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The Tenth Annual Report on Enforced Disappearance in Syria on the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances; Long Years of Constant Grief and Loss

**Nearly 102,000 Syrian
Citizens Forcibly
Disappeared Since
March 2011, Mostly
by the Syrian Regime,
to Destroy Them and
Intimidate the Entire
Population**

Monday 30 August 2021

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.

SNHR
SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Content

I. Enforced Disappearance Is One of the Syrian Regime's Most Notorious Tools to Politically Crush and Terrorize Dissidents and Syrian Society.....	3
II. The Syrian Network for Human Rights' Cooperation with the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Special Rapporteur on Torture, the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism, and the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health.....	7
III. The Record of Victims of Arbitrary Arrest/ Detention and Enforced Disappearance and Its Distribution in Syria Since March 2011.....	8
IV. Enforced Disappearance by the Four Main Parties in Syria.....	12
V. The Syrian Regime Continues to Manipulate Laws Registering Some of the Disappeared Persons as Dead Through Its Civil Registry Departments, with a Total of 1,000 Such Cases Documented.....	33
VI. The Regime Security Services' and Army Forces' Direct Responsibility for the Crime of Enforced Disappearance and the Names of Individuals Who We Believe Are Involved in Committing Egregious Violations.....	39
VII. Conclusions and Recommendations.....	47

I. Enforced Disappearance Is One of the Syrian Regime's Most Notorious Tools to Politically Crush and Terrorize Dissidents and Syrian Society

The phenomenon of enforced disappearance in Syria is organically linked to the phenomenon of arbitrary arrest, with most of those subjected to arbitrary detention going on to be classified as forcibly disappeared; the Syrian regime has targeted participants in political demonstrations against its rule with widespread arbitrary arrests since the early days of the popular uprising in March 2011, and deliberately forcibly disappeared the vast majority of those detained to deter others from joining the political uprising against it through instilling fear that they would be subjected to the same disturbing fate. The Syrian regime has systematically used enforced disappearance as one of its most notorious tools of repression and terrorism aimed at crushing and destroying political opponents simply for expressing their opinion and participating in political demonstrations. The regime has also harnessed the capabilities of the security services, which have tens of thousands of personnel, to persecute, arrest, torture and forcibly disappear those who participated in the popular uprising.

The first years of the mass uprising saw the highest percentage of enforced disappearances because the demonstrations were taking place intensively, and within areas under the control of the Syrian regime, which aimed to end these protests and liquidate as many participants as possible with the objective of reducing or ending the incidence of the popular uprising, even over years; this explains the high numbers of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons in Syria, which in some years reached the level of six out of every thousand Syrian citizens being classified as forcibly disappeared, making the Syrian regime the worst globally in the twenty-first century in terms of forcibly disappearing its citizens.

Not a single month has passed without SNHR recording cases of arbitrary arrests and thus enforced disappearances over the past ten years; even after the Syrian regime regained control over areas that had managed to escape from its control, we have documented hundreds of cases of enforced disappearance against the people of those areas, including the Eastern Ghouta and Western Ghouta of Damascus suburbs, the Southern region of Syria, and the eastern neighborhoods of Aleppo city, as well as neighborhoods of Homs city, Deir Ez-Zour and other areas, all of which confirm the Syrian regime's continuing endeavors to persecute and punish even the most peripheral participants in the popular uprising against it. This also proves, as we have repeated dozens of times, that it is impossible for Syria to reach a state of stability with even minimal respect for the most basic rights of the Syrian citizen so long as the brutal security services that slavishly follow the orders of the Syrian regime survive; this means that the idea of any credible political solution being achieved while these security services continue to wield power without being held accountable for their terrible crimes is simply absurd.

All parties to the conflict and the controlling forces have practiced widespread arbitrary detentions and enforced disappearances of Syrian citizens in connection with the armed conflict, within the areas under their control, with the aim of intimidating political opponents and subjugating society in their areas of control.

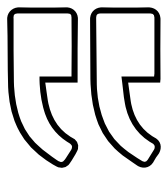
The repercussions of the crime of enforced disappearance are not limited to the victims only, but also extend to their families, who suffer from loss, stress, years of waiting, and absolute helplessness, in the absence of any legal procedures they can take to assist their loved ones, due to the security dominance of the intelligence services responsible for arrests and enforced disappearances, in addition to being afflicted by constant psychological, economic and social suffering.

International law prohibits the use of enforced disappearance under any circumstances, and states that emergency conditions such as conflicts and wars may not be invoked to allow its practice. There are numerous international norms and instruments related to the crime of enforced disappearance, such as [the Rome Statute](#), Article 7 of which describes enforced disappearance as a crime against humanity “when committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack”, with Article 5 of the [International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance](#) also stressing the same point. Similarly, Article VII of the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#) states that no-one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and Article 14 of the same Covenant criminalizes the coercion of any person to testify against himself or admit to an offense he has not committed. In addition, enforced disappearance violates the set of rights included in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, such as the right to recognition of legal personality and to the freedom and security of the person, to access to judicial guarantees and to a fair trial, as well as the right of victims’ families to know the truth about the fate of the disappeared and the circumstances of their disappearance. In addition, enforced disappearance violates the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

On March 11, 2021, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (COI) issued a report entitled “[A Decade of Arbitrary Imprisonment and Detention](#)”, in which it indicated that the Syrian regime has committed, through detentions, crimes that amount to crimes against humanity, and emphasized the regime’s practice of arrests and enforced disappearances in a systematic and widespread manner; the report covered the period from March 2011 to December 2020, with the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) contributing to this report through extensive sharing of a large quantity of data and information; we believe that this report is of great importance and constitutes important material to hold the Syrian regime accountable and to help in obstructing all efforts aimed at rehabilitating it after it lost any legitimacy at the political and human rights levels among the most prominent and important countries in the world.

On July 13, [the United Nations Human Rights Council issued a resolution](#) calling for justice for tens of thousands of Syrians who went missing during the decade-long Syrian conflict. The resolution, proposed by [the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Qatar, Turkey and the United States](#), was adopted by a majority of 26 votes, while six countries opposed, including Russia and China, and 15 abstained.

Fadel Abdul Ghany, Director of the Syrian Network for Human Rights, says:



The Syrian regime has harnessed enormous economic and human capabilities to arrest and disappear this huge number of Syrian citizens in order to crush and exterminate them politically, at a time when the Syrian people and state are suffering from extreme poverty that affects 85% of the total population, with the Syrian regime still continuing to persecute anyone who dares to criticize it. This confirms the absurdity of any political solution in the presence of the security services that have not changed their brutal policy at all, bolstered by the success of the Syrian regime with Russian/Iranian support in achieving impunity, and the international community's failure to hold any Syrian official accountable, despite the enforced disappearances practiced by the Syrian regime amounting to crimes against humanity.

Methodology:

Every year on the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, which falls annually on August 30, SNHR publishes an annual report documenting violations related to enforced disappearances by all perpetrator parties in Syria. [In our 2020 report](#), we outlined the record of victims of enforced disappearance, which was higher than that recorded in the previous year, 2019, with most of the detainees going on to be categorized as forcibly disappeared. In this report, we document the record of enforced disappearance at the hands of the main perpetrator parties since the beginning of the popular uprising in Syria in March 2011 up to August 2021. This report also focuses mainly on the violations that we've documented since the last report, between August 30, 2020, and August 30, 2021, as well as outlining incidents that we documented previously which we had not included in our previous reports.

We also issue [a monthly report](#) documenting [arbitrary arrests](#) and enforced disappearances, and monitoring the incidents and cases documented each month. We have been able to build a strong network of contacts in recent years with local activists and families of victims, as well as survivors and witnesses, both inside and outside Syria, and we have provided all means of communication to facilitate access and documentation such as e-mail, dedicated telephone numbers for documentation and forms on our website. All of this has helped us in the continuous accumulative documentation process in accordance with [our methodology](#) based on the provisions of international laws and the set of principles relating to arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance.

Enforced disappearance is defined in accordance with the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance adopted by the UN General Assembly in [its resolution 47/133 of December 18, 1992](#), as a set of principles applicable to all States; this declaration states that enforced disappearance occurs “in the sense that persons are arrested, detained or abducted against their will or otherwise deprived of their liberty by officials of different branches or levels of Government, or by organized groups or private individuals acting on behalf of, or with the support, direct or indirect, consent or acquiescence of the Government, followed by a refusal to disclose the fate or whereabouts of the persons concerned or a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of their liberty, which places such persons outside the protection of the law.” In our methodology, we classify an individual as being within the enforced disappearance category after they have been detained for 20 days with their family unable to obtain any information about their detention or whereabouts from the official authorities and when the authorities which arrested him or her refuse to acknowledge that detention.

The cases we document are not limited to incidents committed by the Syrian regime that controls the Syrian state, but also extend to actors outside the scope of the state, based on what is stated in the Statute of the International Criminal Court, in which Article 7(2) (i) defines enforced disappearance as “the arrest, detention or abduction of persons by, or with the authorization, support or acquiescence of, a State or a political organization, followed by a refusal to acknowledge that deprivation of freedom or to give information on the fate or whereabouts of those persons, with the intention of removing them from the protection of the law for a prolonged period of time.”

This report relies mainly on SNHR’s archive of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons, resulting from the daily monitoring and documentation that we have carried out continuously since 2011 up to the current moment concerning incidents of arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance. We also constantly update these records, with all statistics included being registered according to each detainee’s name, date, place and conditions of detention, the party responsible for the arrest and enforced disappearance, the latest observations and documents, and other details. SNHR’s Information Technology department has built a dedicated program within the database for each party to the conflict, providing information on detainees’ original governorate, gender, marital and academic status, age group and place of arrest, with all data being entered automatically. Using the SNHR database, we can distribute the cases of arrests and enforced disappearances according to the governorate in which the incident took place, and the governorate which the detainee comes from. In this report, we distribute the cases of arrests according to the place where the arrest took place, rather than the governorate which the detainee comes from because, in most cases, the governorate where the incident took place is the same one he or she is from. We further note that we sometimes distribute cases of arrests according to the governorate which the detainee comes from in order to show the extent of the loss and violence suffered by the people of that governorate compared to other governorates, and that we refer to this in the report when doing so. The data added to the SNHR’s database is retained securely, and we store several backup copies in different locations.

Given the exceptional difficulties and the magnitude of the violations, the cases mentioned in this report represent the bare minimum of violations which we have been able to document, and we confirm that the real figures are far higher.

The report's methodology is also based on the interviews we conducted with families of victims who were forcibly disappeared from different Syrian governorates, carrying out these interviews either by telephone, via various online communication programs or by visiting them in their homes in and outside Syria. In this report, we provide 18 accounts, which we obtained directly rather than from open sources. In some cases, we used aliases to protect witnesses' privacy and to prevent them from being harassed or persecuted by security services. Witnesses received no financial compensation or promises in exchange for interviews. We explained the purpose of the report beforehand to all the interviewees we spoke with, and obtained their consent to use the information they provided to serve the purposes of the report and the documentation processes. All of this is in accordance with our internal protocols, with which we have ensured compliance with for years, and we always strive to develop these to keep pace with the best levels of psychological care for victims.

II. The Syrian Network for Human Rights' Cooperation with the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Special Rapporteur on Torture, the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism, and the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health

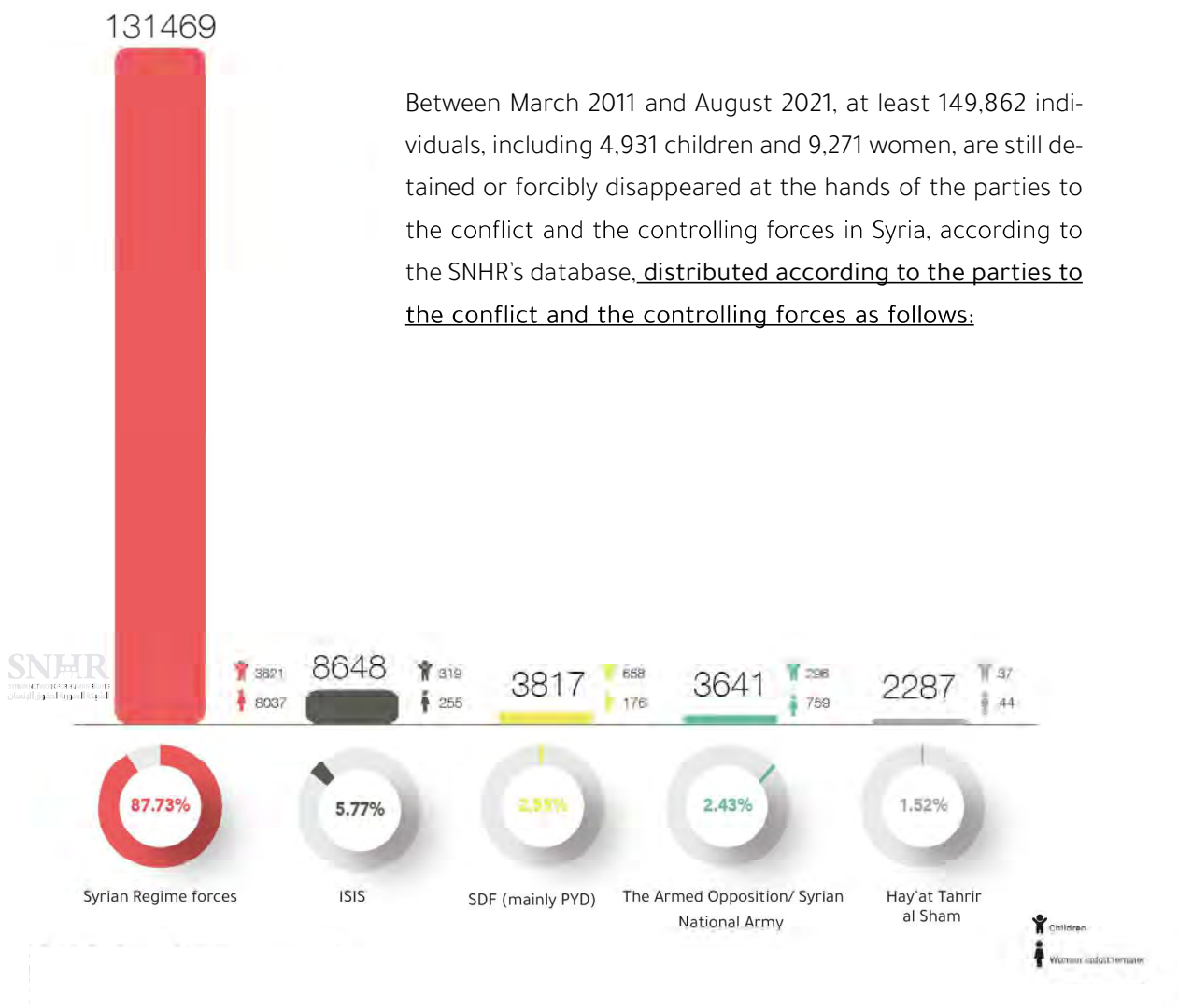
The SNHR team conducts regular [periodic correspondence](#) with the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) and we have received many official responses about the cases we have submitted to them, via letters showing the cases that the WGEID sent to the Syrian regime from among the cases we shared with the WGEID, which are listed in the special annex on the report prepared by the WGEID in Syria.

The SNHR also briefs 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, in regard to these cases.

We have devoted [a form](#) on our official website that families can fill out which are sent automatically to the team at the Detainees and Forcibly Disappeared Persons Department that follows up on each case and communicates with the families to complete the documentation and registration process. We periodically receive documents from the WGEID on a number of cases provided by the SNHR, with the Syrian regime asked to disclose and report on their fate.

In this regard, the SNHR is requesting further cooperation from the families in order to submit as many cases as possible to the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. Our team works continuously to build broad relations with the families of the forcibly disappeared, to obtain as much data as possible which is stored within our database of enforced disappearances. We have also made available every possible safe method of communication via communication applications and have allocated special phone numbers for our team's work to facilitate access for victims' families.

