

At Least 1,882 Cases of Arbitrary Arrest/ Detention Documented in Syria in 2020, 149 of Them in December: Detainees Include 52 Children and 39 Women

Syria Is Neither Stable nor Safe for the Return of
Refugees or IDPs, Especially in Areas Controlled by
the Syrian Regime and Its Brutal Security Services

Saturday 2 January 2021

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.

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| I. Background and Methodology..... | 2 |
| II.The Issues That Characterized 2020 According to the SNHR's Database of Arbitrary Arrests/ Detentions and Enforced Disappearances..... | 5 |
| III.Summary of the Most Notable Events Related to the Detainees Issue in December 2020..... | 8 |
| IV. Record of Cases of Arbitrary Arrests by the Parties to the Conflict..... | 10 |
| V. Most Notable Cases and Incidents of Arbitrary Arrest in December and in 2020 ... | 14 |
| VI.The Most Notable Work Carried Out by SNHR on the Detainees Issue..... | 37 |
| VII. Many Face Multiple Charges Following False Confessions Extorted Via Torture and Intimidation, Before Being Referred to 'Courts' More Like Security Branches, With the Regime Issuing Decrees and Laws That Violate the Principles of Law..... | 37 |
| VIII.The Syrian Regime Is Responsible for Threatening the Lives of Thousands of Detainees Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic..... | 41 |
| IX. Conclusions and Recommendations..... | 43 |

I. Background and Methodology

Arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances have been amongst the most widespread violations since the earliest days of the popular uprising for democracy in Syria in March 2011. These criminal acts, which are considered to be the most common and pervasive regime violations against Syrian citizens, affecting hundreds of thousands of Syrians, are carried out by the Syrian regime's security services and army forces, as well as its 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 (SNHR), as is clarified in our methodology¹.

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 (including 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 crime of enforced disappearance.

The other parties to the conflict and the controlling non-regime forces in Syria, such as the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, extremist Islamist groups, and various Armed Opposition factions, use similar strategies and practices to those of the Syrian regime, albeit at a lower rate and in a less systematic manner than those practiced by Syrian Regime forces; these constitute violations of International Human Rights Law, and, if they took place on the basis of the armed conflict, they constitute violations of International Humanitarian Law.

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>

None of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces provide any public record for the community showing the whereabouts of the arrested/ detainees and the reasons for their arrest, nor do they provide any documentation of the judicial sentences issued against them, including the death penalty, with the vast majority of the families not knowing the fate of their loved ones, since the vast majority, as we've indicated in all the reports we've issued about the detainees, have been forcibly disappeared. We have talked in detail about the phenomenon of enforced disappearance and the suffering of the families, especially the children, in [many reports](#).

Methodology

This report outlines the record of arbitrary arrests by the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria documented both in the past month of December and in the whole of 2020. In addition, it sheds light on the most notable individual cases and incidents of arbitrary arrest and detention that the SNHR's team documented during the last month, as well as categorizing cases and incidents of arrest according to the place where the incident took place.

On 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 record of the cases and incidents of arrests documented by the SNHR, which are included in this report, do not include those kidnappings and abductions in which we were unable to identify the responsible party.

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 under the principles of international laws and the set of principles on arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance. The SNHR's Detainee and Forcibly-Disappeared Department daily:

- Records cases of arrest/ detention/ torture which departmental personnel collect from various sources, such as victims' families, SNHR members in Syrian governorates, cooperating local activists, and former detainees (survivors of detention), conducting daily updates of data on cases of arrest/ detention, enforced disappearance and release, according to verified information on the person's condition, before diligently working to contact the families of the detainees and forcibly disappeared persons, and those close to them, for the purpose of collecting as much information and data as possible, in light of the extraordinary and extremely complex challenges.
- This information, once received, is then registered on the database after being cross-checked with several sources. The Detainee Department also constantly works to pursue any new leads or information about each detainee, the place of detention, and his or her current conditions via continuous interaction with the detainees' families and those close to them, as well as meeting with survivors of arrest/ detention and documenting their testimonies about the circumstances and experience of their detention and the violations they were subject to, along with those whom they saw within the detention centers.

The Detainee Department team constantly updates the database of detainees who were released as and when information becomes available; this data is added to the SNHR's databases which are retained securely, with several backup copies being stored in different locations. We have created on our website a special form [to document a detainee](#) to facilitate access and contact with victims' families.

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 intended to suppress freedom of opinion and expression.

The ongoing daily process of documenting detainees also comes with other additional challenges for SNHR, which has been documenting detainees' cases since 2011. The most notable challenges amongst these are:

- 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 for help with securing their loved ones' release, effectively ransoms, that can amount to thousands of dollars in some cases.

- The failure of the international community and of all the organs of the United Nations to apply pressure on the Syrian regime authorities to release even one individual (including those whose sentences are completed), has affirmed the conviction of many within Syrian society that it is useless to cooperate in the documentation process.

II. The Issues That Characterized 2020 According to the SNHR's Database of Arbitrary Arrests/ Detentions and Enforced Disappearances:

Syrian Regime forces in 2020 particularly targeted individuals who have concluded settlements of their security status with the Syrian regime in areas that previously concluded conciliation/ settlement agreements with the regime for persecution and arrest; these arrests have been concentrated in Damascus Suburbs and Daraa governorates, with most occurring during campaigns of mass raids and arrests, targeting civilians, former workers in humanitarian organizations, popular uprising activists, and defectors from Syrian Regime forces. SNHR has documented at least 307 cases of arrest against individuals who have concluded settlements of their security status.

The areas that Syrian Regime forces took control of as a result of their military operations during 2020 in the suburbs of Aleppo, Idlib and Hama governorates saw arrests, targeting civilians who had remained in their homes and refused to be displaced. The highest rate of arrests documented this year took place, according to the SNHR database, in February 2020, due to Syrian Regime forces carrying out large-scale arrests in the areas where they had regained control.

With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Syrian regime has been subjected to some pressure from several international bodies and organizations in order to reveal the fate of and release tens of thousands of detainees, for fear of the spread of the virus among them, similar to a number of countries worldwide that initiated the release of large numbers of detainees; the Syrian regime, however, circumvented these pressures, and issued [Amnesty Decree No. 6 of 2020](#) on March 22, 2020, with SNHR publishing [a report on March 24, 2020](#), following the issuance of Decree No. 6, explaining in detail how the Syrian regime has manipulated the texts of its decrees and their implementation, noting that it would take 325 years for the regime to release the detainees imprisoned in connection with the political uprising against it if the regime continued with the proposed pace of releases.

Nearly two months after the last amnesty decree, we [issued a report](#) explaining what had happened within two months, noting that the number of arrests carried out by the regime was higher than the number of those it released, with only 96 of the nearly 130,000 citizens unjustly detained released in this brief period, during which another 113 new individuals were arrested; in the same period, we also recorded the deaths of 30 detained Syrian citizens due to torture.

Since the beginning of 2020, we have documented arrests targeting citizens returning from the areas of their displacement to their original areas, which are controlled by Syrian Regime forces, as well as arrests [targeting those who illegally returned from Lebanon](#) to their home towns, who have been charged with 'terrorism'. In this context, we always recommend that refugees or IDPs should not return to Syrian regime-controlled areas because there are no real guarantees that the regime will not subject them to arrest, torture, enforced disappearance, or compulsory military conscription there. The SNHR team has documented at least 156 cases of arrest against returnees, including 89 cases of arrest targeting returnees from outside Syria.

In 2020, Syrian Regime forces continued to persecute Syrian citizens in connection with their political dissent and expression of opinions, despite the right to both being guaranteed by the constitution and international law; amongst those subjected to persecution and arbitrary arrest are a number of Syrian citizens detained solely because they criticized the deteriorating living and economic conditions in the regime-controlled areas, including lawyers and teachers, who were detained by Syrian Regime forces in raids on their homes and workplaces. We also recorded arrests and persecution of citizens in connection with their participation in anti-Syrian regime protests and activities in [Suwayda governorate](#), including college students, with most of these arrests taking place while they were passing through regime checkpoints in Damascus and Suwayda cities. We also recorded arrests targeting civilians in connection with their kinship with participants in the popular uprising for democracy.

We documented Syrian Regime forces carrying out arrests against persons in connection with their movement between and travel to the areas outside the control of the Syrian regime, while they were passing through regime checkpoints. We also documented arrests of individuals for making phone calls to areas outside the Syrian regime's control, with those detained including children, women and elderly people.

We also documented some arrests against workers involved in the field of currency exchange; the aim of these detentions is to extort ransom money from the detainees' families, with these victims being released in exchange for huge sums of money. Amongst those subjected to arbitrary arrest are a number of former detainees released in recent months, who have been rearrested under various pretexts, such as claiming that they have destroyed their personal documents, that their arrest warrants are still outstanding, or in order to conscript them for military service.

In the context of cases in which individuals have been released, we recorded in 2020 that Syrian Regime forces released 545 detainees from civilian prisons in various Syrian governorates, with most of these being released after the end of their arbitrary sentences, with the duration

of their detention ranging from four to nine years. Among those released, we recorded at least 93 individuals who were released in November and December under a special presidential pardon as part of a reconciliation process that targeted detainees from Daraa governorate who had previously made settlements, including dissidents from Syrian Regime forces, whose duration of detention ranged from one to two years. We also recorded that 287 of the released persons were discharged from detention centers due to the issuance of Amnesty Decree No. 6 of 2020. Photos of some of the released detainees clearly showed that they were subjected to malnutrition and neglect of healthcare during their detention.

Meanwhile, the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces continued enforcing the group's policies of arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance throughout 2020, targeting activists and members of civil society groups who oppose their policies. We also recorded SDF carrying out mass raids and arrests of civilians who took part in anti-SDF demonstrations in areas under its control, as well as targeting civilians for their kinship relationships with individuals in the Armed Opposition/ the Syrian National Army. Syrian Democratic Forces also carried out campaigns of mass raids and arrests, targeting many civilians, including children and persons with special needs, on the pretext of fighting ISIS cells, with some of these campaigns backed by US-led coalition helicopters. Also in 2020, we documented Syrian Democratic Forces carrying out arrests of civilians, including children, with the aim of forcibly conscripting them. SDF also targeted several families for arrest, as well as targeting several members of the same families, including elderly people, without providing clear charges, taking these detained individuals to undisclosed locations.

