

By Acknowledging the Death of 836 Forcibly-Disappeared Syrians at its hands, the Syrian Regime Convicts itself, yet the Security Council Does Nothing

Approximately 82,000 Forcibly Disappeared and 14,000 Died due to Torture at the hands of the Syrian Regime

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Monday, August 27, 2018

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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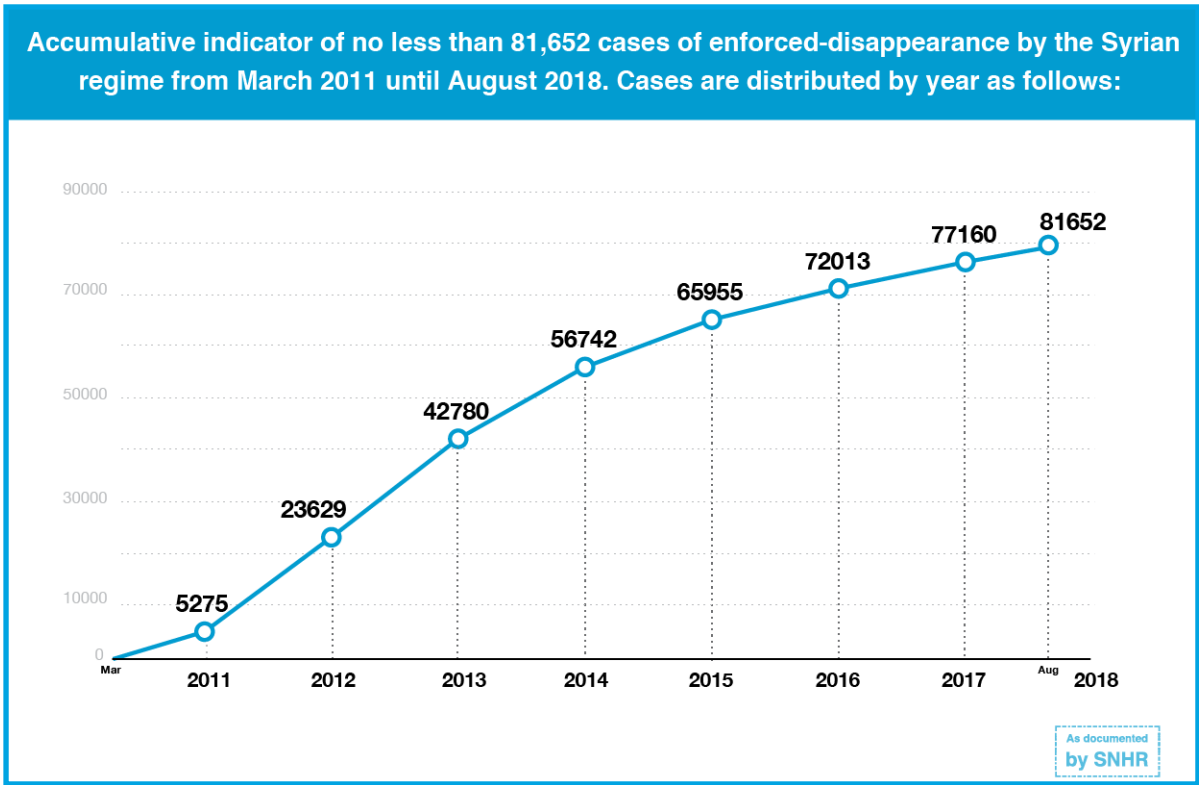
I. Introduction and Methodology

Tens of thousands of Syrians have fallen to the machine of systematic arrests that hasn't only targeted activists or those who were part of the popular uprising that rose against the family rule, but targeted many merely on suspicion or kin. Syrian authorities usually deny to have made the arrest as people go to great lengths just to know the whereabouts of their beloved ones. Consequently, most arrest cases, a percentage of over 85%, turn into enforced-disappearances. These practices are deliberate and a central policy of the Syrian regime's as we pointed out in many past reports. A dedicated team at SNHR has been recording arrest cases, resultant enforced-disappearance cases, and release cases since 2011. We have compiled an extensive and reliable database for those cases. According to the accumulated database, 127,593 Syrian citizens are still detained by the Syrian regime, including 81,652 citizens who have become forcibly-disappeared between March 2011 and August 2018.

Those detainees and forcibly-disappeared persons have been subjected to fathomlessly brutal and sadistic acts of torture. Several years ago, we have released an extensive report on the most notable methods of torture used by the Syrian regime which was released in 2012 and the same methods are still being used to this day. There are new deaths due to torture inside Syrian regime detention centers being recorded almost every week. According to SNHR's database, 13,608 have died due to torture due to torture inside Syrian regime detention centers between March 2011 and August 2018.



The Syrian regime was deliberate in omitting the fates of tens of thousands of detainees in order to inflict as much agony and degradation upon their families as a way of punishment for letting their beloved ones go out and demand changing the family rule. Many of those have been disappeared for years. The following chart shows the distribution of 82,000 forcibly-disappeared at the hands of the Syrian regime by year since March 2011. As shown, 2012 and 2013 recorded the highest numbers of arrests and, thus, most enforced-disappearances which aimed to break and submit the popular uprising.



