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At least 569 Cases of Arbitrary Arrests Documented in Syria in August 2019

Including 362 Cases of Enforced Disappearance



SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Monday, August 2, 2019

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, independent group that is considered a primary source for the OHCHR on all death toll-related analyses in Syria.



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I. Introduction and Methodology

Arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances have been amongst the most widespread violations since the early days of the popular uprising for democracy in Syria in March 2011. These are considered to be the most common and pervasive regime violations against Syrian citizens, affecting hundreds of thousands of Syrians. These violations are carried out by the Syrian security services, as well as their affiliated militias, as part of a deliberate and planned strategy, often in a sweeping indiscriminate manner, in order to instill terror and fear into the largest possible number of Syrian people. Approximately eight months after the start of the popular uprising, other parties began to emerge in Syria, also carrying out arrests and kidnappings. The process of documenting the cases of detention and cataloguing whether detainees are released or join the ranks of the forcibly disappeared has been one of the greatest challenges and difficulties faced by the Syrian Network for Human Rights, as is clarified in our methodology¹.

Since 2011, the Syrian Network for Human Rights has created complex electronic programs to archive and categorize the detainees' data, which the team collects and verifies; this enables us to catalogue the detainees according to gender, the location where each was arrested, the governorate from which each detainee originally came, and the party responsible for their arrest. These programs also enable us to cross-index cases and make comparisons between these parties, as well as identifying the governorates from which the largest proportion of residents have been arrested and disappeared.

¹ "Syrian Network for Human Rights Methodology", Syrian Network for Human Rights, <http://sn4hr.org/public_html/wp-content/pdf/english/SNHR_Methodology_en.pdf>



Given the importance and sensitivity surrounding the violation of arrest of Syrian citizens, the Syrian Network for Human Rights has since its establishment never stopped issuing daily news of arrest incidents, or publishing monthly reports documenting the arrests, enforced disappearances and releases that took place in the preceding month, in addition to issuing an annual report, as well as publishing dozens of other reports on different detention centers run by various parties to the conflict, and additional special reports concerning detainees. Also, the SNHR periodically submits special forms to the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, and the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture.

Most of the arrests in Syria are carried out without any judicial warrant while the victims are passing through regime checkpoints or during raids, with the security forces of the regime's four main intelligence services often responsible for extra-judicial detentions. Every detainee is tortured from the very first moment of his or her arrest and denied any opportunity to contact his or her family or to have access to a lawyer. The authorities also flatly deny the arbitrary arrests they have carried out and most of the detainees are subsequently forcibly disappeared.

The Syrian regime is responsible for no fewer than 89 percent of all the arbitrary arrests that we have documented, and is the first and most prominent of all the parties to the conflict in systematically perpetrating this violation. In most cases, victims' families are unable to accurately identify the body responsible for making the arrest, given the vast array of forces affiliated with the Syrian regime (Iranian militias, the Lebanese group Hezbollah, and others), in addition to the four main regime security agencies and their many branches, all of which are authorized to arrest and torture detainees, and to commit the crimes of enforced disappearance.

The issue of detainees and disappeared persons is one of the most crucial human rights issues in Syria which there has been no progress in resolving, despite its inclusion in several resolutions of the UN Security Council, as well as in UN General Assembly resolutions, in Kofi Annan's plan, and finally in the statement of cessation of hostilities issued in February 2016, which states that "all parties undertake to work for an early release of any arbitrary detained persons, particularly women and children", and in Security Council resolution 2254 of December 2015, article 12, which states that all detainees, especially women and children, must be released immediately. Despite all these resolutions and other official statements, no progress has been made on the issue of securing the release of detainees in any of the rounds of negotiations sponsored by international parties regarding the conflict in Syria.



In light of these considerations in regard to this particular issue, we therefore recommend:

- 1- Arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances, which are still ongoing, as detailed in this SNHR monthly report, must be ended immediately. The fates of all detainees must be revealed, and their families' right to visit them must also be ensured immediately.
- 2- All detainees imprisoned for merely exercising their political and civil rights must be released unconditionally. The use of women and children as prisoners of war must be stopped and they must all be released.
- 3- The independent international monitors of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, which was established by the UN, and the International Committee of the Red Cross must be granted access to all official and unofficial detention centers without establishing any prior arrangements or any restrictions or conditions.
- 4- A UN committee should be formed to monitor and periodically assess the release of the detainees according to a timetable that must be presented by all the detaining parties, primarily the Syrian regime forces that are responsible for 89 percent of all detentions.
- 5- All rulings issued by the regime's field military courts and terrorism courts should be suspended or repealed, since they are non-compliant with domestic and international legislation, as well as failing to provide guarantees of a fair trial.

Methodology

This report outlines the record of arbitrary arrests by the parties to the conflict documented in August. In addition, it records the most notable raids and arrests at checkpoints that resulted in deprivation of freedom, as well as shedding light on the most notable individual cases and incidents of arbitrary arrest that the SNHR's team documented in August, as well as categorizing cases and incidents of arrest according to the location of the incident.

According to the SNHR's database, we can categorize cases of arrest according to the governorate in which the incident occurred, and according to the governorate from which the detainee originally came. In this report and in most of our reports, we categorize the record of arrests according to the place where the arrest took place, not according to the governorate from which the detainee originally came. It should also be noted that sometimes we categorize the cases of arrest according to the governorate from which the detainee originally came in order to show the magnitude of loss and violence suffered by the people of that governorate compared to other governorates, in which case we refer to this in the report.