III. The Record of Victims of Arbitrary Arrest/ Detention and Enforced Disappearance and Its Distribution in Syria Since March 2011



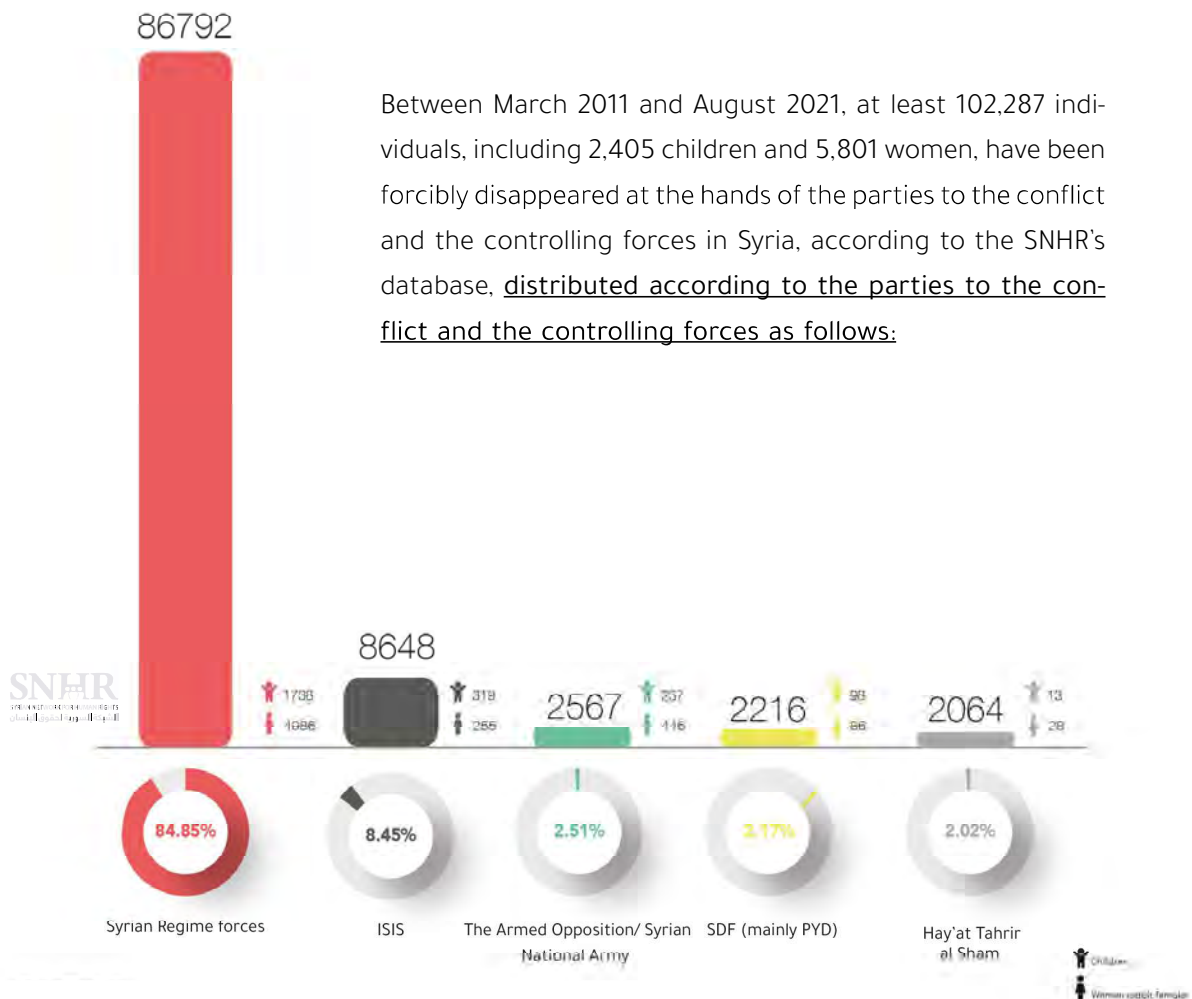
A. Syrian Regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias)¹: 131,469 individuals, including 3,621 children and 8,037 women (adult female).

B. ISIS (the self-proclaimed 'Islamic State'): 8,648 individuals, including 319 children and 225 women (adult female).

C. Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (an alliance composed of Fateh al Sham Front and a number of factions of the Armed Opposition)²: 2,287 individuals, including 37 children and 44 women (adult female).

D. The Armed Opposition/ Syrian National Army: 3,641 individuals, including 296 children and 759 women (adult female).

E. Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (the Democratic Union Party): 3,817 individuals, including 658 children and 176 women (adult female).



¹ We generally use the term 'the Syrian regime' rather than 'the Syrian government', because the nature of the ruling power in Syria is a totalitarian dictatorship based on ruling the nation in an authoritarian fashion through a very limited group of individuals, primarily the President of the Republic and his selected leaders of the security services, while the ministers, including the Prime Minister and the Minister of Interior, play a restricted, largely ceremonial role, which is limited to implementing precisely what the ruling regime orders, without any decision-making power or active role; this means that the government's role is wholly subordinate and limited to serving the regime, with all the main powers being concentrated in the hands of the President of the Republic and the security services. Governance in Syria is wholly decided by the autocratic authority of the ruling family and there is no independent decision-making structure. Rather, the government is an empty façade there for show; the Minister of Interior receives orders from the security branches over which he nominally presides which are in turn under the command of the President, while the Minister of Justice cannot summon a civilian-level security agent other than the head of a security branch; the security branches, along with the president, are the true power and the governing regime in Syria.

² The United Nations has designated it as a terrorist organization

A. Syrian Regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias): 86,792 individuals, including 1,738 children and 4,986 women (adult female).

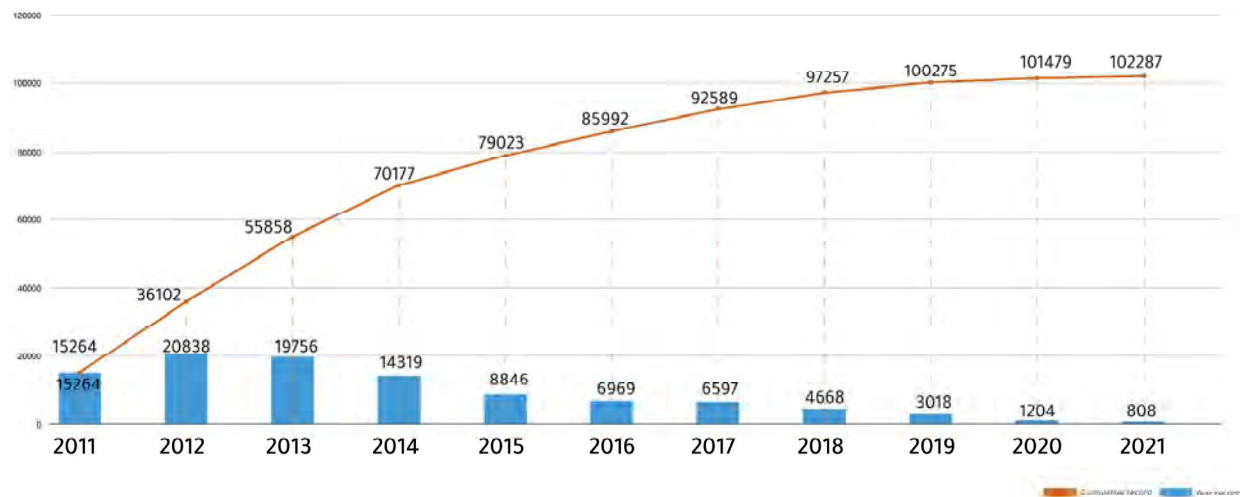
B. ISIS (the self-proclaimed 'Islamic State'): 8,648 individuals, including 319 children and 225 women (adult female).

C. Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (an alliance composed of Fateh al Sham Front and a number of factions of the Armed Opposition): 2,064 individuals, including 13 children and 28 women (adult female).

D. The Armed Opposition/ Syrian National Army: 2,567 individuals, including 237 children and 446 women (adult female).

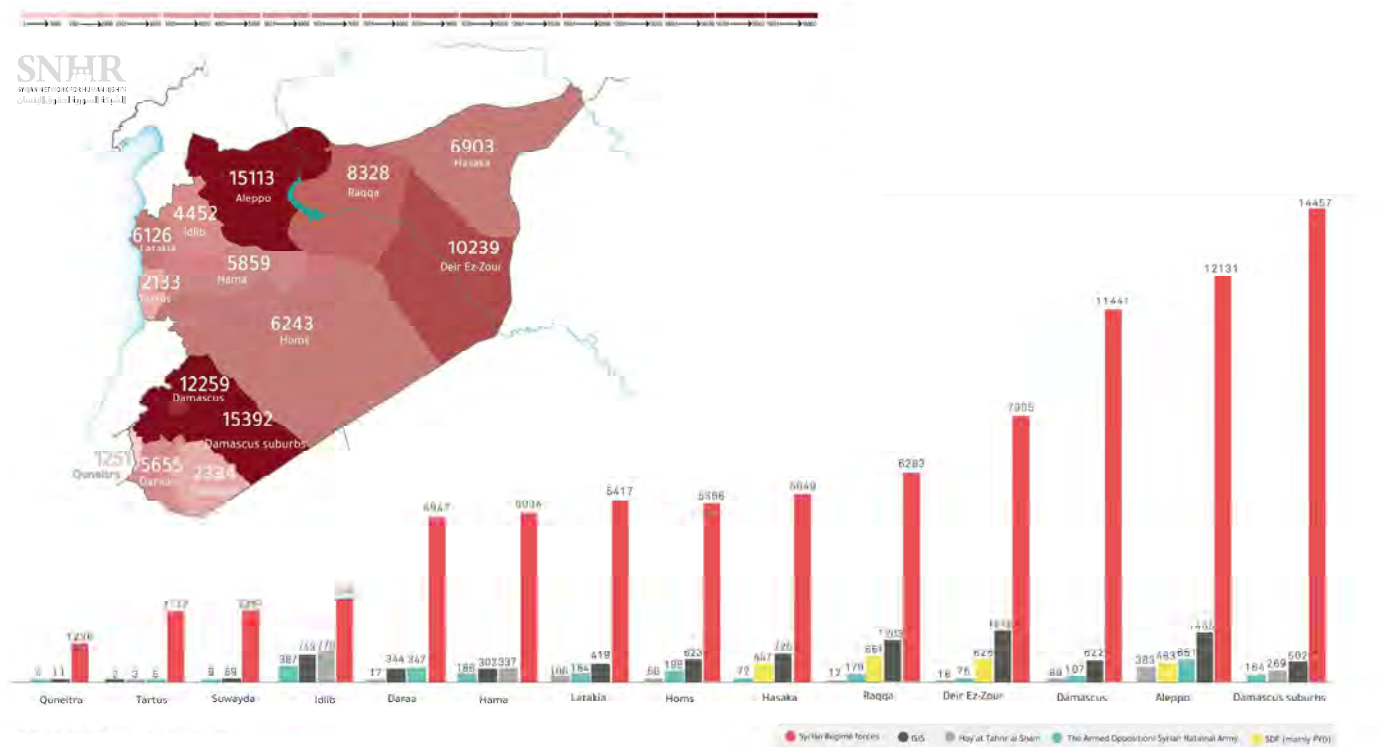
E. Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (the Democratic Union Party): 2,216 individuals, including 98 children and 86 women (adult female).

Chart showing the distribution of the record of the forcibly disappeared in Syria since 2011 by year, and the accumulative linear graph of that record:



The previous chart shows that 2012 was the worst year to date in terms of the number of people forcibly disappeared, followed by 2013, 2011, then 2014, meaning that the first four years of the popular uprising for democracy saw the largest waves of enforced disappearances, with the aim of breaking, destroying and ending the mass uprising.

Map showing the distribution of the record of the forcibly disappeared by the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria according to the Syrian governorates:



The map above shows that Damascus Suburbs governorate saw the largest number of enforced disappearances, followed by Aleppo, Damascus, then Deir Ez-Zour.

Enforced disappearances have been carried out in the context of a widespread attack against all civilian population groups in Syria since 2011. The Syrian regime was the first party to perpetrate the violation of enforced disappearances, and is by far the most prolific perpetrator of this crime, with other parties left far behind in terms of the number of enforced disappearances, to such a degree that there is no serious comparison on this issue, as on other crimes, between the regime and any of the other parties engaged in the conflict. Enforced disappearance, more especially at the level committed by the Syrian regime, amounts to a crime against humanity under Article 7 of [the Rome Statute](#) of the International Criminal Court. This crime is, therefore, not subject to the statute of limitations, with the same article giving the victims' families the right to reparation and to know the fate of their disappeared loved ones. It is also considered a war crime under Article 8 of the Rome Statute itself due to its being practiced as part of a systematic and public policy in the effort to crush the popular uprising for democracy, overwhelmingly by the Syrian regime.

IV. Enforced Disappearance by the Four Main Parties in Syria

A. Syrian Regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias):

Enforced disappearances have been practiced by Syrian regime forces since the early days of the popular uprising in March 2011 against participants in the uprising, activists and opponents of the tyrannical hereditary family rule, and expanded to target people on the basis of their affiliation to specific areas/sects/ family or as part of random arrest campaigns, with the SNHR's database containing data on thousands of families who are still subject to the enforced disappearance of most or all of their members. Most of the detainees - approximately 65 percent of all those arrested - are subsequently classified as forcibly disappeared persons, with enforced disappearance often beginning immediately after the arrest and lasting for many years, as Syrian regime forces deny carrying out the arrest or imprisoning the detainee/ disappeared person, who is held in isolation from the outside world and deprived of the protection of the law and of the most minimal health care requirements, with most being tortured and many killed by torture; many are also subjected to unjust trials in unfair secret courts.

Although Syrian law specifies the period for which prisoners may be detained before they are brought before the courts, under the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, no person is arrested except by order of the judiciary; pursuant to Article 104 of this law, in the event of the arrest of a person by the judicial police (police, security services), the detainee must be brought before the judge within 24 hours, and if it is not possible for him to be questioned by the judge, the public prosecutor will order his immediate release. Likewise, pursuant to Article 105 of the same law, if the defendant was arrested under a subpoena and remained in custody for more than twenty-four hours without being interrogated or presented before the Public Prosecutor as stated in the previous article, his arrest would constitute an arbitrary act, the perpetrator of which could be prosecuted for unlawful restriction of personal liberty. Article 72 of the Code of Procedure stipulates that the investigative judge alone may decide to prevent communication with the arrested person, and that this prohibition can continue for a period of ten days only, while this does not include the arrested person's lawyer.

There is an exception to the legal provisions mentioned, and in conjunction with the lifting of the state of emergency that was lifted at the end of April 2011 under Decree 161 of 2011, Legislative Decree No. 55 of April 21, 2011 was issued, which allowed the judicial police in crimes against state security to arrest the suspect for a period of seven days, renewable by the Public Prosecutor, provided that this period does not exceed sixty days.

Despite this legislation, however, the Syrian regime has violated the constitution that it established in 2012, as well as these laws, with the security services failing to comply with any of them. To this day, there are still thousands of forcibly disappeared persons held since 2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014, for whom many years have passed since their arrest and disappearance, without any lawyer being able to reach

them. Meanwhile, most arrests take place without an arrest warrant and without the approval of the Public Prosecutor, which the security services can obtain after a Syrian citizen's arrest (though kidnapping would be a more accurate term in this context); the Public Prosecutor does not dare to refuse any request from the security services.