II. What Has Changed? Why is the Syrian Regime Revealing Fates of Forcibly-Disappeared Persons after Denying Having any Information on Them for Years?

Since the late Hafez al-Assad, the Syrian regime has ruled the Syrian people with a brutal iron fist and submitted it to a culture of a deadly fear. The Syrian regime has never been merciful towards the Syrian people or showed any sign of compassion for the feelings of the victims' families. The Syrian regime is still facing accusations of disappearing about 17,000 Syrian citizens that has been standing since the Hama incident of 1982. While the majority of those were from Hama, there were many from other governorates including Aleppo, Damascus, Latakia, and Deir Ez-Zour. Decades have passed and the Syrian regime has yet to reveal their fates, as the wound still feels fresh and a reminder to all that no one should stand in its face.



Things haven't dramatically changed during the era of his son Bashar al Assad, as the Syrian regime still conceals the fates of the forcibly-disappeared persons through its official departments. Even if a detainee died during the detention, the Syrian regime chooses to conceal the news of their death for long years, just to keep the suffering, and to benefit its mafia-like networks who receive large sums of money from the residents just to get little information, and we even found out that the information obtained in such ways are incorrect in most cases. Before May 2018, the month when the Syrian regime started to reveal the fate of a large number of forcibly-disappeared persons, SNHR would get information about individual death-due-to-torture cases through residents who were informed of their beloved ones' death through security branches. This has been the way for seven years. In some cases, some families would get information from former detainees that were released by the Syrian regime. As such, the question is, what is the Syrian regime's true motivation behind revealing the fate of approximately 836 persons as what we have documented to this point.

Fadel Abdul Ghany, chairman of SNHR, says:

“It is difficult to tell for sure what the Syrian regime's goal is, but I think there are two possible answers – the first is that the Russians were the ones who told the Syrian regime to do that in order to end this issue that has become a hurdle in the way of wrapping up the Syrian catastrophe. The second one is that the Syrian regime wants to show that he has achieved victory on the ground, and all that is left to do is to end the detainees issue so residents and society can go back under its submission accepting the fact that this is their only choice. As defenders of human rights, we have to question the purpose of the Security Council, the OHCHR, and the international law in light of all of this.”

III. Our New Methodology for Documenting Cases where Forcibly-Disappeared Persons Have been Revealed

Since the start of May 2018, we started receiving reports about families learning of their forcibly-disappeared beloved ones' fate when doing regular paperwork at civil registration offices. SNHR team went to great pains to access tens of families and speak to them. Our first report on this horrifying phenomenon was released on July 13, 2018. The Syrian regime continued to reveal the fate of additional forcibly-disappeared persons in July, which is why we had to released a new report. In case the Syrian regime continues to reveal fates of forcibly-disappeared persons, we will try to keep up with this very dangerous matter that affects the lives of hundreds of thousands of Syrians.



SNHR's database on enforced-disappearance cases, which contains the name of approximately 82,000 cases at the hands of the Syrian regime, proved to be crucially useful. We have searched for the names we recently received in our database to cross-check the information, and we found out that 77% of the cases revealed recently by the Syrian regime were recorded in our enforced-disappearance database. The remaining 23% were new cases that we didn't know anything about their arrest or enforced-disappearance.

SNHR team also relied on the database for deaths due to torture inside Syrian regime detention centers, which contains 14,000 names who died between March 2011 and August 2018. We repeated the same process, and found out that only 28 individuals were previously recorded as having died due to torture. Accordingly, 98% of new deaths were previously enforced-disappearance cases that we had no information on their fate.

We conducted an additional cross-check using the data and documents we've obtained or were posted online. It is important to note that the deaths included in this report are ones revealed by the Syrian regime through civil registration offices exclusively and not by other means.

There are a handful of death cases that were revealed by the Syrian regime who didn't die due to torture, but in summary executions on sentences issued as a result of military field trials (commonly called al-Midan Military Courts) Those cases make up approximately 5% of the overall number of cases. Al Midan Court is a not a court in a legal sense, but more of a security apparatus given that this court's judges are military individuals and them having law degrees is not a requirement. In the cases within the jurisdiction of this court, the defendant has no right to an attorney. In addition, the court is completely affiliated with the executive branch. Another thing to note is that it gives multiple rulings on the same case.

This report includes four new accounts that weren't included in our initial report. Most of the families we have spoken to or met have confirmed that their relatives were in good health at the time of the arrest. They also confirmed that they didn't know any information about them after they were arrested by Syrian regime forces.

We have encountered additional extraordinary challenges as we worked on this report. We haven't been able to speak to all the families that reported that their beloved ones died in light of the Syrian regime's pursuit and ban on SNHR for eight years, as well as its strict ban on any independent human rights work. Additionally, many families refused to speak to us fearing the Syrian regime's retaliation or because they are still in shock of the tragedy that have befallen them, not to mention that barbaric way the Syrian regime's mentality have come up with to tell them about this tragedy.

