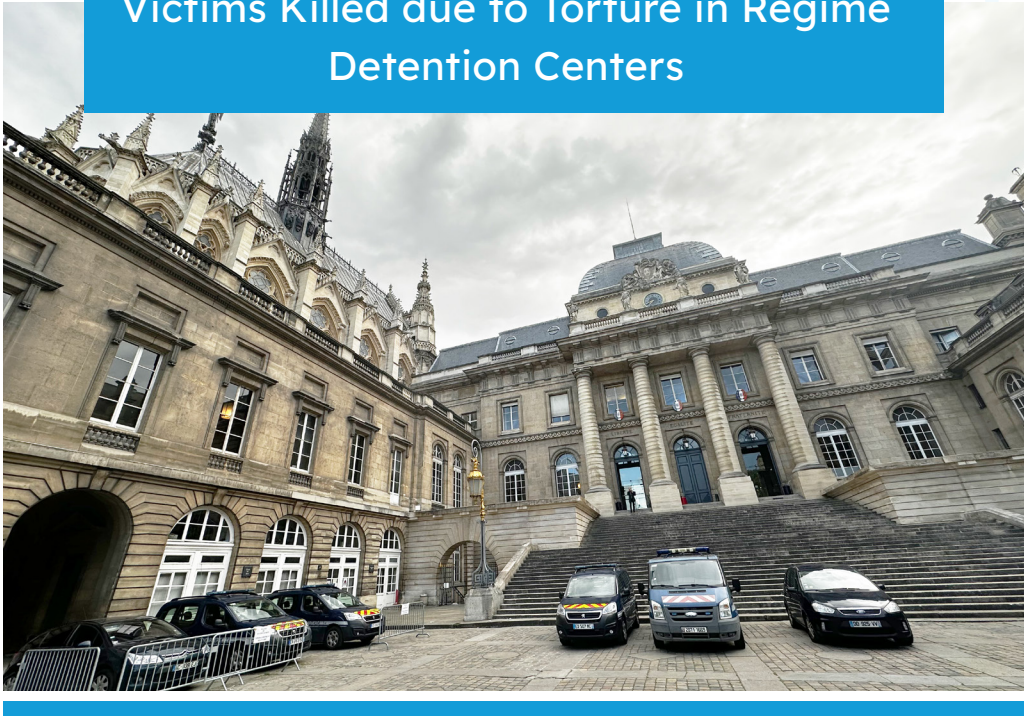


Statement

SNHR Welcomes French Court's Conviction of Three Senior Regime Security Officers Over the Murder of Frenchmen Mazen Dabbagh and His Son Patrick

The World's States Must Move Ahead to Achieve Justice for At Least **15,087** Victims Killed due to Torture in Regime Detention Centers



Saturday 25 May 2024

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 analyzes in Syria.

On Friday, May 24, 2024, the Paris Criminal Court officially convicted three Syrian regime security leadership officials in absentia on charges of complicity in war crimes and crimes against humanity in the case of the Franco-Syrians Mazen Dabbagh and his son Patrick (Abdul Qader), who were arrested, forcibly disappeared, and subsequently killed under torture in a detention center operated by the Syrian regime's Air Force Intelligence Directorate. The Syrian regime also seized the Dabbagh family's properties in Damascus.

This ruling followed several trial sessions held in absentia against the accused from May 21-24, 2024. The case had been under investigation by the War Crimes Unit in Paris since November 2016, before a decision was made by the city's General Prosecutor to launch a judicial examination on the grounds of the universal jurisdiction principle. On October 8, 2018, the examining judges issued arrest warrants against the three officers accused, namely Ali Mamlouk, Jamil Hassan, and Abdel Salam Mahmoud.

This landmark trial would not have been possible without the tireless and brave efforts of Obayda Dabbagh, Mazen's brother, and Ms. Hanan Dabbagh, Mazen's widow.

The Court sentenced the three high-ranking regime officers in absentia to life imprisonment, as they were convinced of complicity in imprisonment, torture, enforced disappearance, and causing deliberate harm to life, constituting crimes against humanity; and extortion and property seizure, constituting war crimes.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), represented by its Executive Director Fadel Abdulghany, closely followed, and attended the recent proceedings over the past four days. Moreover, SNHR's data and reports were referenced in many of the statements made by the Dabbagh family's lawyer, as well as the witnesses, and experts.