The report also documents arbitrary arrests that subsequently turned into enforced disappearances. A number of criteria must be met before SNHR will classify a case as an enforced disappearance: the individual must have been detained for at least 20 days without his or her family being able to obtain any information from the relevant authorities about their status or location, with those responsible for the disappearance denying any knowledge of the individual's arrest or whereabouts.

This report contains two accounts that we've collected through speaking directly with eye-witnesses, none of which are cited from any open sources. We used aliases to protect the privacy of witnesses and prevent them from being harassed or prosecuted. Witnesses received no material compensation or promises in exchange for interviews. We also explained the purpose of these interviews beforehand to the eyewitnesses, who gave us permission to use the information they provided to benefit the report objectives and documentation processes.

The SNHR team implements strict standards in evaluating and assessing any incident of arbitrary arrest in accordance with principles of the international laws and the aforementioned set of principles on arbitrary arrest.

The Detainee and Forcibly-Disappeared Department at SNHR records cases of arrest which departmental personnel collect from various sources, such as: victims' families, SNHR members in Syrian governorates, cooperating local activists, and former detainees, before diligently working to contact the families of the detainees and forcibly disappeared persons, as well as people close to them and people who survived detention, for the purpose of collecting as much information and data as possible, in light of the extraordinary and extremely complex challenges. We also record eyewitnesses' accounts and track cases of arrest to update these records regularly in order to determine the fate of a detainee, their place of detention, and the circumstances of their arrest. We have created on our website a special form to [document a detainee](#) to facilitate access and contact with victims' families.

The ongoing daily process of documenting detainees also comes with other additional challenges for SNHR, which has been documenting detainees' cases since 2011. One of the most notable challenges amongst these is the reluctance of victims' families to cooperate and reveal or provide details of any information on their family members' arrest, even confidentially, more especially if the arrested individual is female, due to a well-founded fear still prevalent in Syrian society that being discovered doing so would result in more torture and further danger for their loved ones and themselves. Instead, families try to negotiate with security forces which usually blackmail these families and demand cash payments, ef-



fectively ransoms, that can amount to thousands of dollars in some cases. Despite the fact that SNHR possesses lists detailing the cases of more than 144,000 detainees, including children and women, we can safely say that our estimate of the actual number of detainees exceeds 215,000.

The failure of the international community and of all the organs of the United Nations to apply pressure on the Syrian authorities to release even one individual (including those whose sentences are completed), even prisoners of conscience, has affirmed the conviction of many within Syrian society that it is useless to cooperate in the documentation process. Most of the releases achieved were part of exchange deals with the armed opposition. The detainee figures included in this report don't include prisoners with a criminal background, but do include cases of arrest that are based on the internal armed conflict, mainly due to opposition activity against the ruling authorities, as well as cases of detention to suppress freedom of opinion and expression.

II. August Outline

Syrian Regime forces in August continued with their campaigns of persecution and arrest, focusing primarily on civilians, former armed opposition fighters and their families in the areas that had signed settlement agreements with Syrian Regime forces. These arrests, which included women, children and elderly people, were concentrated in Douma city in Damascus Suburbs governorate, with Syrian regime forces launching widespread arrests targeting entire families in the city, some of whom we documented as having died due to torture in the Syrian regime detention centers in Damascus city.

Our monitoring also confirmed that Syrian Regime forces arrested some of the previously forcibly displaced civilians who had returned from north Syria to their hometowns as part of these settlement agreements. In addition, Syrian Regime forces in August arrested individuals who had returned from neighboring countries who should supposedly have been protected by the amnesty laws and reconciliation offers established by the Syrian regime. We issued [a special report](#) on this case.

Throughout the month of August, Syrian Regime forces continued to implement the regime's policy of pursuing civilian members of the families of activists involved in the popular uprising for democracy and of the families of fighters of factions of the Armed Opposition in areas under their control, with SNHR documenting the Syrian Regime forces carrying out systematic campaigns of raids and arrests that targeted entire families related to members of factions of the Armed Opposition. These arrests, which included women and children, were concentrated in the cities of Hama, Latakia, and Homs.



Syrian Regime forces also carried out raids and mass arrests targeting all segments of society aged between 18 and 42 years, with the aim of forced conscription and reserve military service in their forces.

In August, we recorded that Syrian Regime forces released 76 detainees from their detention centers between August 1 and August 31, most of whom had served their sentences.

Meanwhile, Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces continued enforcing the group's policies of arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance throughout the month of August, targeting political activists and members of civil society groups who oppose their ideological views. These arrests were concentrated in Raqqa governorate. Additionally, SNHR monitored in August Syrian Democratic Forces carrying out mass arrests against Arab civilians in Manbij city to the northeast of Aleppo governorate; SNHR documented many arrests carried out by members of Syrian Democratic Forces against women and children, torturing them along with their families and filming these crimes.

The arrests carried out by Syrian Democratic Forces targeted IDPs residing in areas under their control, mainly the residents of refugee camps, with the Syrian Democratic Forces making various allegations against these individuals, such as suspected kinship relationships between them and members of ISIS or members of Armed Opposition factions. We recorded several incidents in which the Syrian Democratic Forces arrested many members of the same family. In addition, Syrian Democratic Forces carried out widespread arrests with the aim of forced conscription in the areas under their control.

In addition to these incidents, August also saw the arrests of activists of civil society groups and media activists by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham. We monitored increased rates of arbitrary arrests carried out by HTS in areas under its control, focused on media activists, with most of these arrests occurred because of publications on social networking pages criticizing the HTS's loss of large geographical areas that were under its control to Syrian Regime forces and its allies. These arrests were carried out arbitrarily in the form of nighttime raids or kidnappings.

