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Syrian Human Rights Committee (SHRC)

THE 20TH ANNUAL REPORT

On Human Rights in Syria 2021

January 2021 - December 2021

January 2022

www.SHRC.ORG

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Introduction

2021 witnessed the 10th anniversary of the popular uprising in Syria, which was faced with absolute violence by the regime from the very first day. Throughout these years, the regime used all the different types of weaponry against the Syrian people, from white weapons to forbidden weapons including all the different types of heavy weaponry accompanied by violent state security apparatus such as enforced disappearances, detention, torture, rape, siege and displacement.

The last 10 years of violence has led to the emergence of a new Syria that is different to the one it was prior to 2011, where the centralised state system has fragmented into various different parts of government each under a different form of foreign control. Approximately half of the Syrian population have been forced to leave their homes with no sight of return, and millions of Syrian children have had to leave education due partly to the destruction of approximately a third of the schools in Syria. An estimated 40% of hospitals have also been destroyed, and this is in addition to profound changes in the political, economic and social infrastructure of the country.

The current effects of the past decade of blood carry serious implications for the future of the country, particularly if the international disregard for the crisis continues as it is and which is rooted ultimately in the continued presence of the totalitarian regime in Damascus. As it stands, the international community appears to be leaning increasingly towards dealing with the Assad regime as fait accompli, with an increasing disregard for holding the perpetrators accountable as the international community's will to deal with the accountability is inherently non-existent.

On the other hand, 2021 has witnessed an increase in trials of war criminals in Syria, which were primarily centered in Germany, as the trials are mostly concerned with Syrians who have moved to Germany over the past few years. Though the trials are of individuals, the implication is that the prosecuted is the regime as most of the perpetrators are punished according to the actions they committed whilst operating within the regime structure.

The Assad regime held presidential elections during the year, making it the second presidential elections they held within the past decade, the first being in 2014. The elections took place in a farcical manner, as several unknown figures were nominated for decorative measure only for the president of the Assad regime to win a fourth term, with 95.1% of the votes this time.

The regime's manner in conducting the elections in such a farcical manner demonstrates blatantly their refusal to make any changes to their way of governance. The security branch in the country, and which is the backbone of

the regime, sees that any changes made to the way of governance even if in a cosmetic manner, will lead to the collapse of the regime as it is propped up on fear and terrorism, and thus cannot possibly tolerate the flexibility of cosmetic political manoeuvres.

Despite the diplomatic blockade imposed upon the regime since 2011, they still enjoyed legal legitimacy as per the international community which allowed them the weapons to face Syrian civilians and control them through the violence of the weapons. Of the most prominent manifestations of the regime's weaponisation of their legal legitimacy is their control over official documents, which has become akin to a sword wielded over Syrians whether in security or financial terms. The regime has turned the passport into a main source of income as acquiring one costs \$800, rendering it the most expensive passport in the world.

This year has further witnessed the attempted normalisation of various Arab governments with the Assad regime, the most prominent being the visit of the Emirati Foreign Minister to Damascus as well as a call from the Jordanian Monarch to the head of the Assad regime. This is in addition to calls from the Algerian president to end the sanctions of the Arab League on the Syrian regime, in order to invite the regime to the 2022 Algiers Summit.