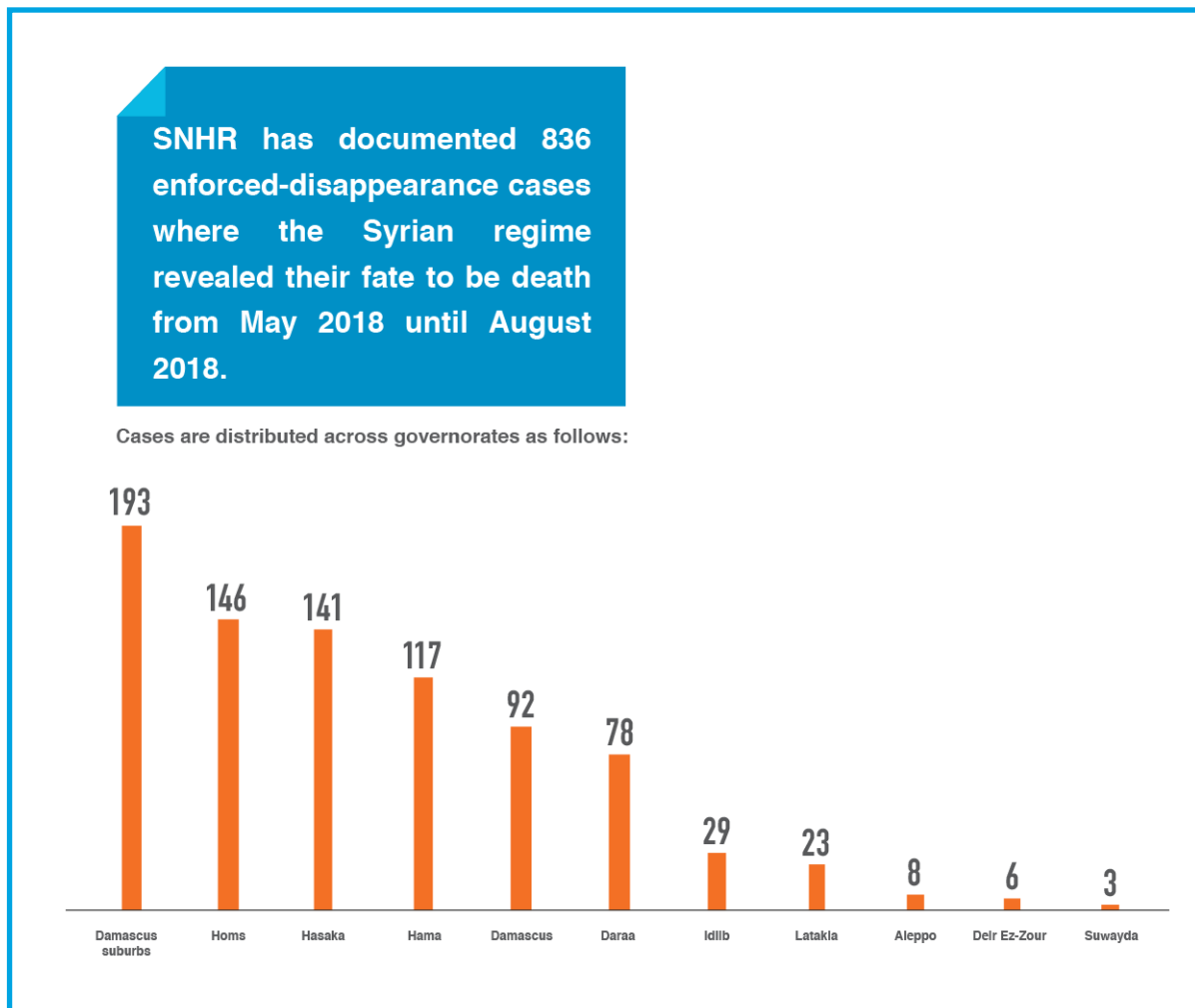


IV. Forcibly-Disappeared Persons Whose Fate Have Been Revealed Since May 2018

As of this writing, we have been able to document 836 cases, of 82,000 enforced-disappearance cases, since May 2018 where the Syrian regime revealed that they all had died. In all cases, the Syrian regime didn't reveal the cause of death, never delivered the dead bodies to their families, or revealed death at the time. The Syrian regime has previously denied having any forcibly-disappeared persons at its detention centers. Among the cases we've documented were nine children, at the time they were arrested, and one woman (adult female).

SNHR believes that all of those died due to torture. Death cases on account of death sentences issued by al Midan Military Court were excluded.

Death toll is distributed across Syrian governorates as follows:



V. With no Dead Bodies Delivered, everyone is still Forcibly-Disappeared

SNHR notes in all of its reports that the Syrian regime stopped delivering dead bodies to the families who are informed that one of their members had died inside a detention center. This applies to the recent cases when forcibly-disappeared persons' fates were revealed through civil records. Except by a phone call or a document from the civil registration offices, the Syrian regime never disclosed any tangible proofs to families proving the death of their relatives, thus the Syrian regime has yet to categorically reveal the fate of the forcibly-disappeared persons. As such, it is important to note that the crime of enforced-disappearance is still ongoing. Unless the person is found, dead or alive, we are going to continue to consider all of them as forcibly-disappeared in accordance with the international community, and the main accused in these crimes is the Syrian regime.