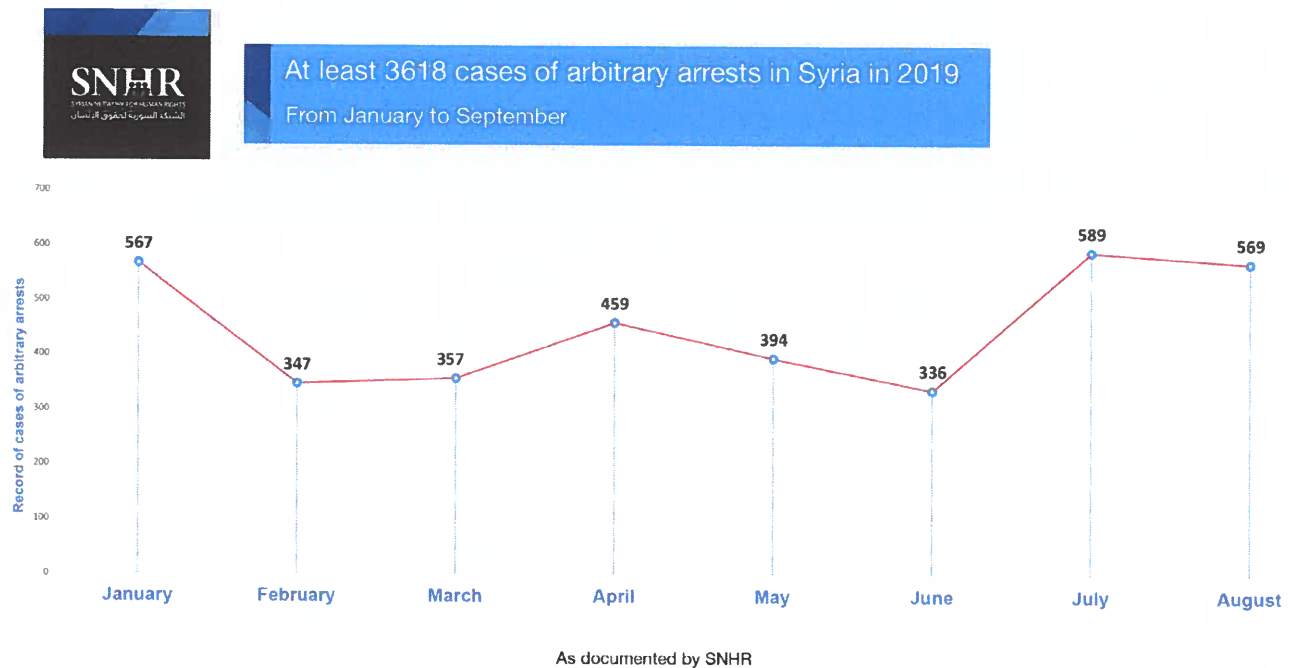
Factions of the Armed Opposition also continued making arrests in the territories under their control during August, which were concentrated in Aleppo governorate, particularly in the Afrin and al Bab areas. Most of these arrests occurred without judicial authorization and without the participation of the police force, which is the legitimate administrative authority responsible for arrests and detentions through the judiciary. Those responsible for these operations were specific factions who detained individuals without any clear charges. The aim of these arrests was to spread fear among the population in the areas under the influence of the faction controlling the area. We recorded several cases of arrests and kidnappings carried out in order to extort ransom money to secure the hostages' release.



III. Record of Cases of Arbitrary Arrests by the Parties to the Conflict

A. Record of cases of arbitrary arrests since the start of 2019:

SNHR documented 3,618 cases of arbitrary arrests at the hands of the main perpetrator parties in Syria since the start of 2019 up to September 2019, distributed as follows:



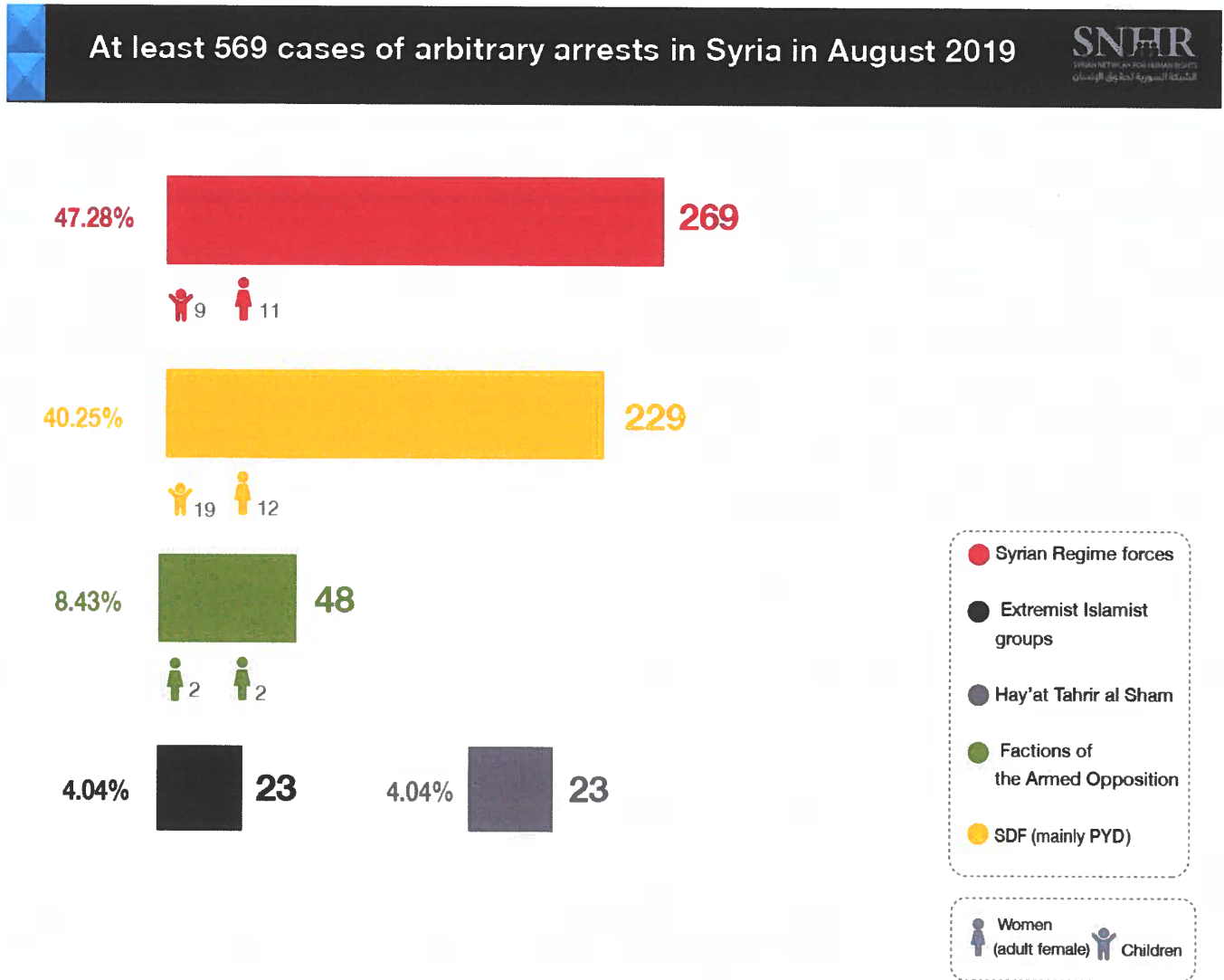
The chart above shows the increasing rates of cases of arbitrary arrests in the months of July and August. This was due to the widespread nature of the arrests and kidnappings carried out by Syrian Democratic Forces targeting Arab civilians in areas under SDF control, specifically in Manbej city in the northwestern suburbs of Aleppo governorate.

B. Record of cases of arbitrary arrests in August:

SNHR documented at least 569 cases of arbitrary arrests in August 2019, including 30 children and 25 women (adult female), at the hands of the main perpetrator parties to the conflict in Syria, including 362 which have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.



These arrests were distributed according to the main perpetrator parties responsible, as follows:



As documented by SNHR

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

269 individuals, including nine children, and 11 women. 186 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

B. Extremist Islamist groups:

Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (an alliance composed of Fateh al Sham Front and a number of factions of the Armed Opposition): 23 individuals, all males. 11 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

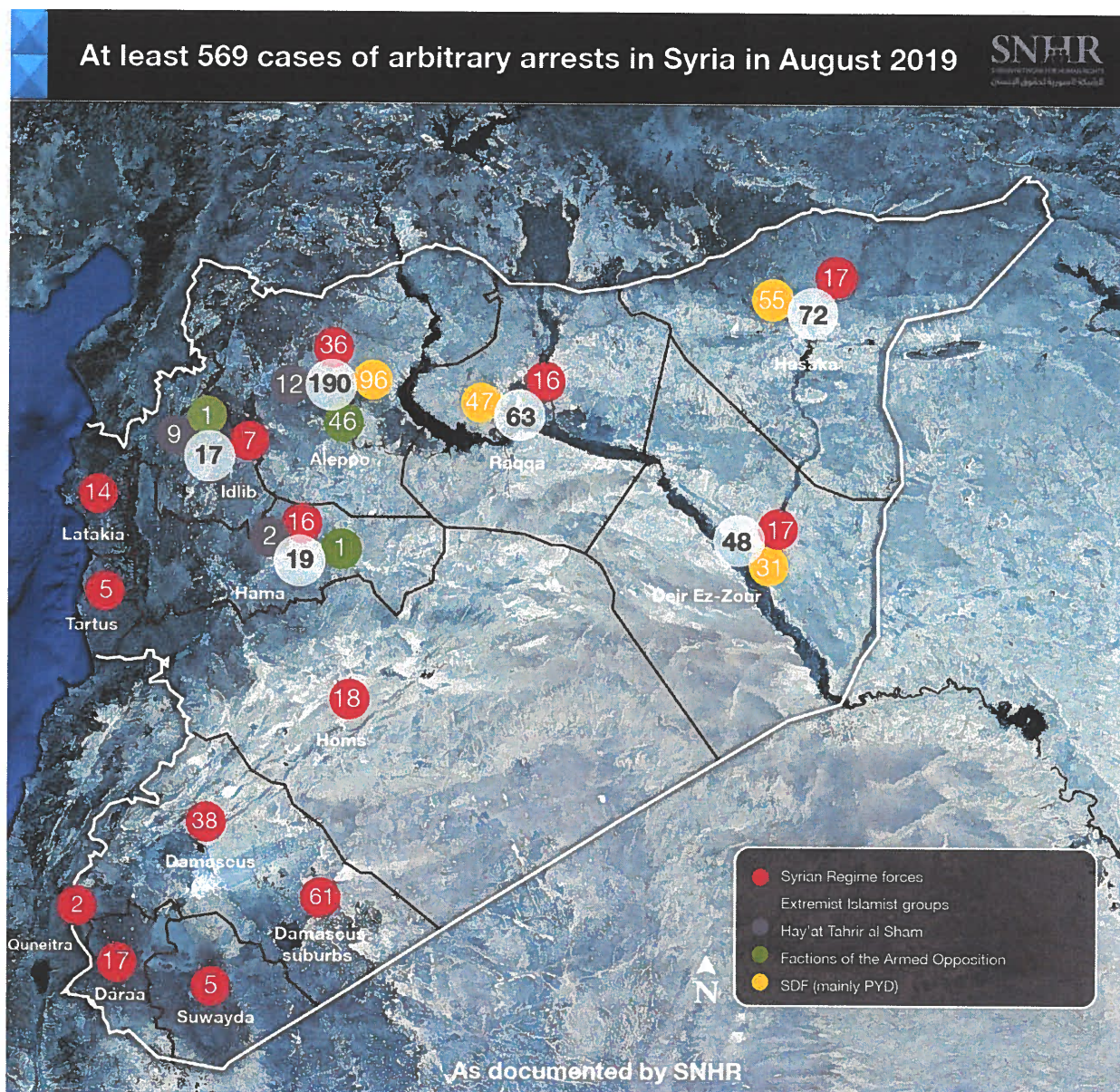
C. Factions of the Armed Opposition: 48 individuals, including two children and two women. 17 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.