In the context of cases in which individuals have been released, we documented in 2020 that Syrian Democratic Forces released 221 civilians from SDF detention centers. The duration of detention for those released ranged from eight months to two years, with most being released as a result of tribal mediation.

2020 also saw Hay'at Tahrir al Sham carrying out detentions of civilians, with arrests concentrated in Idlib city, including activists working with civil society groups, media workers, lawyers and clerics; most of these arrests occurred due to the detainees expressing opinions critical of the HTS's management of areas under its control or because of their work in institutions affiliated with the Interim Government in areas controlled by the Armed Opposition/ the Syrian National Army. Most of these detentions were carried out through summons issued by the Public Prosecution Service of the Salvation Government, which is affiliated with Hay'at Tahrir al Sham, and took place arbitrarily in the form of raids in which HTS members stormed their victims' homes, often breaking down the doors, or by kidnapping their victims while they were traveling or passing through temporary checkpoints.

The Armed Opposition/ the Syrian National Army also continued carrying out arbitrary arrests and kidnappings in 2020, most of which occurred on a mass scale, in many cases targeting several members of the same families, as well as persecuting civilians who protested against its policies in the areas under its control and against the poor living conditions there, and targeting media activists, with SNHR also documenting mass arrests that targeted those coming from the areas under the control of Syrian Regime forces. We also recorded detentions carried out within an ethnic context, with these incidents being concentrated in areas under the group's control in Aleppo governorate. 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, as well as being carried out without presenting any clear charges against those being detained.

III. Summary of the Most Notable Events Related to the Detainees Issue in December 2020:

In December, Syrian Regime forces² continued to persecute Syrian citizens in connection with their political dissent and expression of opinions, despite the right to both being guaranteed by the constitution and international law; among the issues we wish to emphasize in this report are the following:

First: Amongst those subjected to persecution and arbitrary arrest are a number of civilians detained while trying to travel towards areas outside the control of Syrian Regime forces, who arrested these people while they were passing through regime checkpoints. This yet again confirms the truth of our often-repeated observation that no Syrian citizen can feel safe from arrests since these are carried out arbitrarily, without any foundation in law and with no independent judiciary. This underlines the fact that areas under the Syrian regime's control cannot be considered safe for residents there, with a large number of those we communicate with desperate to emigrate or simply wishing to flee and seek refuge in other countries. All this further demonstrates that areas under the Syrian regime's control are very clearly not a safe haven for the return of refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs). There can be no stability or safety in light of the survival of the security services themselves, which have committed crimes against humanity since 2011 and are still continuing to do so to date.

Second: We have recorded multiple arrests and acts of persecution against citizens in connection with making phone calls to their family members and friends in areas outside the control of the Syrian regime.

2 We generally use the term 'the Syrian regime' rather than 'the Syrian government', because the nature of the ruling power in Syria is a totalitarian dictatorship based on ruling the nation in an authoritarian fashion through a very limited group of individuals, primarily the President of the Republic and his selected leaders of the security services, while the ministers, including the Prime Minister and the Minister of Interior, play a restricted, largely ceremonial role, which is limited to implementing precisely what the ruling regime orders, without any decision-making power or active role; this means that the government's role is wholly subordinate and limited to serving the regime, with all the main powers being concentrated in the hands of the President of the Republic and the security services. Governance in Syria is wholly decided by the autocratic authority of the ruling family and there is no independent decision-making structure. Rather, the government is an empty façade there for show; the Minister of Interior receives orders from the security branches over which he nominally presides which are in turn under the command of the President, while the Minister of Justice cannot summon a civilian-level security agent other than the head of a security branch; the security branches, along with the president, are the true power and the governing regime in Syria.

Although we acknowledge that the United Nations and its agencies use the term 'the Syrian government' in general, we believe that this is a completely inaccurate and misleading term in the Syrian context.

Third: Syrian Regime forces in December continued to persecute and arrest individuals who have concluded settlements of their security status with the Syrian regime in areas that previously concluded settlement agreements with the regime; these arrests have been concentrated in Daraa and Damascus Suburbs governorates, with most occurring during campaigns of mass raids and arrests.

Fourth: We recorded arrests of a number of civilians [in connection with their kinship with activists in the popular uprising or opponents of the Syrian regime](#), with these operations being part of the prevailing pattern in the regime's punitive policy against the families and relatives of participants in the popular uprising for democracy. We also documented citizens being arrested simply for criticizing the deteriorating living conditions in regime-controlled areas.

In the context of cases in which individuals have been released, we recorded in December that Syrian Regime forces released 13 detainees from various Syrian governorates, all of whom were released from regime detention centers in Damascus governorate after their arbitrary sentences were completed, with the duration of their detention ranging from four to nine years.

Meanwhile, the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces continued enforcing the group's policies of arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance throughout the month of December, targeting civilians for their kinship relationships with individuals in the Armed Opposition/ the Syrian National Army. Syrian Democratic Forces also carried out campaigns of mass raids and arrests, targeting many civilians, including children, on the pretext of fighting ISIS cells, with some of these campaigns backed by US-led coalition helicopters, with these arrests being concentrated in Deir Ez-Zour and Hasaka governorates. Also in December, we documented Syrian Democratic Forces carrying out arrests/ detentions targeting several families, as well as targeting several members of the same families, including elderly people, without providing clear charges, taking these detained individuals to undisclosed locations.

In December, we also recorded Syrian Democratic Forces carrying out abduction of children with the aim of taking them to its training and recruitment camps and forcibly conscripting them. Syrian Democratic Forces have prevented the children's families from communicating with them, and did not disclose their fate.

December also saw Hay'at Tahrir al Sham³ carrying out detentions of civilians, with arrests concentrated in Idlib city, including activists working with civil society groups and media workers; most of these arrests occurred due to the detainees expressing opinions critical of the HTS's management of areas under its control. These detentions were carried out through summons issued by the Public Prosecution Service of the Salvation Government, which is affiliated with Hay'at Tahrir al Sham, and took place arbitrarily in the form of raids in which HTS members stormed their victims' homes, often breaking down the doors, or by kidnapping their victims while they were traveling or passing through temporary checkpoints.

³ The United Nations has designated it as a terrorist organization

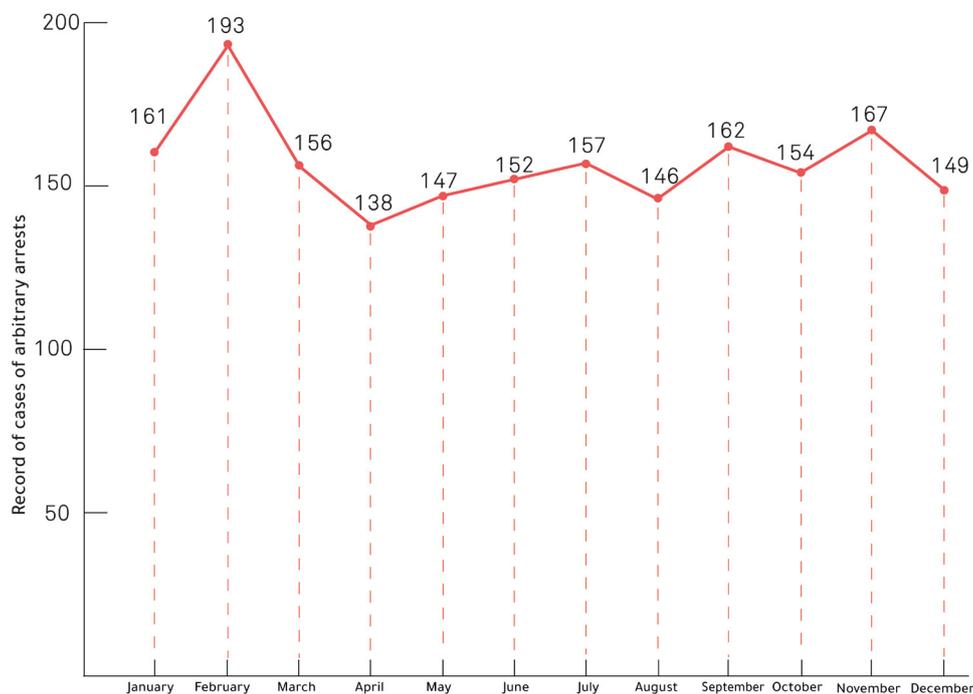
The Armed Opposition/ the Syrian National Army also continued carrying out arbitrary detentions and kidnappings in December, targeting civilians under various pretexts, such as having kinship with Syrian Democratic Forces; we also recorded mass arrests targeting those coming from areas under the control of the Syrian regime. In addition, we recorded detentions carried out under an ethnic pretext, with these incidents being concentrated in areas under opposition forces' control in Aleppo governorate. 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, as well as being carried out without presenting any clear charges against those being detained.

