



The Most Significant Human Rights Violations by Kurdish Democratic Union Party and the Kurdish Self-Management Forces

The Syrian Network for Human Rights is a independent and non-governmental, non-profit human rights organization that investigates and documents all violations committed by all conflict parties involved in the Syrian conflict since 2011. The network, that does not adopt any ideology, was founded in June 2011 and aims to defend the human rights of the Syrian people. It also includes 27 researchers and human rights activists stationed in Syria and in other neighboring countries.

SNHR is committed to all standards and international conventions of Human Rights issued by the United Nations. It aims to ensure that victims' rights are not exploited and perpetrators are held accountable for their crimes.

SNHR issues periodic reports concerning the most notable daily violations, eight monthly statistical or specialized reports, annual reports, and reports concerning global human rights events. It also issues significant studies and documentaries on a regular basis in order to contribute to raising awareness in the Syrian community.

SNHR is considered to be one of the most distinguished and reliable sources of information and references for all the analytical and statistical studies issued by the United Nations.



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I. Introduction:

Kurdish forces joined other conflict parties in Syria when YPG forces, (the armed wing of the PYD party), established the Kurdish Self-Management Forces which was announced in January 2014 and seized control over some regions in north and east of Syria. The PYD party constitutes the main core of the movement that was called later on the “Kurdish Self-Management Forces”.

SNHR contacted the Head of the PYD party, Saleh Mouslem, several times but have not received any reply from his behalf up to the moment of making this report.

II. The most significant human rights violations by the Kurdish Self Management Forces and Kurdish Democratic Union Party:

1. Extrajudicial Killing:

According to SNHR documentation, Kurdish Democratic Union Party killed not less than 407 civilians including 51 children, 43 women, and 16 individuals who died under torture.

On 1 August 2015, KSM (Kurdish Self Management Forces) gathered the residents of Sareen town in Aleppo suburbs in one of the town’s squares after it gained control over it from ISIL. The KSM forces shot at the residents which killed 8 individuals including 3 children and 3 women.

On 14 October 2015, KSM forces killed Mr. Moustafa Al Shatwi from Al Rahyat town in Raqqa while he was going back to his town. The KSM forces shot him while he was passing by their checkpoint.

Most Significant Massacres committed by the KSM forces:

In 2012, government forces started to withdraw from remote areas in north and northeast of Syria while maintaining their presence in the government vital facilities and Kurdish Democratic Union Party took over those areas.

SNHR documented several ethnic cleansing massa-

crs which were committed by the Kurdish Democratic Union Party forces in towns which were mostly inhabited by Arabs. Amongst these massacres, we recorded 3 ethnic cleansing massacres in Al Hassaka governorate which resulted in the death of 91 civilians including 17 children and 7 women.

1. Al-Aghbiesh Town, 21 November 2013:

Kurdish Democratic Union Party forces raided Al-Aghbiesh Town, located in Al-Hassaka city – Tal Nemer town, after some members from the armed opposition attacked one of the KSM’s military checkpoints.

Following the raid, Kurdish Democratic Union Party forces detained a number of young men. According to some of the towns’ residents, Kurdish Democratic Union Party forces insulted the detainees, hit them, and verbally abused the Arab detainees by several discriminating phrases. Afterwards, they executed them and burned many houses in the town. SNHR documented the killing of six civilians including one child. This incident entails a pattern of killing based on ethnic backgrounds.

2. Tal Brak town massacre, 23 February 2014:

Kurdish Self Management Forces raided Tal Brak town, an Arab majority town, and imposed a curfew

before it established a number of military checkpoints at the entry points to the village. Afterwards, the Kurdish forces looted houses, arrested many residents and killed a number of the detainees. SNHR documented the killing of 43 victims including one female child and four women. This incident entails a pattern of killing based on ethnic backgrounds.

A video that depicts the Tal Barak massacre

3. Al-Hajiya and Tal Khalil massacre, 13 September 2014:

Kurdish Self Management Forces raided Al-Hajiya and Tal Khalil towns and killed many of the towns' residents including children and women. SNHR documented the killing of 42 victims including 15 children and three women. Among the victims were teachers at the town's school. This incident entails a pattern of killing based on ethnic backgrounds.

[Video footage](#) showing the victims of the massacre - We recorded two massacres that did not entail patterns of ethnic crimes:

- Amouda Massacre, Hasakah, 27 June 2013:

Armed members of the Democratic Union Party opened fire on a peaceful demonstration demanding the release of detainees in Amouda; what caused the deaths of six people, including two children, according to SNHR documentation.

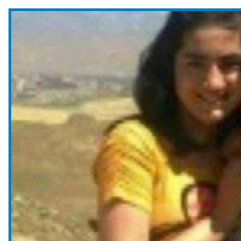
- Marmeen Massacre, 29 November 2015

An armed opposition group and forces from the Kurdish Democratic Union Party stormed Marmeen town in northern Aleppo suburbs and arrested several residents. They accused them of affiliating to Al Nusra Front and ISIL. The residents were taken to Al Talae'e camp in Kafr Jinna town that is next to Efreem city where they killed 12 individuals including a woman. They also shot dead 5 children.

2. Arbitrary Arrests and Enforced Disappearances:

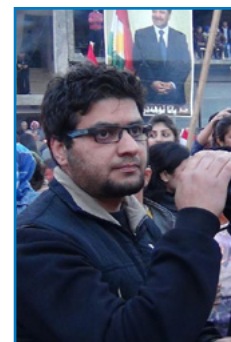
KSM forces arbitrary arrested not less than 1651 individuals, including 88 individuals and 111 children since the beginning of the uprising in Syria.

[Azad Jamkari](#), from Al Hassaka governorate from Rawado channel, was arrested on 9 November 2015, was arrested by KSM forces in Al Malkeya city in Al Hassaka. His fate is still unknown for his family and SNHR.



[Child Siran Hassan](#), from Rmaylan city in Al Hassaka, 14, was arrested by KSM forces from his residence in 13 February 2015 with an aim of forcibly recruiting her.