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

229 individuals, including 19 children and 12 women. 148 of these have subsequently been categorized as cases of enforced disappearance.

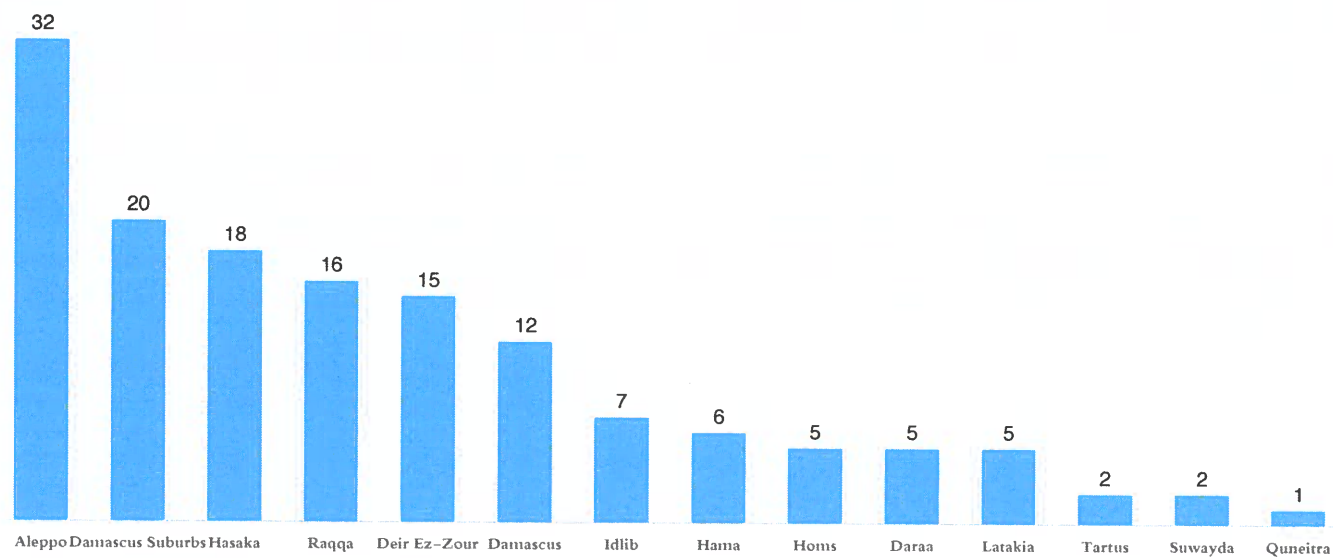
The following map shows the distribution of cases of arbitrary arrests documented in August across all the Syrian governorates by the main perpetrator parties:



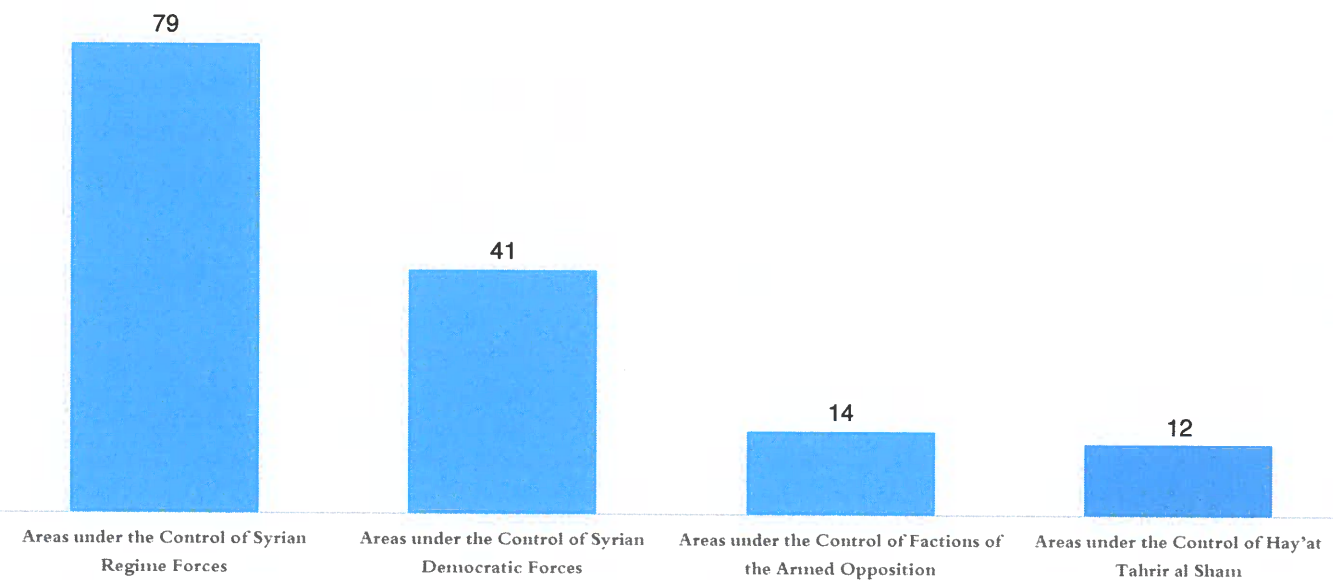
The map above shows that the highest rate of cases of arbitrary arrests was seen in Aleppo governorate due to its unique status compared to other Syrian governorates in having the largest number of the parties involved in the Syrian conflict present there, with control of various parts of the governorate being divided among Syrian Regime forces, Syrian Democratic Forces, factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham. We determined that at least 50 percent of these arrests were at the hands of Syrian Democratic Forces.