IV. Record of Cases of Arbitrary Arrests by the Parties to the Conflict:

A. Record of cases of arbitrary arrests in 2020:

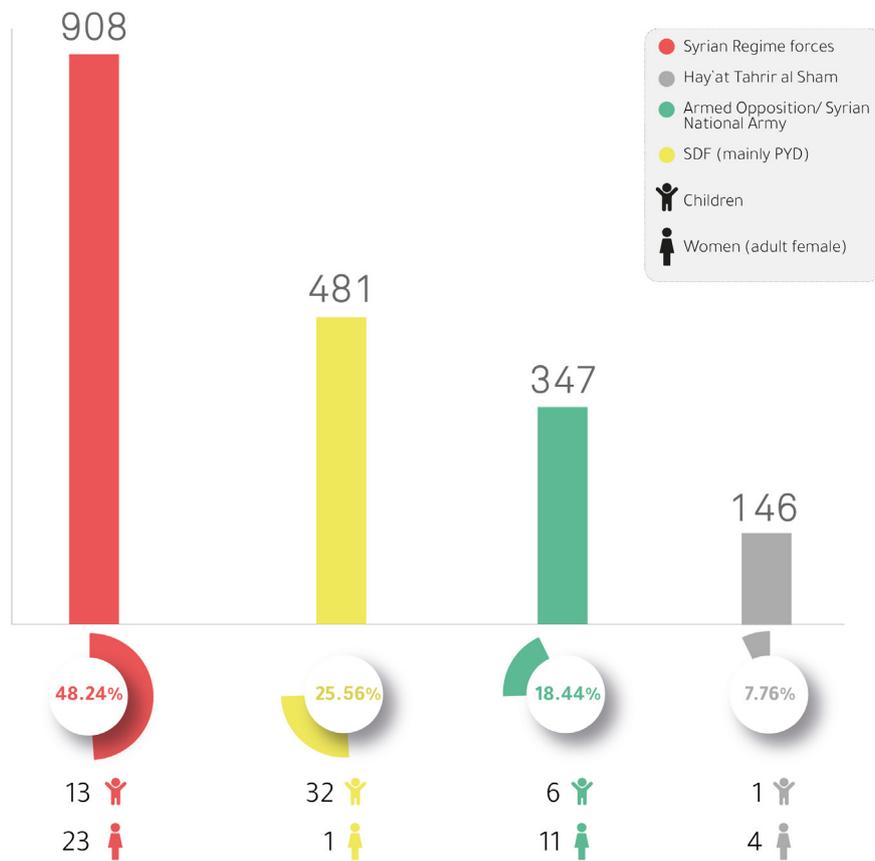
SNHR documented at least 1,882 cases of arbitrary arrest/ detention in 2020, including 52 children and 39 women (adult female), 1,303 of whom have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

The record of cases of arbitrary arrest/ detention at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria in 2020 were distributed as follows:



The chart above shows the increasing rates of cases of arbitrary arrest/ detention in February 2020. This was due to the wide arrests carried out by Syrian Regime forces, some of which occurred on a mass scale in areas they regained control of.

The record of cases of arbitrary arrest/ detention were distributed according to the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria in 2020 as follows:



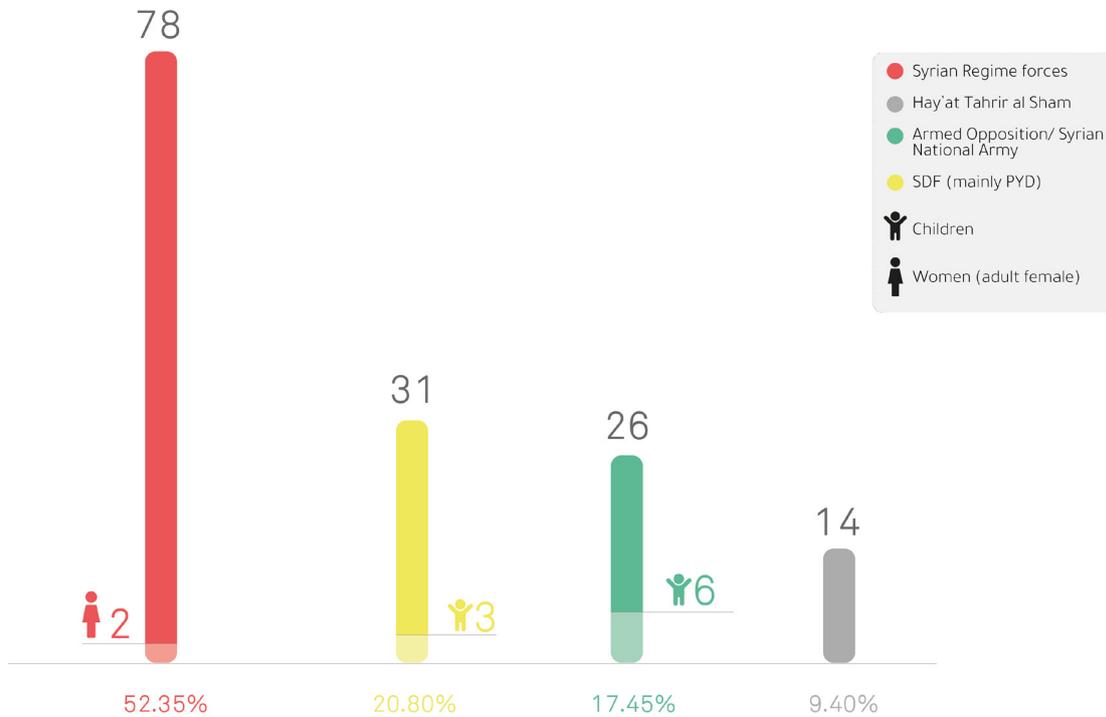
A. Syrian Regime forces: 908 individuals, including 13 children and 23 women.

B. Hay'at Tahrir al Sham: 146 individuals, including one child and four women.

C. The Armed Opposition/ The Syrian National Army: 347 individuals, including six children and 11 women.

D. Syrian Democratic Forces: 481 individuals, including 32 children and one woman.

The record of cases of arbitrary arrest/ detention in December was distributed according to the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces, as follows:



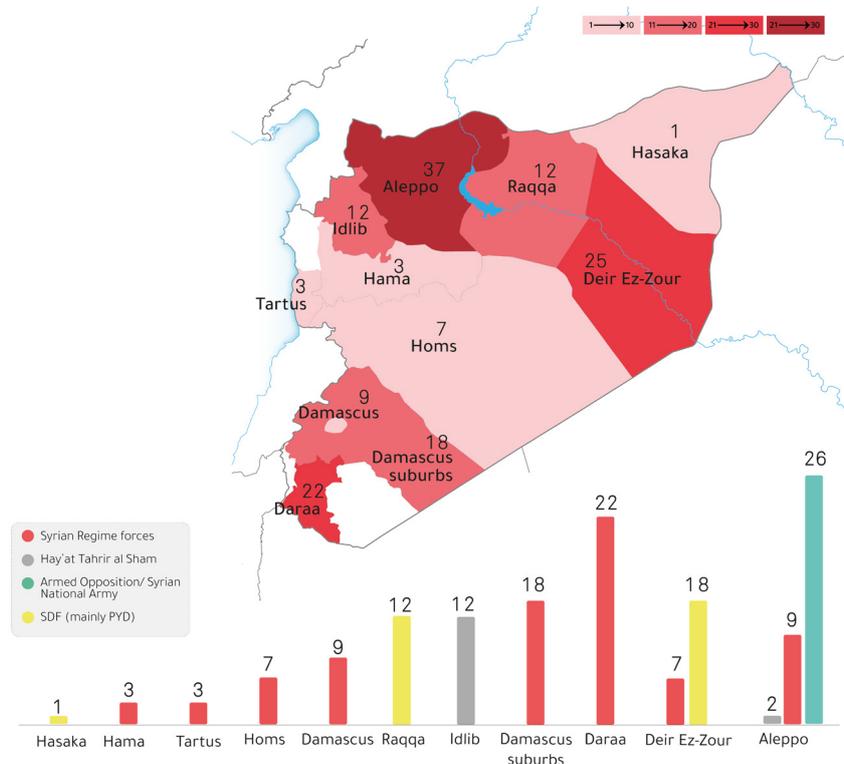
A. Syrian Regime forces: 78 individuals, including two women. 62 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

B. Hay'at Tahrir al Sham: 14 individuals. 11 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

C. The Armed Opposition/ The Syrian National Army: 26 individuals, including six children. 19 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

D. Syrian Democratic Forces: 31 individuals, including three children. 27 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

The cases of arbitrary arrest/ detention documented in December at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces were distributed across all the Syrian governorates as follows:



The map above shows that the highest rates of cases of arbitrary arrest/ detention during this period were seen in Aleppo governorate, followed by the governorates of Deir Ez-Zour then Daraa.

V. Most Notable Cases and Incidents of Arbitrary Arrest in December and in 2020:

1. In 2020:

A. Syrian Regime forces:

- Most notable incidents:

On Wednesday, February 5, 2020, Syrian Regime forces arrested five civilians, including an infant and two women, from al Iteiba town in the Eastern Ghouta in Damascus Suburbs governorate, after they were summoned to one of the regime's detention centers in al Iteiba town. They were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Friday, February 7, 2020, Syrian Regime forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in Ein Tarma town in the Eastern Ghouta in Damascus Suburbs governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of five former volunteers with the Civil Defense Organization, known as 'the White Helmets', who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Friday, April 3, 2020, Syrian Regime forces arrested three women from al Mowazzafin neighborhood in Deir Ez-Zour city as they were returning from areas under the control of Syrian Democratic Forces to their homes in al Mowazzafeen, taking them to an undisclosed location.

On Monday, June 15, 2020, Syrian Regime forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in al Seir Square in the center of Suwayda city after anti-Syrian regime demonstrations that took place in the city. SNHR documented the arrest of nine civilians. Among those detained were government employees who had earlier been arbitrarily dismissed from their jobs due to their dissent with the Syrian regime. We documented that they were released on Thursday, July 9, 2020.

On Friday, July 3, 2020, Syrian Regime forces carried out a campaign of arrests at one of the regime's checkpoints at the entrance of al Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus city. SNHR documented the arrest of five civilians, including one woman, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Monday, August 10, 2020, personnel from the Syrian regime's Military Security Force arrested two nurses working at the Hamouriya Medical Center, in Hamouriya town in the Eastern Ghouta, east of Damascus Suburbs governorate, taking them to an undisclosed location.

On Saturday, August 22, 2020, Syrian regime forces arrested a woman after raiding her house on al Kurneish Street in Douma city in the Eastern Ghouta, east of Damascus Suburbs governorate, on charges of communicating with her relatives in northern Syria by phone, and took her to an undisclosed location.

On Sunday, September 20, 2020, personnel from the Syrian regime's Air Security Force carried out a campaign of arrests at a regime checkpoint near the bridge in al Tayba town, west of Damascus Suburbs governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of one female child and three women, who are from Kanaker village in Damascus Suburbs governorate. We documented that they were released on Tuesday, October 20, 2020.

[Video](#) posted online shows Syrian regime law enforcement personnel and pro-regime militias in civilian dress (more commonly known as shabiha) attacking protesters in al Suwayda city on Monday, June 15, 2020, in response to an anti-regime protest in al Seir Square in the city center. SNHR observed several clearly acts of violence committed by law enforcement forces against protesters the same day, documenting the beating and arrest of nine protesters.

