

statement



The Center for  
Justice & Accountability



---

## SNHR Assists in Building a Case Against the Assad Regime in a US Court

**The Syrian Regime is Still Detaining Roughly 135,000  
Syrian Citizens, and Killed 15,038 Others Under Torture**

**Tuesday, April 13, 2023**

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.

In 2012, US citizen Obada Mzaik was arrested by the Syrian regime's Air Force Intelligence, where he was held and tortured at al-Mazza Military Airbase.

Obada, the plaintiff, enlisted the help of the [Center for Justice and Accountability \(CJA\)](#). In January 2022, the CJA filed a lawsuit at the US District Court for the District of Columbia against the Syrian Arab Republic in order to hold it accountable for the torture practices at its detention centers under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, considering that the Assad regime has tortured a US citizen.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has assisted in building the case file through its partnership with the CJA. The group supplied the CJA with a large set of data and evidences on the torture practices at the Air Force Intelligence branch in al-Mazza Military Airbase in 2012, as well as other information.

Obada Mzaik is one of roughly 135,000 people who are still under arbitrary, roughly 96,000 are forcibly disappeared persons, according to SNHR's database that contains details on those victims; including names, date of arrest, the party that made the arrest, and other relevant information. We believe that all of these are being subjected to brutal torture. In fact, we have documented the killing of roughly 15,038 Syrian citizens under torture, including 94 women and 190 torture. The torture practiced by the Syrian regime does constitute crimes against humanity.

Even though this is a civilian lawsuit, rather than a criminal one, and even though we do not think the Assad regime will pay any compensation or comply with the court's ruling, such a case holds great symbolism because it is a civilian lawsuit against the Syrian Arab Republic headed by the Syrian regime that practices the most harrowing forms of torture in the world. We have released a report documenting [72 methods of torture](#) used by the Syrian regime against detainees.

We hope that the court's ruling will be in favor of the plaintiff, and it is also our hope that the ruling will mention the Assad regime's methodological torture and killing under torture.

This new lawsuit against the Assad regime's brutal practices against Syrians and non-Syrians alike comes at a time when some Arab states are working towards resurrecting relations with and bringing the Assad regime back to the Arab League despite the fact that the Assad regime has not altered any of its brutal practices, has not released even one of the 135,000 detainees, has not put an end to torture, has not hold accountable any of the perpetrators of crimes, and has not launched any investigation into the killing of hundreds of thousands of Syrians, among many other violations. Restoring relations with the regime while its violations continue is effectively a contribution to and an encouragement of the regime's impunity.



[www.snhr.org](http://www.snhr.org) - [info@snhr.org](mailto:info@snhr.org)