We also documented at least 146 raids and checkpoints in August, which resulted in deprivation of freedom. These were distributed across all governorates as follows:



Record of raids and checkpoints, distributed according to the responsible party as follows:



IV. Most Notable Cases and Incidents of Arbitrary Arrest in August:

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

- Most notable incidents:

On Monday, August 12, 2019, Syrian Regime forces arrested five civilians from Tseel town in northwestern Daraa governorate while they were passing through one of the regime's checkpoints in the town, taking them to an undisclosed location. Their fate remains unknown to the SNHR, as well as to their families.

On Thursday, August 15, 2019, Syrian Regime forces arrested 11 civilians from Raqqa city, while they were passing through one of the regime's checkpoints on the Salamiya-Hama road, taking them to Military Security branch in Hama city. Their fate remains unknown to the SNHR, as well as to their families.

- Most notable cases:

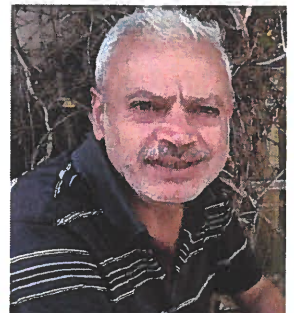
Faraj Mohammad Abo Zaid, from Dael city in the northern suburbs of Daraa governorate, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces on Monday, August 5, 2019, in Dael city. We note that he was among those who previously settled their security situation with Syrian Regime forces. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.

Kamal Saltali al Qaderi from the village of Um al Mayathen in eastern Daraa governorate, who formerly worked as the director of the Syrian Civil Defense' eastern section in Daraa governorate, was arrested by Syrian Regime forces on Thursday, August 17, 2019, at Damascus International Airport upon his return from the United Arab Emirates. We note that Kamal was among those who had previously settled their security situation with Syrian Regime forces. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.



Kamal Saltali al Qaderi

Rakan Tawfiq al Safadi, a Syrian poet and researcher, holds a PhD in Abbasid literature from Damascus University. Born in 1962, Rakan, from al Ghariya village in the southern suburbs of Suwayda governorate, is a university professor at al Qalamoun University in Deir Atteya town in Damascus Suburbs governorate. On Monday, August 26, 2019, Syrian Regime forces arrested him while he was passing through one of the regime's checkpoints at the entrance to Damascus. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.



Rakan Tawfiq al Safadi

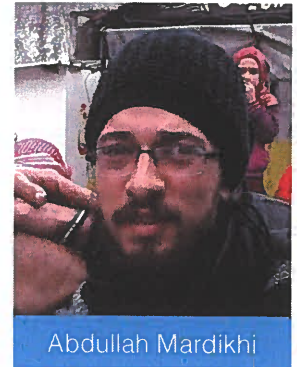


B. Extremist Islamist groups

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

Most notable cases

Abdullah Mardikhi from Idlib city, an activist in the popular uprising and an employee in the municipality of Idlib, was arrested by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham on Tuesday, August 27, 2019, in a raid on his home in Idlib city. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.



Fateh Ahmad Raslan and Mohammad Jamal Daboul, two media workers for Step News Agency, were arrested on Friday, August 23, 2019, by gunmen of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham in Idlib city and taken to a Hay'at Tahrir al Sham detention centre in the city, before Mohammad was released on Thursday, August 29, 2019.

Fateh Ahmad Raslan, born in 1994, is a reporter at Step News Agency and a cameraman with al Ameen humanitarian support organization, from al Sha'ar neighborhood in Aleppo city.

Mohammad Jamal Daboul, born in 1995, is a cameraman at Step News Agency, from Idlib city.



The SNHR contacted one of the activists close to activists Mohammad Daboul and Fateh Raslan², who told us that Hay'at Tahrir al Sham gunmen arrested Mohammad and Fateh in Idlib city and confiscated their equipment. He added: **"HTS learned that Mohammad and Fateh were working for Step News Agency because of a money transfer from the agency to them which the HTS had learned of. They were working with the agency secretly because the agency's work contradicts HTS policy. The gunmen took them to an undisclosed location, and after painstaking attempts and contact with a number of HTS leaders, we found that Mohammad and Fateh were in the HTS political branch in Idlib city, and are still at the moment of this talk detained, with no information on their fate, except promises of releasing them."**

We note that subsequent to this conversation, Mohammad Daboul was released on Thursday, August 29, 2019, while Ahmad is still in detention.

C. Factions of the Armed Opposition

- Most notable incidents:

Gunmen from al Hamza Brigade – a faction of the Armed Opposition - arrested three civilians, including an elderly person, on Friday, August 9, 2019, in their home village of al Sheikh Bilal, which is administratively a part of Rajo town in Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, and took them to an undisclosed location. Their fate remains unknown to the SNHR, as well as to their families.