- Most notable cases:

Thaer Munir al Na'san, a college student at the faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Daraa University, from Tseel town, west of Daraa governorate, was kidnapped on Sunday, January 19, 2020, by gunmen affiliated with Syrian Regime forces in Daraa al Mahatta area of Daraa city. His fate remains unknown to SNHR.

Saleh Eisa al Ta'anni and his son Muhammad, from Saham al Joulan village in the western suburbs of Daraa governorate, were arrested on Sunday, April 19, 2020, by the Syrian regime's Air Security Force personnel, while they were passing through one of the regime's checkpoints on the outskirts of Ein Thakar town in the west of Daraa governorate, before being released on Monday, April 20, 2020.

Nedal Shamdin al Atma, a former defector from the regime military with the rank of captain, from al Sanamayn city, north of Daraa governorate, was arrested by personnel from the Military Intelligence Division's Palestine Branch in Damascus city on Sunday, April 19, 2020, after he was summoned to the same branch; he was among those who previously made a settlement of their legal and security status.

Raed Abdi al Khatib, an activist in the popular uprising from Suwayda city, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces on Tuesday, June 9, 2020, in a raid on an office located in Anji Tower in Suwayda city, following his participation in anti-Syrian regime demonstrations in the city. We documented that he was released on Thursday, July 9, 2020.



Raed Abdi al Khatib

Mahmoud al Sarhan, a dissident conscript from Syrian Regime forces, from al Joulan town in the suburbs of Quneitra governorate, and a resident of Daraa Palestinian Refugee Camp in Daraa city, was arrested by members of the Syrian regime's Military Security Force on Friday, June 12, 2020, while he was passing through one of the regime's checkpoints near the National Hospital in al Sahari neighborhood of Daraa city. We documented that he was released the next day, with the photo taken for him after his release showing the effects of severe torture on his body.

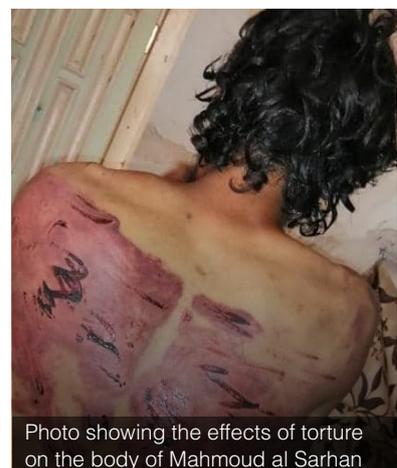


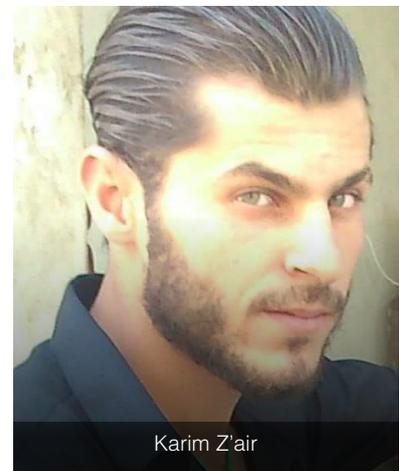
Photo showing the effects of torture on the body of Mahmoud al Sarhan

Raidan Mezyad al Halabi, a university student at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Damascus, from Salkhad city, south of Suwayda governorate, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces on Wednesday, July 1, 2020, in the university student housing in Damascus city, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Raidan Mezyad al Halabi

The poet Karim Z'air, from Salamiya city, east of Hama governorate, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces on Thursday, July 2, 2020, in a raid on his home in Salamiya city, in relation to his support for the anti-Syrian regime demonstrations in Suwayda city. We documented that he was released on August 12, 2020.



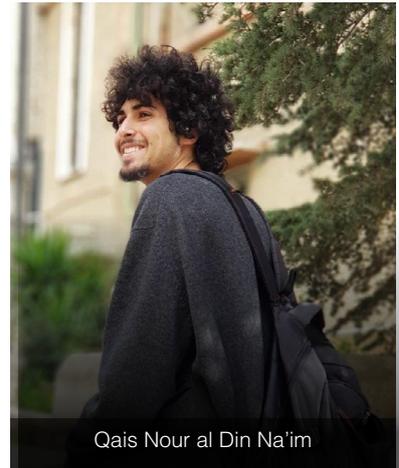
Karim Z'air

Abdul Rahim al Samman, a lawyer from Hama city, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces in the city on Saturday, September 19, 2020, in connection with his having criticized the poor living conditions in the city on his personal 'Facebook' account', and taken to the Criminal Security Branch in the city. We documented that he was released on Thursday, September 24, 2020.



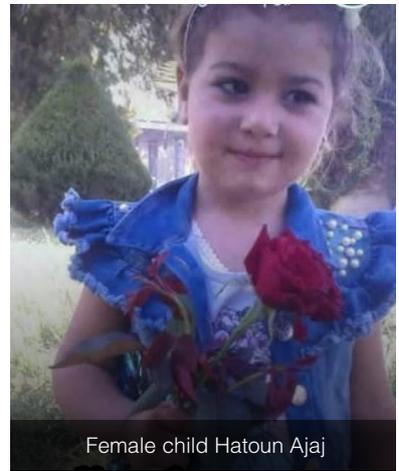
Lawyer Abdul Rahim al Samman

Qais Nour al Din Na'im, a 22-year-old college student from al Suwayda city studying at the second branch of Damascus University's Mechanical Engineering faculty, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces on Sunday, September 20, 2020, while he was passing through the Qasr al Mutamarat checkpoint in Damascus city, and taken to the city's Political Security branch. We documented that he was released on Tuesday, September 22, 2020.



Qais Nour al Din Na'im

Israa Eisa Khamis and her young daughter, Hatoun Ajaj, from Kanaker village in Damascus Suburbs governorate, were arrested by members of the Syrian regime's Air Security Force on Tuesday, September 20, 2020, while they were passing through one of the regime's checkpoints near al Teiba town's bridge in western Damascus Suburbs governorate. We documented that they were released on Wednesday, October 7, 2020.



Female child Hatoun Ajaj

Ms. Salam Hreidin, and her child Yahya Hreidin, from Tafas city in the western suburbs of Daraa governorate, were arrested by members of the Syrian regime's Air Security Force on Sunday, October 18, 2020, in al Sharqi Garage in Daraa al Mahatta area in Daraa city, and taken to the Air Security Branch in the city.

Photos of detainees released by Syrian Regime forces show the effects of the gross neglect of medical and health care during their detention:

Abdul Hamid Mahmoud al Ghafel al Haj Ali, from Kherbet Ghazala town in the eastern suburbs of Daraa governorate, was arrested on Tuesday, December 9, 2014, by Syrian Regime forces in Kherbet Ghazala town and detained for about five-and-a-half years. On Friday, April 17, 2020, he was released from Seydnaya Military Prison in Damascus Suburbs governorate. The photo compares his health and physical situation before his arrest and after his release, clearly demonstrating the Syrian regime's gross neglect of medical and health care of detainees.



Photo of Abdul Hamid al Haj Ali after his release on April 17, 2020



Photo of Abdul Hamid al Haj Ali before his arrest and enforced disappearance on December 9, 2014

Fares Jhayyem, a dissident conscript from Syrian Regime forces, from Zakiya town in the west of Damascus Suburbs governorate, was arrested in 2017, by Syrian Regime forces when he voluntarily came forward to undergo a settlement after he had received guarantees from the reconciliation committee in Zakiya town. On Sunday, April 19, 2020, he was released from Seydnaya Military Prison in Damascus Suburbs governorate. The photo compares his health and physical situation before his arrest and after his release, clearly demonstrating the Syrian regime's gross neglect of medical and health care of detainees.



Photo of Fares Jhayyem before his arrest and enforced disappearance in 2017



Photo of Fares Jhayyem before his arrest and enforced disappearance in 2017

Samer Rabea al Zahira, aged 32, from al Dablan village, which is administratively a part of al Ashra district in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces in May 2019 in a raid on his home in al Dablan village after returning from Lebanon and undergoing a settlement of his security status in a conciliation center in Deir Ez-Zour governorate, and was released from Seydnaya Military Prison in Damascus Suburbs governorate on Thursday, April 23, 2020. The photo compares his health and physical situation before his arrest and after his release, clearly demonstrating the Syrian regime's gross neglect of medical and health care of detainees.



Bashar Qasem al Balkhi, from Naseib village in the eastern suburbs of Daraa governorate, was arrested in 2018 by Syrian Regime forces and detained for about two years. On July 27, 2020, he was released from Seydnaya Military Prison in Damascus Suburbs governorate. The photo compares his health and physical situation before his arrest and after his release, clearly demonstrating the Syrian regime's gross neglect of medical and health care of detainees.



On Wednesday, November 4, 2020, photos shared online showed detainees released by the Syrian regime from regime detention centers in Damascus governorate following the regime's release of about 62 detainees, all from Daraa governorate; among them were 22 individuals who had previously defected from Syrian Regime forces. This release took place in the context of a special presidential pardon in relation to reconciliation agreements carried out by the regime in Daraa governorate, following the assassination of the prominent military leader, Adham al Karad. The Syrian regime gathered the detainees in the Daraa Governorate Building before their release. According to the families, relatives and friends of the released persons, and according to what we have registered in our database, the detainees spent an average period of one

Muhammad al Hussein, known as Muhammad Abu Sufyan, a media activist from the Dlama village, which is administratively a part of al Zerba district in the southern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was arrested by gunmen affiliated with Hay'at Tahrir al Sham on Wednesday, February 12, 2020, in an area near al Dana city in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate, while he was photographing cars carrying displaced people from the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate. He was taken to one of HTS' detention centers in al Dana city where HTS members examined his equipment before releasing him later the same day.



Muhammad al Hussein

Mr. Mustafa al Eidou, a pharmacist and the assistant director of the 'Free' Idlib Health Directorate, is from Hass village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. SNHR documented his arrest by members of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham on Sunday, June 14, 2020, in a raid on his office in the Health Directorate's building in Idlib city, and his release on the same day.