[Media activist Kulal Liani](#), from Rmaylan city in Al Hassaka governorate, was arrested on 29 November 2015 by Kurdish Self Management forces from his residence and he was taken to its headquarters in the city. His fate is still unknown for his family and SNHR.



Further, we recorded the death of not less than 16 individuals under torture at the hands of KSM forces since it was established and until the end of December 2015.

Affan Joma'a Al Aboush, a child from Sharmoukh town in Al Hassaka, 16 years old, was arrested on 12 December 2014, KSM forces arrested him from

his residence in Shamroukh town. On 17 December 2014, his family found his body and it bared torture signs. They found his body next to a KSM military checkpoint.

On 15 July 2014, Roudi Al Hajj’s family confirmed their son’s death under torture in one of the KSM detention centers. It is worth noting that KSM forces handed the body over to the victim’s family and it bared torture marks. Roudi was a local media activist.

3-Violations against Women:

A. Extrajudicial Killing:

SNHR documented the killing of 42 women, (33 adult females and 9 adolescent females) at the hands of Kurdish Democratic Union Party forces since March 2011 and up till the moment of making this report. Most of the victims died due to random shelling or through direct firing during raiding campaigns or sniping.

- [Nabiha Al Sayah](#), from Say Ghoul town in Aleppo suburbs, born in 1998, married, was found dead on Al Raqqa- Tal Abyad road. A driver buried her in Kurmaza town. The victim was shot with three bullets by KSM forces on 14 August 2015 as her family told us. They exhumed her body then buried her in her town.

- On 2 August 2015, we recorded the death of a woman named Hanaa Ismaeil Al Amouri from Saareen town in Aleppo due to random gun shots by KSM forces after a clash with ISIL. KSM forces gathered the residents in a square then locked them in houses for two consecutive days, then directly shot at those houses to terrorize them.

- Sabeha Farhan Al Habash, from Al Razzaza town in Al Hassaka died on 13 May 2015 due to KSM artillery shelling on Tal Tamar town.

- On 13 September 2013, YPG forces executed two women in Al-Hassaka suburbs – Hajiya village after raiding the village and committing a massacre. The two women were.

- Wadha Al-Yassin, Ahmad Al-Yassin’s wife, 44-year-old, she was killed along with her six children in this massacre, and Tarfa Khalil Al-Hasoud, 58-year-old, she was killed along with her husband Hamza Al-Allawi in their home where he was found killed while she was killed in the barn. Apparently, she was trying to hide.

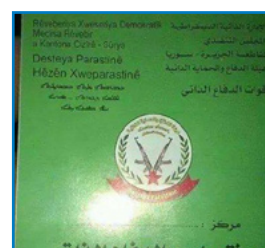
Picture of Wadha Al-Yassin with her kids

- [Tarfa Khalil Al-Hasoud](#)

We recorded the killing of Mrs Lamyia Al-Hamoud, from Al-Hassaka – Al-Masaken neighborhood, who was shot during clashes between government forces and YPG on Thursday 22 January, 2015.

B. Arrests and Kidnaps:

With the beginning of 2014, YPG forces started carrying out raiding and arresting young men in Al-Hassaka, Al-Qameshli, and Efreem in Aleppo suburbs for conscription purposes. The arrest rates increased after the self-protection law or “the conscription” law was issued. The arrests included widely women and girls. The women in the Kurdish areas are in danger of being pursuit, arrested, and forcibly taken to the training camps which are held by YPG.



Pictures of the statement that was distributed among young men who were included in the conscription resolution:



Picture of the statement that was issued by PYD about what it called “Civil Defense Duty”

SNHR documented the arrest of 88 women, including 34 female children under the age of 18 since the beginning of 2014 and up till the end of October 2015. The arrests were aimed to forcibly recruit women.

- On 4 April 2015, KSM forces arrested [child Dilber Ahmad Hajji](#), 16, from Ein Arab region which is also known as Kobani in Aleppo. The aim of the arrest was enforced recruitment.

SNHR interviewed a released detainee, Samar B., from Amouda city in Al Hassaka governorate, born in 1980 and works as a teacher in one of the city's schools. She was arrested by KSM forces in front of her house. She spent 3 days in secret detention centre in Amouda which she have not able to locate. She was released without pressing charges against her.

Samar's testimony:

“On 11 October 2015, when I was next to my house with my child getting ready to go to school, we heard heavy gun firing. The gun firing was due to a funeral of one of KSM forces. Their procession hit my car that I parked next to my house and immediately, they their members got out of the cars and started to shoot next to us. Then three of them came to forcibly take me into their car. One of them twisted my arm violently then threw me inside the car. Later, after I arrived to an unknown location where I was held and it looked like a government facility where KSM members transformed the rooms to temporary dentition rooms. They accused me to be the reason why they hit their car and demanded me to pay for the damages. They threatened me not to see Amouda's sun again if I do not pay the amount of money

they wanted. I stayed there for three days then they released me after they blindfolded my eyes and put me in a car on the road that leads to my house. During my arrest, I was not hit or beaten but they cursed me and threatened me of slaughtering my child if I do not pay the money they wanted.”

- Female child Jamin Siddeaq Ahmad, 14-year-old, from Al-Hassaka – Al-Qahtaniya town, she was kidnapped by YPG on Tuesday 4 November, 2014 from Khawla bent Al-Azzwar school under the threat of weapon. Some students who work for the Youth Revolutionary Movement lured her into the school campus and then she was kidnapped by YPG. Jamin's father told SNHR that he checked multiple times with Al-KSM forces leader and he admitted that they have her. He also told him to forget Jamin because she is now on her way to Jabal Qendeel to join Al-KSM forces there, and that she is not alone as there are thousands of women fighters there. Picture of the child Jamin Ahmad

- [Nairouz Hussein Hussein](#), 17-year-old, from Aleppo – Ifreen city, she was arrested by YPG forces on 14 January, 2015 for conscription purposes.

4. Violations against Children:

A. Extrajudicial Killing:

SNHR documented the killing of 51 children at the hands of KSM forces since it was established and up till 31 December 2015.

