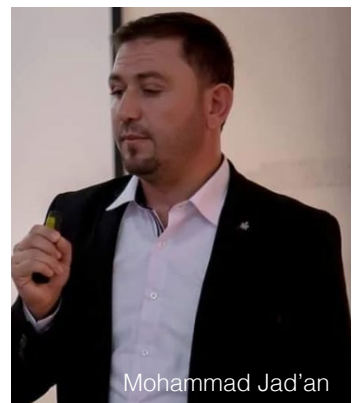
Abdullah Mardikhi from Idlib city, an activist in the popular uprising and an Idlib municipality employee, was arrested by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham on Tuesday, August 27, 2019, in a raid on his home in Idlib city. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.

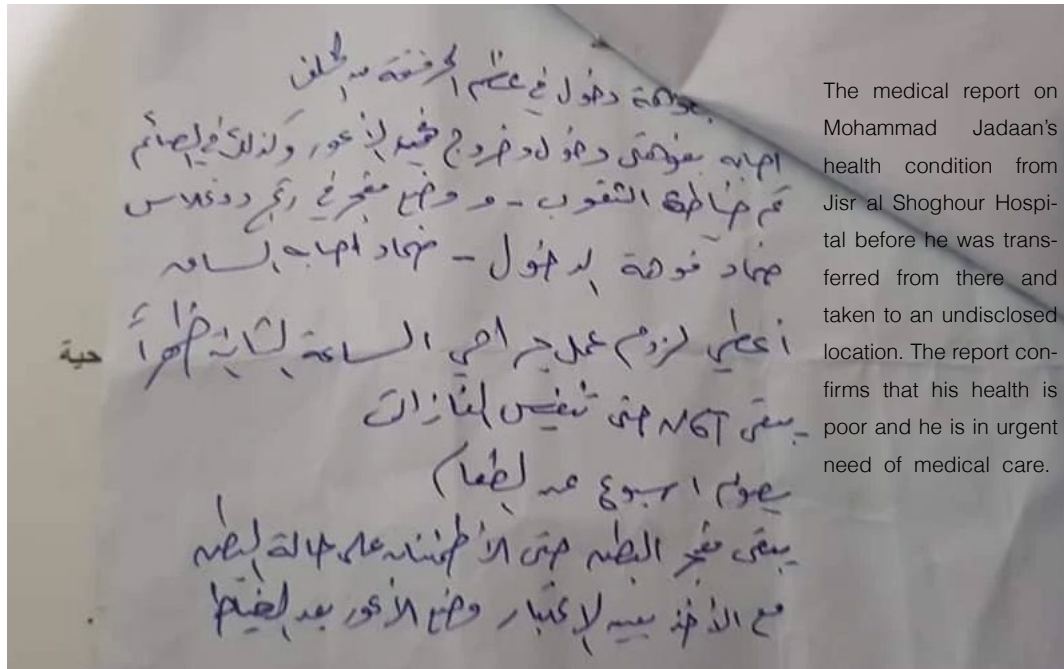


Hani Ata, the head of the local council of Batabo town in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, from Batabo town, was arrested on Wednesday, September 11, 2019, by members of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham in a raid on the local council building in Batabo town and taken to an undisclosed location.



Mohammad Jad'an, a trainer in monitoring and evaluation at the Adam Smith and 'Rteam' organizations, previously worked as a media activist with several media outlets. Mohammed, from Jozef village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, was arrested by members of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham on September 12, 2019, after being shot at by them while passing through one of the HTS checkpoints on the road between Jozef village and Mhambel town, and taken to Jisr al Shoghour Hospital in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate, then to Idlib city hospital, and then to Bab al Hawa Hospital in northern Idlib governorate under tight security, before being released on Thursday, November 14, 2019.



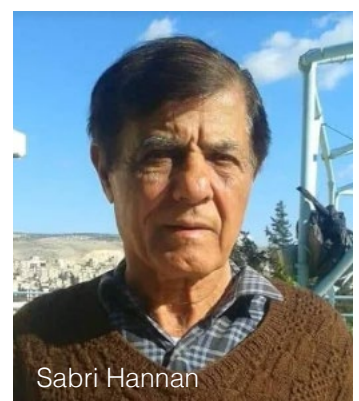


C. Factions of the Armed Opposition

Mohammad Ahmad Khader, from al Basouta village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, is a member of the local council of al Basouta village. He was arrested by gunmen affiliated with factions of the Armed Opposition on Wednesday, August 21, 2019, in Afrin city, before being released on Saturday, August 24, 2019.



Sabri Hannan, aged 75, the director of Jihan Hospital in Afrin city in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, from Ba'denou village in Ma'batli district, which is administratively a part of Afrin city, was arrested by members affiliated with factions of the Armed Opposition in Afrin city on Tuesday, September 10, 2019, and taken to an undisclosed location. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.



