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.

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Siblings Walid & Mamoun al-Khatib
Have been Forcibly Disappeared Since 2014
The Hague - The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has briefed the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on the case of two brothers Walid & Mamoun Mohammad al-Khatib, born in 1970 and 1978 respectively, from Harran al-Awamid village in Eastern Ghouta in Damascus suburbs governorate. Both brothers had been working as taxi drivers before their arrest. Walid was arrested first on Thursday, January 2, 2014, by Syrian regime forces in a raid on his house in al-Hayjana town in Eastern Ghouta in Damascus suburbs governorate. He was taken to an undisclosed location, and has been forcibly disappeared ever since, as his fate remains unknown to SNHR as well as his family. The arresting servicemen also seized his car.

Then, on Friday, January 16, 2015, Mamoun was arrested by personnel from Syrian regime forces in a raid on his house in al-Hayjana town in Eastern Ghouta in Damascus suburbs governorate. He was taken to an undisclosed location, and has been forcibly disappeared ever since, with his fate also remaining unknown to SNHR as well as to his family. The arresting servicemen also seized an agricultural bulldozer he owns.

SNHR has also briefed the UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, as well as briefing the UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, specifically in regard to the case of the brothers Walid & Mamoun al-Khatib.

Syrian authorities have denied any connection with the enforced disappearance of the two brothers, Walid & Mamoun al-Khtaib. SNHR has been unable to determine their fate, as have their family members, who fear that they may be arrested and tortured by regime personnel themselves if they continue to ask about their loved ones' whereabouts and fate, as has happened in numerous previous cases.

SNHR has called on the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearance, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, as well as the UN Special Rapporteur on
the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, to intervene and to demand that Syrian authorities release both brothers immediately, as well as to secure the release of thousands of other forcibly disappeared citizens whose whereabouts and current conditions must also be revealed.

Although the Syrian government is not a party to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, it is indisputably a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Arab Charter on Human Rights. Enforced disappearance constitutes a violation of both instruments.

SNHR also confirms that there are well-founded fears that many of those forcibly disappeared by the Syrian regime since 2011 may have been subjected to torture and possibly died due to torture, with the number of citizens forcibly disappeared by the regime continuing to grow.