- On 23 May 2015, child Haytham Essa Al Shimali, born in 2012, was killed by KSM sniper bullets in Abu Al Shakhat town.

- On 21 June 2015, child Alaa Ahmad Al Ahmad, born in 2001, was killed by KSM bullets in Al Jawadeya town. The victim was killed while trying to escape arrest by the KSM forces.

- On 4 October 2013, SNHR documented the killing of three children from Al-Hassaka – Al-Kahtaniya by a PYD’s shelling that targeted Thyab village in Al-Hassaka countryside.

- On 27 June 2013, PYD’s People Protection Units killed two children in Al-Hassaka – Amouda while they were opening fire against a demonstration. Picture of [Saad Abdulbaqi Syda](#), 15-year-old, one of Amouda massacre victims

B. Arbitrary Arrests and Torture:

SNHR documented the arrest of 111 children by KSM forces since it was established and up till 20 November 2015.

- On 26 May 2015, KSM armed members arrested child [Jilan Akram Omar](#) from Al Qameshli city in Al Hassaka governorate. She was 14 years old and she was released on 29 May 2015.

- On 20 June 2015, KSM forces stormed Al Ayhamer and Khirbit Al Ahyamer towns and arrested 5 individuals, including a child, Yawour Youssef Al Salem Al Abo.

C. Enforced Recruitment:

We recorded the enforced recruitment of not less than 1876 children in different regions in Aleppo and Al Hassaka suburbs. Children were forced to participate in battles, fights and searching check-points. Children have been forced to use and train on using guns since 2012 extensively.

- On 4 April 2015, KSM forces arrested child Dilber Ahmad Hajji, 16, from Ein Arab region which is also known as Kobani in Aleppo. The aim of the arrest was enforced recruitment.



Mr. Wissam Allo, one of the residents in Efreeen city gave SNHR his testimony:

“I was going to Efreeen city with some friends in the north west of Aleppo city that is under the control of KSM forces. We were stopped by a KSM military checkpoint. A young girl approached us and she appeared to be not more than 15 years old I guess. She held a small machine gun and talked to us in Kurdish. She asked us for our IDs and asked the driver to open the car’s trunk before she allowed us to drive on.”

- On 17 November 2014, KSM forces arrested two brothers, Zoya and Aveen Mahmoud Mahmoud, from their school in Al Hassaka city.

5. Violations Against Media Activists:

A. Arrests and Abductions

SNHR documented 24 cases of arrests or abductions amongst media activists. All of them were released later.

Sakfan Amin (worked as a cameraman for Zagros TV channel) was arrested by KSM forces on 18 July, 2014 after they raided his home in Al-Hassaka suburbs in Al-Malikiya town. He was released on 22 July, 2014.



On 3 December 2014, members from, “Raiding Terrorists”, a new PYD squad arrested two media activists, Mahmoud Karweesh a member in Azadi Efreeen coordination and Ali Abdul Rahman. They were released on 26 March 2015.

On Sunday 20 April, 2014, Bishwa Bahlwi (Rudaw TV channel reporter) and Rudi Ibrahim (Orient TV channel reporter) were arrested by an armed group that calls itself (Association of the families of YPG martyrs) in Al-Qameshli. The group is affiliated to PYD. The group had them transferred from one prison to another according to the two reporters. Eventually, after nine hours, they were exiled to Iraqi Kurdistan and accused of treachery because they were working against Syrian Kurdistan. They threatened to kill them if they came back to Rojava (Syrian Kurdistan). They were arrested previously by government forces and detained by PYD.



Mohammad Mahmoud Bashar, Rudaw TV reporter in Al-Hasaka – Ad-Derbasiya, he was arrested on 23 April, 2014 by PYD’s KSM forces. He was released the following day.



Mustafa Abdi (manager of the news website “Kobani Kurd”), was kidnapped by PYD’s KSM forces in Ain Al-Arab as he was on his way back from Turkey on 5 March, 2014 and was released two days after.

Daldar Hamou, reporter for the ARK TV channel, was kidnapped by PYD’s KSM forces in Al-Hassaka suburbs in Al-Qahtaniya region on 11 May, 2014 after they raided his home and confiscated his Laptop and camera. He was released on 16 May, 2014.



It is worth mentioning that he was arrested previously by PYD in last February under the pretext of working without having a permit to work as a journalist.

Sakfan Amin (worked as a cameraman for Zagros TV channel), was arrested by PYD’s KSM forces on 18 July 2014 after they raided his home in Al-Hasaka countryside in Al-Malikiya town. He was released on 22 July 2014.

- Violations against public and private properties

Kurdish Self-Management Forces threatened to arrest and exile journalist [Joumrad Hamdoush](#), (worked as a reporter for Rudaw TV channel in Efreeen) if he continues to cover the news. YPG forces raided his home on 24 April 2014 which forced Hamdoush to disappear because he learned that his house is being surveilled. In a previous incident, KSM forces prohibited him from working as a journalist in Efreeen.

- On 18 February 2014, KSM forces raided the headquarters of Arta Radio in Al-Hassaka countryside – Amouda and stopped it from working for three days because there were unpermitted broadcast devices other than Arta Radio in the building.

Arta radio moved to Ain Al-Arab “Kubani” in Aleppo countryside on 21 June 2014 and broadcasted for one day before KSM forces raided their new headquarters and shut it down under the pretext that “the media law has not been issued yet in the region” despite the fact that PYD radio channel has been broadcasting for two years.

- On 9 May 2014, journalist Lunad Hussein’s home, located in Al-Qahtaniya was bombed under mysterious circumstances. It was suspected that two PYD members were involved in the bombing where one of them planted the explosive device which killed him and injured the other suspected member. KSM forces confiscated the journalists’ book and belongings later. Lunad Hussein is a member of YRK (Kurdish Journalists’ Union) and he lives in Germany. [Lunad Hussein’s home](#)

6. Displacement and Enforced Displacement:

Widespread violations that were committed by the KSM forces, which had ethnic dimensions sometimes; led to the displacement of tens of thousands of the governorate's residents, mostly Arabs, where dozens of other towns are still vacant of its inhabitants.