On Saturday, August 17, 2019, gunmen belonging to factions of the Armed Opposition affiliated with the Olive Branch's operation room arrested three civilians, including a 12-year-old girl, all of whom from Neirab camp in Aleppo city, as they passed through one of the opposition checkpoints in Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate on their way to the Syrian-Turkish border, and took them to an undisclosed location. Their fate remains unknown to the SNHR, as well as to their families.

On Wednesday, August 21, 2019, gunmen belonging to factions of the Armed Opposition affiliated with the Olive Branch's operation room arrested five civilians from one family, all of whom came from Koliko village in the Ma'batli district, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, in a raid on their place of residence in the village, and took them to an undisclosed location. Their fate remains unknown to the SNHR, as well as to their family.

² Via Facebook on August 24, 2019



- Most notable cases:

Mohammad Ahmad Khader, from al Basouta village in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, a member of the local council of al Basouta village, was arrested by gunmen belonging to factions of the Armed Opposition affiliated with the Olive Branch's operation room on Wednesday, August 21, 2019, in Afrin city the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, and taken to an undisclosed location. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR, as well as to his family.



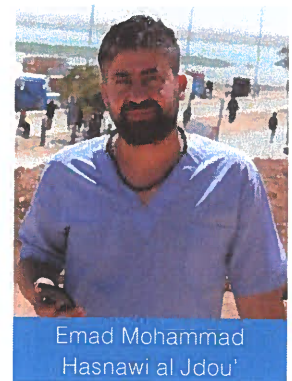
D. Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic forces

- Most notable incidents:

On Thursday, August 22, 2019, Syrian Democratic Forces arrested two civilians, including one child, from Mushrefat al Izzo village, which is administratively a part of Tal Abyad area in the northern suburbs of Raqqqa, while they were passing through one of the SDF checkpoints in the village, and took them to an undisclosed location.

- Most notable cases:

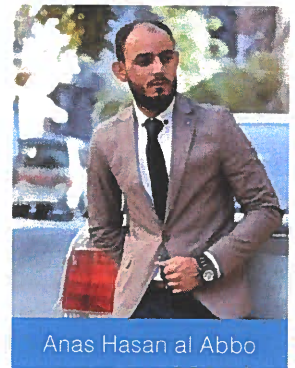
Dr. Emad Mohammad Hasnawi al Jdou' from Tal Barrak town which is administratively a part of al Qameshli city in the suburbs of Hasaka governorate, a doctor working as a pediatrics specialist at the National Hospital in al Qameshli city, was arrested by Syrian Democratic forces on Wednesday, August 7, 2019, while he was passing through an SDF checkpoint near Marshou circle in the middle of Hasaka city, before being released on Saturday, August 10, 2019.



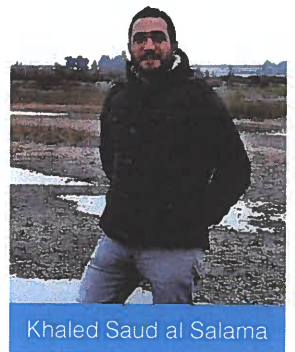
Salah al Din al Abd al Katea, the director of the media office and board member of the Future Makers Team, from al Nahda neighborhood in Raqqqa city, was born in 1985. Syrian Democratic forces arrested him on Saturday, August 10, 2019, in the Greek House Restaurant near al Jisr al Qadim area in Raqqqa city. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.



Anas Hasan al Abbo, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer at the Future Makers Team working in the field of developmental services and service projects, was born in 1993, and resides in Kasret Afnan village in the southern suburbs of Raqqa governorate. Syrian Democratic forces arrested him on Saturday, August 10, 2019, in the Greek House Restaurant near al Jisr al Qadim area in Raqqa city. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.

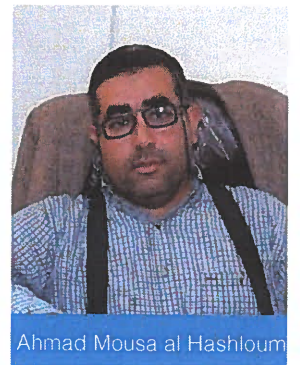


Khaled Saud al Salama , director of traffic safety project with the Future Makers Team, from al Nahda neighborhood in Raqqa city, was born in 1992. Syrian Democratic forces arrested him on Saturday, August 10, 2019, in the Greek House Restaurant near al Jisr al Qadim area in Raqqa city. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.



Owda al Hammad, aged 60, from al Twaina village in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, was arrested on Sunday, August 11, 2019, by Syrian Democratic forces in a raid on his house in al Twaina village. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.

Ahmad Mousa al Hashloun, chairman of the board of directors of the ENMAA Organization, from Raqqa city, was born in 1985. He was arrested on Saturday, August 17, 2019, by Syrian Democratic Forces in a raid on his office in Raqqa city. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR.