The Syrian regime has perpetrated a string of crimes and indignities, from the warrantless arrest and denying the right to an attorney, to the extremely brutal detention conditions, torture, and then turning 85% of them into forcibly-disappeared, before informing the families without delivering a dead body or remains or revealing a burial. From our point of view, the recent revealing of forcibly-disappeared persons' fate is a solid proof that condemns the Syrian regime who has long denied having any forcibly-disappeared persons. How did the Syrian regime, then, know of the fate of those 836 cases?

In a past study released by SNHR analyzing the photographs leaked by the Military Police photographer 'Caesar', entitled "[The Photographed Holocaust](#)", we noted that Syrian regime forces deliberately plan all of these processes and records all the steps in their records. We also pointed out that Syrian regime forces dispose of the dead bodies either by burying them in mass graves or by cremation at a special place designed specifically for this purpose. According to the documents revealed by Caesar, the process of receiving the dead bodies was arranged by the Military Police and the funeral home in Damascus, meaning that the latter was fully aware of what was happening.

VI. Analyzing the Data from the New Death Cases Revealed by the Syrian Regime

By extensively studying the death cases, one by another, SNHR has compiled a set of data that highlights a few important points:

A. Most of those whose fate were revealed were arrested in 2011 and 2012

By cross checking SNHR's database for detainees and forcibly-disappeared persons and the cases recently revealed by the Syrian regime, we concluded that most of the forcibly-disappeared persons that the Syrian regime revealed their death through its civil reg-



istration offices were arrested in 2011 and 2012. Looking at the death certificate and documents that were given to residents or published by civil registration offices, deaths were dated in 2012 and 2013 but with no cause of death. Those dates were released by the detention centers that detained those forcibly-disappeared persons, whereas establishing a death date at civil registration office was in 2018 when the civil records department received this information from detention centers. This means that there are two dates related to each death case, first: the date when a forcibly-disappeared person died, second: the date when they were recorded as dead at the civil registration office. The two dates can be separated by up to five years.

While the significant majority of cases were of individuals who were forcibly disappeared in 2011 and 2012, approximately 85%, there were cases of individuals who were forcibly-disappeared in 2013, 2014, and 2015. We believe all of them died due to torture and the detention centers where they were being kept recorded their death date about a year after they were forcibly disappeared. All forcibly-disappeared persons were recorded by civil registration offices in 2018, when the security apparatuses ordered those offices to do so which is something they haven't done before 2018.

Seeing that the Syrian regime is a centralized totalitarian regime where state institutions couldn't possibly make isolated decisions, the security branches ordering civil registration offices to recorded Syrian citizens who were forcibly disappeared in past years is undoubtedly a deliberate decision by the Syrian regime, for all of these offices work under the authority of the security apparatus. One of the goals the Syrian regime wanted to achieve in this decision was to inflict more terror and insult upon the residents by having the fate of their beloved ones revealed by civil registration offices rather than calling them directly in a glaring demonstration of the Syrian regime's dismissal and disregard for those residents and utter indifference to their feelings. The Syrian regime's barbarian conduct implies such a horrendous sadism.

B. Most cases are for forcibly-disappeared persons at Saydnaya Prison, branch 215, and branch 227

A forcibly-disappeared person is a case where the arresting party refuses to reveal the fate of said forcibly-disappeared person and denies having them. Even in the event that residents or human rights groups manage to find out the place of detention, this doesn't lift the status of enforced-disappearance.



By studying and analyzing cases, in addition to interviewing a number of survivors, we found out that the last temporary place that held the forcibly-disappeared whose fates were revealed were:

Saydnaya Military Prison in Damascus suburbs, branch 215, which is a central apparatus affiliated to the Military Intelligence and one of the branches that saw the most death-due-to-torture cases we've recorded, branch 227, known as al Mentaqa branch, affiliated with the General Intelligence Directorate and located in al Mazza area, Damascus city, and lastly the Air Force Intelligence branch at al Mazza Military Airbase in the capital. Damascus.

C. Cases of kin: we recorded 41 enforced-disappearance cases that involved kinships – siblings, fathers, and uncles

Most of the cases where relatives are arrested are a result of Syrian regime forces raiding houses and taking family members jointly. In some cases, a family member is arrested and his father or brother finds himself forced to surrender himself under the fathomless pressure and intimidation, or through ambushes such as in the case of the peaceful political activist [Yahya Sharbaji](#). Lastly, there are cases where a family member is arrested and another is arrested after a period of time.

In some cases, we noticed that civil registration offices listed the death date for three or five members of the same family on the same date.

• Three siblings: We noticed that they were arrested at the same time, and were listed in civil records with the same death date

Jarir Akla al Allo, Omar Akla al Allo, and Ahmad Akla al Allo, from Ghwairan neighborhood, eastern Hasaka city. We recorded that they were arrested in 2012 by Syrian regime forces. On Tuesday, July 31, 2018, we received information that they were recorded as dead by a civil registration office. We suspect that they died due to torture inside a Syrian regime detention center.