Through our continuous documentation, we noticed that the displacement actions were perpetrated by the KSM forces since it was established.

We also recorded robbery cases and the almost complete destruction and incineration of entire towns. Crops were also confiscated or burned; properties and lands were flattened. All these actions forcibly displaced tens of thousands of residents. In an internationally unarmed conflict, and according to Article VIII of the Rome Statute, all these violations amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity and constitute breaches to the Customary International Humanitarian Law. These incidents entail a pattern of killing, burning and arrests based on ethnic backgrounds.

- Demolition and Incineration of Houses and Properties:

i. Towns that were almost completely destroyed; thus its residents were displaced:

Al Haswiya Al Kabeera, Al Haswiya Al Saghera, Um Kabeer, Um kaheef, Al Naem, Al Henwa Al Kabera, Al Henwa Al Saghera, Al Fastat, and Al Khawla towns.

ii. Towns that were partially destroyed; thus some of its residents were displaced:

Al Erja, Abu Jari, Eastern Palestine, Western Palestine, Um Kranyet, Lazaka, Al Khanasaa, Khazaa, Slayma, Oukaz, Al Jisi, Nakatha, Oumaya, Al Masoudeya, Tal Sawan, Abu Harmala, Abu Kabeer, Al Zahraa, Abu Feree', and Al Ghareeka towns.

- February 2015:

On 28 February 2015, KSM forces burned and destroyed dozens of houses in a number of towns in Tal Hamees town after ISIL withdrew from it and KSM forces gained control over the region. Al Housayneya town, Al Naem, and Al Hasweya towns were among the towns that were burned.

- March 2015:

In March 2015, KSM forces flattened houses to the ground in towns of western Hassaka suburbs and demolished several houses after forcing its residents to leave it. These towns are: Fareesat Al Sharayeen, Tal Bilal, Fareesat Al Wosta, and Al Razaz towns.

On 3 March 2015, KSM forces burned a number of houses in Al Wawya and Al Houswa towns. Also, during March, it gained control over 29 towns in Tal Hamees region after it stormed it and destroyed people's houses. According to that region, 9 towns were destroyed almost completely.

- April 2015:

On 20 April 2015, KSM forces destroyed most of the houses in the town of Tal Al Shouk in Tal Barrak suburbs after it gained control over it.

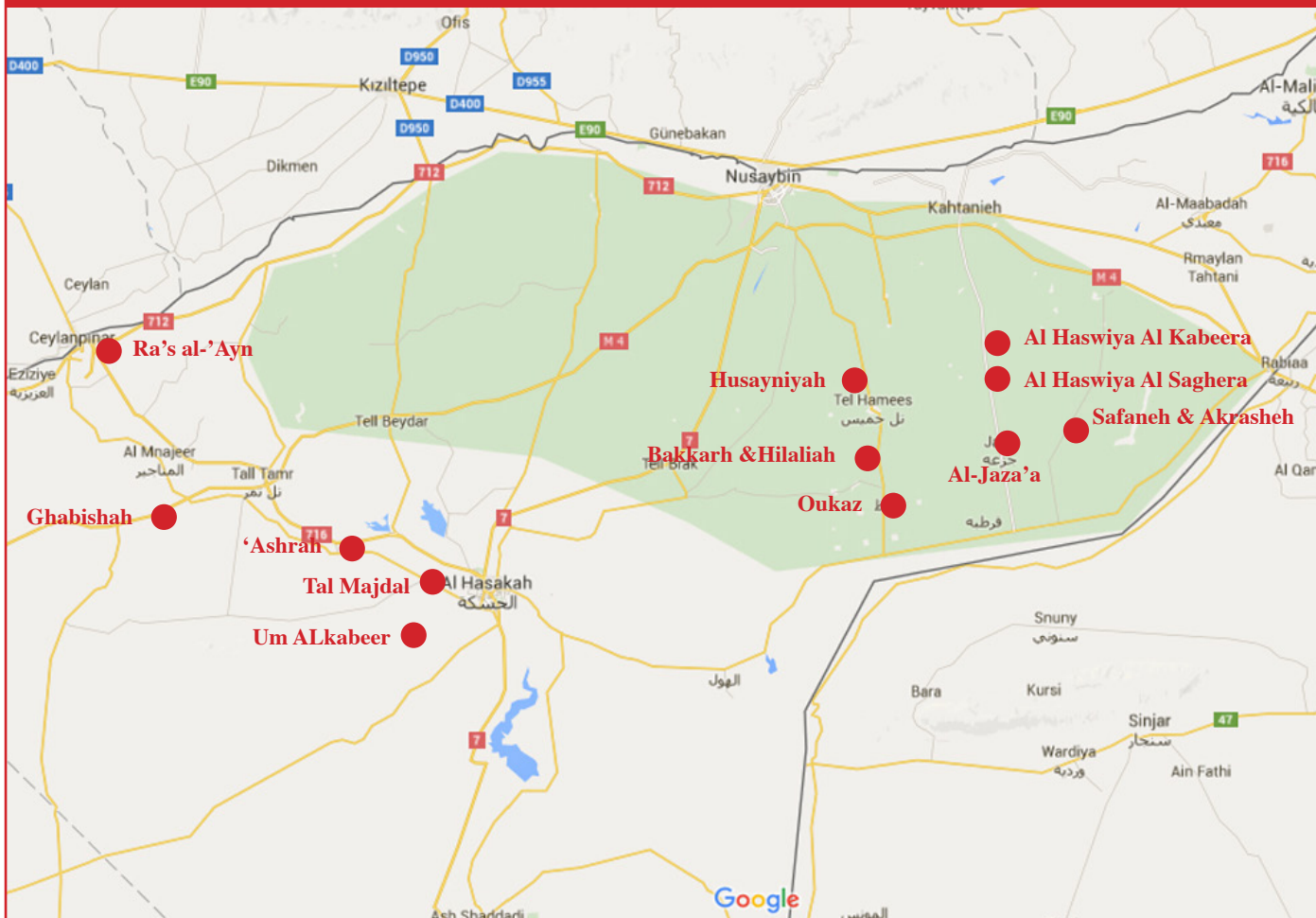
- May 2015:

On 10 May 2015, KSM forces burned five houses in Al Hela town in Raes Al Ein suburbs. Among the houses that were burned was Salman Subieh, and Saleem Mohamad Khalaf's houses.