[Abdul Qader "Patrick" Mazen Dabbagh](#), who was originally from Damascus city, was a French national born in 1993. He was a second-year student at Damascus University's Literature and Humanities Department at the time of his arrest on Sunday, November 3, 2013, by personnel from the Syrian regime's Air Force Intelligence Directorate, who raided his family home in al-Mazza neighborhood in Damascus city. Following his arrest, Patrick was taken to the Air Force Intelligence Directorate's interrogation branch at Mazza Military Airbase in Damascus city. He has been forcibly disappeared ever since with the Syrian regime denying any knowledge of his whereabouts and refusing to allow anyone, even a lawyer, to visit him. On Wednesday, August 15, 2018, his family learnt that he had been registered as having died on January 21, 2014.



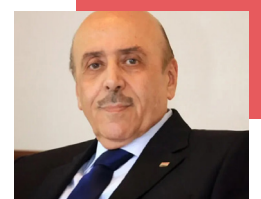
↑ Abdul Qader "Patrick" Mazen Dabbagh

Patrick's father, [Mazen Saleh Dabbagh](#), born in 1959, was the Senior Educational Advisor at the French Charles de Gaulle School in Damascus city, which operates under the supervision of the French State through the country's embassy in Damascus city. He was arrested the day after his son, also by personnel from the Syrian regime's Air Force Intelligence Directorate, on Monday, November 4, 2013, in another raid on the family's home in al-Mazza neighborhood of Damascus city. Mazen's family subsequently learnt that he had been registered as having died on November 25, 2017, about three years after Patrick's death. In July 2016, Mazen's wife and daughter were expelled from their house in Damascus, after it had been confiscated by Abdel Salam Mahmoud, one of the three regime officers charged in the case.



↑ 👁 Mazen Saleh Dabbagh

This ruling is a landmark conviction of three of the most prominent military leadership officials, all of whom have held key, senior positions within the regime, including [Ali Mamlouk](#), who is still a highly influential senior regime figure. Born in 1946, Ali Mamlouk is a Major General who headed the National Security Bureau, the highest regime security authority which oversees the work of other security bodies, from 2012 until January 18, 2024, when he was named a Special Security Advisor to the President of the Syrian Arab Republic. He recently visited Iran to offer his condolences over the recent death of the Iranian President.



↑ 👁 Ali Mamlouk

[Jamil Hassan](#) is a Major-General from al-Qarniya village in rural Homs governorate, born in 1952. He headed the Syrian Air Force Intelligence Directorate from 2009 until 2019. As such, he is directly responsible for the widespread violations perpetrated by the Air Force Intelligence personnel under his leadership, which includes killings, arbitrary arrests, torture, and enforced disappearance of detainees.



↑ 👁 Jamil Hassan

Abdel Salam Fajr Mahmoud is a Brigadier-General from al-Fou'a village in northern rural Idlib governorate, born in 1959. He headed the Interrogation Branch at the Air Force Intelligence Directorate in Damascus city from 2011 until 2020. According to dozens of first-hand accounts obtained by SNHR from former detainees who survived the Interrogation Branch at Mazza Military Airbase, Abdel Salam personally tortured and interrogated hundreds of detainees, including some who died due to torture and medical negligence, as well as the horrific detention conditions in the detention centers under his supervision.

SNHR welcomes the conviction of the three regime officers: Ali Mamlouk, Jamil Hassan, and Abdel Salam Fajr Mahmoud. SNHR views this as a step forward along the path of accountability. The world's democratic states must remember and seek justice for at least **136,192** individuals who are still arrested and/or forcibly disappeared in regime detention centers where they are subjected to various forms of torture. It is also imperative to remember that the Syrian regime has been responsible for the killing of at least **15,087** victims due to torture and medical negligence to date. The names and details of all of the **15,087** documented victims are recorded on SNHR's database. Moreover, the Syrian regime is still submitting more information on forcibly disappeared persons to civil registry offices to officially register their deaths. Since the beginning of 2018, up until May 24, 2024, we have recorded that at least **1,631 individuals**, including 24 children and 21 women, had been registered as dead in the civil registry records. In all of those cases, the cause of death was not disclosed, nor has the regime returned the victims' bodies to their families. The Syrian regime has also failed to disclose any of the deaths at the time they took place. These practices all constitute crimes against humanity. SNHR is hopeful that these new rulings, which were issued on the grounds of the universal jurisdiction principle, will constitute a beginning in achieving more justice for victims and their families, and a step towards holding the perpetrators accountable.

We must also emphasize that the Syrian regime continues to defy international law, contravening all international resolutions. On Thursday, May 23, 2024, we released a [report](#) showing that Syrian regime authorities continue to arbitrarily arrest and torture victims in a blatant violation of the order issued six months ago by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to cease all such activities. Therefore, all possible measures must be taken to deter the Syrian regime, which only understands the language of force and coercion.





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No justice without accountability

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