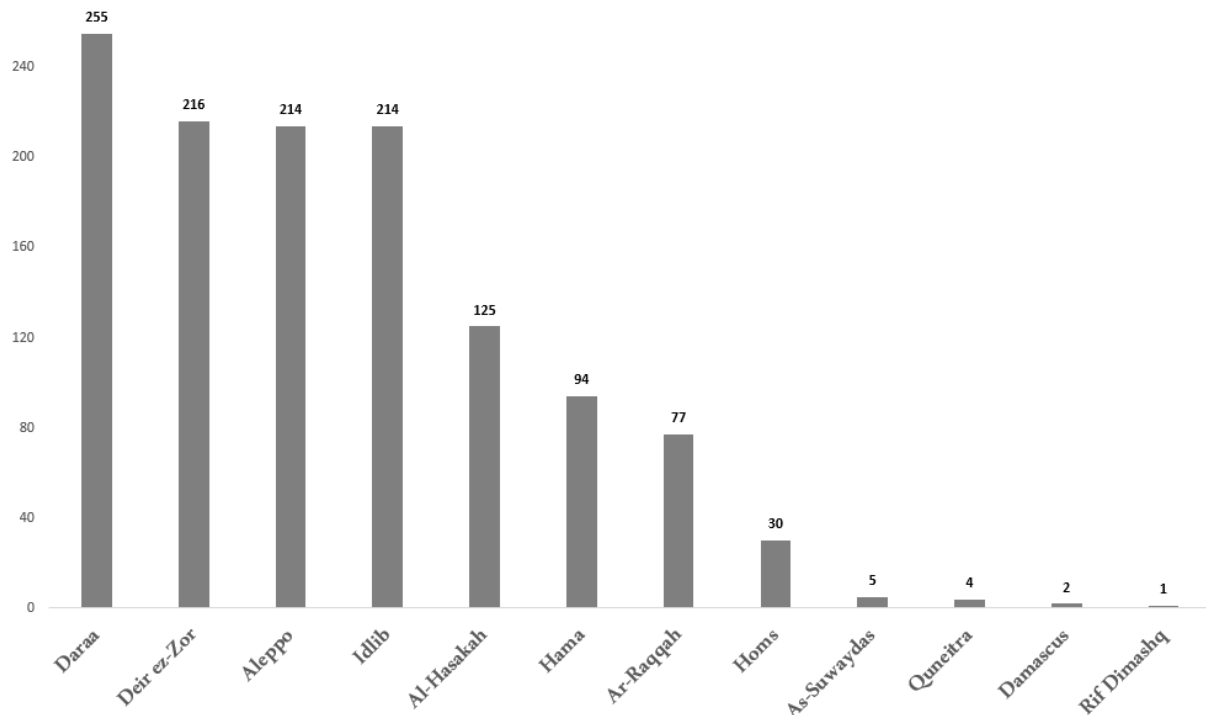
The attempt of various Arab governments to open communication channels with the Assad regime, and their quest to end the diplomatic isolation, comes at the expense of the nations as the governments seek to extend a lifeline to a regime that bathed in its peoples blood and exported crises to every part of the region. This normalisation represents complete apathy towards the war crimes committed by the regime over the past 10 years.

As it issues its 20th annual report on the human rights situation in Syria, the Syrian Human Rights Committee calls for dedicating the work of all Syrians and free people across the world to follow up the documentations of the violations committed by the Assad regime, and take advantage of all international and national accountability tools and mechanisms, and ultimately work towards preserving the memory of violations for future accountability references.

The Syrian Human Rights Committee

Genocide

The Syrian Human Rights Committee (SHRC) documented the deaths of 1237 people in 2021, in comparison to the 1750 deaths documented in 2020. The governorate of Daraa exceeds the other governorates in the number of victims this year, with (255) people, followed by Deir ez-Zor governorate with (216) people, then Aleppo and Idlib governorates with (214) people each.



The decrease in casualty numbers in comparison to previous years is due to the cessation of hostilities in most regions within Syria throughout the year; as direct clashes were limited to the attempts made by the regime's Fourth Division and Iranian forces in storming certain areas within the province of Daraa during August. This is in addition to indiscriminate shelling on areas adjacent to the borders of Idlib governorate, which lie between regime controlled areas and non-regime controlled areas.

With the gradual decline in the number of casualties in Syria over the past years, the direct responsibility on the perpetrators has also declined. As it stands this, the Assad regime and their foreign allies are responsible for 453 documented deaths this year, making the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) responsible for 68 deaths, ISIS for 34 deaths, the various opposition factions alongside Tahrir al-Sham being responsible for 28 deaths, in addition to the International Coalition being responsible for 7 deaths and Turkish forces being responsible for 4 deaths. As such, all known

perpetrators were documented as responsible for the deaths of 48% of the victims, whilst those responsible for the remainder of the victims killed by explosions, landmines and assassinations, remain formally unknown and unclaimed.