On 12 May 2015, KSM forces were positioned next to the mosque in Al Haweesh town in Raes Al Ein for ten days. During that time, it vandalized the mosque before it left according to a several residents in that region.

On 18 May 2015, KSM forces flattened several houses to the ground using bulldozers in Lilan town southern of Raes Al Ein city after it stormed and gained control over it. What helped the KSM forces was the international coalition shelling.

An interactive map that depicts the locations of the most significant towns who's residents were displaced due to the violations of the Kurdish Self Management Forces.



On 19 May 2015, KSM forces looted, broke and entered to several houses in the following towns: Hayla, Al Laghaf, Al Houwiesh, Al Ramo, Al Soussa, Al Rihaneyi, Al and Al Salheya in Raes Al Ein.

On 27 May 2015, KSM forces burned five houses in the following towns: Al Zebyan, Kamel, Jade-datIdwan and Al Raseem houses. All these towns are located in the vicinity of the Raes Al Ein in Al Hassaka suburbs.

- June 2015:

On 6 June 2015, KSM forces demolished several houses in Al Sarli and Eshra towns in southern of Al Hassaka governorate.

On 9 June 2015, KSM forces used to bulldozers in Tal Hamam city and flattened several houses in it.

On 10 June 2015, KSM forces used bulldozers in Um Al Masameer town in southern of Al Hassaka governorate.

- July 2015:

On 9 July 2015, KSM forces burned several houses in Al Rehaneyi town in the southern suburbs of Ras Al Ein after its residents were displaced in May 2015.

- Burning or Looting Crops:

June 2015:

On 3 June 2015, KSM forces burned some crops in Ras Al Ein region.

On 5 June 2015, KSM forces burned the crops in Al Mountafein town in the suburbs of Nahyat Tal Temer in Al Hassaka suburbs.

On 6 June 2015, KSM forces looted the wheat and barley crops in vast agricultural lands that spread from Raes Al Ein till Naheyf Tal Temer region. It also looted the crops in the vicinity of Jabal Abdul Azeez that belonged to the displaced residents. They harvested the lands with 15 machines under the protection of their gunmen.

- May 2015:

On 7 May 2015, KSM forces confiscated a number of agricultural machines in the towns in the suburbs of Tal Nahya and Talhmes towns. We recorded the confiscation of three machines owned by Al Rumi family from Al Zahraa town.

On 17 May 2015, KSM forces looted the crops from several agricultural lands which were owned by Arabs in the following towns: Safana, Akrasha, Al Boutha, Mohamad Al Thayab, Al Housayneya, Al Khatouna, Al Enzi, Jazaa', Khazaa', and Slayma in Al Hassaka suburbs.

On 26 May 2015, KSM forces shot live bullets at a protest aiming to disperse it. The protest objected on the KSM actions that destroyed their houses, looted their crops and prevented the famers from farming their lands.

On 28 May 2015, KSM forces confiscated a number of barley and wheat crops that were stored in civilian houses in Al Shara town.

On 31 May 2015, KSM forces harvested vast agricultural lands that were owned by the residents of Al Aghbeesh town.

Widespread violations that were committed by the KSM forces, which had ethnic dimensions sometimes; led to the displacement of tens of thousands of the governorate's residents, mostly Arabs, where dozens of other towns are still vacant of its inhabitants.

These towns are: Al Rawya, Al Khansaa, Al Ta'ef, Balkees, Al Khasa, Al Kharnoubi Al Saghera, Khirbit Mousa, Awayniyi, Al Housyneyi, Al Mabrouki, Al Salmasa Al Kabeera, Al Salmasa Al Shaghera, Al Jisi, Al May, Al Jouyasmeya, Al Zarka, Al Hinwa, Tal Majdel, Al Ishraa, Al Razaza, Um Al Kabar, Tal Khaleef, Al Madina, Al Shlashiyi, Al Madan, Al Soussa, Journ Abyad, Maghouja, Al Gharaa, Al Hwiesh, Sayed Abad, Al Tahmeen, Nafyat Habash, Al Dabeeb, Al Saleel, Al Alkana, Um Hujra, Abu Fakheez, Al Karen and Al Badee', Tal Temer Shameya, Al Aghbeesh, Tal Hamam, Al Fouwaida, Al Khmasa Arbe'en, Granada, and Al Kouzleyi towns.

Through our continuous documentation, we noticed that the displacement actions were perpetrated by the KSM forces since it was established. In what follows are the eyewitness's testimonies before and after the report's preparation which indicates a sustained and continuous approach that escalated dramatically in the period of time that is covered by the report.

June 2014:

Um Layth, born in 1982, a widow and a mother of 6 children, from Al Raes Al Ein city in Al Hassaka governorate told SNHR that she was expelled twice from her house by KSM forces. She was also threatened of murder, denigration, and robbery.

"In June 2014, after the school year was over, KSM forces stormed Raes Al Ein city. They were led by Houssien Kojar and they threatened and notified the Arab residents to evacuate their houses. These forces came to my house and my neighbor's as well and ordered us to evacuate the houses without justifying the reasons. They told me to go to Turkey or to regions under the control of armed opposition. We are civilians and we do not support the armed opposition or others.

I left my house and went to Turkey where I stayed for two months. Then I decided to go back to my house again when the school year was going to begin in Raes Al Ein and I was expelled from my house again for the second time. They threatened me that I and my family shall be burned alive in the house if I do not evacuate the house in two days. Housien Kojar, the leader, insulted me with his words so I had to leave my house for the second time. They took over my house, my land and two shops that I own. Since that time I have been living as a refugee in Turkey with my children. We have nobody to support us. More than 150 Arab families were displaced and their properties were seized by the KSM forces. We do not dare to go back to our cit. What did we do to them so that they did that to us?"