• Four brothers

Adel Abbas al Ayyash, Munther Abbas al Ayyash, Ali Abbas al Ayyash, and Hamid Abbas al Ayyash, from al Qameshli city, northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate. We recorded that they were arrested in 2012 by Syrian regime forces. On Monday, July 30, 2018, we received information that they were recorded as dead by a civil registration office. We suspect that they died due to torture inside a Syrian regime detention center.



D. 18 arrest incidents of individuals connected to each other, all were recorded with the same death date

We recorded 18 incidents of arrest by the Syrian regime that targeted citizens connected to each other either by a mutual job or kinship. When the Syrian regime revealed their fate, we found out that they all also had the same death date. This leads us to believe that they might have received a death sentence.

Abdul Sattar Abdul Fattah Khouhani, from Darayya city, southwestern Damascus suburbs governorate. We recorded that he was arrested on Friday, July 22, 2011, by Syrian regime forces in Darayya city. When studying the cases that were revealed later, we found out that he was recorded on Thursday, June 7, 2018, in the civil records as dead while the death date shown on the document sent to the civil registration office was Tuesday, January 15, 2013, about five years ago. His brother, Majd al Din Khouhani, was killed along with him. Majd was a law student who was arrested on Monday, August 8, 2011, in an ambush set by Syrian regime forces in Darayya city. Both Majd's and Abdul Sattar's deaths were registered on the same day by civil registration offices. Their family confirmed to us that they died at Saydnaya Military Prison in Damascus suburbs governorate.



SNHR spoke to Amina Khouhani, Majd and Abdul Sattar's sister, via phone. Amina told us that security forces arrested Abdul Sattar as he was trying to help his friend Islam Dabbas, who was also a prominent peaceful activist that died at Saydnaya Military Prison, **“Also, security forces raided our home several times trying to find Majd al Din. They finally arrested him by ambushing him in Darayya. When one of our relatives went to the civil registration offices to acquire a family statement, the employee there told him that both my brothers Abdul Sattar and Majd are recorded as dead. Both of them were leaders of the peaceful movement in Darayya, and never promoted violent activities.”**



Amina added that her family had the chance to visit her brothers at Saydnaya Military Prison in December 2012. Amina also noted that they had different sources confirming to them that they were executed at Saydnaya Military Prison along with a number of detainees. Death certificates for [Majd al Din](#) and [Abdul Sattar Khouhani](#). The certificates indicate that they died on the same day

Omar Nawwaf al Mekhleef, worker, from Briedej village, suburbs of Hama governorate, born in 1994. We recorded that he was arrested on Friday, April 13, 2012, from Briedej village by Syrian regime forces. His death certificate, according to civil records, indicate that he died on June 23, 2014, at a detention center. He was added to civil records in April 2018. We suspect that he died due to torture.



Omar Nawwaf al Mekhleef

Yousef Nawwaf al Mekhleef, worker, from Briedej village, suburbs of Hama governorate, born in 1983. We recorded that he was arrested on Friday, April 13, 2012, by Syrian regime forces from Briedij village. His death certificate, according to civil records, indicate that he died on June 23, 2014, at a detention center. He was added to civil records in April 2018. We suspect that he died due to torture.



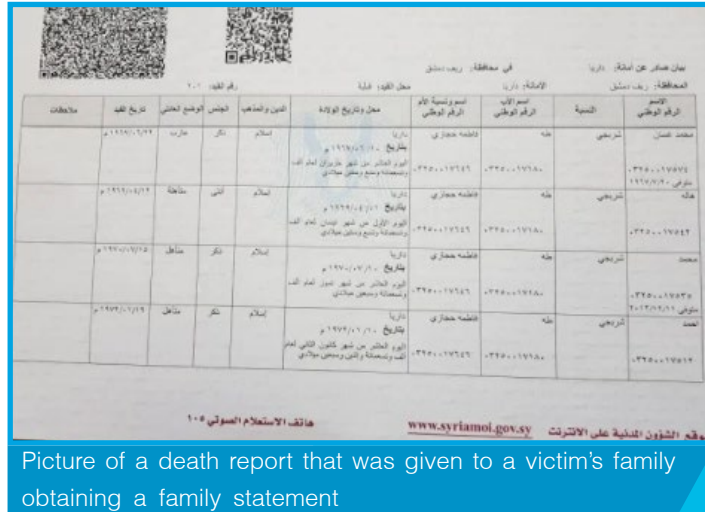
Yousef Nawwaf al Mekhleef

E. Death certificates and family statements don't reveal place and cause of death

As we reviewed all the death certificates and family statements that were sent to us or were able to access, we found out that these documents don't reveal the cause and place of death. They were also standard death certificates bearing no differences from a death certificate for an ordinary citizen who died naturally.

Therefore, SNHR has repeatedly stressed that this act by the Syrian regime does not constitute a true revelation of the fate of those individuals as they are still considered forcibly-disappeared since there is no tangible evidence such as a dead body, remains, or a burial





Picture of a death report that was given to a victim's family obtaining a family statement

As shown, the report contains the name of the city in which the detention center, where the individual died, is located. However, the report doesn't specify which detention center. SNHR team also noticed that most death statements were in Damascus city, and a few of them contained a time of death.