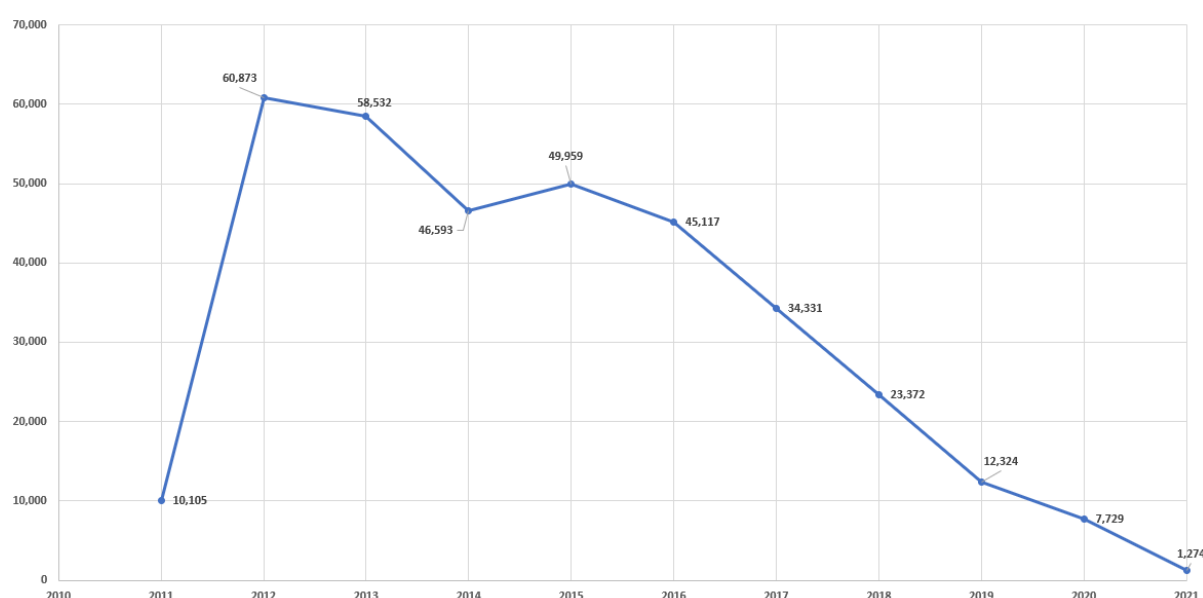
On 25th September, the United Nations Human Rights Council issued its first report since 2014, stating that the number of victims in Syria since 2011 is approximately 350,209. In actuality, this number does not represent the reality on ground but rather the minimum number that could be verified by UN and member agencies mechanisms.

According to the report, the governorate of Aleppo has the highest number of victims over the past decade with a documented 51,731 deaths. This was followed by the governorate of Rif Damascus wherein the report stated 47,483 deaths, followed then by the governorate of Homs with 40,986 deaths, Idlib governorate with 33,371 deaths and Hama governorate with 31,993 deaths.

All the known perpetrators are responsible for 40% of the documented deaths, whilst the actors responsible for the remaining victims' deaths this year remain unknown, and who were killed due to explosions, landmines and assassinations.

The penultimate report was issued in August 2014, documenting 191,369 deaths.

Number of victims in Syria according to United Nations documentation, 2011-2021



Explosions

The Syrian Human Rights Committee (SHRC) documented 81 explosions this year, in comparison with the documented 100 explosions in 2020. Similar to the previous year, most explosions in 2021 took place in Aleppo suburbs under the control of the National Army who are in opposition to the Assad regime. Aleppo's suburbs witnessed 75% of the explosions whilst 10% of them took place in Idlib, and the remaining explosions took place across regions either under regime control or under SDF control.

The explosions were concentrated primarily in three areas within Aleppo's suburbs, namely Afrin where 16 explosions take place, followed by Jarablus where 15 explosions took place and al-Bab where 14 explosions took place. The significant increase in explosions happening in places under the control of the National Army imply a systematic targeting of this specific area. The Syrian regime, their allies and the SDF have an immediate interest in destabilising the security in areas controlled by the National Army, which are under the direct supervision of the Turkish state, and it is believed that they both are primarily responsible for the explosions which have taken place there.

The explosions were concentrated in Aleppo's suburbs under the opposition's National Army control, where 75% of explosive attacks took place.

Several factors contribute to the facilitating of the explosions by the aforementioned parties, the most prominent are:

- The armed faction's control over the security file through their neutralisation of the existing security services, such as the police force and national security services, and their refusal to cooperate with each other, or rather their work in opposition, and targeting each other.
- Negligence and or corruption. Data shows that during this year and the past few years, members within factions have facilitated the entry of cars and trucks from SDF-controlled areas without inspection in return for bribes. No disciplinary measures were taken against those involved in these actions.
- Lack of skills and technological capacities amongst those in charge of security operations in these areas, as primitive methods are carried out for inspections, where even trained dogs are unavailable.

