

## Statement

# SNHR Condemns Israeli Occupation Forces' Detention of an SARC Ambulance Crew in Quneitra on February 15, 2025

Thursday 20 February 2025



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.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has documented that on February 15, 2025, Israeli occupation forces intercepted a Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) ambulance in the Rasm al-Share' area of rural Quneitra governorate and detained its four-member crew—three volunteers and a driver—while they were transporting a sick woman from the Golan Hospital to her home in Rasem al-Share'.

According to information obtained by SNHR from reliable local sources, the ambulance's entry had been pre-coordinated between the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and the Israeli occupation forces, which recently advanced into Syrian territory, to facilitate the patient's return to her home. Despite this earlier agreement, an Israeli army patrol intercepted the ambulance, forced the crew to disembark, bound their hands, blindfolded them, and took them to an unknown location before releasing them three hours later without any legal justification or explanation for their detention.

Additionally, SNHR's sources confirmed that Israeli patrol members seized the ambulance and drove it themselves to transport the sick woman to her home—an arbitrary and illegal action.

## A GRAVE VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

SNHR must stress that the Israeli occupation forces' actions in the areas they infiltrated since December 2024 in Quneitra governorate constitute a clear breach of international humanitarian law and a violation of national sovereignty principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nation, in an attempt to impose a new de facto situation contrary to international law.

The detention of the SARC ambulance crew constitutes a direct violation of Article 19 of the 1949 First Geneva Convention, which mandates the protection of medical units and ambulances, prohibiting any attacks on or detention of them. This act also constitutes arbitrary detention in violation of Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and amounts to degrading treatment, contravening the Convention Against Torture.

Furthermore, Israel's incursion into Syrian territory violates Article 2(4) of the Charter of the United Nation, which prohibits the use of force against member states' territorial integrity. It also constitutes a severe violation of the disengagement agreements signed between Syria and Israel in 1974 and demonstrates a blatant infringement on the principle of national sovereignty.

## **WE CONDEMN ISRAELI INCURSION AND OF ISRAEL'S CONTINUING VIOLATIONS**

SNHR strongly condemns Israel's ground incursion targeting border villages and towns in Quneitra governorate, and the grave violations of international humanitarian law this entails, including the detention of medical and humanitarian personnel and obstruction of their work.

SNHR believes these practices undermine the Syrian transitional government's efforts to manage the current phase in a peaceful and stable way, as well as hindering humanitarian and medical efforts to provide services to those in need in the occupied areas.

### **Recommendations by SNHR**

#### **1. To the international community**

- Exert intense legal and diplomatic pressure on Israel to compel it to abide by international humanitarian law and cease its violations against medical and humanitarian personnel.
- Strengthen international monitoring mechanisms related to the humanitarian situation in affected areas to ensure the protection of humanitarian workers and prevent Israel from exploiting its military incursions to impose a new reality on the ground.

#### **2. To the UN and international organizations**

- Conduct an independent investigation into the detention of medical personnel and Israeli violations against humanitarian workers.
- Ensure adherence to the 1974 disengagement agreements and monitor illegal military incursions that threaten security and stability in the region.
- Impose binding measures on Israel to halt its targeting of medical personnel and their vehicles and to ensure the unobstructed delivery of humanitarian aid.

#### **3. To the Israeli occupation forces**

- Immediately cease targeting medical and humanitarian workers and uphold the principle of medical neutrality enshrined in the Geneva Conventions.
- Comply with international humanitarian law and refrain from detaining medical personnel or obstructing their work in any form.
- End illegal military incursions into Syrian border areas and respect Syrian sovereignty in accordance with UN resolutions.
- Issue an apology and provide compensation to the affected ambulance crew and the Syrian state for damages resulting from the unlawful detention and seizure of the ambulance crew, in line with international humanitarian law and principles of justice and reparation for violations.

#### **4. To the Syrian transitional government**

- Submit formal complaints to the United Nations and international human rights organizations to document Israeli violations and demand accountability for those responsible.
- Enhance the protection of medical and relief workers by collaborating with international organizations to ensure their freedom of movement and safety.
- Activate international diplomacy to garner support against Israeli violations and exert pressure to restore sovereign rights in the occupied areas.

#### **5. To civil and human rights organizations**

- Document Israeli violations against medical and humanitarian workers and prepare detailed reports to be submitted to relevant international bodies.
- Raise awareness about the dangers of targeting medical and relief personnel and the need for a unified stance to protect them.
- Support legal efforts to hold perpetrators of these violations accountable and engage with international entities to file legal cases against Israel's unlawful practices and occupation.



## SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



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*No justice without accountability*

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