The Syrian regime has not provided any real official procedures that the families of the disappeared can follow to obtain information about their family members or to discover their fate in the regime's detention centers, with the exception of a few complex, pro forma and useless methods, the most prominent of which involve visiting:

- **Military Police headquarters**, located in al Qaboun neighborhood in Damascus city, where families can submit a request to search for a missing person, so that the Military Police will search its records, taking one of the following actions:
 - If the disappeared person is still alive, the Military Police often do not provide his/ her family with any information about him/ her, and even deny detaining him/her.
 - In the event that the disappeared person is among the dead, the family is referred to a military or civil hospital or, depending on the case, to the Medical Services Department to obtain a death certificate. We have noticed a decrease in the number of families being referred to obtain death certificates through the Military Police following the phenomenon of the Syrian regime registering hundreds of disappeared persons, in Civil Registry departments, as deceased.
 - In the event that the disappeared person is in Seydnaya Military Prison and that visits are permitted to him/her, the Military Police notifies the family. Most of the forcibly disappeared persons' families have confirmed to us that they have repeatedly asked about their family members many times before receiving any response from the Military Police, receiving confirmation that their loved one is being detained, or discovering that he or she is among the dead.
- **Military Judiciary, Counter-Terrorism Court or Reconciliation Committees**: Families can submit a request to search for a missing person at the Military Judiciary, Counter-Terrorism Court, or Reconciliation Committees in the areas that have concluded 'reconciliation agreements' with the Syrian regime; through this procedure, they can only discover whether the detainee/ disappeared person was or is being subject to a trial, while in most cases the family does not obtain accurate information; even if the family is able to find out any information, they are still unable to take any action, such as appointing a lawyer, visiting the disappeared, or knowing where he/ she is being held by the security services.

The Syrian regime has deliberately failed to establish any official channels to provide information to the families of the disappeared, leaving families in a state of constant fear and loss, meaning that the effect of enforced disappearance extends to them as well as to their imprisoned loved ones, forcing them to resort to exorbitantly expensive informal methods such as mediators, influential people and networks of mafiosi figures, including officers, judges and lawyers, who blackmail the families and defraud them of huge sums of money in exchange for giving them some information about their family members and their fate, which in most cases is likely to be random or false information.

According to the SNHR's database, at least 131,469 of the individuals detained by Syrian regime forces since March 2011, including 3,621 children and 8,037 women (adult female), are still arbitrarily detained as of August 2021. Of this total, at least 86,792 individuals, including 1,738 children and 4,982 women (adult female), have been classified as forcibly disappeared persons. The Syrian regime is responsible for 84.85% of the total number of enforced disappearance cases.

Consequently, all the 18 amnesty decrees issued by the Syrian regime since 2011 did not lead to the release of tens of thousands of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons. We have detailed this in [previous reports](#) on [some of the amnesty](#) decrees [the regime issued](#), in which we noted that these amnesties did not extend to political dissidents, who constitute the vast majority of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons, who have been disappeared in order to end their political opposition and reduce them to the level of question marks, thereby deterring the rest of society from opposing the rule of the current regime.

Testimonies of victims' families and cases of persons forcibly disappeared by Syrian regime forces:

Enas Abdul Hakim Sharbaji, an activist in the popular uprising, and a university student at Damascus University's Faculty of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, from Darayya city, west of Damascus Suburbs governorate, born in 1994, was arrested by Syrian regime forces for the second time on Thursday, May 30, 2013, while he was on his way from Damascus city to Sehnaya in Damascus Suburbs governorate, and taken to an undisclosed location.

We note that the father of the disappeared Enas, namely Abdul Hakim Sharbaji, an activist in the popular uprising, from Darayya city, west of Damascus Suburbs governorate, born in 1963, was arrested by Syrian regime forces on Wednesday, August 24, 2011, while he was passing through one of the regime's checkpoints in Darayya city. On Friday, July 27, 2018, his family learned that he was registered in the Civil Registry Department that he died on January 15, 2013, and it is most likely that he was executed in Seydnaya Military Prison in Damascus Suburbs governorate.



Enas Abdul Hakim Sharbaji

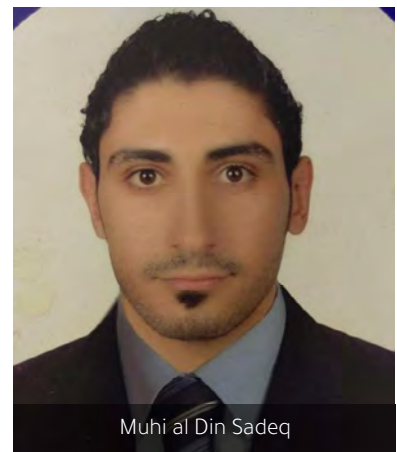


Abdul Hakim Sharbaji

The SNHR contacted Ms. Yasmin Sharbaji³, the daughter of Abdul Hakim and sister of Enas, who told us: “After my father left a mosque in Darayya city and went to his family’s house with a friend who was a witness to the arrest, they were intercepted by a temporary checkpoint belonging to the Syrian regime and investigated their names to check if they were wanted, before they arrested my father and released his friend, and my father’s fate remained unknown until 2013, when one of the released persons, called Shabal Ibrahim, informed us that my father was in Seydnaya Prison and was severely beaten because he was wearing a white jellabiya. On January 14, 2013, he was taken with a number of detainees, including activist Yahya Sharbaji, to an undisclosed location. When we extracted a family record statement from the Civil Registry Department, we found out that my father had passed away on January 15, 2013.

“As for my brother Enas, I and his friend were with him, using public transport, heading from Damascus city to Sehnaya town at around seven p.m.; halfway there, he and his friend got off the public vehicle to take a secondary road that leads to Sehnaya town for fear of passing through temporary checkpoints and to avoid problems, but unfortunately, a Syrian regime checkpoint was in their way and arrested them. The wanted individual was his friend, but they arrested Enas with him. The next day, my mother and I asked about him at all the checkpoints in Sehnaya town and the area, and they all told us that they knew no one with these names. A month after his arrest, one of the released persons informed us that Enas was in the Air Security Branch in Damascus and that he was fine and gave us signs confirming that he was Enas. In 2018, we extracted a family record statement from the Civil Registry Department, showing us that Enas is still alive.” Yasmin added that a while before her arrest, she conducted a security search through intermediaries for the name of Enas at all the military checkpoints in Sehnaya town, and he was not wanted for security reasons by the Syrian regime.

Muhi al Din Sadeq from Damascus city, born in 1989, a college student at Damascus University’s Faculty of Informatics Engineering, Networks and Communications, was arrested on Tuesday, August 14, 2012, by Syrian regime’s Political Security Force personnel while he was passing through one of the Syrian regime forces’ checkpoints at Damascus International Airport while trying to travel with his family to Algeria, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Muhi al Din Sadeq

³ We contacted her via phone on August 15, 2020

The SNHR contacted Ms. Shafeen al Ali⁴, a friend of Muhi al Din Sadeq who is familiar with the circumstances of his disappearance. She told us:

“Muhi al Din Sadeq intended to travel to Algeria with his family through Aleppo International Airport, but one of his friends informed him that one of the collaborators with the Syrian regime had written a malicious report against him and that they intended to arrest him at Aleppo International Airport, so he changed the airport and went with his family to Damascus International Airport, where he was arrested. Months after his arrest, Muhi al Din conveyed a message with one of the released persons that he was in the Political Security branch located in Maysat Square in Damascus, or as it is called - the Jebba Branch, and that he was subject to a field court; his family tried to appoint a lawyer, but they were told that the lawyer could not do anything in the event that the detainee is subject to the field court; to this moment, his family has not been able to find out where he is being held or his fate.”

Basel Abdul Razzaq Iskaif, born in 1987, from al Zahraa village, which is administratively a part of Darkoush district in Jisr al Shoghour area in Idlib governorate, was a resident of Sehnaya town, west of Damascus Suburbs governorate. Basel, who holds a BA from the Faculty of Mass Communication at Damascus University, graduating in 2012, was also working for a customs clearance company in al Hariqa area of Damascus city at the time of his arrest. He was arrested on November 5, 2012, by Syrian regime forces at his workplace in the customs clearance company's office in al Hariqa area in Damascus city, before being taken to an undisclosed location.



Basel Abdul Razzaq Iskaif

The SNHR contacted Mr. Moayad Iskaif⁵, Basel Iskaif's nephew, who told us:

“Basel worked in a customs clearance company in al Hariqa area in Damascus city; on November 5, 2012, a group of personnel affiliated with the Syrian regime stormed his office in al Hariqa area, city following the arrest of a number of his relatives in al Hariqa area, with the patrol that carried out the arrest taking them around and displaying them in the streets of al Hariqa area, without knowing the reason. We were unable to obtain any information about them, although we paid huge sums of money to intermediaries to give us accurate information about them, but they provoked us without obtaining any information by which we can know their whereabouts.”

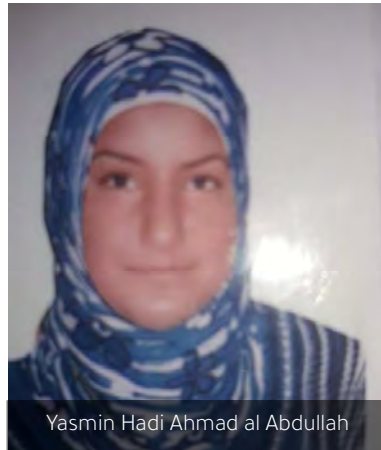
Yasmin Hadi Ahmad al Abdullah and Fatima Ibrahim al Tawwal, from Deir Ez-Zour city, born in 1996 and 1975 respectively, were arrested by the Syrian regime's Military Security Force personnel on Tuesday, November 6, 2012, at the Military Police Street in Deir Ez-Zour city, and taken to one of the regime's detention centers in Damascus city, with both remaining forcibly disappeared.

⁴ We contacted her via e-mail on January 28, 2020

⁵ We contacted him via phone on August 30, 2020

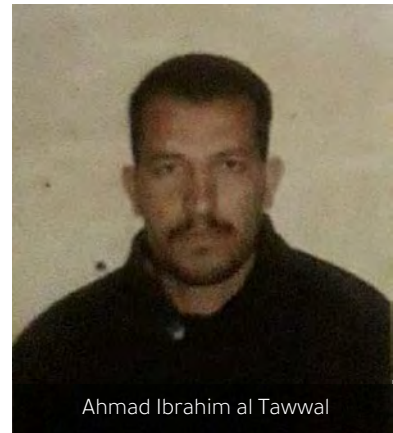


Fatima Ibrahim al Tawwal



Yasmin Hadi Ahmad al Abdullah

Ahmad Ibrahim al Tawwal, from al Jbeila neighborhood in Deir Ez-Zour city, born in 1974, was arrested by the Syrian regime's Military Security Force personnel on Wednesday, October 24, 2012, while he was passing through one of the regime's checkpoints on the road to al Assad Hospital in Deir Ez-Zour city, and taken to Seydnaya Military Prison in Damascus Suburbs governorate. His family was able to visit him for the last time in 2014 in Seydnaya Prison.



Ahmad Ibrahim al Tawwal

Muhammad Ibrahim al Tawwal, from al Joura neighborhood in Deir Ez-Zour city, born in 1970, was arrested by personnel from the Syrian regime's Military Security Force on Friday, April 24, 2015, after they raided his home in al Joura neighborhood, and taken to an undisclosed location.

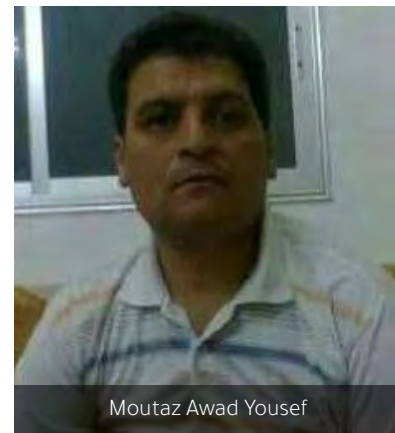


Muhammad Ibrahim al Tawwal

The SNHR contacted Ms. Yusra al Tawwal⁶, Yasmin al Abdullah's mother and the sister of Fatima, Ahmad and Muhammad al Tawwal, who told us:

"In the beginning, my brother Ahmad was arrested on October 24, 2012, after the Military Security branch personnel stormed his house in al Jbeila neighborhood in Deir Ez-Zour city without knowing the reason. He worked in sanitary and electrical installations and does not participate in any military or political activity; we have had no news of him at all. A month after his arrest, personnel from the same branch arrested my daughter Yasmin and my married sister Fatima, while they were with each other on the Military Police Street in Deir Ez-Zour city, without any reason. They are housewives, and they also aren't involved in any activity outside the home. We could no longer obtain any information about them or the reason for their arrest until 2014, when we were able to obtain information through an officer of the Syrian regime after paying sums of money, that only my brother Ahmad was in Seydnaya Military Prison, without obtaining any information about my daughter Yasmin and my sister Fatima. We visited Ahmad twice in 2014, and after that there was absolutely no news of him. On April 24, 2015, my third brother, Muhammad, was arrested after Military Security personnel stormed his house in al Joura neighborhood in Deir Ez-Zour city without knowing the reason, after which we could not find out where they were all detained or the charges brought against them to this day, despite all attempts to hire a lawyer or pay sums of money to intermediaries with the regime."

Moutaz Awad Yousef, born in 1978, from Kansafra village in the suburbs of Idlib governorate, who was teaching mathematics, was arrested on Monday, August 5, 2013, by gunmen affiliated with the Syrian regime's State Security Force, while he was passing through one of the regime's checkpoints at the southern entrance to Tartus city, as he was traveling from Kansafra village to Tartus city, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Moutaz Awad Yousef

The SNHR contacted Mr. Yousef Awad⁷, Moutaz's father, who told us:

"My son Moutaz was suffering from infertility and consulted several doctors in the Idlib area, but to no avail. So he went to Tartus city to consult a doctor. While on his way to Tartus city and passing through the checkpoint at the southern entrance to the city, the personnel at the checkpoint arrested him, who are State Security Branch's personnel. Since that time, we have obtained no information about him or his whereabouts."

⁶ We contacted her via phone on February 7, 2021

⁷ We contacted him via phone in April, 2020

Mr. Yousef also added that Moutaz was intending to travel to Lebanon in the event that he did not obtain a result in Tartus city, so he extracted passports for him and his wife and a travel permit from the Education Directorate as a government employee and followed all official procedures, however, he did not escape arrest and enforced disappearance.

Samir Fawzi Ata, born in 1976, from Daraa city, who was a day laborer, and his wife, Ms. Samar Awad Hussein, born in 1976, a Syrian-Palestinian resident of Daraa city, who was an employee at the Technical Supervisors Institute in Daraa city, were arrested on Monday, October 14, 2013, by Syrian regime forces in the Shamal al Khat neighborhood, next to the tuberculosis treatment clinic facing the Martyr Muhammad Jabr al Falouji High School in Daraa city, and taken to an undisclosed location.

The SNHR contacted Mr. Basem Awad Hussein⁸, the brother of Ms. Samar, who told us:

“On October 14, 2013, Syrian regime’s army personnel carried out a military operation to demolish a tunnel between the Shamal al Khat neighborhood, which is under the control of Syrian regime forces, and the Camp neighborhood, which is under the control of the Armed Opposition factions. After completing this operation, the army personnel stole and looted the contents of the houses in the neighborhood; by chance, my sister Samar and her husband Samir were crossing from the neighborhood, so they saw the soldiers stealing the contents of their house; they stood in their way to prevent them from robbing the house, so the personnel arrested them and arrested a number of other families in the neighborhood, and they were taken to an undisclosed location.” We learned from Mr. Basem that he found out the details of his sister’s arrest incident from her neighbor, who told him about the incident after he was able to enter the neighborhood three days after the siege was lifted and the military campaign ended. He added that the fate of his sister and her husband remains unknown as of the date when we spoke with him.

The child Mahmoud Abdullah Hejazi, from al Qadam neighborhood in Damascus city, and residing in Sehnaya town, west of Damascus Suburbs governorate, born in 1997, was working in a clothing store in al Hariqa area in Damascus city. He was arrested by Syrian regime forces on Sunday, December 15, 2013, after a raid and arrest campaign in Sehnaya town, and taken him to an undisclosed location.