- November 2014:

Ahmad, 25 years old, a taxi driver, from Al Safana town in the southeast of Al Qameshli city who is currently living in Al Hassaka suburbs. He told SNHR his testimony:

"The number of the inhabitants of Al Safana town is almost 1500 individuals. Twenty five individuals enrolled with ISIL and tried to establish a headquarters but we were against this idea and expelled them from the town. We do not want our town to be a battlefield between the Kurdish forces and ISIL. We hate ISIL.

The KSM forces surrounded the town for about a week, since the end of October and up till the beginning of November in an attempt to storm it. They raided the town and they wore a camouflaged military uniform who were about 600 gunmen. They gathered a great number of the families in the town's square, cursed, insulted and accused us of

enrolling with ISIL. Also, they accused us of storing weapons in our houses. Some of their insults were racial even though the town was free of any ISIL presence.

They searched the houses in the town, burned almost 50 houses and shot at the water tanks. After that, they arbitrary arrested not less than 150 young men and ordered us to leave the city. They did not even allow us to take out belongings as they fired into the air. We heard explosion sounds from the town as we left it. I believe that the KMS bombed some houses. We arrived to a nearby town and I cannot even mention the town's name because we fear the retaliation of the KSM forces. We heard the explosion sounds from the town every day."

All these clashes in addition to shelling from different conflict parties, including the international coalition's bombardment, led to waves of displacement. Most of the displaced individuals never returned to their houses out of fear from the KSM retaliation. Their houses, lands and shops were destroyed or burned and their possessions were looted; all these actions also conveyed a racial or ethnic grudge.

- February 2015:

Mohamad Al Abbas, 27, from Al Ewja town in Hassaka suburbs, was displaced from his town and is currently residing in Aksaray City in Turkey. He told us his testimony:

"Our town is so small, almost 70 houses. Sometimes the KSM forces used to shoot at the town in order to terrorize the residents but did not target the residents directly even though our town was free from any ISIL presence. On 10 February 2015, we heard an unknown movement outside the house then we saw members of the KSM forces in their military uniforms entering the town. I hid in

my house for almost 4 hours and during that time, I heard the sounds of gun firing, and the screams of women and children. When the firing sounds cooled down I met the residents. That is when I learned that the KSM forces arrested nearly 30 individuals then held them captive in the mosque. They broke into three houses who had members enrolled in ISIL and burned their houses even though their owners were not inside it. Those members are: Ahmad Turkey Al Falah, Abdul Rahman Al Aydan and Farhan Aydan Al Mohamad. KSM forces issued warnings to all the residents in the town stating that they must evacuate their houses in not more than 24 hours or else they will be burned alive in their houses. I was terrified, just as the rest of the residents and packed my belongings and fled with my family to a town called Al Gherra in Jabal Al Azeez region where we stayed there for four month, then I left to Turkey.”

Abu Saleh Al Swadi, born in 1992, married and a taxi driver from Tal Tamer Shameyi town in Al Hassaka western suburbs. We spoke to him in Turkey and he told us his testimony:

“I moved with my brother in mid 2013 to live in Tal Hamam town which is almost 8 Kilometers away from my hometown. On 23 February 2015, ISIL stormed Al Aghabeesh town and its surrounding villages, including our town which was all under KSM control. We heard shelling sounds for four hours then I fled the town with my older brother Abdul Kader, 27, and saw several women and children who were expelled from their houses under the pretext of ISIL’s invasion.”

May 2015

On 26 May 2015, KSM forces warned the residents of a number of residents in Jabal Al Azeez to evacuate it and gave then a 24 hours notice. The KSM pretext is that it was a military region. These towns are:

Um Al Kabar, Jurn Abyad, Tal Za’yster, Al Shahe-di, Al Fawqani, Al Moutawasita, Al Hamaneyi Al Fawqaneyi, Al Addad, Makhoulja, Al Ikla, Abu Sera, Eastern Dawodiya, Western Dawodiya, Al kefra, Southern Wasta, Tal Sousa, Al Qaseir, Al Sousa city, Al Sayad, Al Aghbeesh, Tal Hamam, Al Serhaneyi, Al Ghouraa, Al Khazna, Al Hazoumiya, Al Jafar, and other towns of southern of Al Hassaka governorate.

Nour Al Jabouri, one of the residents in Al Aghbeesh town in Al Hassaka suburbs was displaced twice. He is living in Turkey now and he told us his testimony:

“In the end of May 2015, after ISIL withdrew from the towns that surrounded Jabal Al Azeez region, southern of Al Hassaka governorate, KSM forces forced the Arab residents to leave their houses. I used to live in a town called Tal Hamam that is 8 kilometers away from Al Aghbeesh town in the southern suburbs of Al Hassaka governorate. I spoke to a number of displaced individuals from surrounding towns and they told me how KSM forces looted and burned their places and threatened them. The following month, KSM forces stormed the town of Tal Hamam and accused us of being ISIL members and that we should be in Palmyra not Kurdistan. They burned a great number of houses and that is when I was displaced for the second time. We ran out of the town on foot and passed by several towns which were almost entirely vacant of any residents. We will never forget what they did to us.

The first time I was displaced was almost a year and a half when KSM forces committed a heinous massacre in Al Aghbeesh town against Arab residents. We ran away with almost 100 Arab families to Tal Hamam town and built small houses to shelter us. Then I was displaced again for the second time.”

region again to the towns in the northern suburbs of Deir Al Zour in the end of May. Later in August I learned from the residents of the surrounding towns to ours that the KSM forces looted and burned most of the houses in the town. How could we forget what they did to us?”

In the following testimony, we focus on how KSM forces prohibited Abu Awwad from going back to his house.

Abu Awwad, 26, a university student in the Faculty of Law, from Al Rihaneyi town in the suburbs of Raes Al Ein city. He was displaced from his town to the northern suburbs of Deir Al Zour. Abu Awwad gave his testimony about his displacement from Al Rehaneyi town and how he was prevented by KSM forces from returning back to it:

“On 7 May 2015, I fled my town with my family due to the clashes between KSM forces and ISIL, in addition to the international coalition shelling. We went to Al Zabeeb town in Jabal Al Azeez region.