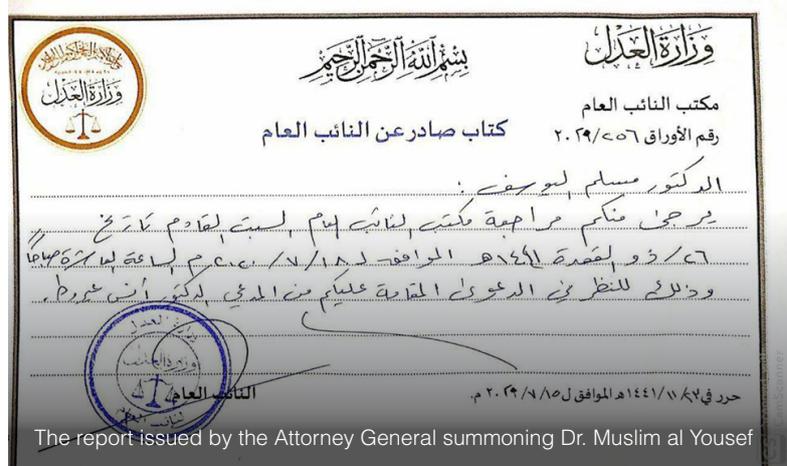
Mustafa al Eidou

Hussein Ahmad al Khleif, nicknamed Abu Sham, a reporter for the Children of One World Organization, works as a cameraman for Syria TV and the Turkish Anadolu Agency. Hussein, born in 1989, is a graduate of the University of Hasaka's Faculty of Law, from al Jabin village in the suburbs of Hama governorate. He was arrested by members of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham on Sunday, July 5, 2020, after being lured to al Azraq Factory in Sarmin city in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate. We documented that he was released on Saturday, July 18, 2020.

Dr. Msallam al Yousef, Dean of the Faculty of Sharia and Law at the University of Idlib, from Khan Sheikhoun city, south of Idlib governorate, was arrested by members of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham on Saturday, July 18, 2020, after being summoned to its Attorney General in Idlib city, and taken to an undisclosed location. We documented that he was released on Monday, July 20, 2020.



Msallam al Yousef



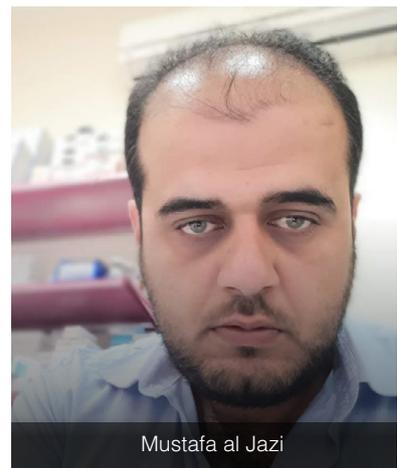
The report issued by the Attorney General summoning Dr. Muslim al Yousef

Lawyer Akram Jnaid, a member of the Free Lawyers Syndicate in northwestern Syria, and a member of the Political Bureau of the al Jaish al Thani faction of the Armed Opposition forces, was detained by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel on Saturday, August 1, 2020, while he was passing through Deir Ballout crossing between Idlib governorate and Afrin city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate; he was released after several hours.



Akram Jnaid

Mustafa al Jazi, a pharmacist and the director of the midwifery institute in Idlib city who is originally from al Bara town in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, was detained by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel on Tuesday, August 18, 2020, after he was summoned to the group's al Falah Center (al Hisbah) for questioning in connection with an artistic event held by the Midwifery Institute for one of its students. We documented that he was released on Saturday, August 22, 2020.



Mustafa al Jazi

Ahmad Zuhair Abu Bakr, the supervisor of the educational complex in Ma'aret Misreen city in the northern suburbs of Idlib, was arrested by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel on Tuesday, September 15, 2020, in a raid on his home in Ma'aret Misreen city. We documented that he was released the next day.



Ahmad Zuhair Abu Bakr

Nabil Mustafa Haj Khalil, from Ma'aret Misreen city, north of Idlib governorate, was arrested by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel on Wednesday, September 16, 2020, while he was passing through one of HTS checkpoints near Ma'aret Misreen city, and taken to one of its detention centers in Armanaz town in the suburbs of Idlib governorate.

Muhammad Na'san al Dabl, a media activist and cameraman for Orient News Channel, from Darkoush city in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate, was arrested by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel on Friday, October 2, 2020, while he was passing through one of HTS checkpoints at the entrance to Darkoush town. We documented that he was released the next day.



Muhammad Na'san al Dabl

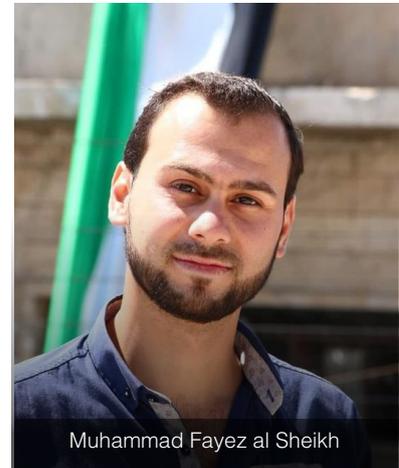
Saleh Haj Yousef, a media activist and cameraman for Orient News Channel, from Ariha city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, was arrested by the Public Prosecution service of the Salvation Government, which is affiliated with Hay'at Tahrir al Sham on Sunday, October 4, 2020, after they summoned him to the Public Prosecution building in Idlib city in connection with his criticism of an employee of the Salvation Government's Civil Registry on his personal 'Facebook' account. We documented that he was released the next day.



Saleh Haj Yousef



Muhammad Fayez al Sheikh, the head of the Molham Volunteering Team's relief campaigns department in Idlib governorate, from Kafranbel city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, was arrested by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 when he visited the HTS' Spoils Committee office in Idlib city. He was released on the same day.



Muhammad Fayez al Sheikh

Journalist Fouad Basbous and media activist Meqdam Basbous, two brothers from Saraqeb city in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, was arrested by the Salvation Government's Public Prosecution Service, which is affiliated with Hay'at Tahrir al Sham, on Saturday, October 24, 2020, after being summoned to the Public Prosecution service's office in Idlib city in connection with Fouad's criticism of the Salvation Government and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham. We documented that Fouad was released on November 9, 2020, and Meqdam was released on November 14, 2020.



Brothers Fouad and Meqdam Basbous

Nour al Shallou, a media activist and humanitarian worker, from al Atareb town in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, born in 1992, was detained by HTS-affiliated personnel on Saturday, September 19, 2020, as she was leaving Sarmada Court in Sarmada city in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Nour al Shallou before her arrest and enforced



توضيح بخصوص قضية الناشطة الإعلامية "نور الشلو"

قبل أكثر من شهرين تم توقيف الناشطة الإعلامية "نور الشلو" العاملة ضمن إحدى المنظمات المحلية بعد ادعاء رُفِعَ بحقها، وُثِقَ بعدة شهادات، مع اطلاع كامل لبعض إعلاميي الداخل ومتابعتهم للقضية.

في مراحل التحقيق والبحث المعمق، ثبت تورط المدعى عليها في عدد من القضايا الجنائية والأخلاقية، كابتزاز النساء بصورهن وإرسالها للرجال، فيما لا تزال قضايا أخرى قيد التحقيق.

أن قضية "نور" لا شأن لها بعملها الإعلامية أو ناشطة، مؤكداً على حفظ حقوق جميع الإعلاميين والإعلاميات وحماية حرية الرأي والتعبير في إطارها السوري، إلا أن ممارسة العمل الإعلامي لاتعني الحصانة من المحاسبة القضائية.

On Thursday, November 19, 2020, Hay'at Tahrir al Sham issued an official document citing its justification for the arrest of the activist Nour al Shallou

C. The Armed Opposition/ The Syrian National Army

- Most notable incidents:

On Sunday, January 12, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detention in Kourkan village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of 11 civilians, including three women, all of whom were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Wednesday, April 8, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detention in Kotana village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of five civilians, including one woman, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Saturday, June 20, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces detained four teachers in Rajou district center in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, on charges of dealing with the Self-Management forces, and took them to an undisclosed location.

On Sunday, August 16, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detention in Sheikhoutka village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of three elderly men, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Sunday, September 6, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in Ma'batli district, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of seven civilians, including two women, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

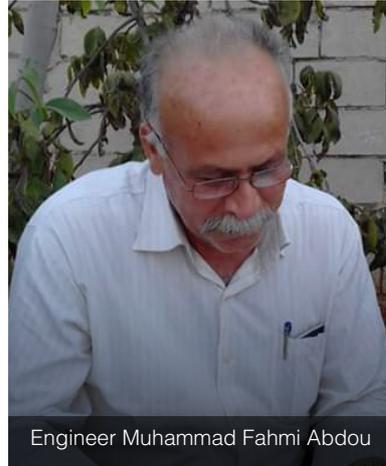
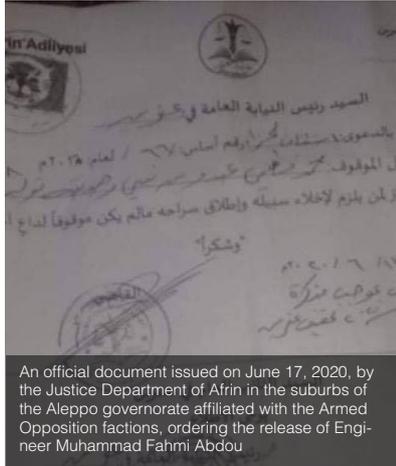
On Saturday, November 7, 2020, members affiliated with the Military Police branch in Afrin city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate assaulted the activist Hussam al Hamada, nicknamed Abu Ra'ed al Homsy, who is an activist in the popular uprising, from al Ashrafiya village in the suburbs of Homs governorate, after he visited the headquarters of the Military Police branch in Afrin city to inquire about two detainees they were holding.



- Most notable cases:

Salah Ibou, aged 40, from Qerzaihel village of Shirawa district, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, who is an employee with the Ba-har Relief Organization, was detained on Monday, March 9, 2020, by personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces, while he was passing through one of their checkpoints in Tranda village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city. We documented that he was released on Wednesday, May 13, 2020.

Engineer Muhammad Fahmi Abdou, aged 62, works in the engineering office of the local council in Sharran town, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. Fahmi, who comes from Sharran town, was arrested on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, by the Syrian National Army forces after leaving work in Afrin city, and was taken to an undisclosed location.