Assassinations

The Syrian Human Rights Committee has documented 376 of assassinations in 2021, in comparison to the 348 assassinations in 2020, 337 assassinations in 2019 and 84 assassinations in 2018.

The gradual rise in the number of assassinations in the last four years is a clear indicator of the transformation Syria has witnessed, from direct targeting through hostilities to indirect targets of which no party claims responsibility for.

Whilst it is not possible to confirm the parties behind the assassinations as only individuals who perpetrated some of the past assassinations have been arrested, by assessing the contexts SHRC identifies five potential parties who stand behind these operations, namely:

The gradual rise in the number of assassinations is a clear indicator of the transformation Syria has witnessed, from direct targeting to indirect targets of which no party claims responsibility for.

1. Regime security agencies, who have a direct interest in targeting opposition figures including those who carried out reconciliation agreements with the regime. Regime security agencies understand that tolerating opponents, even those who they have settled agreements with, could weaken their grip over the security of the country and subsequently ruin their constructed image in front of the public – whom they rule over with an iron fist. As such, a number of assassinations this year targeted people who had worked with the regime on certain files, and perhaps it is in the interest of regime agencies to get rid of them after their roles were over, as in the case of reconciliation brokers.
2. Armed factions, as most assassinations take place in the areas controlled by the National Army and Tahrir al-Sham. A possibility is that some assassinations are perpetrated by them as a means to settle scores, either within the same faction or between the different factions.
3. Extremist organisations, such as ISIS and Hurras al-Din among others as various investigations have revealed that these organisations have been involved in multiple assassinations. It is in the interest of extremist groups to destabilise the security and stability of the region in general, as it allows them a wider margin for movement. The groups also have an interest in targeting their opponents or those who were once allied with them and have since changed their positions.

4. Criminals, the exceptional security situation in Syria in general, and in particular the northern region, has led to a significant rise in crime rates. As such, it is believed that a large number of the assassinations are linked to criminal motives as many of those assassinated are not necessarily active in public affairs in the first place.
5. Other actors, it is believed that some of the assassinations have been carried out by those loyal to the Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD), and others may be carried out by foreign intelligence services.

Targeting Markets and Commercial & Industrial Centres

The targeting of public markets, commercial and industrial areas continued, albeit at a lower rate compared to previous years. SHRC documented 20 attacks on marketplaces and commercial areas, in contrast to the 31 attacks documented in 2020, and 40 attacks documented in 2019.

It is worth noting that most of the attacks that were documented this year were perpetrated by unknown actors, whether as car or bicycle explosions or IEDs, whilst the majority of targeted attacks that occurred in previous years was by direct bombing of Russian warplanes or artillery by regime forces and Russian forces.

Most attacks on marketplaces in 2021 were perpetrated by unknown actors

Landmines

The Syrian Human Rights Committee documented 169 people killed by landmines in 2021.

Last November, the International Landmine Monitor issued its report for 2020, in which it stated that Syria topped the world in landmine victims, reaching 2729 deaths by landmines, followed by Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Colombia and then Iraq. According to the International Landmine Monitor, the documented number of victims in Syria is the highest recorded number for any country in the world in one single year, since they first began documenting landmine victims in 1999.

Documented Massacres 2021

Date	Incident	Vic-tims	Area	Prov-ince	Actor	Weapon
01/01/2021	Rocket Launcher Shelling	11	Sarmin	Idlib	Regime Forces	Rocket Launcher
30/01/2021	Car explosion downtown	8	Afrin	Aleppo	Unidentified	car bomb
31/01/2021	Car explosion downtown	6	Azaz	Aleppo	Unidentified	car bomb
25/02/2021	Car explosion in poultry market	5	Ras Al-Ain	Hasakah	Unidentified	car bomb
27/02/2021	A landmine exploded under a car with women collecting truffles	5	Rasm Al-Ahmer	Hama	Unidentified	Landmine
07/03/2021	A landmine exploded under a car with civilians collecting truffles	18	Wadi Al-Adheib	Hama	Unidentified	Landmine
21/03/2021	Artillery shelling on Atareb hospital	5	Atareb	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
07/04/2021	Guided rocket on civilian vehicle	7	Alnajiyyah	Aleppo	Regime forces	Artillery shells
01/06/2021	Shooting fire at civilians gathering	5	Manbej	Aleppo	SDF	Gunshots
10/06/2021	Artillery shelling with a laser-guided missile on a house in the centre of the village, and after the citizens gathered to res-	11	Ablin	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells

Date	Incident	Vic-tims	Area	Prov-ince	Actor	Weapon
	cue the in-jured, the place was subjected to a similar bombard-ment.					
12/06/2021	Artillery shelling on Al-Shifa Hos-pital located in Al-Filat Street down-town	18	Afrin	Aleppo	SDF	Artillery shells
21/06/2021	Artillery shelling	5	Ehsim	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
03/07/2021	Artillery shelling with a laser-guided mis-sile on a house west of the village	5	Ablin	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
15/07/2021	Artillery shelling with a laser-guided mis-sile on a stone-cutting workshop on the outskirts of the town	6	Al Fu'ah	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
17/07/2021	Artillery shelling with a laser-guided shell on a house southeast of the village	7	Sarjah	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
17/07/2021	Artillery shelling on a house north of the town	8	Ehsim	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
22/07/2021	Artillery shelling on a house south of the village	7	Ablin	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells

Date	Incident	Vic-tims	Area	Prov-ince	Actor	Weapon
29/07/2021	Missile bomb- ing, the vic- tims are from the same family	5	Al Yadu- dah	Daraa	Regime forces	Rocket launchers
19/08/2021	Artillery shelling	5	Mashoon	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
26/09/2021	Shelling by warplanes, and the vic- tims of the displaced people of Rif Dimashq	6	Barad	Aleppo	Russian air- force	Arial mis- siles
11/10/2021	Car explosion between Kawa rounda- bout and al- Qabban roundabout at the en- trance of the wholesale market down- town	8	Afrin	Aleppo	Unidentified	car bomb
20/10/2021	Artillery shelling on densely pop- ulated areas	12	Ariha	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
03/11/2021	Explosion of landmine at Al-Dowa area near Palmyra	7 of one family	Al-Dowa	Homs	Unidentified	Landmine
11/11/2021	Shelling on an area, north the city	5 of one family	Idlib	Idlib	Russian air- force	Arial mis- siles

Documented Explosions in 2021

Date	Explosion	Damage	Area	Governorate	Weapon
02/01/2021	An explosion by a gre- nade thrown by a member of the Na- tional Defence Forces of the regime forces downtown.	2 victims	Hasakah	Hasakah	Hand gre- nade

Date	Explosion	Damage	Area	Governorate	Weapon
02/01/2021	Explosion in a residential neighbourhood	2 victims	Jindires	Aleppo	Car bomb
03/01/2021	Explosion downtown	2 girls killed	Ras Al-Ain	Hasakah	Car bomb
12/01/2021	A bomb planted in a car exploded at the western entrance to the city	Medium material damage	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
16/01/2021	An explosive device planted in a parked car exploded on Al-Thalathen Street in Idlib city	Medium material damage	Idlib	Idlib	Explosive device
17/01/2021	A bomb planted in a car selling bread exploded in the main green market downtown	2 victims	Sujjo	Aleppo	Explosive device
18/01/2021	An explosion near a weapons store on Al-Jalaa Street downtown	2 victims	Idlib	Idlib	Explosive device
22/01/2021	Two explosions in a residential area	4 injured	Jasem	Daraa	Explosive device
25/01/2021	Explosion in a residential area	1 victim	Jasem	Daraa	Explosive device
26/01/2021	An explosion near the municipal roundabout area downtown	3 victims	Tell Abiad	Ar Raqqa	Motorcycle bomb
27/01/2021	Explosion in a residential area	2 victims	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
31/01/2021	Explosion in a residential area	6 victims	Um Shkaif	Aleppo	Explosive device
02/02/2021	Explosion in an industrial area in the village	2 victims	Ulan	Aleppo	Car bomb
14/02/2021	Explosion in a residential area	2 injured	Jindires	Aleppo	Car bomb
17/02/2021	Explosion in Al-Mahmoudiyah Neighbourhood	2 injured	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
20/02/2021	Explosion in a popular market downtown	2 victims	Al Busayrah	Deir ez-Zor	Explosive device