The SNHR contacted Thaer³, a friend of Ahmad al Hashloun, who told us: **“At 16:45 on Saturday, three white military van vehicles belonging to the SDF stopped in front of the headquarters building of the ENMAA Organization in Raqqa city. Three elements got out of the cars, two of whom were in civilian clothes and one in military uniform of the Syrian Democratic Forces. One of them asked an employee standing at the door of the organization to call on Ahmad al Hashloun, then they arrested Ahmad and his colleagues and put them in a car, whose driver was masked.”** Thaer added that the members didn't show the people there any arrest warrants and did not give any answer to those who witnessed the incident when they asked about the reason for the arrest or their destination. He added: **“The day after the arrest, a number of Ahmad's relatives visited the SDF's General Security headquarters to inquire about Ahmad's condition, the charge against him and the place of his arrest. They have not received an answer to this day.”**

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

- The SNHR believes that the Syrian regime has not fulfilled any of its obligations under any of the international treaties and conventions which it has ratified. We refer specifically to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It also violated several articles of the Syrian Constitution itself, with thousands of detainees detained without any arrest warrant and held for many years, without charges, and prevented from appointing a lawyer and from receiving family visits. 65.08 percent of all detentions documented have subsequently been categorized as enforced disappearance cases, with detainees' families being denied any information on their loved ones' whereabouts, while anyone making enquiries about the detainees faces the risk of being arrested themselves for doing so.
- Hay'at Tahrir al Sham imposes absolute authority over the large areas it controls and the residents there. The group which has a political entity, and has developed a highly hierarchical structure, is therefore obliged to implement the provisions of international human rights law. Hay'at Tahrir al Sham has committed widespread violations through arrests and enforced disappearances.
- Factions of the Armed Opposition have carried out arrests and torture against a number of residents in areas under their control.

³ Via his personal account on Facebook on August 24, 2019



- Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic forces have violated many basic rights and practiced numerous violations such as torture and enforced disappearance. They also have a political entity with a largely hierarchical structure and are, therefore, also obliged to apply the provisions of international human rights law.

Recommendations

Security Council

- Monitor the implementation of Resolution 2042, adopted on April 14, 2012, Resolution 2043, adopted on April 21, 2012, and Resolution 2139, adopted on February 22, 2014, all of which demand the immediate cessation of the crime of enforced disappearance.

Human Rights Council

- Follow up on the issue of detainees and forcibly disappeared persons in Syria and highlight this issue in all annual meetings.
- Cooperate and coordinate with all active local human rights groups in Syria.

Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI)

Launch investigations into the cases included in this report and previous reports. SNHR is willing to cooperate and provide more evidence and data.

International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism (IIIM)

Address the cases mentioned in this report and past reports. SNHR is willing to cooperate and provide more evidence and data.

United Nations and the guarantors of the Astana talks

- An impartial special committee should be formed to monitor cases of enforced disappearance, and to make progress in revealing the fate of the nearly 98,000 documented missing persons in Syria, approximately 85 percent of whom are detained by the Syrian regime.
- Immediately begin applying pressure on all parties to ensure that they immediately reveal their detention records according to a timetable. In the meantime, detention places should be revealed immediately, and humanitarian organizations and the International Committee of the Red Cross should be allowed to visit them directly.
- Ensure the release of children and women, and the end to the practice of holding families and friends as war hostages.

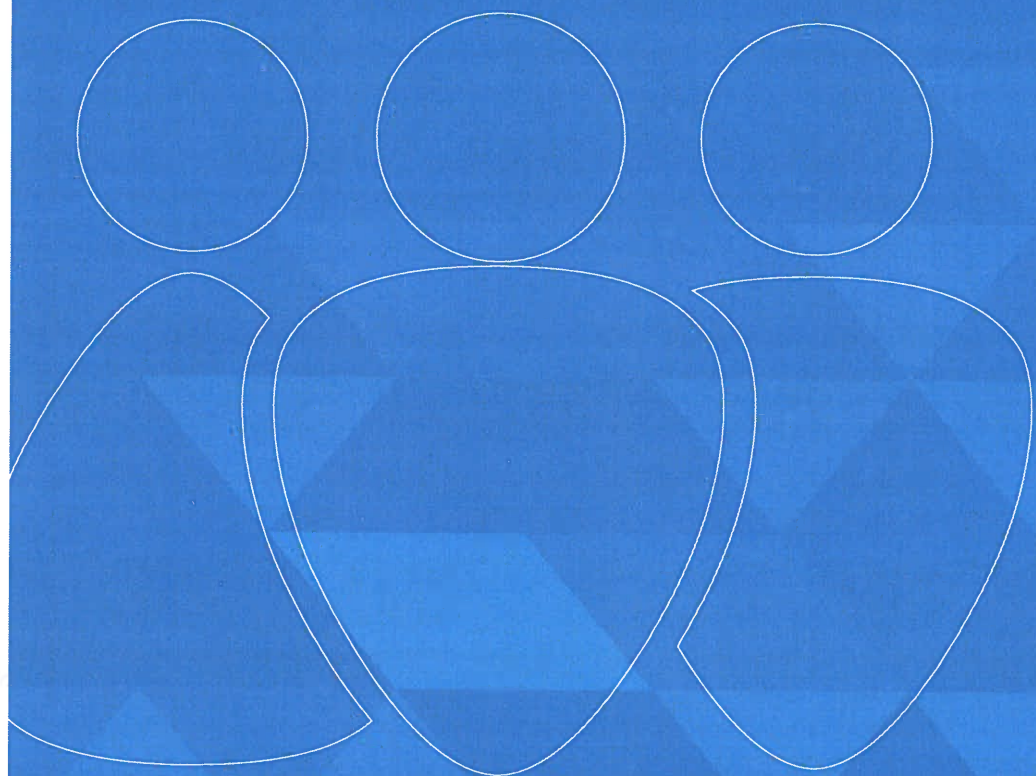


- We call on the official recently appointed to take charge of the detainee file at the UN special envoy's office to include the issue of the detainees during the upcoming round of Geneva talks, as this issue is of far greater importance to the Syrian people than other longer-term issues which can be jointly addressed later by the parties after a political settlement is reached, such as the constitution.

Acknowledgments

Our sincere thanks to the relatives and families of the victims, their friends, eyewitnesses and local activists who have contributed effectively to the collection and verification of data.





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