After the KSM forces gained control over Al Rehaneya town and expelled ISIL from it on 15 May 2015, I left Al Zabeeb town and went back to my village, however, the KSM forces prevented us from entering it and said: “You support ISIL, go to Raqqa where ISIL is.”

“They accused us of enrolling into ISIL even though our town was free from any ISIL presence. The number of inhabitants in our town is not more than 400 inhabitants and ISIL sometimes entered it and sometimes it used to leave it, and we could not have stopped them. We had to go back to Jabal Al Azeez region again but with the intensity of the clashes and the international coalition forces, I fled the

- June 2015:

On 30 June 2015, KSM forces warned the residents of some towns from Al Ali tribe in the vicinity of Tal Barrak to evacuate it and accused the residents of supporting or enrolling in ISIL. Most of the towns that were warned are:

Al Sultaneyi, Al Sakman, Al Saybat and Um Kahfe.

On 13 June 2015, KSM forces stopped some Arab families from returning to their houses in the following towns:

Wadha, Faresa, Al Sarli, Abu Shakhat, Abu Joulud, Al Shara, Al Dahmaa, Al Rawiya, and Naheyt Mabrouka towns in the suburbs of Raes Al Ein city in Al Hassaka.

Abdul Mutaleb, 52, a farmer who lived in Um Masameer town is currently living in Ourfa city in Turkey. He told SNHR his testimony:

“In June 2015, the battles between ISIL and the KSM forces intensified in our town. Also, we were being shelled by the international coalition forces. All these factors forced us to leave the town and we ran to the towns in Abdul Azeez region. There, we stayed for about a month when we heard news that the KSM forces allowed the residents who did not support ISIL to return to their town after they gained complete control over it.

We went back to our town but after ten days we were surprised by the invasion of the KSM

forces to our house when they arrested my elderly father in Tal Temer for 7 days. They accused him of dealing with ISIL and supporting it against the Kurds. He was beaten and humiliated. They did not even take into consideration that he was an elderly. They released my father by forced him to fingerprint on a paper which they told him that it was a release order. Later, it turned out that it was a paper that stated of waiver. My parents are old and illiterate. By that statement, KSM forces took over our five houses and all the agricultural lands that we owned. We had to leave the town.

We are not their only victims. Every day they destroy, burn, loot houses and properties. The number of inhabitants in our town is not more than 300, and up till now, almost 30 families have left the region.”

Omar Al Hamadani, 36, from Khirbit Karaj town that belongs to Tal Temer region and he is currently living in Ourfa in Turkey. He told us his testimony:

“Our village was under ISIL’s control in the beginning of 2015, but they did not have a headquarters inside the town. In May 2015, and after the battles between ISIL and KSM forces intensified, we fled to the towns of Jabal Abdul Azeez and stayed there for nearly a month.

KSM forces gained control over the town in 5 June 2015. After 10 days, we decided to go back to the town. Upon our arrival, we saw not less than 12 houses that were demolished, which is half of the number of the houses in the town. The number of inhabitants in our town is not more than 100 inhabitants. We were prevented by the KSM forces from returning back to our town as they said that we need to leave to ISIL-controlled regions. This time we had to

leave to Turkey because the battles intensified in the towns of Jabal Al Azeez region.”

- July 2015:

Mohannad, a telecommunications engineer, from Raes Al Ein city stated the following in an SNHR testimony:

“My family was harassed a lot by the KSM forces. Our suffering started in the mid of June 2014 when 5 KSM armed members, who affiliated to Houssein Kojar the military leader of the KSM forces in Raes Al Ein city, stormed our house. They gave a three day notice to my family and interrogated my father. They asked him about my whereabouts and if I had enrolled with ISIL, which is a routine question. In that same period of time, we learned that KSM forces displaced nearly 90 Arab families from the city. We were supposed to be among the displaced families, but some of our Kurdish relatives from my father’s side mediated with the KSM forces to let us stay in the city. After almost two months, in mid August 2014, they demanded my father to enroll my brothers in the KSM forces and asked him to pay an amount of money, then accused him of enrolling and supporting ISIL.

They told my father: “You are not cooperating with us. You are not enrolling your family members in our forces and do not mourn our victims. You Arabs destroyed our city. You are ISIL supporters.

In the mid of July 2015, car was bombed next to Koujar office (the military leader of the KSM forces) that is 500 meters away from our house. Few hours later, a KSM patrol stormed our house and gave my family a one day notice to leave the house or they will burn them alive

inside it. As a result, my family was forced to leave the town in addition to dozens of other families. Among the displaced families, was Al Hajj Houssein family, who is a Muazzin in Al Mahata mosque and owned several shops and houses. His charge was that his brother-in-law was an ISIL member.”

- Violations Committed by KSM forces against Turkmen:

Turkmen are Turkish people who are located primarily in Central Asia. They have been residing in Syria in a number of cities and towns especially in Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Al Raqqa, Daraa and Al Hassaka governorates. Most of them are Sunnis and they descendents from the Turkish families who lived in Syria hundreds of years ago during the Ottoman period. In Al Hassaka governorate, the number of the Turkmen inhabitants is nearly 8 thousands where half of them live in Raes Al Ein city and its suburbs. The rest inhabit Al Nashwa neighborhood in Al Hassaka and Al Qameshli cities.

Most of the violations were committed against Arabs, but also, it was committed against other ethnic groups in Al Hassaka. For instance, in February 2015, nearly 100 Turkmen families were subjected to the cruelty, injustice and oppression. Some of these residents also told us that they were forced to displace and leave the city due to arbitrary arrests mainly, and due to the armed clashes that happened in the region.