Picture of a death certificate for a forcibly disappeared person by the Syrian regime, issued by the civil registration office

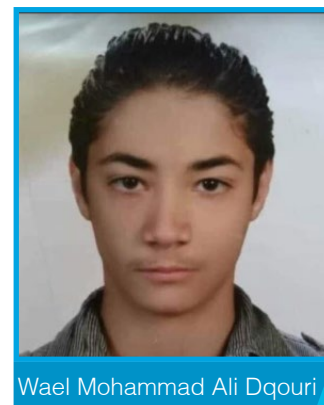
In addition, we noticed that the Syrian regime started adding death certificates to civil records in April 2018, and not before. We have been able to confirm this suspicion when some families managed to obtain internal statements that aren't for publication or usually handed out to families. Those statements show that the various civil registration offices across Syria started recording incidents of death in April 2018. We have yet to find a document before that date, which suggests that this date is when the Syrian regime started its grim scheme.

F. The fate of nine forcibly-disappeared children revealed

By studying and cross-checking data with our enforced-disappearance archives at SNHR, we found nine cases, of the 836 whose fate were revealed, of individuals who were children at the time when they were arrested and forcibly disappeared by the Syrian regime. Most of those nine cases were in 2012 and part of raid and wide arrest campaigns carried out by the Syrian regime.



Wael Mohammad Ali Dqouri, from Rukn al Din neighborhood, northern Damascus city. He was 12-year-old at the time of this arrest. He was arrested by Syrian regime forces on Friday, October 25, 2013. On Thursday, July 12, 2018, we received information that he is recorded at the civil registration office as dead. We suspect that he died due to torture inside a Syrian regime detention center.



Ahmad al Sayed Ahmad, from Mu'damiyet al Sham city, western Damascus suburbs governorate, born in 1997. We recorded that he was arrested in 2012 by Syrian regime forces. On Saturday, July 28, 2018, we received information that he is recorded as dead at the civil registration office. We suspect that he died due to torture inside a Syrian regime detention center.

Osama Mohammad Saeed al Meqdad, from Bosra al Sham city, eastern Daraa governorate, born in 1995. We recorded that he was arrested by Syrian regime forces in 2012. On Sunday, July 29, 2018, we received information that he is recorded as dead at the civil registration office. We suspect that he died due to torture inside a Syrian regime detention center.

G. Three arbitrary arrest cases, including one woman. Their families had the chance to visit them before they had become forcibly-disappeared. Eventually, their families learned of their death through civil records

In some cases, the Syrian regime transfers detainees from civil and military prisons, where some families had a chance to visit their relatives, to other places, where families lose any hope of knowing the destination where their beloved ones were taken. Those detainees turn into forcibly-disappeared persons as their fate remains unknown. We have shed light on this horrifying phenomenon in a number of [past statements](#). This phenomenon involved a number of female detainees from Adra Central Prison where they were transferred to places where their fates have been unknown ever since.

Among the newly-revealed cases were three cases that went through this scenario, where their families were able to visit them until the Syrian regime transferred them and now revealed that they had died.

Mohammad Ali Jum'a al Khaled, from al Shiha village, suburbs of Hama governorate, born in 1995. We recorded that he was arrested by Military Security Intelligence branch affiliates on February 22, 2014, in Hama city. He was being held at Hama Central Prison where his



family visited him several times. On January 3, 2016, a police patrol transferred Mohammad at night from Hama Central Prison to an undisclosed location. On August 1, 2018, his family found out that he died on March 4, 2016, through civil records. We suspect that he received a death sentence.

SNHR spoke to Mr. Yahya at his new residence in Idlib after he was displaced. Yahya is Mohammad Ali's brother:

“The Military Security arrested my brother on a security report on him. He went missing for nearly a year, before he was transferred to Hama Central Prison and my mother used to visit him every week there. That is until one of the detainees who were with him told us that the police transferred him to Saydnaya Military Prison along with a number of detainees after they received sentences from the Field Court. We never knew what sentence he received. When we learned of the civil records matter, my mother went to the office where she was told that his name is on the lists of dead persons. His death date was about a week after he was transferred to Saydnaya Military Prison which confirms that they had him executed.”

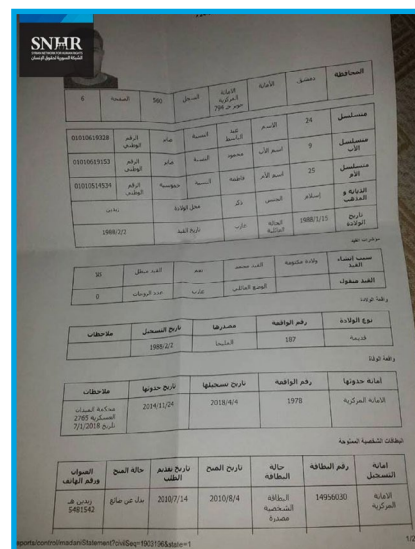
H. Forcibly-disappeared persons who received death sentences from the secret al Midan Military Courts and military courts

We believe that the overwhelming majority of those whose deaths were revealed by the Syrian regime recently had died due to torture inside Syrian regime detention centers - about 95% of all cases. However, there are cases that didn't die due to torture but were executed. The percentage of those, out of the total number of cases we were able to document, is 5% as we documented 37 cases, of all cases, that were tried by al Midan Military Court and military courts according to their families. Those were distributed among civil prisons, military prisons, and security branches.