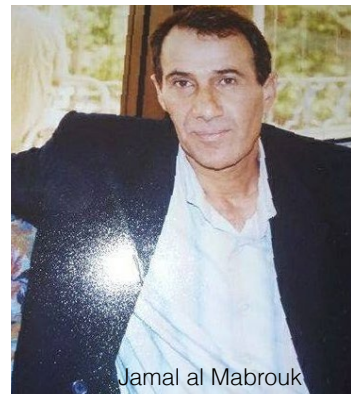
Bozan Nazif Bozan, a member of the political bureau of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, from Ras al Ein city in the north-western suburbs of Hasaka governorate, was arrested by gunmen belonging to Peace Spring forces, which are affiliated with Syrian National Army forces, on Thursday, November 14, 2019, in Ras al Ein city and taken to an undisclosed location.



D. Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic forces (mainly PYD)

Ragheb Sherabi al Harfeesh, aged 32, the head of the Syrian Democratic Forces' educational complex in Tal Barrak town in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, from Tal Barrak town, was arrested by Syrian Democratic Forces on Saturday, September 21, 2019, at the educational complex in Tal Barrak town. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.

Jamal al Mabrouk, aged 60, a civil engineer, the former head of the municipality of al Suwaydiya Saghira village, and his son Kazem Jamal al Mabrouk, from al Suwaydiya Saghira village, which is administratively a part of the al Tabqa area in the western suburbs of Raqqa governorate, were arrested by Syrian Democratic Forces on Wednesday, October 2, 2019, in al Suwaydiya Saghira village, and taken to one of the SDF's detention centers in al Tabqa city in the western suburbs of Raqqa governorate. We note that Jamal, who is married with five children, is working for the al Furat for Development program, which is a development program supported by the US Department of State-sponsored Creative Associates International. On Tuesday, November 15, 2019, both were released.



VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

- The SNHR believes that the Syrian regime has not fulfilled any of its obligations under any of the international treaties and conventions which it has ratified. We refer specifically to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It also violated several articles of the Syrian Constitution itself, with thousands of detainees detained without any arrest warrant and held for many years, without charges, and prevented from appointing a lawyer and from receiving family visits. 65.08 percent of all detentions documented have subsequently been categorized as enforced disappearance cases, with detainees' families being denied any information on their loved ones' whereabouts, while anyone making enquiries about the detainees faces the risk of being arrested themselves for doing so. The Syrian regime has also violated the right to liberty enshrined in article 9 of the ICCPR through the widespread practice of arbitrary and unlawful detentions.
- Hay'at Tahrir al Sham imposes absolute authority over the large areas it controls and the residents there. The group which has a political entity, and has developed a highly hierarchical structure, is therefore obliged to implement the provisions of international human rights law. Hay'at Tahrir al Sham has committed widespread violations through arrests and enforced disappearances.
- Factions of the Armed Opposition have carried out arrests and torture against a number of residents in areas under their control.
- Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic forces have violated many basic rights and practiced numerous violations such as torture and enforced disappearance. They also have a political entity with a largely hierarchical structure and are, therefore, also obliged to apply the provisions of international human rights law.

Recommendations

Security Council

- Monitor the implementation of Resolution 2042, adopted on April 14, 2012, Resolution 2043, adopted on April 21, 2012, and Resolution 2139, adopted on February 22, 2014, all of which demand the immediate cessation of the crime of enforced disappearance.

Human Rights Council

- Follow up on the issue of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons in Syria and highlight this issue in all annual meetings.
- Cooperate and coordinate with all active local human rights groups in Syria.



Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI)

Launch investigations into the cases included in this report and previous reports. SNHR is willing to cooperate and provide more evidence and data.

International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism (IIIM)

Address the cases mentioned in this report and past reports. SNHR is willing to cooperate and provide more evidence and data.

United Nations and the guarantors of the Astana talks

- An impartial special committee should be formed to monitor cases of enforced disappearance, and to make progress in revealing the fate of the nearly 98,000 documented missing persons in Syria, approximately 85 percent of whom are detained by the Syrian regime.
- Immediately begin applying pressure on all parties to ensure that they immediately reveal their detention records according to a timetable. In the meantime, detention places should be revealed immediately, and humanitarian organizations and the International Committee of the Red Cross should be allowed to visit them directly.
- Ensure the release of children and women, and the end to the practice of holding families and friends as war hostages.
- We call on the official recently appointed to take charge of the detainee file at the UN special envoy's office to include the issue of the detainees during the upcoming round of Geneva talks, as this issue is of far greater importance to the Syrian people than other longer-term issues which can be jointly addressed later by the parties after a political settlement is reached, such as the constitution.

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