Ms. Silvana Abdul Rahman Qara Gul, from Satya village in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, who lives in al Ashrafiya neighborhood of Afrin in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate. Ms. Gul, who is 45 years old, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces on Wednesday, June 3, 2020, in a raid on her home in al Ashrafiya neighborhood, and taken to one of their detention centers in the city.



Horik Trash, a teacher from Kura village, which is administratively a part of Rajou district in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was detained on Saturday, June 20, 2020, by personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces in Rajou district center in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, on charges of dealing with the Self-Management forces, and was taken to an undisclosed location.

Ramadan Muhammad Allou, aged 72, from Qastal Khadraya village, which is administratively a part of Bulbul district in Afrin region, in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces on Saturday, July 25, 2020, in a raid on his home in Qastal Khadraya village, and taken to an undisclosed location.

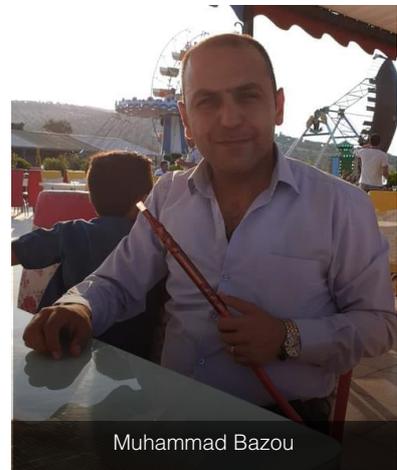


Lawyer Luqman Hanan, aged 40, from Dala village, which is administratively a part of Ma'batli district in Afrin region, in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces on Sunday, July 26, 2020, in a raid on his home in al Mahmoudiyya neighborhood of Afrin city. We documented that he was released on Thursday, August 20, 2020.



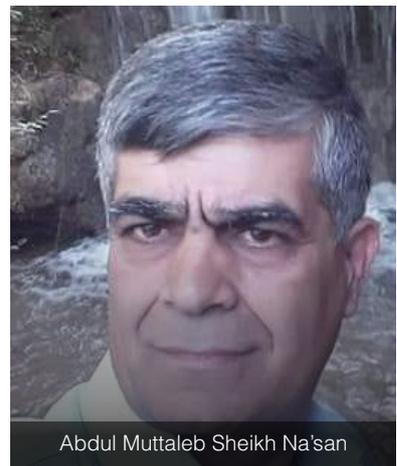
Luqman Hanan

Muhammad Bazou, the head of the local council's health office for his home district of Jandariss, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces on Thursday, September 17, 2020, in a raid on his home in the Jandariss district, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Muhammad Bazou

Abdul Muttaleb Sheikh Na'san, the head of the local council of Ma'batli district, from Ma'batli town, which is administratively a part of Rajou district in Afrin suburbs in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces on Wednesday, October 14, 2020, in Ma'batli district, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Abdul Muttaleb Sheikh Na'san

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

- Most notable incidents:

On Thursday, January 2, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detention in al Khababesa neighborhood of al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of eight civilians from one family, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Monday, March 2, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detention in Theyban town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of three civilians, including one woman, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Tuesday, March 3, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detention in Ja'bar village, which is administratively a part of al Tabqa area in the western suburbs of Raqqa governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of four civilians from one family, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Tuesday, June 16, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by a US-led coalition warplane, carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detention in al Khayasa neighborhood in al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of five civilians, including one child, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

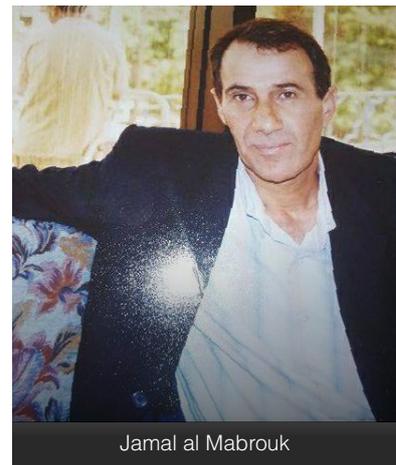
On Friday, August 7, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detention in al Sh-heil city and al Hawayej village in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, in connection with earlier protests against SDF in the two areas. SNHR documented the arrest of 28 civilians, including two children, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Thursday, September 17, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detention in al Noufal neighborhood in al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of three civilians from one family, including one child, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Friday, October 23, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detention in al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of seven civilians from one family, including one child, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

- Most notable cases:

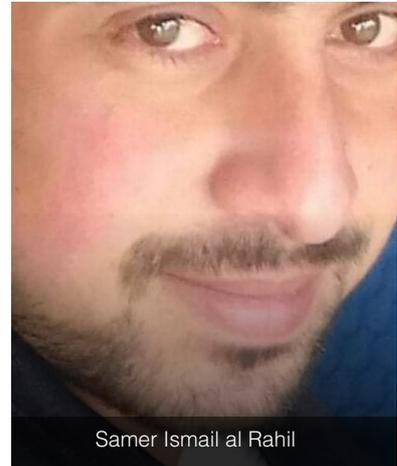
Jamal al Mabrouk, aged 60, a civil engineer, works for the al Furat for Development program of Creative Associates International, from al Suwaydiya Saghira village, which is administratively a part of the al Tabqa area in the western suburbs of Raqqa governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces on Thursday, February 13, 2020, in a raid on his home in al Suwaydiya Saghira village, and taken to one of the SDF's detention centers in al Tabqa city. We documented that he was released on Thursday, April 2, 2020.



Jamal al Mabrouk

Lawyer Omar al Khamri, from Ja'bar village, which is administratively a part of al Tabaqa area in the western suburbs of Raqqa governorate, the Chairman of the board of directors of 'Together for Algarnya', was detained on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, by personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic forces in Ja'bar village. We documented that he was released on Thursday, April 2, 2020.

Samer Ismail al Rahil, a college student at the Euphrates University's Faculty of Arts in Hasaka city, from the city's al Aziziya neighborhood, was detained on Wednesday, March 4, 2020, by personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic forces while he was passing through one of the SDF's checkpoints in al Tabaqa city in the western suburbs of Raqqa governorate. We documented that he was released on Saturday, April 4, 2020.



Samer Ismail al Rahil

Saed Hamdan al Ghafel, a child from al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by a US-led coalition warplane, on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, in a raid on al Khayasa neighborhood in al Sh-heil city. We documented that he was released on July 12, 2020.



Child, Saed Hamdan al Ghafel

Two children, Omar Muhammad al Ahmad al Afain, and Yousef Khleif al Ahmad al Afain, from al Sh-hail city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, both 16 years old, were detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces on Saturday, July 4, 2020, while passing through one of the SDF's checkpoints in al Bseira city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, and taken to an undisclosed location.

Two children, Omar and Omran Ismail Ibrahim al Salem, from al Hawayej village, were detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces on Friday, August 7, 2020, in a raid on the village in connection with earlier protests against the SDF, and taken to an undisclosed location.

Ayham Bassam Khalaf al Noufal, a 16-year-old child from al Noufal Neighborhood in al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces on Thursday, September 17, 2020, in a raid on his family's home in the neighborhood, and taken to an undisclosed location.

Abdul Rahim Suleiman al Mesleh, a prominent figure in al Jabour clan in Hasaka governorate, from Tefla village, which is administratively a part of Tal Barrak district in the eastern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces on Tuesday, October 20, 2020, as he was passing through one of the SDF's checkpoints near Tal Barrak district. We documented that he was released on Friday, October 23, 2020.



Abdul Rahim Suleiman al Mesleh

Ammar Sabbar al Nabboub, a person with special needs from al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces near one of the irrigation canals in the city's al Hawi neighborhood on Friday, November 6, 2020. We recorded that he was released on Thursday, November 12, 2020, with his body bearing signs of torture.



Signs of torture on Ammar al Nabboub's body after his release



Ammar al Nabboub before his arrest

Media worker, Muhammad Haj al Rahim, a correspondent for the 'Shufi Mafi' radio station, from al Mansour neighborhood, east of Raqqa city, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces on Thursday, November 19, 2020, in a raid on his home in the neighborhood, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Muhammad Haj al Rahim

2. In December 2020:

A. Syrian Regime forces:

- Most notable incidents:

On Sunday, December 6, 2020, Syrian Regime forces arrested five civilians from the western Damascus Suburbs governorate, as they were passing through one of the regime's checkpoints in Aleppo city, while they were on their way to areas under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate. They were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Friday, December 11, 2020, Syrian Regime forces arrested three civilians in Tartus city, including two women, and one civilian in Damascus city, all of whom are members of the same family, in connection with their kinship with a political activist. One of the two women was released after several hours of detention, while the second one was released on December 13, 2020, two days after being detained, and the other civilians were released on Tuesday, December 22, 2020.

On Sunday, December 13, 2020, Syrian Regime forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in al Tal city in the western Damascus Suburbs governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of five civilians, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

- Most notable cases:

Ibrahim Ayed al Shehadat, from Da'el city in the northern suburbs of Daraa governorate, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces personnel in Daraa city on Tuesday, December 8, 2020, and taken to an undisclosed location. SNHR notes that Ibrahim was amongst those who had concluded a settlement previously.

Khaled al Dabbas, a doctor, from Kafr Batna town in the Eastern Ghouta, east of Damascus Suburbs governorate, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces on Friday, December 11, 2020, in a raid on his clinic in Kafr Batna town, on charges of possessing a secret warehouse of medical supplies and medicine, and taken to an undisclosed location. SNHR notes that Dr. Khaled was amongst those who had concluded a settlement previously.

Zaher Abdul Fattah Oweir, from Dael city in the northern suburbs of Daraa governorate, was arrested by the Syrian regime's Air Security Force personnel on Wednesday, December 16, 2020, and taken to an undisclosed location

B. Hay'at Tahrir al Sham

- Most notable cases:

Faisal Abdul Razzaq al Bayyoush, from Kafranbel city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, the director of the Logistics Office at the Union of Revolutionary Bureaus, was arrested by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel on Wednesday, December 16, 2020, while he was in the Radio Fresh office in Salqin city in the governorate's western suburbs. He was detained over his criticism of a member of the local council in Kafranbel city on his personal Facebook account. We documented that he was released on Saturday, December 19, 2020.