[Abdul Baset Mahmoud Saber](#), from Zebdeen village, eastern Damascus suburbs governorate, born in 1988. He was arrested by Syrian regime forces in September 2012 at a checkpoint called al Nasim near al Mleiha town, Damascus suburbs governorate. A document his family acquired from the civil registration office indicates that he died on November 24, 2014. He was listed in civil records on April 4, 2018, as dead. We suspect that he received a death sentence from al Midan Military Court.



Ammar Saber, Abdul Baset's brother, was arrested in 2014. He met his brother during interrogation at the Air Force Intelligence in al Mazza Military Airbase. We contacted Ammar and he told us that signs of torture were clearly visible on his brother when he saw him. At the time, Abdul Baset had already received a sentence from al Midan Military Court in Damascus. Ammar said, **“On July 7, my mother travelled from Lebanon to Damascus to obtain a family statement that was required for my younger sister’s marriage paperwork. After the employee gave my mother the statement, she was shocked when she read that my brother Abdul Baset was recorded as dead. At first, she thought there was some kind of mistake so she asked the employee to print another copy, but he assured her that the statement she has is accurate and told her that his name was one of the names who died at the Syrian regime prisons and were sent to civil records. When she asked her what she has to do to have his dead body, she told her she is going to have to ask the Military Court.”**



Document acquired by the family of the victim Abdul Baset Saber from the civil registration office

I. A forcibly-disappeared woman revealed to be dead

We recorded one case of a woman whose family learned that she died through the civil registration office. The woman was transferred from Adra Central Prison to an undisclosed detention center. She turned into another enforced-disappearance case as we highlighted this phenomenon earlier.

Lama Nawwaf al Basha, a university student at the faculty of Project Management in Damascus University. From al Tal city, northern Damascus suburbs governorate, a volunteer at the civil group Methaq Syria (Syria’s Covenant), born in 1992. She was arrested by Syrian regime forces on Sunday, November 16, 2014, in an ambush in al Tal city. Lama was transferred to Adra Central Prison and was tried by al Midan Military Court. In 2015, a police patrol transferred Lama from Adra Central Prison to an undisclosed location. Her family saw her last when they visited her on March 29, 2015. On July 31, 2018, Lama was listed in civil records as dead. We suspect that she received a death sentence.



Lama al Basha

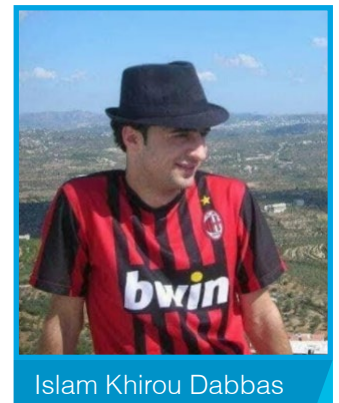


J. Prominent popular uprising activists were among those who died

Among the 836 cases we were able to document were no less than 22 well-known popular uprising activists – 10 university students, two engineers, three athletes, four teachers, and three religious figures.

All of them were never involved in armed activities and never promoted violence, killing, or any vandalization acts. They were known in their communities for their peaceful messages and launching civil initiatives that aimed to preserve public places and raise awareness on rights and freedoms, as well as gifting water and flowers to Syrian regime forces. For this very particular reason, they were a strategic target for the Syrian regime who wanted to bury the peaceful popular uprising, and push the uprising to extremism in light of the Syrian regime's racist, sectarian, and brutal practices.

Islam Khirou Dabbas, a university student at the faculty of architecture, a popular uprising activist, from Darayya city, western Damascus suburbs governorate, born in 1989. He was arrested by Syrian regime forces on Friday, July 22, 2011. We learned on Monday, July 16, 2018, that he died on Sunday, December 15, 2013, according to civil records. We suspect that he was executed per a death sentence at Saydnaya Military Prison, Damascus suburbs governorate.



Islam Khirou Dabbas

We contacted Um Islam, Islam al Dabbas's mother,

“After the names of the dead detainees have been publicized on social media, one of our relatives went to the civil registration office where we found out through a family statement that Islam died and they didn't tell us anything else, but we were told previously by a former detainee who was with Islam at Saydnaya that he was executed.”

“Islam was never involved in armed activities. On the contrary, he gifted security forces flowers and cold water when they used to go out with the demonstrations. He always talked about how they shouldn't vandalize and keep the streets clean after the demonstrations.”

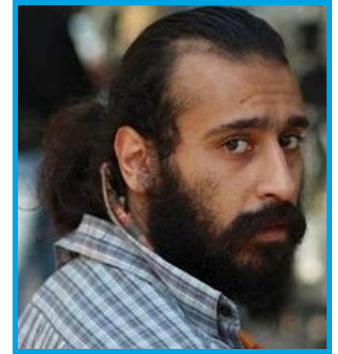
Safwan al Hajjar, an electronics engineer, from al Muhajireen neighborhood, Damascus city, born in 1976. He was arrested by Syrian regime forces on Sunday, December 23, 2012, in al Muhajireen neighborhood. On Tuesday, July 24, 2018, we received information that he died in 2014 according to civil records. We suspect that he died due to torture inside a Syrian regime detention center.