The SNHR contacted Ms. Khadijah Izz al Din Awad⁹, the mother of the child Mahmoud, who told us:

“My son Mahmoud worked in a clothing store in al Hariqa area of Damascus city, and we live in Sehnaya town in Damascus Suburbs governorate. On December 15, 2013, Syrian regime personnel were launching a widespread campaign of arrests in Sehnaya town, which lasted for three days, and they were arresting anyone from the areas Darayya, al Qadam or Sbeina in Damascus Suburbs governorate residing in Sehnaya town, by raiding homes or through checkpoints. On that date, my son Mahmoud, who was born in al Qadam neighborhood, and while he was at the al Tayyara stop in the town, the regime forces arrested him; my other son had seen how Mahmoud was arrested,

⁸ We contacted him via e-mail in June 2020

⁹ We contacted her via phone on May 12, 2021

as they put him in the trunk of the car with a number of other children. Six months after his disappearance, his cousin saw him in Damascus city while he was being taken from the Justice Palace while he was tied to a chain (ganzeer) with six other people and boarded the bus belonging to the security forces. I visited al Qaboun Prison in Damascus city dozens of times without getting any results or knowing anything about his fate.”

Ms. Khadijah added that she extracted a family record statement from the Civil Registry department at the end of 2020 to check whether he was alive or dead, **“The statement didn’t mention that Mahmoud had died, but I was not able to obtain any information about his fate to date.”**

The child, Muhammad Abdul Rahman al Barmawi, from Daraa city, born in 1996, who was a middle school student. On Friday, January 3, 2014, Syrian regime forces arrested him after raiding the child Muhammad’s family home in al Sabeel neighborhood in Daraa city, and took him to an undisclosed location.



Child, Muhammad Abdul Rahman al Barmawi

The SNHR contacted Mr. Anas Abdul Rahman al Barmawi¹⁰, the brother of the child Muhammad, who told us:

“At seven am, Syrian regime personnel raided our house near the al Razi School in al Sabeel neighborhood of Daraa city, and arrested my 17-year-old brother, Muhammad, in front of his parents and brothers, then he was taken to an undisclosed location; we did not obtain any information about him or the place of his detention since that time, despite all our attempts to hire a lawyer or search for him in the security branches.” Anas added that they could not even determine the charges or reasons for his brother’s arrest.

Thamer Muhammad Badawi, a Syrian regime forces’ military conscript, from al Hazmieh village in Homs city, was 30 years old at the time of his arrest. Syrian regime forces arrested him in 2019 from one of the schools in Deir B’alba neighborhood in Homs where IDPs reside, after returning from al Rukban camp, located on the Syrian-Jordanian border, and took him to an undisclosed location. We note that Thamer settled his security status upon his return.



Thamer Muhammad Badawi

¹⁰ We contacted him via e-mail in April 2020

The SNHR contacted Mr. Omran¹¹, Thamer's brother, who told us:

“Thamer was a military conscript with Syrian regime forces; during his leave of absence at his home in Deir B'alba neighborhood of Homs, he was unable to return to his military regiment as a result of the bombardment and the battles between the regime forces and the opposition factions during the opposition's control over the neighborhoods of Homs city in 2013. After he was displaced from one place to another, he settled in al Rukban Camp, located on the Syrian-Jordanian border, with his family. In 2019, Thamer, with his family and many camp residents, reconciled with the Syrian regime, and then the regime placed them in a school to accommodate the displaced in the Deir B'alba neighborhood. Several days later, a patrol of Syrian regime forces arrested Thamer with several other young men; since then, we don't know anything about him at all.”

B. ISIS (Self-proclaimed 'Islamic State'):

Following the announcement of its establishment in April 2013, ISIS used a strategy of kidnappings and enforced disappearances, targeting anyone opposing its presence, activists and foreign workers/ media workers, as well as targeting civilians in raids and at checkpoints on multiple pretexts, and launching many military attacks that were accompanied by mass kidnappings of civilians, especially during its attacks on areas with an ethnic or religious minority. ISIS had also previously established at least 54 main detention centers in areas under its control in northeastern Syria, in addition to dozens of secret detention centers. In a previous report, entitled [The Black Bottom](#), we talked about the 19 most notable ISIS detention centers. ISIS has used enforced disappearance as a weapon of terror against the residents of the areas that came under its control or those that it attacked, and gave the families of the kidnapped/ disappeared no opportunity to search for or ask about their family members, but rather pursued [the families for asking about their loved ones] in many cases; with the decline of ISIS control in March 2019 and losing control over all the detention centers that belonged to it, as well as its presence being limited to narrow enclaves in the Syrian Badiya, all these detention centers were empty, and we do not know the fate of the people forcibly disappeared by ISIS to date.

The parties that controlled the areas which were formerly under ISIS' control, namely the Syrian Democratic Forces, made little efforts to reveal the fate of the forcibly disappeared, nor did they cooperate sufficiently with the families of the abductees, who tried by various means to investigate the fate of their family members or obtain any information about them, or provide them with any information.

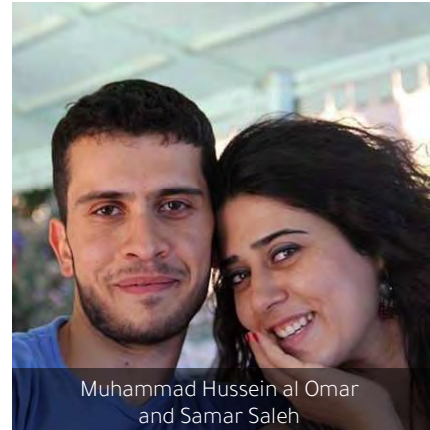
The processes of tracing the fate of those forcibly disappeared by ISIS are extremely difficult and complex, but the controlling forces, primarily Syrian Democratic Forces, which are detaining thousands of ISIS leaders and members, bear the responsibility of conducting an actual investigation to reveal the fate of the forcibly disappeared, and they must allow local and international human rights organizations to work freely in their quest to reveal the fate of the forcibly disappeared.

¹¹ We contacted him via phone in March 2021

Since the announcement of the establishment of ISIS up until August 2021, the SNHR team documented at least 8,648 individuals, including 319 children and 225 women, who are still forcibly disappeared by ISIS, meaning it is responsible for 8.45% of the total number of the forcibly disappeared in Syria.

Testimonies of victims' families and cases of persons forcibly disappeared by ISIS:

Muhammad Hussein al Omar, a media activist and a university student at the Faculty of Civil Engineering at University of Aleppo, from Misyaf city, west of Hama governorate, born in 1989, and Samar Saleh, a media and relief activist, and a holder of a BA from the Faculty of Archeology and Museums at Aleppo University, born in 1988, from al Atareb city, west of Aleppo governorate, both were kidnapped by gunmen affiliated with ISIS on Tuesday, August 13, 2013, in al Atareb city. Their fate remains unknown.



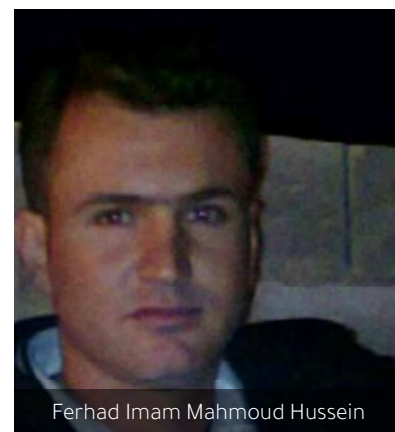
Muhammad Hussein al Omar
and Samar Saleh

The SNHR contacted Ms. Deyaa al Bahri¹², Muhammad's mother, who told us:

"At the beginning of the popular uprising in 2011, Muhammad was one of the young people motivated to support this uprising and was one of its activists, who was arrested twice by the Syrian regime in 2012 and released from Aleppo Central Prison; his motivation and activism made us feel fearful for him, especially after he was arrested twice, so we forced him to travel to Egypt in 2013 to complete his studies there and get him out of the country, despite his refusal to travel and his connection to Syria. Several months later, we received news that Muhammad had been kidnapped by ISIS elements in al Atareb area in the suburbs of Aleppo, accompanied by Samar al Saleh, who had been planning their engagement. We did not believe this news, because Muhammad was in Egypt. After verifying this information, we knew that Muhammad went to Turkey and then to Raqqa governorate, and then al Atareb ten days before his abduction. While he was in a car accompanied by Samar Saleh and her mother in al Atareb area, a vehicle carrying ISIS elements blocked their way and a number of gunmen got out. They violently beat both Samar and Muhammad, dragged Samar by her hair in front of her mother's eyes, and put Muhammad and Samar in one of the accompanying cars, and since that time we have not received any information about them."

Ferhad Imam Mahmoud Hussein, from Ein al Arab city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, born in 1984, was arrested by gunmen affiliated with ISIS on Wednesday, February 19, 2014, in the Aliya district near Hasaka city, and taken him to an undisclosed location.

Ferhad Imam Mahmoud Hussein



Ferhad Imam Mahmoud Hussein

¹² We contacted her via phone in August 2021

Aref Othman Zidan, from Izaz city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, born in 1981, was arrested by gunmen affiliated with ISIS on Monday, March 24, 2014, in Izaz city. His fate remains unknown.



Aref Othman Zidan

Ayed Jasem Assaf, a lawyer from Raqqa city, was arrested by gunmen affiliated with ISIS on Wednesday, July 9, 2014, in Raqqa city. His fate remains unknown.



Ayed Jasem Assaf

Azad Khashman Wali, a doctor and member of the General Secretariat of the Kurdish National Council, from Manbej city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was arrested by gunmen affiliated with ISIS on Tuesday, August 19, 2014, from Ibn Sina Hospital near the public park in Manbej city, and taken him to an undisclosed location.



Azad Khashman Wali

Jalal Mustafa Ahmad, from Ein al Arab city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, born in 1959, was arrested by gunmen affiliated with ISIS on Thursday, January 29, 2015, after they raided his house in Manbej city, in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Jalal Mustafa Ahmad

Othman Yousef Ismail, a doctor from Ein al Arab city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, born in 1967, was arrested by gunmen of ISIS on Saturday, February 7, 2015, in Manbej city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, and taken him to an undisclosed location.



Othman Yousef Ismail

C. Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (an alliance composed of Fateh al Sham Front and a number of factions of the Armed Opposition):

Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (HTS) is similar to ISIS in using the practice of enforced disappearances against its opponents, including activists and civilians, as well as against its military adversaries in Armed Opposition factions/ Syrian National Army, with the aim of terrorizing the community and deterring dissent or criticism of its policies in areas under its control; it sometimes expands these practices to include persecution of the families of the forcibly disappeared if they ask about their family members or attempt to investigate their disappearance or obtain information about their fate. Hay'at Tahrir al Sham has also followed in the Syrian regime's footsteps in its policy of disappearing detainees, establishing, through its security apparatus, dozens of secret prisons, which it directly manages and supervises; despite the establishment of a judicial body affiliated with its 'Salvation Government', HTS prevents this body from intervention in the cases of individuals forcibly disappeared in Hay'at Tahrir al Sham's prisons, instead trying them in secret mock trials, bringing one charge against them to justify their arrest, such as collaborating with the US-led Coalition, kidnapping, or targeting its groups with killings and assaults, and forbidding the detainees from appointing a lawyer or communicating with the outside world. In most cases, it carries

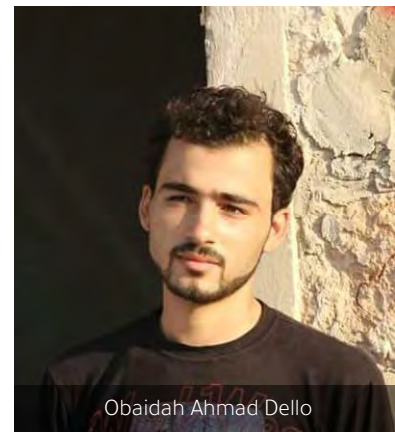
out executions in its prisons without notifying the families of the disappeared and without handing over their bodies, in order to avoid popular resentment against it, and with the aim of continuing the families' suffering the pain of waiting and retaliation against them, as well as with the aim of spreading fear in society and warning of the consequences of criticizing or rejecting its policies and teachings in the areas under its control.

Enforced disappearance by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham often lasts for years, and the group denies its responsibility for the detention; in many cases, forcibly disappeared persons have appeared through HTS media outlets, in videos, 'confessing' to working with the US-led Coalition, or to targeting HTS-affiliated groups, and other charges, with all of those who appeared in these coerced confession videos subsequently forcibly disappeared again. Many families were subjected to fraud and swindling operations by networks connected to Hay'at Tahrir al Sham who financially blackmail families in exchange for the release of the disappeared or for obtaining information about their fate.

According to the SNHR's database, at least 2,287 individuals, including 37 children and 44 women (adult female), detained by HTS, since the announcement of the establishment of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham in early 2012 are still being held up until August 2021. At least 2,064 of these individuals, including 13 children and 28 women, have been forcibly disappeared.

Testimonies of victims' families and cases of persons forcibly disappeared by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham:

Obaidah Ahmad Dello, a fighter with a faction of the Armed Opposition, from Ihsem town in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, born in 1995, was arrested by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel on Saturday, February 28, 2015, near al Meghraqa School, south of Ihsem town, and taken to an undisclosed location.



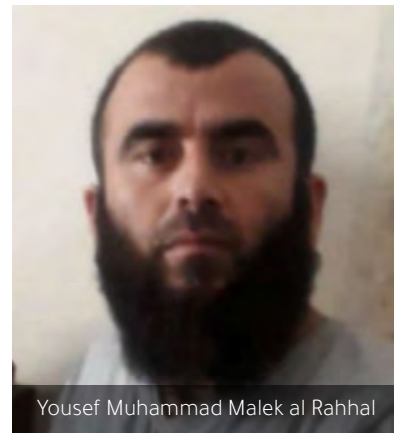
The SNHR contacted Mr. Abdul Rahman Dello¹³, Obaidah Ahmad Dello's brother, who told us:

"Obaidah was affiliated with a military faction called the Syrian Martyrs' Battalions and Brigades; at six am, on Saturday, February 28, 2015, when Obaidah was with his colleague at one of the points in Ihsem town to carry out a military mission, personnel from al Nusra Front (currently Hay'at Tahrir al Sham) saw them from a distance. His colleague ran away, but my brother Obaidah could not escape due to an earlier injury to his body, so HTS personnel arrested him on charges that he was trying to shoot at them, and he was taken to one of HTS' military points on the road between Ihsem town and Deir Loza village in Idlib suburbs, and then to al Uqab prison in Kansafra town in the

¹³ We contacted him via phone in July 2021

suburbs of Idlib governorate. In May 2015, he was transferred from al Uqab prison to an undisclosed location. Since that date, we have not obtained any information about him or his place of detention, and every time we tried to ask about him in the HTS prisons, they tell us that he has died, but we have not received his body or a death certificate. We have asked a number of HTS leaders about him, and they told us that his crime is not punishable by death.” Abdul Rahman added that he was warned by people affiliated with Hay’at Tahrir al Sham against repeating his questions about his brother.