Faisal Abdul Razzaq al Bayyoush

C. The Armed Opposition/ The Syrian National Army

- Most notable incidents:

On Thursday, December 10, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detentions in B'ayyah village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of 15 civilians, who were taken to one of the SNA's detention centers.

On Saturday, December 12, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detentions in Midan Akbis town, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of five civilians, who were taken to one of the SNA's detention centers.

On Sunday, December 20, 2020, personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detentions in Ma'batli town, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of 13 civilians, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

- Most notable cases:

Hussein Ibrahim Alikou and Dalil Rashid Alikou, aged 32 and 24 respectively, from Anqala village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, were detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces in Jandaris town in the northern suburbs of the governorate on Wednesday, December 2, 2020, and taken to an undisclosed location.

Athad Ismail, from Midanki village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces in a raid on his house in the village on Wednesday, December 2, 2020, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Muhammad Mustafa Bilal, from Kawanda village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with Syrian National Army forces in Midan Akbis town, which is administratively a part of Afrin city, on Wednesday, December 12, 2020, and taken to one of the SNA's detention centers in Midan Akbis town.

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

- Most notable incidents:

On Wednesday, December 2, 2020, personnel affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by a US-led coalition helicopter, carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detentions in Gharbiya village, which is administratively a part of al Soor area in the northern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. SNHR documented the detention of four civilians from one family, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Wednesday, December 2, 2020, personnel affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detentions in Um Rqeiba village, which is administratively a part of al Shaddadi area in the southern suburbs of Hasaka governorate. SNHR documented the detention of 15 civilians, including two children, who were taken to one of the SDF's detention centers in al Shaddadi city.

On Sunday, December 6, 2020, personnel affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detentions in al Taef village, which is administratively a part of al Qameshli area in the northeastern suburbs of Hasaka governorate. SNHR documented the detention of four civilians, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Sunday, December 13, 2020, personnel affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detentions in al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, following anti-SDF protests in the city. SNHR documented the detention of eight civilians, who were taken to one of the SDF's detention centers.

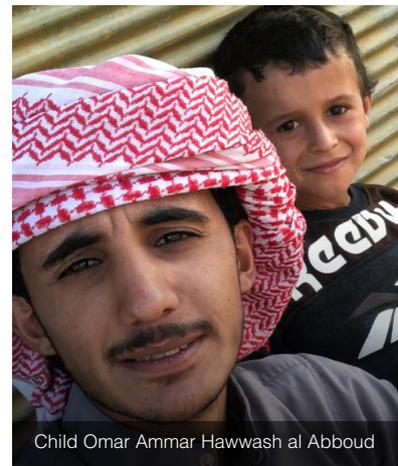
On Monday, December 14, 2020, personnel affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests/ detentions in al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. SNHR documented the detention of five civilians, including two children, who were taken to one of the SDF's detention centers.

- Most notable cases:

Two children, Abdul Ghafoor al Sayyed and Faisal al Sayyed, from Um Rqeiba village, which is administratively a part of al Shaddadi area in the southern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, were detained by personnel affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces on Wednesday, December 2, 2020, in a raid on their house in the village, and taken to one of the SDF's detention centers in al Shaddadi city.

Suleiman Abd Hamoud al Aswad, from al Baghouz town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces on Friday, December 4, 2020, in a raid on his house in the town, and taken to an undisclosed location.

Child Omar Ammar Hawwash al Abboud, aged 16, from al Sh-heil city in the northern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces in a raid on his family's house in al Kheyasa neighborhood in al Sh-heil city, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Child Omar Ammar Hawwash al Abboud

Abdul Hamid al Bash, from al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, was detained by personnel affiliated with the Syrian Democratic Forces on Sunday, December 13, 2020, in a raid on his house in the city. We documented that he was released on Monday, December 21, 2020.



Abdul Hamid al Bash

VI. The Most Notable Work Carried Out by SNHR on the Detainees Issue:

Since 2011, the SNHR 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 make comparisons between these parties, as well as identifying the governorates from which the largest proportion of residents have been arrested and disappeared.

Over the years, we have published periodic [news](#) reports on arrest incidents, as well as publishing [a monthly report](#) that monitors the record of cases of arrest, enforced disappearance, or release that occurred in the previous month, as well as semi-annual and annual reports, in addition to dozens of additional reports that provide information on the various detention centers of the parties to the conflict, and other [special reports](#) related to detainees. We also periodically submit special forms to the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Special Rapporteur on Arbitrary Detention and the Special Rapporteur on Torture.

VII. Many Face Multiple Charges Following False Confessions Extorted Via Torture and Intimidation, Before Being Referred to 'Courts' More Like Security Branches, With the Regime Issuing Decrees and Laws That Violate the Principles of Law:

We at the SNHR wish to emphasize that the vast majority of detainees involved in the popular uprising for democracy in Syria, including political and human rights activists, media workers, and relief activists, and similar prisoners of conscience, have been falsely accused by the regime's security branches of several charges based on testimonies taken from detainees by

regime forces under coercion, intimidation and torture. The most prominent of these charges are: provoking sectarian strife, threatening the system of governance, weakening national sentiment, collusion with external agents and the enemy, supporting and financing terrorism, and weakening the nation's morale, all of which are broad and wide-ranging charges, which are documented within regime security authorities' reports; these detainees may be transferred to another security branch if they are wanted by more than one branch. The detainees are forced to place their fingerprint on these coerced report under threats, torture and general intimidation; it should be noted here that the security branches rarely allow detainees to read and sign these false confessions, instead of ordering them to use a fingerprint in place of a signature, with the detainees in most cases doing so while blindfolded with a piece of cloth; these security reports are then referred to the Public Prosecution Service, after which the majority of these cases are referred to either the [Counter-Terrorism Court](#) or the Military Field Court (The stages mentioned here may take months and possibly years, during which the detainees are subjected to the worst forms of torture, which often prove lethal.).

Regarding the Counter-Terrorism Court in short, this was established in accordance with Presidential Decree No. 22 of 2012 to serve as a substitute for the exceptional Supreme State Security Court, and examines detainees' cases according to the Counter-Terrorism Law No. 19 of 2012, an article of legislation similar to the legislation on 'counter-revolutionary goals' issued in 1964, which violates the most basic principles and rules of law and human rights, under which a person can be arrested simply because he or she is suspected of not supporting the Syrian regime, with the court ruling on most cases of arrest carried out by Syrian Regime forces. The Counter-Terrorism Court consists of three judges appointed by the President of the Republic, according to the proposal submitted by the Supreme Judicial Council, which is also chaired by the President of the Republic, who try civilians, military personnel and juveniles, and issue sentences in absentia. In addition, these sentences may not be appealed except in the case of those who surrender themselves voluntarily. Although the body's official name is the Counter-Terrorism Court, it tries all types of crimes and can therefore be called an exceptional court; it is, in fact, part of the regime's security apparatus.

As for the Military Field Court, again briefly, this was established by Decree No. 109 of August 17, 1968, with its jurisdiction originally specified as being only for crimes committed in wartime; its remit was expanded in 1980, however, to allow it to operate in both war and peace times and to try civilians, military personnel and juveniles. This court is also formed by the executive authority through the Minister of Defense, and consists of a president and two members who are not required to be law graduates. The rulings issued by this court are not open to appeal, being endorsed by the Minister of Defense. Regarding the death sentences issued by this court, they are ratified by the President of the Republic, with both the Minister of Defense and

the President of the Republic able to manipulate the rulings issued according to their personal whims. The Military Field Court is wholly managed by the executive authority that dominates the judicial authority, and therefore the most fundamental conditions of fair trial are not met in this court, which is also closer to a military-security branch than to a court of law.

According to the SNHR's database, the vast majority of detainees were arrested in connection with their participation in activities opposed to the Syrian regime, no matter how innocuous, such as attending demonstrations, being involved in media or humanitarian relief activism, or even as a result of their kinship ties with an activist; this means that the vast majority of detainees are arrested in connection with their political activism, meaning that they are political detainees.

The Syrian regime also legalized the crime of torture, despite the fact that the current Syrian constitution, issued in 2012 by Decree No. 94, prohibits arbitrary arrest and torture according to Article 53, and the General Penal Code in accordance with Article 391 which imposes a penalty of from three months to three years in prison for anyone who beats a person with a degree of severity during the investigation of crimes, and prohibits torture during investigation in accordance with Article 391; however, there are legal texts that explicitly oppose previous constitutional articles and Article 391, giving almost complete immunity to the security services and legalizing impunity, with the most prominent of these being the following:

1. Legislative Decree No. 14 of January 25, 1969, stating that: "It is impermissible to pursue any workers in the State Security Administrations for crimes they have committed during the execution of the specified duties they were authorized to carry out, except by virtue of an order to pursue issued by the director."
2. Article / 74 / of the Internal Security Law of the State Security Department and the rules of service for its employees issued by Legislative Decree No. 549 of May 25, 1969, states that: "No legal action may be taken against any General Intelligence Department employees, those assigned or detailed to the department, or those contracted with it for crimes incurred on the job or in the course of performing the job before referral to a department disciplinary board and before an order is obtained from the director."
3. Legislative Decree No. 69 of 2008, by which an amendment to the Military Penal Code gave immunity to police and political security personnel, who were previously amongst those who could be tried before the ordinary judiciary, and limited the ability to take action against them or against the army and the armed forces. Paragraph (a) of Article 1 of this decree stipulated: "Crimes committed by each of the officers, warrant officers and members of the Internal Security forces, members of the Political Security Division, and members of Customs Brigade, due to performing the tasks entrusted to them." Paragraph (b) of the same article states, "Prosecution orders for officers, warrant officers, members of the Internal Se-

curity forces, members of the Political Security Division, and members of Customs Brigade are issued in a decision by the General Command of the Army and the armed forces, in accordance with the provisions of Article / 53 / of Penal Code and the Military Trial Procedure and its amendments.” This prosecution is issued in wartime, according to the Penal Code and the Military Trial Procedure by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and the Armed Forces, who is at the same time the President of the Republic. Consequently, such prosecution was banned - if it had ever taken place - for officials at any level of leadership and limited to the senior leadership.