Safwan al Hajjar



Salah al Din Naqshbandi, a university student at the faculty of media in Damascus University, a popular uprising activist, from Deir Ez-Zour city, born in 1989. He was arrested by Syrian regime forces on Tuesday, January 14, 2014, from Damascus city. We received information on Wednesday, July 24, 2018, that he died on Wednesday, February 11, 2015, according to civil records. We suspect that he died due to torture inside a Syrian regime detention center.



Salah al Din Naqshbandi

Mohammad Nasr al Masri, a medical student, from Homs city, born in 1993. He was arrested by Syrian regime forces on Wednesday, January 22, 2014, from the Department of Immigration and Passports in Damascus city. On Wednesday, May 16, 2018, he was listed in civil records as dead. We suspect that he died due to torture inside a Syrian regime detention center.



Mohammad Nasr al Masri

Mahmoud al Ali, footballer for al Jazira Football Club, from al Qamshli city, northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate. He was arrested by Syrian regime forces on Wednesday, October 8, 2014, from Damascus city. On Wednesday, August 1, 2018, we received information that he was listed in civil records as dead. We suspect that he died due to torture inside Saydnaya Military Prison, Damascus suburbs governorate.



Mahmoud al Ali

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

Legal conclusions

SNHR believes that the Syrian regime has demonstrated a lack of commitment to the international agreements and treaties it ratified, in particular the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights. In addition, the Syrian regime has violated the Syrian constitution itself as hundreds of thousands of detainees have been detained for many years with no arrest warrants or any charges. The Syrian regime also denied those detainees the right to an attorney and barred their families from visiting them. 85% of all detainees have become enforced-disappearance cases as the Syrian regime never informed their families of their



whereabouts. In case a family tried to inquire about the whereabouts of their beloved ones, a question that might put the families at risk in some cases, security branches and authorities would deny having them in the first place.

Enforced-disappearance was a strategy the Syrian regime used to target anyone connected to the popular uprising that rose against the family rule. Analyzing data shows that this phenomenon was prevalent in the areas that were distinctly known for joining the uprising, which suggests that this was based on a consistent and deliberate policy, including the recent revealing of forcibly-disappearance persons' fates which was also done in a deliberate manner. The implications of the harmony between the state institution in a way that serves the criminal act is clear judging from the arrests that targeted figures who supported the popular uprising which was followed by forcibly disappearing them and then issuing death certificates that don't contain any information about the place and cause of their deaths. This also suggests that wide segments of the employees, leaders, and workers were aware of this particular policy by the Syrian regime, as well as the true cause of death and the brutal acts of torture. Some of them even had knowledge of the location of the dead bodies and mass graves given the appallingly large number of forcibly-disappeared persons and the number of death-due-to-torture cases we recorded which is estimated at nearly 14,000 deaths.

Enforced-disappearance is prohibited by the customary international humanitarian law according to rule 98 which prohibits enforced-disappearance in international and non-international armed conflicts.

Rule 117 of the same law states, "Each party to the conflict must take all feasible measures to account for persons reported missing as a result of armed conflict and must provide their family members with any information it has on their fate."

Further, the international criminal law prohibits enforced-disappearance. According to the International Criminal Court's Rome Statute, practicing enforced-disappearance in a systematic manner constitutes a crime against humanity (Article 7-1-i), which applies to the acts of the Syrian regime.

Recommendations

Security Council and United Nations

- Hold an emergency meeting to discuss this critical matter that threatens the fates of nearly 82,000 individuals and terrorizes the whole Syrian society.
- Find methods and mechanisms to prevent the Syrian regime from tampering with the living and the dead, as this poses a major threat to the security and stability of the Syrian state.



- The Security Council should act to stop torture and deaths due to torture inside Syrian regime detention centers, and save whoever detainees left as quickly as possible.
- Take action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to protect the detainees from a certain death inside detention centers.

OHCHR

- Issue a statement to condemn and address this blatant violation of the most basic standards for human dignity.
- Release an extensive report on this barbarian phenomenon and clearly condemn it, and call on the Security Council to take urgent action to find a solution that preserve the rights of the families, reveal the fate of the dead bodies, and hold the criminals accountable.

Commission of Inquiry (COI)

- Start investigating this critical issue. We are willing to provide all additional information and data

International, Impartial and Intendent Mechanism (IIIM)

- Add this critical issue to the main investigation agenda.

Syrian regime

- Stop treating the Syrian state as a private family property
- Stop terrorizing the Syrian people through enforced-disappearance, torture, and death due to torture.
- Stop tampering with and exploiting civil records and in service of the goals of the ruling family.
- Shoulder all legal and material fallouts and compensate the victims and their families from the resources of the Syrian state.

Acknowledgment and Condolences

We would like to thank all the residents and witnesses who contributed to this report and our most heartfelt condolences to the victims' families and friends.





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