SNHR interviewed Mo'ayed Al Sultan, 29, a lawyer, who lived in Raes Al Ein before he was displaced to Turkey. He is now living in Istanbul and he gave us his testimony:

“On 17 April 2013, armed opposition groups and An-Nusra front withdrew from Raes Al Ein almost entirely after clashes with the

KSM forces. We feared our lives and therefore leaved the city. My family Members) and almost 20 Turkmen families fled towards the Turkish borders (Jilan Binner Crossing point). We had to flee the city due to the continuous arrests and murders committed by the Kurdish forces. Residents in this city were arrested and expelled from their houses because the KSM forces accused them of supporting armed opposition groups. Right now, since not everyone can afford to move to a different region or country, only 20 Turkmen families out of 200 are left in Raes Al Ein.”

III. Attachments and Annexes

[“No Alternative to Return Home”](#): Violations Committed by Kurdish Self Management Forces in Al Hassaka Governorate:

Amnesty International reports:

[‘WE HAD NOWHERE TO GO’ - FORCED DISPLACEMENT AND DEMOLITIONS IN NORTHERN SYRIA”](#)

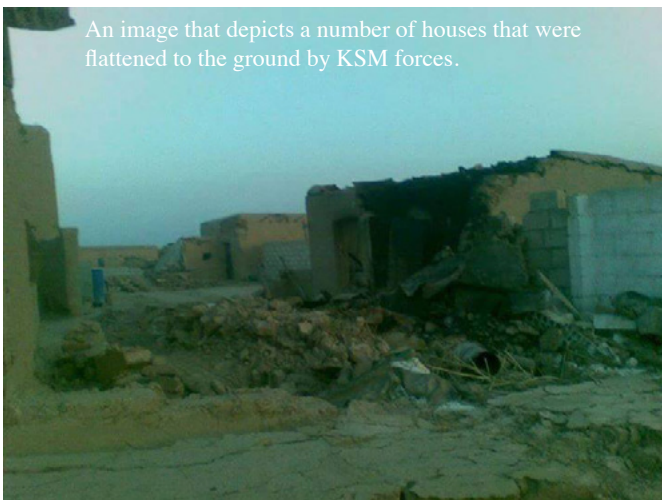
Syria: [Arbitrary detentions and blatantly unfair trials mar PYD fight against terrorism](#)

[Under Kurdish Rule](#) – Abuses in PYD-run enclaves of Syria

A [statement](#) that was issued from Christian churches, civil and political institutions about the violations of the Kurdish Self Management forces:

A [video](#) that depicts the destruction effects in some houses in Al Hawsawiya town next to Tal Hamees.

An image that depicts a number of houses that were flattened to the ground by KSM forces.



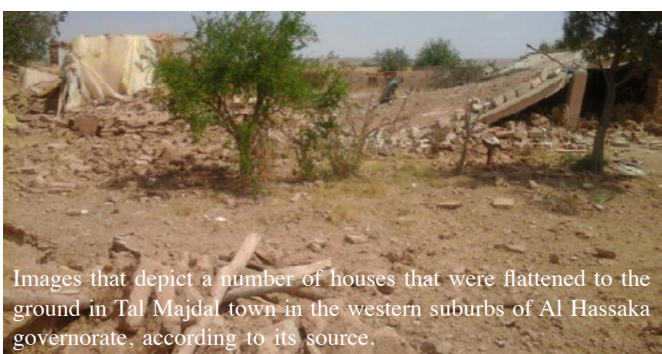
A [video](#) that depicts the displacement of residents in Al Mabrouka town and its surrounding

- An [image](#) that depicts the displacement of families from Al Hassaka suburbs in May 2015:

- An image that depicts the displacement of families in the western suburbs of Raes Al Ein city



Images that depict a number of houses that were flattened to the ground in Tal Majdal town in the western suburbs of Al Hassaka governorate, according to its source.



An image that shows depicts a house that was flattened to the ground by KSM forces in Al Razzaza town



- An image that depicts displaced people from Al Mabrouka town and its surrounding villages in the suburbs of Raes Al Ein suburbs.



- Several images which depicts displaced families from Al Jabour tribe in Al Hassaka suburbs due to the KSM actions.



Image shows families from Al Jabour Clan in Al Hassakah countryside displaced by Kurd Self-management forces © SNHR



Image shows families from Al Jabour Clan in Al Hasakah countryside displaced by Kurd Self-management forces

© SNHR



Image shows families from Al Jabour Clan in Al Hasakah countryside displaced by Kurd Self-management forces

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IV. Conclusions:

Kurdish Self Management Forces violated the International Human Rights Law when it threatened, assaulted, attacked, arrested, killed and robbed civilians who live under its military authority.

Indiscriminate destruction, displacement, arbitrary arrests, extrajudicial killing and ethnic assaults are considered a clear violation of the International Humanitarian Law, and these indiscriminate killings amount to war crimes.

KSM forces prohibited civilians and residents from returning to their towns which is clear evidence that forced displacement was a systemized and deliberate strategy.

Recommendations:

i. To the Independent Investigation Commission:

Reveal the results of the investigations about the violations that were committed by Kurdish Self Management Forces.

ii. To the Security Council:

- Refer the Syrian file to the International Criminal Court.
- Impose sanctions against those responsible for the war crimes they committed.
- Impose and arms embargo against the Kurdish Self Management Forces since they violated the human rights law.

iii. To the Countries Who Support the KSM forces:

- Pressure the KSM forces to end all its violations against civilians and residents.
- Hold the perpetrators accountable for their crimes.
- To compensate for the damage and destruction they inflicted.
- Stop all forms of arms support since according to the international law, it is a contribution to those crimes.
- Condemn the crimes that were committed by the KSM forces.

iv. To the Kurdish Self Management forces:

- Abide to the international human rights law.
- Seize their arrests, assaults and destruction under the pretext of fighting ISIL.
- Investigate all the committed crimes.
- Compensate to all those affected.
- Allow residents to return to their towns.
- Hold all the perpetrators accountable for their crimes.

Acknowledgment and Condolences:

Our heartfelt thanks and appreciations go to the victims' families, eyewitnesses, and local activists whose testimonies contributed majorly to this report. Our most profound consolations go out to the victims' families and friends.