Date	Explosion	Damage	Area	Governorate	Weapon
24/02/2021	Explosion in city centre	2 injured	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
10/03/2021	Explosion in a residential area	Medium material damage	Al Bab	Aleppo	Car bomb
15/03/2021	Explosion of a bomb planted in a car	1 victim	Baksariya	Idlib	Explosive device
16/03/2021	Explosion on the outskirts of the city	minor material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	Car bomb
17/03/2021	Explosion of a bomb planted in a car	Medium material damage	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
20/03/2021	Explosion in a residential area	2 victims	Al Bab	Aleppo	Car bomb
21/03/2021	Explosion of a bomb planted in a car	1 injured	Deir Semaan	Aleppo	Car bomb
30/03/2021	An Explosion of a bomb planted in a car in Al-Mahmoudiyah Neighbourhood	minor material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
01/04/2021	Explosion of a bomb planted in a car on As-siyasah St	1 injured	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
12/04/2021	Explosion of a bomb planted in a car in town	minor material damages	Kafraya	Idlib	Explosive device
12/04/2021	Explosion of a bomb planted in a car on the outskirts of the city	Medium material damage	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
14/04/2021	Explosion of a bomb planted in a car in the city	Medium material damage	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
15/04/2021	A bomb planted in a delivery vehicle loaded with goods exploded downtown	Medium material damage	Al Bab	Aleppo	Explosive device
15/04/2021	An explosion on the eastern corniche road	minor material damages	Idlib	Idlib	Explosive device

Date	Explosion	Damage	Area	Governorate	Weapon
20/04/2021	An explosion in an area under the control of the regime forces	1 victim	Inkhil	Daraa	Explosive device
23/04/2021	An explosion in an area under the control of the regime forces	2 victims	Al-Susah	Al-Qunaitra	Explosive device
27/04/2021	An Explosion of a bomb planted in a car	1 victim	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
27/04/2021	An Explosion of a bomb planted in a car	20 injured	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
02/05/2021	An explosion in the industrial Market	1 victim & 13 injured	Tell Abiad	Ar Raqqa	Motorcycle bomb
05/05/2021	An Explosion of a bomb planted in a car in Al-Mahmoudiyah Neighbourhood	5 injured	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
11/05/2021	An explosion in a building located near civilian homes and the Equestrian Club and Al-Yaman camps for the displaced south of the town	Lady killed	Kafraya	Idlib	Unidentified
19/05/2021	An Explosion of a bomb planted in a car	Medium material damage	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
22/05/2021	A bomb exploded near a taxi in an area under the control of the regime forces	1 Victim	Jillen	Daraa	Explosive device
24/05/2021	An Explosion near the Sharia secondary school	3 victims	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Motorcycle bomb
26/05/2021	An explosive device exploded in a car in the middle of the main market in the city	1 Victim	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
31/05/2021	An explosive device exploded in a car near Al-Kitab roundabout downtown	minor material damages	Al Bab	Aleppo	Explosive device

Date	Explosion	Damage	Area	Governorate	Weapon
01/06/2021	An Explosion targeted a car	1 Victim	Al-Humur	Hasakah	Motorcycle bomb
02/06/2021	An explosive device exploded in a car	2 children injured	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
05/06/2021	Two explosive devices went off in a car	minor material damages	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
07/06/2021	A suicide bomber blew himself up with an explosive belt in the middle of the town's market	1 victim & 8 injured	Al-Rai	Aleppo	Suicide bomber
08/06/2021	An Explosion of a bomb planted in a car in Al-Mahmoudiyah Neighbourhood	minor material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
14/06/2021	An Explosion of a bomb planted in a car	1 injured	Al Bab	Aleppo	Explosive device
14/06/2021	An Explosion at the entrance of the village	2 victims	Kafr janneh	Aleppo	Car bomb
26/06/2021	An explosive device exploded in a car north of the city	3 victims	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
27/06/2021	An explosive device exploded in a car	1 Victim	Al Bab	Aleppo	Explosive device
14/07/2021	An explosive device exploded in a motorcycle downtown	2 injured	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
17/07/2021	An explosive device exploded in a car	2 injured	Al Bab	Aleppo	Explosive device
18/07/2021	An explosive device planted in a car exploded on Villas Street	1 injured	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
09/08/2021	An explosive device planted inside a car exploded, next to the Fatima Al-Zahra Mosque	minor material damages	Al Bab	Aleppo	Explosive device
10/08/2021	An explosive device exploded on the Corniche Road	minor material damages	Idlib	Idlib	Explosive device

