



Cases of Arbitrary Arrest recorded in the First Half of 2016 4557 Including 739 in June 2016

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I. Introduction

The detainees issue hasn't seen any notable progress even though it was included in the "Cessation of Hostiles" statement. Regarding that issue in particular, we recommend the following:

1- Arbitrary arrests must be ceased immediately as it is still an ongoing concern according to SNHR monthly report. All detainees' fates must be revealed and their families' right to visit them must be insured immediately as well.

2- All detainees who were detained for merely exercising their political and civil rights must be released unconditionally. The use of women and children as war hostages must be stopped and they all must be released.

3- To grant 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 access to all official and non-official detention centers without setting up any prior arrangements or any restrictions or conditions.

4- A UN committee should be formed to see to the release of the detainees periodically and per a timetable that must be presented by all the detaining parties and mainly government forces that is detaining 99% of all the detainees.





Methodology:

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 up 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 press on the Syrian authorities to release even one case (including those whose sentences are over), and even prisoners of conscience, was one of the reasons the Syrian society believe 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 its information from former detainees.

All the documented detainees in June 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 categories 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 put it 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 their relatives' involvement with armed opposition factions or providing 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 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 specific faction or it is undergoing a power struggle. As a result, many armed militias that have emerged can't be monitored as they are 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.





III. Details

A. Arbitrary arrests in the first half of 2016

SNHR documented no less than 4557 arbitrary arrests in the first half of 2016.

The arrests are divided by the influential parties as follows:

- Government forces (army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias): 3151
- Extremist Islamic groups:
 - o ISIS (self-proclaimed the Islamic State): 779
 - o Al-Nusra Front: 168
- Armed opposition factions: 96
- Self-management forces (consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party – branch for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party): 363

B. Arbitrary arrests in June 2016

we recorded 739 cases of arbitrary arrest in June 2016

Arbitrary arrest made in June included many widespread arrests of government employees by government forces. Also, government forces arrested students from areas out of its control. These arrests take place as the detainees are passing government-forces-affiliated checkpoints at entry points to areas under government forces where these people are either going to collect their salary or to take exams.

Additionally, government forces carried out widespread arrests of civilians who are heading to Lebanon as they are passing from the Lebanese-Syrian borders. These arrests included particularly civilians residing in the cities of Damascus suburbs, which are not under the control of government forces, such as Al-Zabadani, Douma, and Madaya.

Furthermore, ISIS continues to enforce its policy of arbitrary arrests against civilians in its areas. The arrests included those who violated the organization’s forcibly-imposed regulations, owners of phone shops and internet cafes, and civilians who are trying to flee ISIS-held areas to areas under the control of armed opposition.

In contrast, Self-management forces also continues its policy of arbitrary arrests and enforced-disappearance against civilians and political and media activists who oppose its views in its areas. The arrests were concentrated in Al-Hasaka city and Ifreen city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate.