Yousef Muhammad Malek al Rahhal, born in 1983, a married father of five who was a leader in the ranks of the Ahrar al Sham Movement, an Armed Opposition faction, from Ma’ar Shamarin village in the suburbs of Idlib governorate, was arrested by Hay’at Tahrir al Sham personnel on Tuesday, January 22, 2019, following a raid on his house in Ma’ar Shamarin village, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Yousef Muhammad Malek al Rahhal

The SNHR contacted Dr. Khaled al Rahhal¹⁴, Yousef’s brother, who told us:

“On January 22, 2019, a military force affiliated with Hay’at Tahrir al Sham stormed my brother Yousef’s house, arrested him, and took him to an unknown place; through people affiliated with Hay’at Tahrir al Sham, and after paying huge sums of money, we

were able to trace his place of detention, as he was transferred between several prisons, including al Uqab prison and Idlib City Central Prison, the last of which was Harem City Prison in the western suburbs of Idlib, and [found out] that the accusation against him was carrying out kidnappings and killings in the areas of northern Syrian to take ransom from the victims’ families. We visited him



A video published by the Ebaa Agency of Hay’at Tahrir al Sham in late March 2021 shows Yousef Muhammad Malek al Rahhal confessing to his involvement in kidnappings

several times, the last of which was in Harem City Prison in March 2021. During the visit, we saw the signs of torture on his body, which caused damage to the nerves in his right foot and broke two fingers. He told us that the interrogators extracted confessions from him under torture, then they recorded a video in which he confessed to his role in kidnapping a number of people, with this video published at the end of March 2021, and included a person claiming that he was kidnapped by Yousef Rahhal on May 18, 2019. On this same date, Yousef was detained by Hay’at Tahrir al Sham.” Dr. Khaled added that his brother had been sentenced to death, but until this moment his brother’s fate remains unknown, whether he is alive or executed, as they could not visit him.

¹⁴ We contacted him via phone on July 29, 2021

Khaled Fawaz Husseinou, born in 1995, from Kafr Nbouda town in the northwestern suburbs of Hama governorate, is a media activist who works as an administrator in the Anatolia IDP Camp in the north of Idlib governorate, where he also lives. He was arrested by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel on Monday, April 5, 2021, while he was near a petrol station on the road leading to Kafr Lousin village in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate and taken to an undisclosed location.



Khaled Fawaz Husseinou

The SNHR contacted Ms. Heyam al Khaled on August 17, 2021, Khaled's aunt, by phone, who told us: **"While we were at home in the Anatolian Camp, we were surprised and panicked when a military force of several cars stormed the house, and they asked us about Khaled; then, three personnel searched the house and confiscated Khaled's equipment including photography equipment, memory cards, flash drives and papers related to his work in the camp. At that time, Khaled was not at home, then they informed us that he was accused of embezzlement of money, and they asked us to inform him to surrender, but what we learned after they went that Khaled was detained by them and that the raid on the house came after the arrest; we were not aware that Khaled had received any security threats. His mother visited several security centers in Idlib city to ask about him, but did not get any information; they even denied detaining him. In July 2021, the Hay'at Tahrir al Sham's General Security Department circulated contact numbers for anyone who has a detainee to ask about him, and, after communicating with them, we received a response that Khaled was fine and that they were holding him in the Sarmada area of Idlib suburbs without obtaining other details."** Heyam added that they have not assigned a lawyer to follow up on Khaled's case.

D. Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (the Democratic Union Party):

Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have practiced the policies of kidnapping and detention in the areas under their control, either through campaigns of raids, or through temporary checkpoints that they establish periodically. SDF imprison those they arrest in detention centers without putting them on trial and prevent their families from visiting or communicating with them or appointing lawyers. Despite this, no clear charges have been brought against these detainees, with the SDF targeting activists, humanitarian workers, and political opponents who criticize their policies, as well as detaining civilians under different pretexts, such as having kinship relationships with individuals in the Armed Opposition/ Syrian National Army or accusing them of having links with ISIS. In many of their detentions and enforced disappearances, SDF personnel have targeted individuals on the basis of their ethnic background, with victims often remaining under enforced disappearance for many years, during which time the disappeared individuals spend several months in solitary confinement. We have noted that SDF has released a number of those detained after concluding agreements with dignitaries and Sheikhs of the tribes in the areas from which the detainees come.

Syrian Democratic Forces have sought to introduce legislation legitimizing all their operations of repression, detention, enforced disappearance, and kidnapping under two main pretexts, namely forced conscription and fighting terrorism, with this policy being very similar to that of the Syrian regime, which classifies anyone who opposes its policies and demands democratic change in the ruling system and an end to the dynastic dictatorship of the ruling family and the government appointed by it as a terrorist who must be arrested and whose voice must be silenced to make an example of him/her to the rest of society.

Many of the children detained or abducted for forced conscription by SDF have also been subjected to enforced disappearance, with their families prevented from obtaining any information about them, and their disappearance which, in many cases, lasts up to two years.

According to the SNHR's database, at least 3,817 individuals, including 658 children and 176 women, are still detained by Syrian Democratic Forces, having been detained at some point since the SDF's establishment - that is, since the establishment of the Kurdish Democratic Union Party's Self-Management Forces, in January 2014, as of August 2021. At least 2,216 of these individuals, including 98 children and 86 women, have been forcibly disappeared.

Testimonies of victims' families and cases of persons forcibly disappeared by Syrian Democratic Forces:

Jamil Omar Ibrahim, an activist in the popular uprising and one of the founders of the Kurdish Democratic Union Party in Syria, from Tal Teir village, which is administratively a part of al Qameshli city in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, born in 1953, was arrested by Syrian Democratic Forces on Friday, July 13, 2012, in al Qameshli city, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Jamil Omar Ibrahim

Behzad Dorson, born in 1963, a member of the Political Bureau of the Kurdish Democratic Party in Syria and the holder of a BA degree from al Furat University's Faculty of Education in Deir Ez-Zour city, from al Malekiya city in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, was kidnapped by gunmen affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces on Wednesday, October 24, 2012, on the road linking the villages of Mella Marzi and Shekr Khaji, which are administratively a part of al Malekiya city, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Behzad Dorson

Brigadier General Muhammad Khalil al Ali, head of the Kurdish Military Council, from Kafr Saghir village, which is administratively a part of Jabal Sam'an area in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate, Colonel Muhammad Ibrahim, Colonel Hasan Osso, Major Behzad Na'so, Captain Hussein Bakr, from Afrin city in the suburbs of Aleppo, Lieutenant Adnan Barazi, from Ein al Arab city in the suburbs of Aleppo, and Colonel Muhammad Kali Khairi and Lieutenant-Colonel Shawqi Othman, all officers defected from Syrian regime forces in 2012, were kidnapped by Syrian Democratic Forces on Tuesday, April 16, 2013, near al Malekiya city in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, while on their way to the Iraqi-Syrian border, and taken to an undisclosed location.



The SNHR contacted Basem Muhammad al Ali¹⁵, the son of Brigadier General Muhammad Khalil al Ali, who told us:

"On Tuesday, April 16, 2013, while the eight officers were heading to the Kurdistan region of Iraq, as per an invitation previously sent to them by the Political Bureau of the Kurdish Democratic Party, we lost contact with them before they reached the Iraqi border, with their fate remaining unknown for four months. While we followed up and searched for them, we found out that when they passed through the Syrian Democratic Forces' last checkpoint between al Malekiya area in the Hasaka suburbs and the areas of Iraqi Kurdistan, they were lured and ambushed, with Syrian Democratic Forces personnel kidnapping them, and they were taken to Derek prison (the court prison) and put in solitary cells underground, with their health conditions deteriorating; since that date, Syrian Democratic Forces deny any connection with their kidnapping." Muhammad added that despite the presence of witnesses and information they obtained from various sources among those released or conscripted by Syrian Democratic Forces, the SDF did not conduct any real investigation or acknowledge the fate of the disappeared officers.

¹⁵ We contacted him via phone on July 28, 2021

Fouad Saeed Ibrahim, born in 1973, a member of the Kurdish National Council in Syria, from Sharm al Sheikh, which is administratively a part of al Malekiya district in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, was arrested by Syrian Democratic Forces on Friday, March 24, 2017, on the road between al Malekiya city and Sharm al Sheikh village, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Fouad Saeed Ibrahim

The SNHR contacted Mr. Ali Saeed Ibrahim¹⁶, Fouad's brother, who told us:

"With the beginning of the popular uprising in al Malekiya in April 2011, my brother Fouad participated in this uprising and formed the Kurdish Youth Coordination in Derek (al Malekiya), and led the demonstrations against the Syrian regime despite the threats he was exposed to by the Syrian regime and the Democratic Union Party (PYD), and became a member of the Kurdish National Council in Syria, and then was elected as a member of the council's general secretariat; upon the establishment of the Kurdish Supreme Committee, he was chosen as a member of the Kurdish Committee that was formed following the Dohuk Agreement between the Movement for a Democratic Society (TEV-DEM) and the Kurdish National Council in Syria (ENKS). He was arrested for the first time by Syrian Democratic Forces on October 2, 2016, in Derek city, while he was distributing invitations for an activity in the local council of Derek city entitled "Peaceful Coexistence", before he was released on October 17, 2016. He then continued his revolutionary activity despite all the challenges and difficulties he was subjected to, until Friday, March 24, 2017, at 4:30 pm, upon his return from paying respects to one of his friends, personnel affiliated with Asayish monitored him, and when they were sure that he was alone in his car, they cut off his way and arrested him near Mamashour village on the road between al Malekiya city and Sharm al Sheikh village, and left his car in the middle of the road. When my older brother Ahmad went to collect the car, they found an Asayish car guarding Fouad's car, and they did not allow us to take it. Fouad was taken to the Anti-Terror Units center located on Ein Diwar Road near the Haji Jasem Mosque (which was the former State Security building) in al Malekiya area." Ali added that since his brother's arrest, all his family's attempts to ask questions about his wellbeing, determine the reason for his arrest, find out where he's being held and secure his release or at least obtain information about his fate have been fruitless, although some of those released from SDF detention centers told the family that they had seen Fouad in Alaya prison in al Qameshli city in the Hasaka suburbs prior to October 2020, when he was transferred to an undisclosed location.

¹⁶ We contacted him via phone on July 28, 2021

E. The Armed Opposition/ Syrian National Army:

The Armed Opposition factions/ Syrian National Army have used enforced disappearance against activists and those criticizing their practices and often resort to kidnappings and arrests without resorting to the judicial system that they established in their areas of control. The Armed Opposition factions/ Syrian National Army also detain forcibly disappeared persons within its military headquarters or secret prisons, and deny carrying out the arrests, with the period of enforced disappearance often lasting for years, during which the disappeared person is not subject to any trial and his/ her fate remains linked to a decision taken by the faction that carried out the arrest with no judicial involvement.

Enforced disappearances carried out by the Armed Opposition factions have increased since the areas under their control became concentrated in areas of the northern suburbs of Aleppo and the suburbs of Raqqa and Hasaka since the end of 2018, with some of these disappearances having an ethnic and sectarian character, especially in Afrin area and its villages in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate.

We have recorded other cases of enforced disappearance in which civilians were taken hostage and released in exchange for possession of property or payment of ransom money. Most of these arrests/ detentions occurred without judicial authorization and without the participation of the police force, which is the legitimate administrative authority responsible for arrests and detentions through the judiciary, as well as being carried out without any clear charges being presented against those detained.

According to the SNHR's database, at least 3,641 individuals, including 296 children and 759 women (adult female), are still detained by the various Armed Opposition factions/ Syrian National Army since 2011 to date, in all the areas it controlled or controls. At least 2,567 of these individuals, including 237 children and 446 women, have been forcibly disappeared.

Testimonies of victims' families and cases of persons forcibly disappeared by the Armed Opposition/ Syrian National Army:

Kamel Amin Srailwel, from Douma city in the Eastern Ghouta, Damascus Suburbs governorate, born in 1949, was kidnapped by gunmen affiliated with Jaysh al Islam, one of the Armed Opposition factions, in March 2016 in Barza neighborhood in Damascus city, and taken to an undisclosed location.



Kamel Amin Srailwel

The SNHR contacted Amin Sraiwei¹⁷, the son of the disappeared, Kamel Amin Sraiwei, who told us:

“My father Kamel was a critic of Jaysh al Islam and he constantly tried to expose their policies. In March 2016, while my father was with my younger brother Muhammad, who was 17 years old at the time, in Barza neighborhood of Damascus city, members of Jaysh al Islam kidnapped them; at that time, Jaysh al Islam had control of the neighborhood. Their fate remained unknown until October 2016, when one of those released from the Syrian regime’s prisons, who knows my father well, informed us that he saw my father in al Khatib branch in Damascus city, although this information was not confirmed. We guess that Jaysh al Islam was behind [the dissemination of] this information to dismiss the accusation against it; at the end of 2017, when the regime’s army tried to advance in Barza neighborhood, my brother Muhammad managed to escape from a prison in Barza neighborhood after Jaysh al Islam withdrew from the area without seeing my father or finding out any information about him. After a while, we received news from a person called Sheikh Abu Anas Kanakri, who was close to the leader Zahran Alloush, stating that my father had died as a result of beatings and torture during his interrogation, and he did not disclose the source of his information to us. We ascribe the responsibility for my father’s disappearance to Jaysh al Islam who kidnapped him.”

Muhammad Fahmi Abdou, a civil engineer and member of the local council in Sharran town, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, from Matino village in Afrin suburbs, was arrested on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, by Syrian National Army forces, and taken to an undisclosed location. On June 17, 2020, the Justice Department in Afrin issued a decision to release Muhammad, but we have received no information confirming his release, and his fate remains unknown.



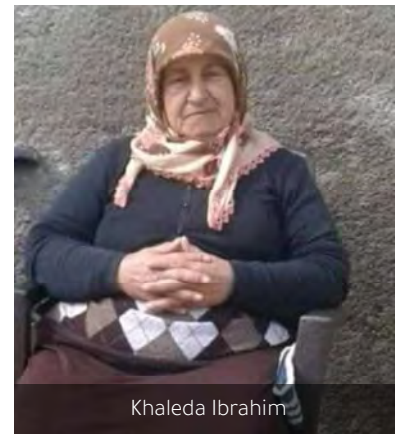
Engineer Muhammad Fahmi Abdou



An official document issued on June 17, 2020, by the Justice Department of Afrin in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate affiliated with the Syrian National Army, stipulating the release of Engineer Muhammad Fahmi Abdou

¹⁷ We contacted him via phone in March 2020

An elderly lady, Khaleda Ibrahim, from Jendeires town, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northwestern suburbs of Aleppo, was kidnapped by gunmen affiliated with Faylaq al Sham (the Sham Legion) affiliated with the Syrian National Army, in October 2020, along with her daughter Hanaa Ibrahim and Hanaa's young daughter, after gunmen raided their house in al Qadim street in the al Tal neighborhood of Jendeires town, with all being taken to an undisclosed location.



Khaleda Ibrahim

Aziz al Bakr, born in 1978, a farmer from Hazra village in the Bulbul district, which is administratively a part of Afrin region in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was arrested by the Syrian National Army forces while working on his land in Hazra village on February 18, 2021, and taken to an undisclosed location.

We contacted Mr. Taha al Bakr¹⁸, Aziz's relative, who told us:

"A military group raided Aziz's house and inquired about him, saying that they belong to the Military Police, but they were in civilian apparel, so we told them that he was not home; they then searched the house and destroyed some of its contents; they asked about his whereabouts again, then went to the land he owned, which is located on the outskirts of the village, and kidnapped him from there. After that, we went to the Military Police and they told us that we had to ask the faction that arrested him and that they were not responsible for him and didn't detain him. After searching and asking people to mediate and asking about him, we learned that he was detained by a faction that warned us not to reveal its name, or else we would not see him again. We are still waiting for his return to this day."

V. The Syrian Regime Continues to Manipulate Laws Registering Some of the Disappeared Persons as Dead Through Its Civil Registry Departments, with a Total of 1,000 Such Cases Documented

Since early 2018, the Syrian regime has begun registering many of the detainees previously forcibly disappeared in its detention centers as dead in the records maintained by the state Civil Registry departments, with the Syrian regime having harnessed several levels of the Syrian state institutions to implement this procedure in violation of Syrian law and to manipulate the data on the forcibly disappeared recorded at the Civil Registry, with this blatantly illegal manipulation starting with the ministries of Interior and Justice, and extending to Civil Registry officials in all Syrian governorates. The regime failed to comply with the rules and procedures for registering those dying in detention centers, such as the attorney general or his deputy coordinating reports on the death incident and notifying the Civil Registrar of deaths in

¹⁸ An alias; we contacted him via phone on June 8, 2021

custody within the legal period “within thirty days of its occurrence”, as stipulated in Article 14 of the Civil Status Law/ 2007. We issued [two separate reports](#) on this phenomenon, which causes further emotional devastation for the already traumatized disappeared individuals’ families, clearly showing the extent to which the Syrian regime has harnessed state institutions to serve it in a barbaric way, and confirming the extent to which the Syrian regime has tampered with the Civil Registry’s data on the forcibly disappeared, registering them as dead without giving families any information about the circumstances and location of their deaths and with the heartbroken families aware of the impossibility of investigating the circumstances of the death incident.