4. Decree No. (55) issued on April 21, 2011, related to counter-terrorism, of which Article 1 states: “Added to Article 17 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the following paragraph: responsible for law enforcement or authorized tasks investigate the crimes stipulated in Articles 260 up to 339 articles 221 and 388 and 392 and 393 of the Penal Code and collection of evidence and surveillance of the suspects, which should not exceed the reservation for them for seven days subject to renewal from the Attorney-General and in accordance with the data of each file on the unit should not exceed this period of sixty days.”

These three decrees and Article 74, which are supposed to be legal texts but in reality constitute a violation of the law, are decrees and texts that legitimize crimes, violate even the 2012 constitution, and violate fundamental tenets of human rights. For this reason, Syria under the current Syrian regime suffers from two problems; the first in terms of the legal texts themselves, and the second in terms of applying the law which is far graver; without a doubt, these legal texts, which express a commitment to ensuring impunity, along with the Syrian regime's failure to carry out any investigation or accountability for any member of the regime's security forces, no matter how low-ranking, against the background of acts of torture, have all contributed to increasing the rate of torture. Indeed, the regime's security services, in coordination with some doctors in military hospitals, are so sure of their impunity that they have invented new and horrific methods of torture that are even more brutal and savage than their usual methods. We have noted the use of new methods of torture in the past two years that were not used in previous years, which have caused deaths due to torture to continue up to this day. The laws established by the Syrian regime do not justify committing or concealing crimes, because they are not laws but rather pseudo-legal provisions that violate the law.

Other parties to the conflict have also established courts to try their detainees in accordance with procedures that are, to a great extent, similar to the courts affiliated with the Syrian regime. Extremist Islamist groups have established Sharia courts made up of sharia judges or security personnel and issued sentences according to their extremist ideology. As for the areas under opposition control, these have established courts which operate according to amended forms of existing Syrian laws. Syrian Democratic Forces, meanwhile, have established the 'people's courts' and established their own laws and legislation derived from the Syrian laws, with all

these courts following the policy of exceptional courts by holding brief proceedings, essentially amounting to kangaroo trials, to try the cases before them without any considerations of the fundamental standards of fair trials, and relying mainly on the jurisprudence of judges, most of whom are unqualified or illegal.

Over the past nine years, the Syrian regime has issued nearly 17 amnesty decrees, many of which are similar to one another and focus on securing the release of perpetrators of crimes, felonies and offences, while including only a very small number of detainees referred to exceptional courts such as the Counter-Terrorism Court and the military field courts, and excluding the largest proportion of detainees who were not subjected to any trial during the years of their detention, who have been classified as forcibly disappeared. We previously [issued a report](#) in which we monitored the detention and torture incidents that we recorded since the issuance of the last two amnesty decrees, Decree No. 20 of 2019, and Decree No. 6 of 2020. We also issued [a special report](#) in which we outlined our follow-up work regarding the implementation of the latest decree No. 6, nearly two months after its issuance, and the record of arrests, torture and releases recorded by the SNHR between the issuance of Decree No. 6 on March 22, 2020, and May 15, 2020. Despite all the amnesty decrees issued, at least 130,000 citizens in the categories of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons are still detained by the Syrian regime.

VIII. The Syrian Regime Is Responsible for Threatening the Lives of Thousands of Detainees Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic:

Detainees and individuals forcibly disappeared by Syrian Regime forces are subjected to exceptionally brutal and sadistic methods of torture, which have assumed a particularly vengeful character since the popular uprising for democracy began in March 2011. In a detailed report published by SNHR previously, we recorded [at least 72 methods of torture](#) practiced in the Syrian regime's detention centers and military hospitals.

As well as inflicting these horrendous methods of torture on detainees, the Syrian regime also deliberately subjects the imprisoned detainees to unimaginably squalid, unsanitary and massively overcrowded conditions in its detention centers which lack even the bare minimum of hygiene or sanitation to protect against illness and disease. These conditions are especially horrific in the headquarters of the four main security branches and military prisons, where large numbers of detainees are packed into cells of various sizes, with an average cell area measuring 4 x 6 square meters containing approximately 50 detainees; this means that each detainee barely has an area of 70 cm² for sitting and sleeping, with detainees usually taking turns to attempt to sit or lie down to sleep when their numbers exceed the holding capacity of the cell, as they routinely do. These cells also lack ventilation and the most basic standards of sanitation and cleanliness, with the conditions being even more squalid in the solitary confinement cells

located on the detention centers' lower floors which lack even light. Throughout the duration of their detention in the security branches, detainees are also prevented from going outside to get any exercise, or exposure to fresh air or sunlight.

In addition to these congested unsanitary conditions, detainees are able to shower or wash only very rarely throughout the period of their detention, which often lasts for many years, with all these factors contributing to and exacerbating the spread of diseases, epidemics and infectious conditions, especially respiratory and skin diseases, which are further aggravated due to the lack of fresh air and the lack of exposure to sunlight and light. The narrowness of the cells and the cramped, overcrowded conditions also lead to suffocation and shortness of breath amongst many detainees due to inhaling the putrid smells of bodily waste, sweat, pus, and blood from wounds. The conditions of detention in security branches and military prisons are somewhat similar to the civilian central prisons in terms of overcrowding, human stacking, and lack of cleanness and ventilation.

Syrian Regime forces deliberately withhold sufficient quantities of pillows and blankets from detainees in detention centers, with those which are issued usually being filthy, threadbare, soiled and encrusted with blood, pus or other bodily waste and fluids, and lousy with parasites. In addition, detainees are denied adequate clothing and often left only in their underwear since their clothing is worn, soiled or torn during torture or forcibly removed during inspections; all these practices expose detainees to severe cold in winter, when temperatures fall below freezing.

All these practices make each of the days, months, and years that detainees spend in detention into a never-ending hell, with these brutal conditions being a very deliberately imposed and widespread strategy on the part of the Syrian regime inflicted with the aim of degrading and further torturing detainees. Subjecting detainees to conditions that foster disease and infection and leaving them to suffer without medical help or treatment is another deliberate and conscious part of this strategy, forcing already physically and emotionally traumatized detainees to endure an additional layer of torment and debasement often leading to death. With the recent global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Syrian regime's admission that it has already documented cases of infection, the already grave situation facing prisoners in regime jails is now critical, particularly in light of the detention conditions that are, as explained above, favorable for the spread of infectious diseases such as the COVID-19 coronavirus; this now threatens the lives of approximately 130,000 people who are still documented as being detained or forcibly disappeared by Syrian Regime forces, according to the SNHR database.

Instead of releasing prisoners of conscience and other detainees, including detainees whose sentences' periods have ended, in order to contribute to alleviating the terrible overcrowding suffered by detainees and threatening their lives due to the spread of the coronavirus, we have documented the Syrian regime arresting even more citizens, which means additional overcrowding in detention centers. This behavior completely conflicts with the demands of some countries allied with the Syrian regime and prominent figures and organizations affiliated with them to ease or freeze the sanctions imposed by other countries on this regime, under the pretext of helping it to overcome the coronavirus. The Syrian regime's policy towards the issue of detainees clearly reveals the inconsistency of this request, clarifying precisely how the Syrian regime deals with citizens in light of the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus and how indifferent it is to their wellbeing.

IX. Conclusions and Recommendations:

- The issue of detainees and forcibly 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 arbitrarily 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. The International Committee of the Red Cross has been unable to conduct any periodic visits to any of these detention centers, constituting a violation of International Humanitarian Law.
- 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. The regime has also violated several articles of the Syrian Constitution itself, with thousands of detainees detained without any arrest warrant, 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 cases of enforced disappearance, with detainees' families being denied any information on their loved ones' whereabouts, while anyone making inquiries 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.
- The Armed Opposition/ The Syrian National Army 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:

UN Security Council

- The Security Council should 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.
- In light of the spread of the coronavirus, it is vital to put pressure on the Syrian regime to release tens of thousands of arbitrarily detained persons, primarily medical personnel whose professional skills and services the Syrian people are in dire need of.

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 previous reports. SNHR is willing to cooperate and provide more evidence and data.

United Nations, the international community, 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 99,000 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.
- We call on the official 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.
- Support organizations working to document cases of arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearance, and torture, support the course of accountability and its mechanisms, and support organizations working in victim rehabilitation programs.

The Russian regime:

- Must demand that its ally, the Syrian regime, disclose the fate of nearly 99,000 forcibly disappeared persons and immediately release tens of thousands of arbitrarily detained persons and detainees whose sentences ended, before demanding that those states which imposed sanctions on the Syrian regime lift them.
- Must provide the Syrian regime with the necessary medical supplies and equipment to examine tens of thousands of detainees and ensure that they are not infected with the COVID-19.

All parties to the conflict and the controlling forces:

- The arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances, which are still ongoing, as detailed in this SNHR monthly report, must be ended immediately, the fate of all detainees and the forcibly disappeared persons must be revealed, their families should be allowed to visit them immediately, and the bodies of detainees who were killed as a result of torture should be handed over to their families.
- Unconditionally release all detainees who have been imprisoned merely for exercising their political and civil rights, release women and children, people with special needs, the sick, and the elderly, and stop using any detainees as prisoners of war.
- Allow the independent international monitors of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry and the International Committee of the Red Cross to access all official and unofficial detention centers without establishing any prior arrangements or any restrictions or conditions, and improve the conditions of places of detention to meet the legal standards of detention centers.

- 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.
- Publish a register containing the detainees' data together with the reasons, locations, and sentences issued.
- All sentences issued by the regime's field military courts and Counter-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.
- End the policy of carrying out arrests without legal warrants, release all detainees imprisoned by them without judicial charges, and emphasizes that individuals should also be detained only briefly before being presented in a court of law, and that such trials do not take weeks or months.

Acknowledgments

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to victims' family members and friends, as well as to eyewitnesses and local activists, all of whom have contributed effectively to the collection and verification of data, and to extend our sincere solidarity to the detainees and the forcibly disappeared persons and their families.



Federal Foreign Office

SNHR
SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان



Human Rights

www.snhr.org - info@sn4hr.org