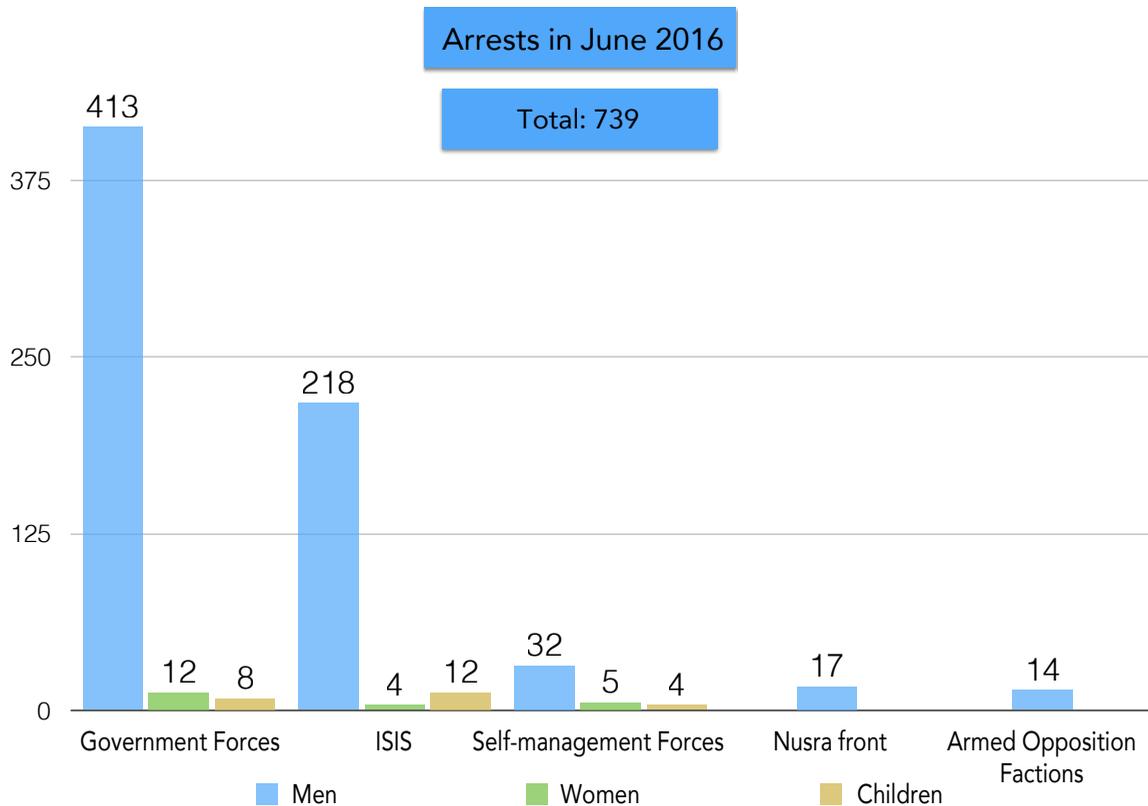




In June, we recorded a rise in the rates of the arrests carried out by Al-Nusra Front against media activists, and activists in general, in Idlib governorate, civilians who are related to individuals working with various armed opposition factions and also against elements of armed opposition factions.

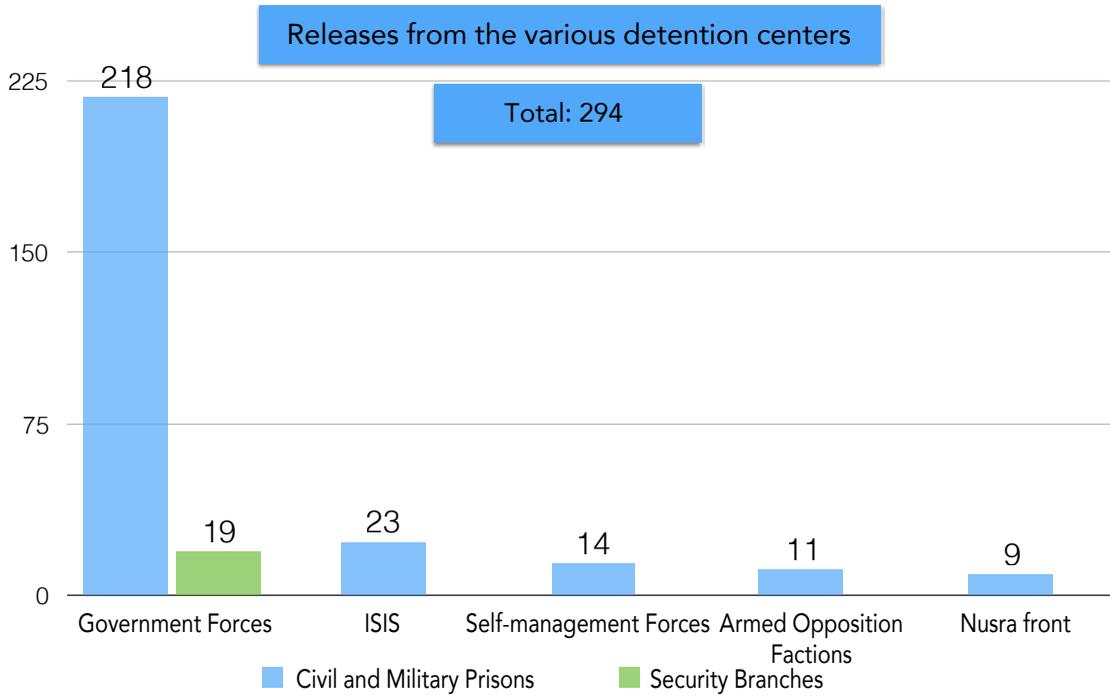
The following table illustrates the distribution of arrest cases that we were able to record in June. While this what we were able to record due to security and logistic restriction, we emphasize that the actual number is higher.