The SNHR team has documented at least 1,002 cases of forcibly disappeared persons, including nine children and two women, in which the Syrian regime revealed the fate of the disappeared through registering their deaths at Civil Registry offices, all of whom had died in detention, since the beginning of 2018 until August 2021. The regime failed to disclose the cause of death, with the families not being given their loved ones’ bodies or being informed of the place of their burial. The regime also failed to notify the families of their loved ones’ deaths when they occurred; through use of this policy, the Syrian regime has been able to avoid definitive clarification of the fate of the forcibly disappeared. We at the SNHR can confirm that the crime of enforced disappearance is still taking place, and according to international law, these people will remain classified as forcibly disappeared, with the main party held responsible for their disappearance being the Syrian regime. We emphasize that the number provided above represents only the bare minimum of cases which we have been able to document, and that the real number of cases involving individuals forcibly disappeared by the Syrian regime whom it has registered as dead in this way is likely to be far greater, but the regime is now only announcing this limited number. We believe that there are some cases about which we have been unable to obtain information, but these remain limited, and one of our greatest fears is that the Syrian regime will register tens of thousands of forcibly disappeared persons as dead in the Civil Registry departments, and begin publicly announcing these gradually when families visit Civil Registry departments or through periodically published lists.

The Syrian regime is certainly responsible for revealing the fate of those whom it forcibly disappeared, and for informing the Syrian people of how they were killed, who killed them, and the whereabouts of their remains, more especially since the Syrian regime has always denied their detention; based on all of these facts, these lists constitute an indictment and solid evidence of the Syrian regime’s involvement in the killing of these people who we believe died as a result of torture.

Testimonies of victims' families and cases of persons forcibly disappeared by Syrian regime forces who were registered as dead at the Civil Registry Department:

Badr Kanj al Kanj, from al Qsair city, west of Homs governorate, was arrested by Syrian regime forces in March 2012, while he was passing through one of the regime's checkpoints (al Dmaina al Sharqiah checkpoint) in Homs city. In February 2021, his family learned that he had been registered in the Civil Registry Department as dead. We at the SNHR consider it probable that he died due to torture in one of the regime's detention centers in Damascus city. We stress that since Syrian regime forces did not hand Omar's body over to his family, he is still classified as forcibly disappeared.



Badr Kanj al Kanj

Hussein Ali Ali, born in 1979, a fighter in the ranks of one of the Armed Opposition factions, from al Bab city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo, was arrested by Syrian regime forces in August 2012, while participating in the battles at Kwaireis Airbase, east of Aleppo governorate. Almost since that date, he has been classified as forcibly disappeared, with the Syrian regime denying his detention and preventing anyone, even a lawyer, from visiting him. On Thursday, July 2, 2020, his family learned that he had been registered in the Civil Registry Department as having died on Wednesday, July 14, 2015. We at the SNHR consider it probable that he died due to torture in one of the regime's detention centers in Damascus city. We stress that since Syrian regime forces did not hand Omar's body over to his family, he is still classified as forcibly disappeared.



Hussein Ali Ali before his arrest and enforced disappearance

رقم القيد	محل القيد	الإقامة	تاريخ الوفاة	الجنسية	الجنس	محل الوفاة	تاريخ ولادة	اسم الأم	اسم الأب	اسم ونسبة	ملاحظات
٣٨٦	الباب	الباب	١٤/٧/٢٠١٥	سوري	ذكر	دمشق	١٤/٧/٢٠١٥	نور الدين	علي	علي بن حسين	مفقود

A death certificate of the disappeared Hussein Ali Ali issued by the Civil Registry Department

Omar Muhammad Ghannoum, born in 1992, from al Hamidiya village, which is administratively a part of al Qsair city, west of Homs governorate, was a university student at the Faculty of Human Medicine at Tishreen University in Latakia city at the time of his arrest at the university by Syrian regime forces on Wednesday, May 1, 2013. On Friday, January 17, 2020, his family learned that he had been registered at the Civil Registry Department as having died on Monday, November 24, 2014. We at the SNHR consider it probable that he died due to torture in one of the regime's detention centers. We stress that since Syrian regime forces did not hand Omar's body over to his family, he is still classified as forcibly disappeared.



Omar Muhammad Ghannoum



A death certificate of the victim Omar Muhammad Ghannoum

The SNHR spoke with a cousin of the victim Omar Ghannoum¹⁹, named Haitham, who revealed that Omar's family had repeatedly tried to obtain information about his whereabouts through mediators, but to no avail. Haitham added: **"On May 1, 2013, Omar was arrested in Tishreen University in Latakia by members of the Syrian regime, and we couldn't find out anything about him after that, despite our repeated attempts to find out his whereabouts; when his family extracted a family record statement, they were shocked to find that Omar was registered as having died on November 24, 2014."**

Muhannad Muhammad Subhi al Karmou al Shehabi, born in 1987, who graduated with a Master's Degree from Aleppo University's Faculty of Chemistry, was a teaching assistant in the university's faculties of Pharmacy and Science at the time of his arrest. Muhannad, from al Bab city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was arrested on Sunday, December 22, 2013, by Syrian regime forces in Aleppo city. On Friday, June 12, 2020, his family learned that he had been registered in the Civil Registry Department as having died on Wednesday, April 8, 2015. We at the SNHR consider it probable that he died due to torture in one of the regime's detention centers in Damascus city. We stress that since Syrian regime forces did not hand Omar's body over to his family, he is still classified as forcibly disappeared.

¹⁹ We contacted him via phone on May 13, 2020



Muhannad Muhammad
 Subhi al Karmou al Shehabi



A death certificate of the victim
 Muhannad Muhammad Subhi al
 Karmou al Shehabi

Muhammad Nour Ahmad al Muhammad, a high-school student from Kafr Zita city in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate, was arrested by Syrian regime forces on Sunday, July 13, 2014, in Hama city. Almost since that date, he has been classified as forcibly disappeared, with the Syrian regime denying his detention and preventing anyone, even a lawyer, from visiting him. On Thursday, August 27, 2020, his family learned that he had been registered in the Civil Registry Department as having died on July 15, 2015. We at the SNHR consider it probable that he died due to torture in one of the regime's detention centers. We stress that since Syrian regime forces did not hand Omar's body over to his family, he is still classified as forcibly disappeared.



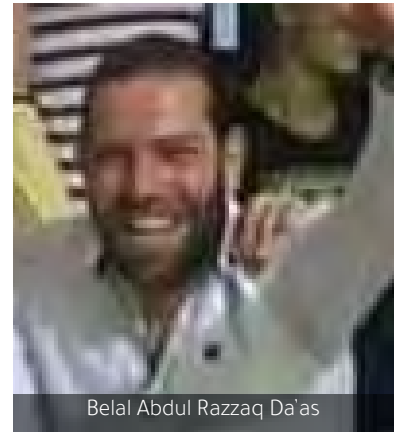
Muhammad Nour Ahmad al Muhammad

Hassan Abdul Razzaq Hamoud, born in 1966, from Termanin town in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate, was a 'Colonel Pilot' who graduated from the '14 special course of combat Pilots'. Hassan was arrested by Syrian regime forces in 2014. Almost since that date, he has been classified as forcibly disappeared, with the Syrian regime denying his detention and preventing anyone, even a lawyer, from visiting him. On Friday, December 4, 2020, his family learned that he had been registered in the Civil Registry Department as having died on Sunday, July 14, 2019. We at the SNHR consider it probable that he died due to torture in one of the regime's detention centers. We stress that since Syrian regime forces did not hand Omar's body over to his family, he is still classified as forcibly disappeared.



Hassan Abdul Razzaq Hamoud

Belal Abdul Razzaq Da'as, from the Jouret al Shayyeh neighborhood of Homs city, was arrested by Syrian regime forces in 2016 while he was passing through a regime checkpoint in Homs city. Belal was aged 30 at the time of his arrest. Almost since that date, he has been classified as forcibly disappeared, with the Syrian regime denying his detention and preventing anyone, even a lawyer, from visiting him. On Friday, February 1, 2021, his family learned that he had been registered in the Civil Registry Department as dead. We at the SNHR consider it probable that he died due to torture in one of the regime's detention centers. We stress that since Syrian regime forces did not hand Omar's body over to his family, he is still classified as forcibly disappeared.



Belal Abdul Razzaq Da'as

Khaled Shehadeh Azizi, a Colonel Pilot who had defected from the Syrian regime's forces, from al Shajara town in the western suburbs of Daraa governorate, was arrested on Saturday, December 29, 2018, by Syrian regime forces after being summoned to a regime detention center although he was amongst those who had previously settled his security status. Almost since that date, he has been classified as forcibly disappeared, with the Syrian regime denying his detention and preventing anyone, even a lawyer, from visiting him. On Wednesday, December 30, 2020, his family learned that he had been registered in the Civil Registry Department as dead. We at the SNHR consider it probable that he died due to torture in Seydnaya Military Prison in Damascus Suburbs governorate. We stress that since Syrian regime forces did not hand Omar's body over to his family, he is still classified as forcibly disappeared.

Yasin Ali al Ghazali, a former fighter in the ranks of an Armed Opposition faction in Daraa governorate, from Qerfa village in the eastern suburbs of Daraa governorate, was arrested by Syrian regime forces in 2019 in Damascus city, although he was amongst those who had previously settled his security status. Almost since that date, he has been classified as forcibly disappeared, with the Syrian regime denying his detention and preventing anyone, even a lawyer, from visiting him. On Saturday, February 9, 2021, his family learned that he had been registered in the Civil Registry Department as dead. We at the SNHR consider it probable that he died due to torture in one of the regime's detention centers. We stress that since Syrian regime forces did not hand Omar's body over to his family, he is still classified as forcibly disappeared.



Yasin Ali al Ghazali

VI. The Regime Security Services' and Army Forces' Direct Responsibility for the Crime of Enforced Disappearance and the Names of Individuals Who We Believe Are Involved in Committing Egregious Violations:

The Syrian regime is very centralized, and we at the SNHR rely on the relevant rules of customary humanitarian law in holding commanders and other senior officials responsible for war crimes committed by their subordinates pursuant to their orders²⁰ accountable if they knew, or had reason to know, that these subordinates were about to commit or were committing such crimes and failed to take all necessary and reasonable measures in their power to prevent their commission, or if such crimes had been committed, to punish the persons responsible²¹; the International Criminal Court Statute (ICC Statute) expands the elements of this responsibility to include crimes against humanity, which are committed in time of peace or war, and war crimes. This law also holds military commanders in addition to senior officials, including civilians, responsible for this²². In addition, combatants bear responsibility for their actions, even if they were carrying out orders from their higher-ranking superiors. The SNHR has repeatedly warned, through reports and statements, of the need to refrain from carrying out any acts that lead to committing war crimes or crimes against humanity, in addition to noting that international law provides that, even duress, the perpetration of war crimes or crimes against humanity or extermination only become acceptable as a defense in extreme situations where there is no option but to kill or be killed²³.

The various institutions of the Syrian regime have long been involved in committing widespread and systematic violations, many of which constitute crimes against humanity²⁴ and war crimes²⁵, with everyone who ordered, incited, encouraged, justified, participated, provided assistance in or facilitated those crimes considered to be involved in them; at the forefront of these institutions are those of the army and the security bodies. There is a tendency among fact-finding committees and international commissions of inquiry towards revealing the names of individuals involved in perpetrating violations, with the SNHR having taken this view for years, and demanding that the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic should reveal the names of individuals whose involvement in committing egregious violations constituting crimes against humanity and war crimes it has verified.

²⁰ ICRC, International Humanitarian Law, Rule 152, https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_rul_rule152

²¹ ICRC, International Humanitarian Law, Rule 153, https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_rul_rule153

²² International Criminal Court, Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 28, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/nr/rdonlyres/add16852-ae9-4757-abe7-9cdc-7cf02886/283503/romestatuteng1.pdf>

²³ The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, Erdemovic case, IT-96-22, Para. 17, <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/erdemovic/tjug/en/erd-tsj980305e.pdf>

²⁴ International Criminal Court, Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 7, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/nr/rdonlyres/add16852-ae9-4757-abe7-9cdc-7cf02886/283503/romestatuteng1.pdf>

²⁵ International Criminal Court, Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Article 8, <https://www.icc-cpi.int/nr/rdonlyres/add16852-ae9-4757-abe7-9cdc-7cf02886/283503/romestatuteng1.pdf>

Names of the most prominent leaders of the Syrian regime's security services involved in the crime of enforced disappearance of tens of thousands of Syrian citizens:

Hundreds of leaders of the Syrian regime's security services, army and other state institutions have been involved in the violations that have been committed against the Syrian people and the Syrian state since 2011 to date, with SNHR maintaining a database that includes detailed reports on thousands of individuals involved in committing violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law in Syria, their positions and the most prominent violations they committed that we have documented, and working to update this database continuously whenever new details emerge. We have provided detailed information on many of these figures in [reports](#) and other materials we've issued over the past ten years.

With regard to arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance and related violations, the four security services namely the General Military Intelligence Division, Air Force Intelligence Division, General Administration Division, and Political Security Division, mainly practiced arrests, torture and enforced disappearances in their detention centers, in addition to a number of military and civilian prisons. Enforced disappearance has been practiced according to a general methodology, with a decision taken to employ this as a policy according to the chain of command that starts from the President of the Republic and is directly linked to him by the Ministries of Defense and Interior, the National Security Office, and the associated security services. Here we note that the appointments, promotions and transfers of officers among the heads of the security services are carried out under decisions and decrees issued by the President of the Republic exclusively. We also note that the process of identifying officials in the security services is very difficult and complex, as the Syrian regime is reluctant to announce them. Therefore, we rely on cross-check processes between: the database of archival documents, the database of those involved in human rights violations, and the accumulated information we obtain from survivors of detention and defected officers.

We believe that revealing the names of the perpetrators of violations is a form of exposure and accountability, firstly before local public opinion, and secondly, international public opinion, and in order to enable the families of the forcibly disappeared to identify their opponents before the courts and bodies that we aspire to see established within the transitional justice process, and to deter those individuals who we believe are involved from repeating their crimes, and in order for others to know that the fate of everyone who commits violations against the Syrian citizen will be to be subject to defamation and exposure in front of his community, his family, the media, and later before local and international courts; we will strive to put as many of these individuals and their ilk as possible on the lists of terrorism and economic sanctions.

The following are the names of the vast majority of those who took command of the security services and its security branches over the past ten years, who are directly responsible for the arrests, torture and enforced disappearances that were committed during the period in which they held their positions from March 2011 until August 2021.

A. General Military Intelligence Division:

The Military Intelligence Division is one of the most prominent of the regime's security services that practiced arrests and enforced disappearances, with our estimates indicating that it is responsible for about 55% of these operations compared to the rest of the security services, with the largest number of detention centers belonging to this division. We have been able to identify at least 21 detention centers within the security branches that belong to the Military Intelligence Division alone, which are located in Damascus city and other governorates. All of these have participated in enforced disappearances. The Military Intelligence Division has many other branches responsible for intelligence, technical and administrative work, but these do not have detention centers and did not participate in arrests and enforced disappearances directly. SNHR is currently preparing an extensive report on the Military Intelligence Division. The Military Intelligence Division is administratively and formally affiliated with the Ministry of Defense, but it is actually, informally affiliated with the National Security Office.

