

INVITATION

Launch Event for SNHR's Two Reports on the Most Notable Violations by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham and ISIS

Online event (via Zoom)

15 February 2022 at 13:00-14:30 EST Time - 19:00-20:30 CET Time
(18:00-19:30 UTC Time - 20:00-21:30 Syria Time)

The areas of Syria under the control of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (HTS) have expanded and changed dramatically since its establishment up to the present day, with 2014 being the starting point of the group's independent control over the lands where it has power. The group now known as HTS passed through a series of stages in its development before reaching its current form. The core of the group's foundation can be traced back to Jabhat al Nusra (al Nusra Front), which was first created in January 2012; its name was subsequently changed to Jabhat Fateh al Sham in 2016, and the most recent 'rebranding' as HTS was announced on January 28, 2017, with this group being formed from Jabhat Fateh al Sham and a number of other extremist Islamist organizations. While some armed opposition factions, local and foreign clerics, and Sharia officials joined this alliance, many of those involved gradually left it, although Jabhat al Nusra personnel and members of other extremist Islamist groups and extremist individuals continue to be the mainstay of HTS, with Abu Muhammad al Joulani being its leader since its foundation.

HTS has violated the basic rights and freedoms of individuals in all areas under HTS control. The death toll since the announcement of the establishment of Jabhat al Nusra in January 2012 has reached at least 505 civilians, including around 28 who died due to torture and neglect of healthcare, and 106 killed by executions following summary and arbitrary trial proceedings. To date, at least 2,327 individuals, including 43 children and 44 women, continue to be arbitrarily detained or forcibly disappeared by HTS. The extent and severity of those violations, whose practice and continuing nature undermine HTS' self-serving PR narrative depicting itself as a moderate group, play an important political role in HTS' efforts to preserve its survival. To that end, HTS must address the legacy of its past, acknowledge these violations, hold the perpetrators accountable, compensate the victims, and respect basic human rights.

In January 2022, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) issued a report on HTS' most notable violations since the establishment of Jabhat al Nusra to date (The report is available at this [link](#)) which revealed that HTS continues to commit multiple types of human rights violations, mainly in its detention centers.

SNHR also issued a report on the most notable ISIS violations against Syrian society and ISIS' contribution to distorting the popular uprising calling for freedom and dignity (The report is available at this [link](#)) in which SNHR revealed that ISIS has killed at least 5,043 individuals since the announcement of the organization's establishment in Syria in April 2013, noting that despite the passage of almost two years since the defeat of ISIS, the fate of nearly 8,684 persons forcibly disappeared by ISIS remains unknown.

We have recently witnessed a relative re-emergence of ISIS in Syria, embodied in the attack on Ghwayran Prison in Hasaka city. This confirms the report's assertion that the elimination of extremist organizations cannot be achieved by force of arms alone, and in this context, this event tries to answer the question: What is the impact of the prolonged Syrian conflict, the lack of prospects for political change, and the control of forces that violate human rights in various Syrian areas, on fueling extremist organizations, especially ISIS?

Speakers:

- **Ibrahim Olabi**
A lawyer (Barrister) at Guernica 37 in London
- **Hossam Jazmati**
A Syrian writer and researcher, whose work focuses on analysis of jihadist movements
- **Rahaf Aldoughli**
Professor of Political Sciences
- **Fadel Abdul Ghany**
Director of the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR)

Moderator:

Nour H. Murad
Journalist & Program Host

To participate directly on Zoom, please sign up using the following [link](#).

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the event.

The event is in Arabic - there will be direct translation to English.

The online event will focus on the following questions:

- How can pressure be put on Hay'at Tahrir al Sham in order to mitigate and end its terrible violations against civilians, and to stop its replication of the Syrian regime in some of its dictatorial practices?
- What are the repercussions of the continuation of these violations on the local community and on Syrian society as a whole, and what is the likely future impact of these violations?
- How can civil society organizations educate Syrian society about the importance of documentation and accountability processes? Also, what role can these organizations play in light of the loss of hope regarding the feasibility of documentation and fear of the repressive Hay'at Tahrir al Sham's practices?
- What types of support can be provided to survivors and victims' families - in light of all the different types of violations they have been subjected to - especially the victims of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham and ISIS?
- What are the repercussions of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham's continued policy of arbitrary detention/enforced disappearance/torture on the local community? What are the tools available to hold it accountable?
- What is the fate of approximately 8,684 forcibly disappeared persons who had been detained by ISIS? What are the ways to put pressure on Syrian Democratic Forces, which took control of former ISIS headquarters and areas, to ensure that they take action to resolve this sensitive issue?
- What are the tools available to refocus the world's attention on the seriousness of what is happening in Syria in order to pressure the international community to stop these violations and accelerate the political transition process?



For any additional information, please contact
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