Arrests in June are distributed as follows:

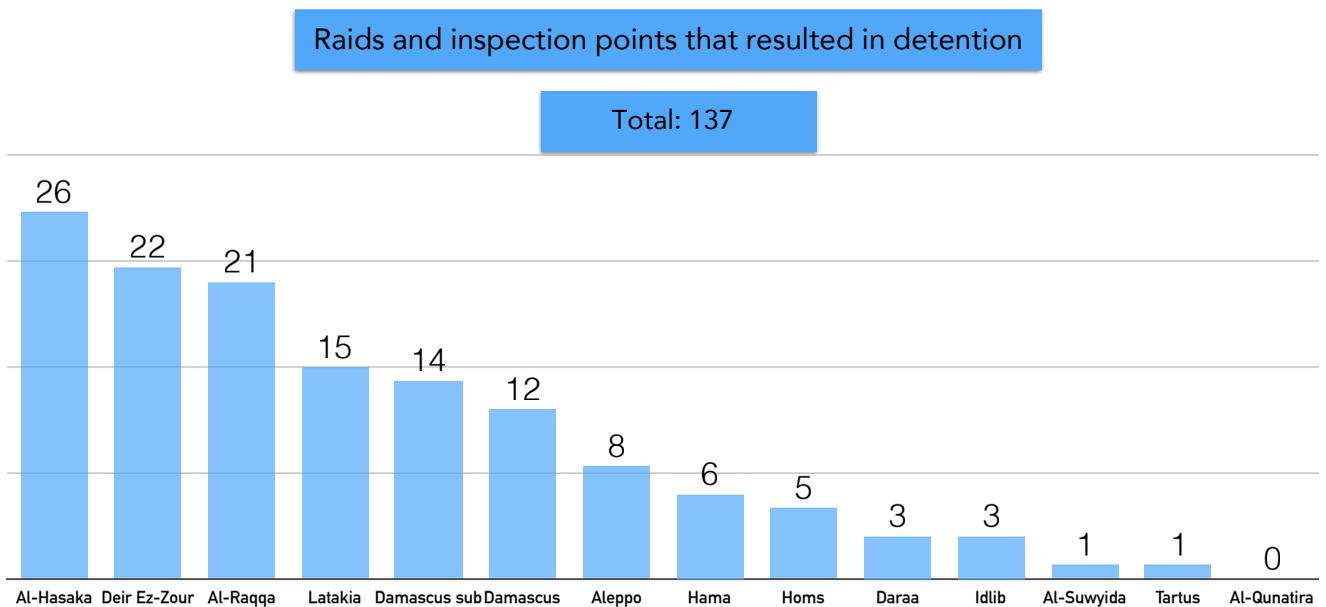




Releases from the various detention centers were as follows:

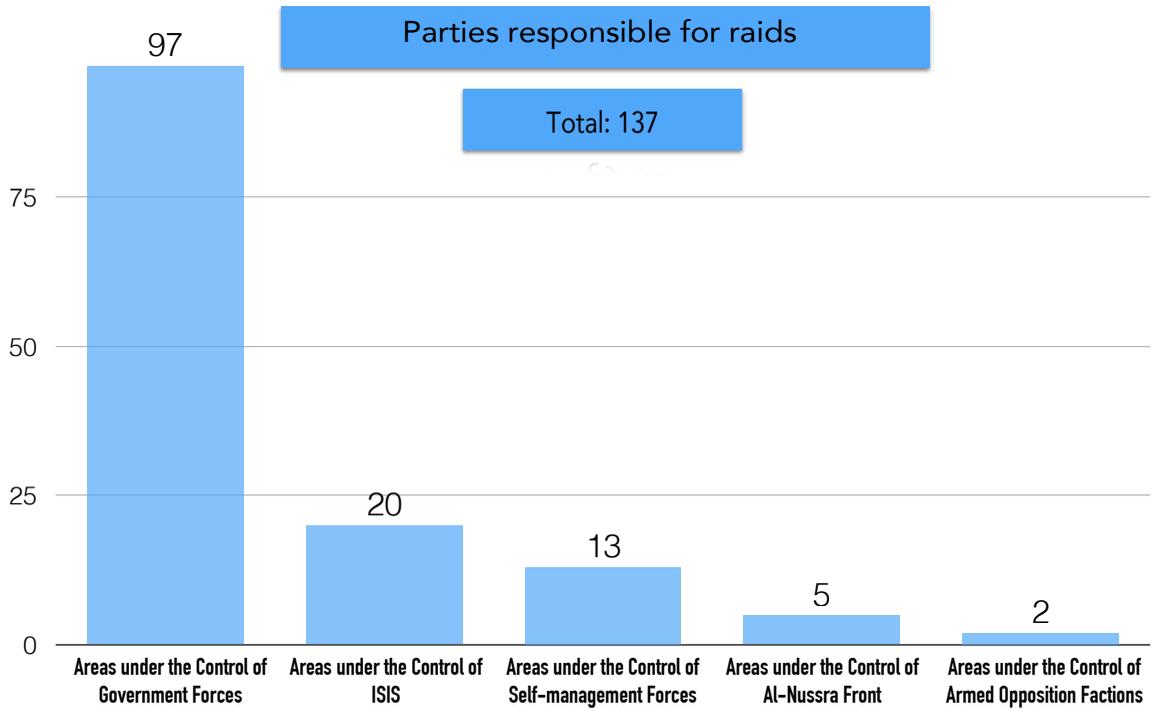


Raids and inspection points that resulted in detention:

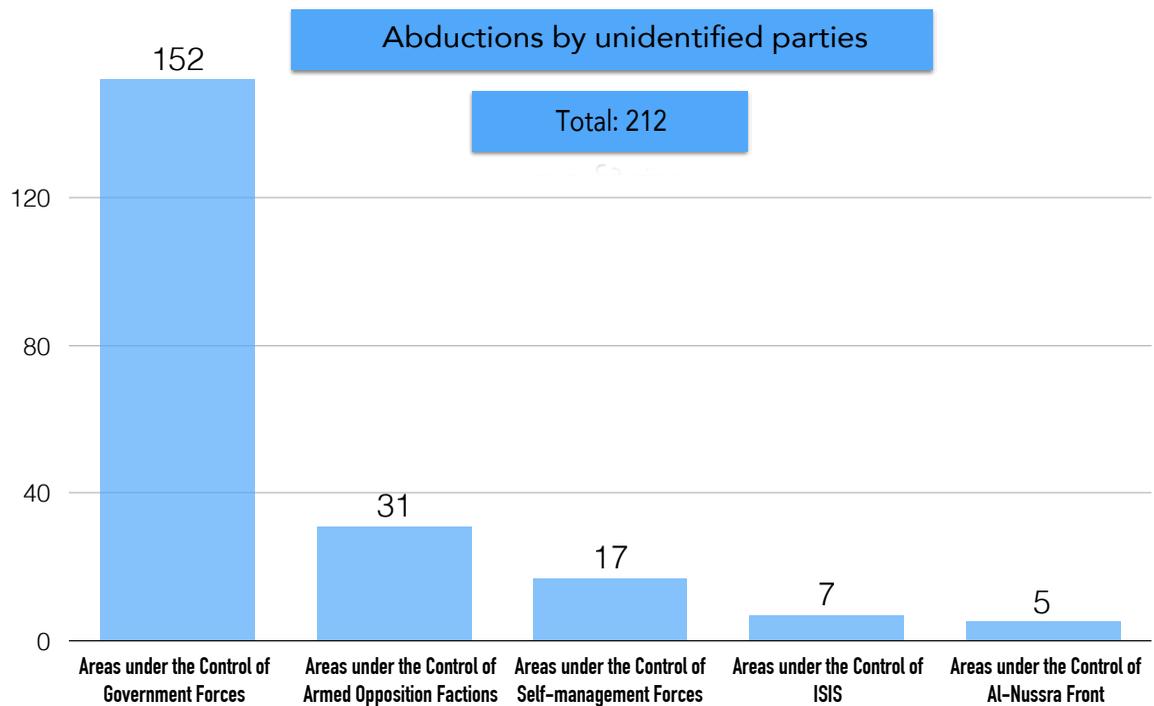




Parties responsible for raids:



Abductions by unidentified parties:





III . Most Notable Cases of Arbitrary Arrest in June

Government forces:

[Engineer Ayman Ghaibour](#), from Aqareb town in the suburbs of Hama governorate, 48-year-old. He was arrested by government forces on Sunday 12 June 2016 as he was passing a government forces checkpoint in Al-Qtaifa area in Damascus suburbs governorate. He was released on Tuesday 28 June 2016.

(Name concealed for security reasons), doctor from Hama city, 41-year-old. He was arrested by government forces at a government forces checkpoint in Ein Al-Louza neighborhood in Hama city. His fate is still unknown to SNHR as well as his family.

Extremist Islamic groups:

[Mustafa Bazar](#), from Ihsim town in the suburbs of Idlib governorate, 44-year-old, head of the medical point in Ihsim town in the suburbs of Idlib governorate. He was arrested on Friday 10 June 2016 by Al-Nusra Front armed elements who raided his place of residence in Ihsim town and took him to an undisclosed location. His fate is still unknown to SNHR as well as his family.

[Abdullatif Zaitoun](#), from Ariha city in the suburbs of Idlib governorate, a religious clerk who holds a Master degree in economy. On Wednesday 15 June 2016, he was by abducted by armed men from Jund Al-Aqsa from his place of residence in Ariha city. He was taken to a place outside the city and was subjected to torture and severe beating. [He](#) was released after 30 minutes where the abductors tossed him onto the street in Ariha city.

Self-management forces (Consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party – branch for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party)

[AbdulKarim Abu-Loqman](#), from Amouda city in the suburbs of Al-Hasaka governorate, 48-year-old, member of the political office of the Kurdistan Democratic Party. He was arrested by Self-management forces (Consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party – branch for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party) from his place of residence on Monday 27 June 2016 after he participated in an event for the commemoration of Amouda city massacre.





Writer [Farhan Mer'ie](#), from Alat Qaws village in the suburbs of Al-Hasaka governorate, 52-year-old, writer and member of the central committee of the Kurdistan Yekiti Party. On Monday 13 June 2016 he was arrested by Self-management forces (Consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party – branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party) from his place of residence in Alat Al-Qaws town and was released on the same day.

[Writer Dalkash Mer'ie](#), from Alat Al-Qaws village in the suburbs of Al-Hasaka village, 55-year-old, on Monday 13 June 2016, he was arrested by Self-management forces (Consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party – branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party) from his place of residence in Alat Al-Qaws town and was released on the same day.

Unidentified groups:

Wednesday 1 June 2016, media activist Wasim Al-Khatib was abducted in Al-Qaboun neighborhood, located in Damascus city and under the control of armed opposition factions. The abductors put Wasim in a car, beat him and insulted him, and stole his money. They released him on Saturday 4 June 2016. We haven't been able to identify the group who executed the abduction as of this writing.

Wasim is the head of the Syrian Institution for Documentation and Publishing in Damascus and Damascus suburbs governorate, he is from Irbeen city in Damascus suburbs, born in 1990, has a certificate in economy and trading, single.

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 and end to the crime of enforced-disappearance.

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.