Date	Explosion	Damage	Area	Governorate	Weapon
15/08/2021	An explosive device exploded in a garbage container on the Azaz-Afrin road	minor material damages	Azaz	Aleppo	Explosive device
19/08/2021	An explosive device planted in a car exploded on Azaz city	2 injured	Azaz	Aleppo	Explosive device
23/08/2021	Explosion in the cargo truck yard	7 injured	Azaz	Aleppo	Car bomb
05/09/2021	An Explosion in a residential area	2 victims	Afrin	Aleppo	Car bomb
13/09/2021	An explosive device planted and went off in downtown	minor material damages	Al Bab	Aleppo	Explosive device
14/09/2021	An explosive device planted and went off next to a car	minor material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
17/09/2021	Explosion in the cargo truck yard	8 injured	Al Bab	Aleppo	Unidentified
23/09/2021	An explosive device planted next to a car and went off in downtown	minor material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	Explosive device
25/09/2021	An explosive device explodes in a garbage container	minor material damages	Al Bab	Aleppo	Explosive device
28/09/2021	An explosion near the local council building in the city	7 injured	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
28/09/2021	An explosion near the Green market in the city	2 victims	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
11/10/2021	Car explosion between Kawa roundabout and al-Qabban roundabout at the entrance of the wholesale market downtown	8 victims	Afrin	Aleppo	Car bomb
11/10/2021	Explosion in a house at Dabes village	3 victims	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
11/10/2021	Explosion of explosive device in the outskirts of city	1 person injured	Al Bab	Aleppo	Explosive device

Date	Explosion	Damage	Area	Governorate	Weapon
02/11/2021	Explosion in a house at Qaraf Maghar village	2 girls killed	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Explosive device
03/11/2021	Explosion at A-Dowa area near Palmyra	7 persons of one family	Al-Dowa	Homs	Landline
06/11/2021	Explosion in a car, downtown	Limited material damages	Idlib	Idlib	Explosive device
27/11/2021	Explosion in a car, downtown	4 persons killed	Manbej	Aleppo	Explosive device
01/12/2021	Explosion in a car, in refugees camp	2 persons injured	Al Bab	Aleppo	Explosive device
22/12/2021	Explosion in an open place	a child killed, his father injured	Kansafra	Idlib	cluster bomb left over from previous shelling
27/12/2021	Explosion in agricultural land	5 children injured	Azaz	Aleppo	Bomb left over from previous battles
30/12/2021	Explosion in a car, downtown	several persons injured	Azaz	Aleppo	Explosive device

Markets and Commercial & Industrial Centres

Date	Incident	Damage	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
03/01/2021	Explosion next to Muddah Bakery	Medium material damage	Jindires	Aleppo	unidentified	Explosive device
14/01/2021	Bombing targeting the wholesale market in the city centre	severe material damages	Ariha	Idlib	Regime forces	Rockets launchers
17/01/2021	Explosion under a car selling bread in the main	severe material damages	Sujjo	Aleppo	unidentified	Explosive device

Date	Incident	Damage	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
	Green market in downtown					
02/02/2021	Explosion in the industrial area of the village	1 Victim	Olan	Aleppo	unidentified	Explosive device
13/02/2021	Explosion in the main market in town	severe material damages	Al-Rai	Aleppo	unidentified	Car bomb
20/02/2021	Explosion in popular market in Eastern Deir ez-Zor countryside	2 victims	Al Busayrah	Deir ez-Zor	unidentified	Explosive device
20/02/2021	Explosion in the main market in town	severe material damages	Sujjo	Aleppo	unidentified	Car bomb
25/02/2021	Explosion in poultry market in town	severe material damages	Ras Al-Ain	Hasakah	unidentified	Car bomb
02/05/2021	Explosion in the industrial Market in town	severe material damages	Tell Abiad	Ar Raqqah	unidentified	Motorcycle bomb
11/05/2021	Explosion in the Green market	Medium material damages	Suluk	Ar Raqqah	unidentified	Explosive device
26/05/2021	Explosion in the middle of the main market in the city	1 Victim	Afrin	Aleppo	unidentified	Explosive device
07/06/2021	Explosion in the middle of the main market in the city	1 victim & 8 injured	Al-Rai	Aleppo	unidentified	Suicide bomber
23/08/2021	Explosion in the cargo truck yard	2 victims	Azaz	Aleppo	unidentified	Car bomb
14/09/2021	Explosion inside a freight car near shops	severe material damages	Al Bab	Aleppo	unidentified	Explosive device