Head of the Military Intelligence Division	Deputy Head	Year
Major-General Abdul Fattah Qudsiyeh	Ali Younes	2011
Major-General Abdul Fattah Qudsiyeh/ Major-General Rafiq Shehadeh	Major-General Muhammad Mahmoud Mahalla	2012
Major-General Rafiq Shehadeh	Major-General Muhammad Mahmoud Mahalla	2013
Major-General Rafiq Shehadeh	Major-General Muhammad Mahmoud Mahalla	2014
Major-General Rafiq Shehadeh	Major-General Muhammad Mahmoud Mahalla	2015
Major-General Muhammad Mahmoud Mahalla	Major-General Kefah Melhem	2016
Major-General Muhammad Mahmoud Mahalla	Major-General Kefah Melhem	2017
Major-General Muhammad Mahmoud Mahalla	Major-General Kefah Melhem	2018
Major-General Kefah Melhem	Major-General Ibrahim al Wa'ri	2019
Major-General Kefah Melhem	Major-General Ibrahim al Wa'ri	2020
Major-General Kefah Melhem	Major-General Ibrahim al Wa'ri	2021

Heads of Military Security Division branches in the governorates:

	Branch Number	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Notes
Damascus suburbs		Major-General Rustum Ghazaleh	Major-General Rustum Ghazaleh										There is the Military Security Branch in Damascus suburbs, not under the Military Security Division in Damascus. During 2011-2015, Major-General Rustum Ghazaleh was the head of the Military Security Division in Damascus suburbs, and he was killed in April 18, 2015.
Daraa	245	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	Brigadier General Louay al Ali	The Military Security Branch in Daraa is affiliated with the Military Security Branch in Hama, and the same officer was both head of branch.
Suwayda		Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	
Quneitra	220	Brigadier General Samea Saleh al Ali	Brigadier General Suhail al Hasan	Brigadier General Suhail al Hasan	Brigadier General Suhail al Hasan	Brigadier General Suhail al Hasan	Brigadier General Suhail al Hasan	Brigadier General Suhail al Hasan	Brigadier General Suhail al Hasan	Brigadier General Suhail al Hasan	Brigadier General Suhail al Hasan	Brigadier General Suhail al Hasan	
Homs	261	Brigadier General Muhammad Zuhair	Brigadier General Hakan Da'boul	Brigadier General Hakan Da'boul	Brigadier General Hakan Da'boul	Brigadier General Hakan Da'boul	Brigadier General Hakan Da'boul	Brigadier General Hakan Da'boul / Major-General Ibrahim al Wafi	Brigadier General Muftid Warda	Brigadier General Muftid Warda	Brigadier General Muftid Warda	Brigadier General Muftid Warda	Hussein (Hussein) was killed in February 2017.
Hama	219	Brigadier General Muhammad Meteh	Brigadier General Adel Mustafa		Brigadier General Muhammad Derwish	Brigadier General Mazen Hawwash al Kanj	Brigadier General Mazen Hawwash al Kanj	Brigadier General Mazen Hawwash al Kanj	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	
Aleppo	290	Major-General Kefah Melhem	Brigadier General Muhammad Meteh / Brigadier General Abdul Latif	Major-General Rafiq Shehadeh	Major-General Rafiq Shehadeh	Major-General Rafiq Shehadeh	Brigadier General Abdul Latif al Fand		Brigadier General Mazen Hawwash al Kanj	Brigadier General Mazen Hawwash al Kanj	Brigadier General Mazen Hawwash al Kanj	Brigadier General Wafik Naser	
Hasaka	222			Brigadier General Diab al Ali	Brigadier General Diab al Ali	Brigadier General Diab al Ali	Brigadier General Ali al Taha	Brigadier General Ali al Taha	Brigadier General Muhammad Janoudi	Brigadier General Muhammad Janoudi	Brigadier General Muhammad Janoudi	Brigadier General Rabe Ghannem	
Deir Ez-Zour/ Raqqa	243	Major-General Jamel Jamah	Major-General Jamel Jamah	Brigadier General Mazen Hawwash al Kanj	Brigadier General Mazen Hawwash al Kanj	Brigadier General Jamel Razouq	Brigadier General Jamel Razouq	Brigadier General Jamel Razouq	Assignment of Brigadier General Yassin Ahmad Dahi	Assignment of Brigadier General Yassin Ahmad Dahi	Assignment of Brigadier General Yassin Ahmad Dahi	Brigadier General Ahmad Khalil Ibrahim	Major General Jamel Jamah was killed on October 10, 2013. Brigadier General Jamel Razouq was killed in February 2018.
Latakia		Brigadier General Adnan al Ahmad	Brigadier General Adnan al Ahmad	Brigadier General Adnan al Ahmad	Brigadier General Adnan al Ahmad	Brigadier General Adnan al Ahmad	Brigadier General Emad Mayhoub	Brigadier General Emad Mayhoub	Brigadier General Emad Mayhoub				
Tartus							Brigadier General Adnan al Ahmad	Brigadier General Adnan al Ahmad	Brigadier General Emad Mayhoub		Brigadier General Ibrahim Abbas	Brigadier General Suleiman Musa Qana / Assignment of Brigadier General Ghazi	
Idlib	271	Brigadier General Nofal al Hussein	Brigadier General Nofal al Hussein	Brigadier General Nofal al Hussein	Brigadier General Nofal al Hussein	Brigadier General Nofal al Hussein			Brigadier General Hussein Nafrouf	Brigadier General Hussein Nafrouf	Brigadier General Hussein Nafrouf	Brigadier General Hussein Nafrouf	
The Badiya	221	Colonel Malek Habib	Colonel Malek Habib	Colonel Malek Habib	Colonel Malek Habib	Colonel Malek Habib	Colonel Malek Habib	Colonel Malek Habib	Colonel Malek Habib	Colonel Malek Habib	Colonel Malek Habib	Colonel Malek Habib	

Heads of the central branches of the Military Security Division in Damascus city:

Branch	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2011
291	Brigadier General Burhan Qadiri	Jointly between Brigadier General Burhan Qadiri and Brigadier General Yousef Abdou	Brigadier General Yousef Abdou	Brigadier General Yousef Abdou				Brigadier General Hussein Noufel	Brigadier General Hussein Noufel	Brigadier General Hussein Noufel	Brigadier General Hussein Noufel	Brigadier General Burhan Qadiri
292	Rafiq Shehadeh	Rafiq Shehadeh						Brigadier General Adel al Theker	Brigadier General Adel al Theker	Brigadier General Adel al Theker	Brigadier General Adel al Theker	Rafiq Shehadeh
294	Brigadier General Zafer Yousef	Brigadier General Zafer Yousef	Brigadier General Zafer Yousef	Brigadier General Zafer Yousef	Kefah Melhem	Brigadier General Kamal Hasan	Brigadier General Kamal Hasan	Brigadier General George Saloum	Brigadier General George Saloum	Brigadier General George Saloum	Brigadier General George Saloum	Brigadier General Zafer Yousef
235	Brigadier General Muhammad Khalouf	Brigadier General Muhammad Khalouf	Brigadier General Suhail Ramadan	Brigadier General Suhail Ramadan	Brigadier General George Suleiman	Brigadier General George Suleiman	Brigadier General Ibrahim al Wafi	Brigadier General Ibrahim al Wafi	Brigadier General Kamal al Hasan	Brigadier General Majed Ibrahim	Brigadier General Majed Ibrahim	Brigadier General Muhammad Khalouf
215	Brigadier General Shafiq Ahmad Messah	Brigadier General Shafiq Ahmad Messah	Brigadier General Jamal Razouq	Brigadier General Jamal Razouq	Brigadier General Jamal Razouq	Assignment of the security officer	Assignment of the security officer	Brigadier General Hussein Nafrouf	Brigadier General Hussein Nafrouf	Brigadier General Hussein Nafrouf	Brigadier General Hussein Nafrouf	Brigadier General Shafiq Ahmad Messah
216	Brigadier General Muhammad Zamrini	Brigadier General Muhammad Zamrini	Brigadier General Suleiman Musa	Brigadier General Suleiman Musa	Brigadier General Suleiman Musa	Brigadier General Suleiman Musa	Brigadier General Adnan al Ahmad	Brigadier General Emad Mayhoub	Brigadier General Emad Mayhoub	Brigadier General Muhammad al Muallem	Brigadier General Muhammad al Muallem	Brigadier General Muhammad Zamrini
227	Brigadier General Muhammad Saeed Sammour	Brigadier General Muhammad Saeed Sammour / Brigadier General Shafiq Messah	Brigadier General Shafiq Ahmad Messah	Major-General Ibrahim al Wafi	Major-General Ibrahim al Wafi	Brigadier General Emad Muhammad	Brigadier General Issa Iskander Mandou	Brigadier General Kamal al-Husseini	Brigadier General Kamal al-Husseini	Brigadier General Kamal al-Husseini	Brigadier General Kamal al-Husseini	Brigadier General Muhammad Saeed Sammour
248	Brigadier General Muhammad al Haj Ali	Brigadier General Muhammad al Haj Ali	Brigadier General Muhammad al Haj Ali	Brigadier General Muhammad al Haj Ali	Brigadier General Muhammad al Haj Ali	Brigadier General Muhammad al Haj Ali	Brigadier General Haitham Barakat	Brigadier General Haitham Barakat	Brigadier General Haitham Barakat	Brigadier General Haitham Barakat	Brigadier General Haitham Barakat	Brigadier General Muhammad al Haj Ali
237		Brigadier General Ghassan Halim Khalil	Brigadier General Ghassan Halim Khalil	Brigadier General Ghassan Halim Khalil	Brigadier General Ghassan Halim Khalil	Brigadier General Ghassan Halim Khalil	Brigadier General Ma'an Hussein	Russian leadership	Russian leadership	Russian leadership	Russian leadership	

B. Air Force Intelligence Division:

The Air Force Intelligence Division is second in terms of responsibility for arrests and enforced disappearances after the Military Security Division. This division has six regional branches in different Syrian governorates named according to the region, 'the Region branch/ Damascus, the Northern, Central, Southern, Eastern, and Coastal regions branches', with each regional branch having a departmental headquarters in the governorates it is responsible for, in addition to six central branches in Damascus city, most of which contain detention centers; the most prominent of these are the Investigation Branch and the al Mazza Branch 'Airport Branch/ Mazza Prison' in Damascus city. The Air Force Intelligence Division is affiliated with the Ministry of Defense.

Head of the Air Force Intelligence Division	Deputy Head	Assistant Head	Year
Major-General Jamil al Hasan		Major-General Zuhair Hamad	2011
Major-General Jamil al Hasan	Major-General Fouad al Tawil		2012
Major-General Jamil al Hasan			2013
Major-General Jamil al Hasan			2014
Major-General Jamil al Hasan			2015
Major-General Jamil al Hasan	Major-General Ghassan Jawdat Ismail	Major-General Adib Nemr Salameh	2016
Major-General Jamil al Hasan	Major-General Ghassan Jawdat Ismail	Major-General Adib Nemr Salameh	2017
Major-General Jamil al Hasan	Major-General Abdul Salam Mahmoud	Major-General Adib Nemr Salameh	2018
Major-General Jamil al Hasan	Major-General Abdul Salam Mahmoud	Major-General Qahtan Khalil	2019
Major-General Ghassan Jawdat Ismail			2020
Major-General Ghassan Jawdat Ismail			2021

Heads of the Air Force Intelligence Division branches in the governorates:

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Damascus		Brigadier General Iyad Iskandar Mandou	Colonel Beda Hafez Makhoul	Colonel Beda Hafez Makhoul Killed in 2014					Brigadier General Habib Hasan		
Daraa	Colonel Qusai Mayhoub	Colonel Qusai Mayhoub	Colonel Qusai Mayhoub	Colonel Qusai Mayhoub	Colonel Qusai Mayhoub	Colonel Qusai Mayhoub	Colonel Qusai Mayhoub	Colonel Qusai Mayhoub	Colonel Suwaimen Mahmoud Hammoud died on September 8, 2019 Colonel Khairat Ahmad Dayoub	Colonel Khairat Ahmad Dayoub	Colonel Khairat Ahmad Dayoub
Suwayda	Major Asaad Abdou	Major Asaad Abdou	Major Asaad Abdou								
Qnitra											
Homs	Brigadier General Jawdat al Ahmad	Brigadier General Jawdat al Ahmad	Brigadier General Jawdat al Ahmad	Brigadier General Jawdat al Ahmad	Brigadier General Jawdat al Ahmad	Brigadier General Jawdat al Ahmad	Colonel Sayel Asaad Daoud	Colonel Sayel Asaad Daoud	Colonel Sayel Asaad Daoud	Colonel Sayel Asaad Daoud	Colonel Sayel Asaad Daoud
Hama		Suheil al Hasan				Colonel Fajr al Sabbagh					
Aleppo	Major-General Adib Nemr Salameh	Major-General Adib Nemr Salameh	Major-General Adib Nemr Salameh	Major-General Adib Nemr Salameh	Major-General Adib Nemr Salameh	Assignment of Brigadier General Iyad Iskandar Mandou	Brigadier General Suheil al Hasan			Brigadier General Habib Hasan	Brigadier General Habib Hasan
Hasaka	Brigadier General Hussein al Saleh	Brigadier General Hussein al Saleh	Brigadier General Hussein al Saleh	Brigadier General Hussein al Saleh	Brigadier General Hussein al Saleh	Brigadier General Hussein al Saleh	Brigadier General Hussein al Saleh				
Raqqa	Brigadier General Abdullah al Jou'ei	Brigadier General Abdullah al Jou'ei	Brigadier General Abdullah al Jou'ei							Lieutenant Colonel Ahmad Muhammad killed in 2020	
Deir Ez-Zour						Brigadier General Muhammad Tayyar al Munther Ghannam	Brigadier General Munther Ghannam	Brigadier General Jihad Zaki	Brigadier General Jihad Zaki	Brigadier General Jihad Zaki killed in July 2020	
Latakia	Colonel Majid al Abdallah	Colonel Suheil al Abdallah	Colonel Suheil al Abdallah				Brigadier General Suheil al Abdallah				
Tartus		Brigadier General Ahmad Jarrah	Brigadier General Ahmad Jarrah	Brigadier General Ahmad Jarrah	Brigadier General Ahmad Jarrah	Brigadier General Ahmad Jarrah		Brigadier General Yousef Sulaiman	Colonel Engineer Gheed Salameh	Colonel Engineer Gheed Salameh	
Idlib		Brigadier General Ahmad Asad	Brigadier General Ahmad Asad	Brigadier General Ahmad Asad	Brigadier General Ahmad Asad	Brigadier General Ahmad Asad					

Heads of the central branches of the Air Force Intelligence Division in Damascus city:

Branch	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Al Mazza branch	Brigadier General Yasin Ahmad Dahi	Brigadier General Yasin Ahmad Dahi	Brigadier General Yasin Ahmad Dahi	Brigadier General Yasin Ahmad Dahi / Brigadier Abdul Salam Fajr Mahmoud	Brigadier General Abdul Salam Fajr Mahmoud	Brigadier General Abdul Salam Fajr Mahmoud	Brigadier General Abdul Salam Fajr Mahmoud	Brigadier General Abdul Salam Fajr Mahmoud	Brigadier General Abdul Salam Fajr Mahmoud	Brigadier General Abdul Salam Fajr Mahmoud	Brigadier General Abdul Salam Fajr Mahmoud
Harasta branch	Brigadier General Muhammad Khaled Rahmoun	Brigadier General Muhammad Khaled Rahmoun	Brigadier General Muhammad Khaled Rahmoun	Brigadier General Muhammad Khaled Rahmoun	Brigadier General Muhammad Khaled Rahmoun	Brigadier General Muhammad Khaled Rahmoun	Brigadier General Muhammad Khaled Rahmoun	Brigadier General Muhammad Khaled Rahmoun			

C. General Administration Division 'State Security':

The General Administration Division is an independent security body directly affiliated to the former National Security Office, which is directly affiliated with the Presidency of the Republic, with its employees being appointed by both the Ministries of Defense and Interior. The Public Administration Division has branches in all Syrian governorates in addition to central branches in Damascus city, most of which include detention centers.

Leadership of the General Administration Division:

Head of the General Administration Division	Deputy Head	Assistant Head	Year
Major-General Zuhair Hamad	Major-General Nazih Zarir		2011
Major-General Zuhair Hamad	Major-General Nazih Zarir		2012
Major-General Muhammad Deeb Zaitoun	Major-General Zuhair Hamad		2013
Major-General Muhammad Deeb Zaitoun	Major-General Zuhair Hamad		2014
Major-General Muhammad Deeb Zaitoun	Major-General Zuhair Hamad		2015
Major-General Muhammad Deeb Zaitoun	Major-General Zuhair Hamad		2016
Major-General Muhammad Deeb Zaitoun	Major-General Zuhair Hamad	Major-General Ghassan Khalil	2017
Major-General Muhammad Deeb Zaitoun	Major-General Zuhair Hamad		2018
Major-General Muhammad Deeb Zaitoun	Major-General Zuhair Hamad		2019
Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa			2020
Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa			2021

Heads of the General Intelligence Division 'State Security' branches in the governorates:

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Damascus	Hafez Makhoul										
Damascus suburbs											
Daraa	Brigadier General Ahmad al Saghir	Brigadier General Ahmad al Saghir						Brigadier General Oqab Saqr	Brigadier General Oqab Saqr	Brigadier General Oqab Saqr	Brigadier General Oqab Saqr
Suwayda	Brigadier General Muhammad Makhoul	Brigadier General Muhammad Makhoul	Brigadier General Muhammad Makhoul	Brigadier General Muhammad Makhoul	Brigadier General Muhammad Makhoul	Brigadier General Muhammad Makhoul	Brigadier General Ghassan Jawdat Ismail	Brigadier General Ghassan Jawdat Ismail	Brigadier General Salem al Hourri	Brigadier General Salem al Hourri	Brigadier General Salem al Hourri
Quneitra		Colonel Qais Malla									
Homs	Colonel Feras Hamed	Colonel Feras Hamed	Colonel Feras Hamed		Brigadier General Oqab Saqr	Brigadier General Oqab Saqr / Brigadier General Ibrahim Darwish	Brigadier General Ibrahim Darwish / Brigadier General Madyan Nadeh	Brigadier General Madyan Nadeh	Brigadier General Madyan Nadeh	Brigadier General Madyan Nadeh	Brigadier General Madyan Nadeh
Hama	Brigadier General Ibrahim Darwish	Brigadier General Ibrahim Darwish	Brigadier General Ibrahim Darwish	Brigadier General Ibrahim Darwish	Brigadier General Ibrahim Darwish	Brigadier General Ibrahim Darwish					Brigadier General Tayseer Announ
Aleppo	Major General Akram Mutezzat	Major General Akram Mutezzat	Major General Akram Mutezzat / Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Najm	Brigadier General Azizul Rahman Najm	Brigadier General Khalil al Malla	Brigadier General Khalil al Malla	Brigadier General Khalil al Malla	Brigadier General Khalil al Malla	Brigadier General Khalil al Malla	Brigadier General Khalil al Malla	Brigadier General Khalil al Malla
Hasaka								Brigadier General Mhanna Mahmoud	Brigadier General Mhanna Mahmoud / Brigadier General Ghassan al Ali	Brigadier General Ghassan al Ali	Brigadier General Ibrahim al Hariri
Raqqa	Brigadier General Khaled al Halaibi	Brigadier General Khaled al Halaibi	Brigadier General Khaled al Halaibi (left office)						Brigadier General Ismail Obeid		Brigadier General Bassam Shehadeh
Deir Ez-Zour	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali	Brigadier General Da'as Hasan Ali / Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Najm
Latakia		Colonel Khader Khader			Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Najm	Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Najm	Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Najm	Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Najm	Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Najm	Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Najm	
Tartus		Brigadier General Muhammad Zaiti				Major-General Akram Ali Muhammad	Major-General Akram Ali Muhammad	Major-General Akram Ali Muhammad	Major-General Akram Ali Muhammad	Brigadier General Qais Hassan Abdul Rajab	
Idlib		Brigadier General Abdul Rahman Najm									

Heads of General Intelligence Branches "State Security" in Damascus city

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Raid / 295 branch									Brigadier General Qais Hassan Abdul Rajab	Brigadier General Qais Hassan Abdul Rajab	
285	Brigadier General Husam Fandi	Brigadier General Ibrahim Malla									
Al Khatib / 251 branch	Major-General Tawfiq Younes	Major-General Tawfiq Younes	Major-General Tawfiq Younes	Major-General Tawfiq Younes	Major-General Tawfiq Younes	Major-General Tawfiq Younes					Brigadier General Ahmad Ref'at al Deeb
255	Brigadier General Ghassan Khalil	Brigadier General Ghassan Khalil	Brigadier General Akram Muhammad	Brigadier General Akram Muhammad	Brigadier General Akram Muhammad	Brigadier General Akram Muhammad					

D. Political Security Division:

The Political Security Division is administratively and formally affiliated with the Ministry of the Interior, and plays a major role in the regime's monitoring and intelligence operations and in conducting security investigations of both civilians and employees of the Ministry of Interior. It has central branches in Damascus city, most of which undertake monitoring and correspondence tasks, with a number of them having detention centers, as well as regional branches in the governorates.

Leadership of the Political Security Division:

Head of the Political Security Division	Deputy Head	Assistant Head	Year
Major-General Muhammad Deeb Zaitoun			2011
Major-General Muhammad Deeb Zaitoun	Major-General Nazih Hassoun		2012
Major-General Rustum Ghazaleh	Major-General Nazih Hassoun		2013
Major-General Rustum Ghazaleh	Major-General Nazih Hassoun		2014
Major-General Nazih Hassoun	Major-General Nazih Hassoun		2015
Major-General Nazih Hassoun			2016
Major-General Nazih Hassoun	Major-General Muhammad Khaled Rahmoun		2017
Major-General Muhammad Khaled Rahmoun/ Brigadier General Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa			2018
Brigadier Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa/ Major-General Naser al Ali			2019
Major-General Naser al Ali			2020
Major-General Ghaith Deeb			2021

Heads of Political Security Branches in the governorates:

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Damascus suburbs	Brigadier General Ahmad Kousa	Brigadier General Ahmad Kousa				Brigadier General Jawdat Ibrahim al Sali	Brigadier General Jawdat Ibrahim al Sali	Brigadier General Jawdat Ibrahim al Sali	Brigadier General Jawdat Ibrahim al Sali	Brigadier General Bassam Muhammad Khaddour	Brigadier General Bassam Muhammad Khaddour
Damascus	Brigadier General Ali Makhlof	Brigadier General Ali Makhlof	Brigadier General Ali Makhlof							Brigadier General Riyad Shehadeh	Brigadier General Riyad Shehadeh
Daraa	Brigadier General Atef Najib/ Brigadier General Naser al Ali	Brigadier General Naser al Ali	Brigadier General Naser al Ali						Brigadier General Osama Ali Asaad	Brigadier General Osama Ali Asaad	Brigadier General Osama Ali Asaad
Suwayda	Colonel Ibrahim Zaidan	Colonel Ibrahim Zaidan	Brigadier General Muhammad Heikmat Ibrahim	Brigadier General Husam Muhammad Heikmat Ibrahim	Brigadier General Jawdat Ibrahim al Sali	Brigadier General Wafiq Sha'ban	Brigadier General Wafiq Sha'ban	Brigadier General Wafiq Sha'ban	Brigadier General Wafiq Sha'ban	Brigadier General Wafiq Sha'ban	Brigadier General Wafiq Sha'ban
Quneitra	Captain Ziad al Raikad	Captain Ziad al Raikad									
Homs	Colonel Muhammad Ali al Abdullah, killed in 2011/ Brigadier General Naser al Ali	Brigadier General Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa	Brigadier General Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa	Brigadier General Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa	Brigadier General Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa	Brigadier General Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa	Brigadier General Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa	Brigadier General Husam Muhammad Nouri Anya Louqa	Brigadier General Riyad Shehadeh	Brigadier General Riyad Shehadeh/ Colonel Faleq Ahmed	Colonel Fa'eq Ahmad
Hama	Brigadier General Nader Deeb	Brigadier General Nader Deeb/ Brigadier General Muhi al Din					Colonel Osama Ali Asaad	Colonel Osama Ali Asaad	Brigadier General Bassam Muhammad Khaddour	Brigadier General Bassam Muhammad Khaddour/ Colonel Amer Hurmuz	Colonel Amer Hurmuz
Aleppo	Brigadier General Naser al Ali		Brigadier General Ryad Habib Kharfan Abbas	Brigadier General Ryad Habib Kharfan Abbas	Brigadier General Ryad Habib Kharfan Abbas	Brigadier General Ryad Habib Kharfan Abbas	Brigadier General Ryad Habib Kharfan Abbas	Brigadier General Ryad Habib Kharfan Abbas	Brigadier General Yaser Suleiman	Brigadier General Yaser Suleiman/ Anas Ali Zreiq	Brigadier General Anas Ali Zreiq
Hasaka	Brigadier General Tayseer Wasel	Brigadier General Tayseer Wasel	Brigadier General Tayseer Wasel	Brigadier General Tayseer Wasel	Brigadier General Tayseer Wasel	Brigadier General Tayseer Wasel	Brigadier General Tayseer Wasel	Brigadier General Amjad Ibrahim Nezami	Brigadier General Amjad Ibrahim Nezami	Brigadier General Amjad Ibrahim Nezami killed in 2020/ Brigadier	Brigadier General Samer Muhammad Sweidan
Raqqa	Colonel Muhammad Ammar Sarmini	Colonel Muhammad Ammar Sarmini	Brigadier General Tayseer Kahliah killed in 2013					Brigadier General Samer Muhammad Sweidan	Brigadier General Samer Muhammad Sweidan	Brigadier General Samer Hafez Salman	Brigadier General Samer Hafez Salman
Deir Ez-Zour	Brigadier General Muhi al Din Harmouch	Brigadier General Muhi al Din Harmouch/ Brigadier General Jassem Muhammad	Brigadier General Jassem Muhammad						Brigadier General Ayman al Ahmad	Brigadier General Ayman al Ahmad	Brigadier General Ayman al Ahmad
Latakia	Brigadier General Taha Haj Taha	Brigadier General Taha Haj Taha	Brigadier General Khader Khader	Brigadier General Taha Haj Taha	Brigadier General Taha Haj Taha	Brigadier General Taha Haj Taha	Brigadier General Taha Haj Taha	Brigadier General Taha Haj Taha	Brigadier General Taha Haj Taha/ Brigadier General Mustafa Kreiz	Brigadier General Mustafa Kreiz	Brigadier General Mustafa Kreiz
Tartus			Brigadier General Naser al Ali				Brigadier General Shakib Ajwad Nasr	Brigadier General Shakib Ajwad Nasr	Brigadier General Shakib Ajwad Nasr	Brigadier General Shakib Ajwad Nasr	Brigadier General Shakib Ajwad Nasr
Idlib	Brigadier General Atef Najib	Brigadier General Atef Najib	Brigadier General Aysar Jazzar Bougha	Brigadier General Aysar Jazzar Bougha	Brigadier General Aysar Jazzar Bougha	Brigadier General Aysar Jazzar Bougha	Brigadier General Aysar Jazzar Bougha	Brigadier General Aysar Jazzar Bougha	Brigadier General Suleiman Suleiman	Brigadier General Suleiman Suleiman	Brigadier General Suleiman Suleiman

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

Legal conclusions

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) believes that the Syrian regime has clearly demonstrated a lack of commitment to the international agreements and treaties it has ratified, in particular the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights. In addition, the Syrian regime has violated a number of articles of the Syrian constitution itself, detaining hundreds of thousands of detainees for many years without issuing any arrest warrants or bringing any charges against them. The Syrian regime has also denied those detainees the right to an attorney and barred their families from visiting them. 68.25% of all detainees have gone on to be classified as forcibly disappeared, with the Syrian regime never informing their families of their whereabouts or fate. Any attempt by detainees' family members to inquire about their loved ones' whereabouts may put the families themselves at risk of being arrested.

Enforced disappearance is prohibited under customary international humanitarian law according to Rule 98 which prohibits enforced disappearance in international and non-international armed conflicts.

Rule 117 of the same law states, "Each party to the conflict must take all feasible measures to account for persons reported missing as a result of armed conflict and must provide their family members with any information it has on their fate."

Furthermore, international criminal law prohibits enforced disappearance. According to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the systematic practice of enforced disappearances is by its very nature a crime against humanity (Article 7, paragraph 1-i), which applies to the actions of the Syrian regime.

The other parties involved in Syria have also practiced the crime of enforced disappearance, although without the centralized and systematic nature of the Syrian regime, which differs from them in the vast quantity and distribution of cases, although the ISIS group and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham are similar to the Syrian regime in the widespread and systematic nature of such cases as indicated by our data.

Recommendations

UN Security Council and United Nations

- Hold an emergency meeting to discuss this critical matter that threatens the fates of nearly 102,000 individuals and terrorizes the whole of Syrian society.
- Investigate individuals involved in the crime of enforced disappearance in Syria and impose sanctions on them.
- Work to reveal the fate of the forcibly disappeared persons in parallel with or prior to the start of the upcoming rounds of the political process, and set a strict timetable to reveal their fate.
- Establish methods and mechanisms to prevent the Syrian regime from persecuting and tampering with the living and the dead, as this poses a major threat to the security and stability of the Syrian state.

- The Security Council should act to end torture and deaths due to torture inside Syrian regime detention centers, and to save whoever is left among the detainees as quickly as possible.
- Take action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to protect the detainees from certain death inside detention centers, and to put an end to the epidemic of enforced disappearance that continues to plague Syria which poses a threat to the security and stability of Syrian society.
- The Security Council should continue with implementation of the resolutions it has adopted, most notably Resolution 2042 and Resolution 2139, and must hold parties responsible for compliance with them. The Security Council should follow its resolutions with action.
- Devote more attention to the issue of the forcibly disappeared in Syria, particularly given the magnitude of the numbers of disappeared and the fact that this is a crime against humanity. This issue must be addressed urgently.
- All detainees must be immediately allowed to contact their families, as well as lawyers and doctors. Binding guarantees must be established to prevent recurrence of lethal torture inside detention centers.
- Compel the Syrian regime to open all detention centers before the International Committee of the Red Cross and all United Nations committees.

The Syrian regime

- Stop treating the Syrian state as a private family property.
- Stop terrorizing the Syrian people through enforced disappearances, torture, and death due to torture.
- Stop tampering with and exploiting civil records in service of the goals of the ruling family.
- Take responsibility for all legal and material costs and compensate the victims and their families from the resources of the Syrian state.

The Syrian regime's allies, Russia and Iran

- Stop supporting a regime involved in the disappearance of nearly 102,000 of the Syrian people, since that support is considered complicity in crimes against humanity.

Human Rights Council

- Follow up on the issue of the detainees and forcibly disappeared persons in Syria, shed light on this issue at all periodic annual meetings, and dedicate a special session to addressing this horrifying threat.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

- Prepare a special and extensive report shedding light on this catastrophe, including all of its psychological, social, and economic ramifications, and support active human rights organizations in Syria.

UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

- Increase the manpower available to work on the issue of forcibly disappeared persons at the office of the Special Rapporteur on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances in Syria in light of the massive level and extent of cases of enforced disappearance in the country.

Arab and international human rights organizations:

- Advocate for the issue of the forcibly disappeared in Syria, condemn the Syrian regime and expose its brutal practices, and be resolute and constant in demanding that the fate of all the forcibly disappeared be revealed.

Solidarity

We wish to express our complete and constant solidarity with the victims and their families. We also extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the families and local activists, without whose efforts we could not have prepared and completed the report in such an exhaustive way.



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