Date	Incident	Damage	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
28/09/2021	Explosion near the Green market in the city	2 victims	Jarabulus	Aleppo	unidentified	Explosive device
11/10/2021	Explosion at the wholesale market, downtown	8 victims + severe material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	unidentified	Car bomb
20/10/2021	Shelling on popular market	Medium material damages	Ariha	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
19/11/2021	Shelling downtown with 6 missiles	Severe material damages of Al-Tayyeb Bakery	Afrin	Aleppo	SDF	Portable surface-to-surface missiles
26/12/2021	bombing of a poultry house	Medium material damages	Daret Azza	Aleppo	Russian air forces	Aerial missiles
27/12/2021	Bombing of 3 adjacent poultry houses	Medium material damages	Daret Azza	Aleppo	Russian air forces	Aerial missiles



In 2021, the “Revolutionary Youth” of the “Democratic Union Party” (PYD) escalated their violations, most notably by the kidnapping and recruiting of minors; males and females in addition to their attacks on media professionals and media organisations

Targeting of the Healthcare and Emergency Sectors

Attacks on the healthcare and emergency sector continued this year albeit at a lower rate than previous years, which is due to the general cessation of hostilities in the country. As such, the Syrian Human Rights Committee has documented attacks on five hospitals and healthcare centres, in comparison to the 21 hospitals and healthcare centres that were targeted in 2020, and the 73 that were targeted in 2019.

SHRC further documented the targeting of three Civil Defence centres, the death of five members who worked within the emergency sector and the injury of 15 others, in addition to the targeting of six ambulance and rescue vehicles.

The suffering of the healthcare sector in all regions in Syria continued to suffer in 2021, exacerbated tremendously by the outbreak of the Coronavirus. An already exhausted medical sector with little capacities and staff were further tested as they had to deal with the increasing cases of the virus. One such example of this, is the regime's ministry of health announcement on October 18th that hospitals on Damascus and Suburbs, Lattakia, Aleppo and Suwaida had reached 100% occupancy, whilst hospitals in Homs were at 90% occupancy rate.

Assaults on healthcare workers this year by security and military personnel took place in areas under different control, in addition to various instances of civilians attacking healthcare workers and taking advantage of the poor application of law in those areas.

For example, on 4th May, several companions of a patient in Al-Basil Public Hospital in Homs, beat two doctors up causing moderate injuries. On 7th August, the administration of Mare' Hospital in the city of Mare' in Aleppo's suburbs, decided to dismiss Dr. Othman Hajjawi from working in the hospital and preventing him from working in the healthcare sector across the entirety of the region under the control of the National Army, on the grounds that he supported Dr. Rafi al-Alwan, another doctor who was insulted and humiliated by a Turkish nurse when working in the hospital. Another example is on 28th August, when masked people attacked members of the medical staff in al-Mujtahid hospital in Damascus for an unknown reason, seriously injuring three of them.

1. Targeting members of the emergency rescue sector

Deaths

Date	Victim	Incident	Area	Province	Actor	Weapon
16/02/2021	Abd al-Hadi Muhammad al-Hariri, member of Humanitarian Relief Experts	He was killed when an explosive device planted under a car of the organisation's community health team exploded in the city centre	Al Bab	Aleppo	Unidentified	Explosive device
06/03/2021	Ahmed El-Waki, member of the Civil Defence	He was killed while putting out the fires left by the missile strikes on the area	Terhin	Aleppo	Regime forces	Missiles
12/06/2021	Two relief members	They were killed due to the bombing of Al-Shifa Hospital in Al-Filat Street in downtown	Afrin	Aleppo	Unidentified	Artillery shells
19/06/2021	Daham Al-Husain, member of the Civil Defence	Shelling directly targeted the Syrian Civil Defence Centre in the town	Qastoun	Hama	Regime forces	Artillery shells

Injuries

Date	Victim	Incident	Area	Province	Actor	Weapon
12/06/2021	Ismail Al-Naasan, Zaher Hamsho, and Ahmed Ibrahim, civil	They were injured due to the shelling that directly targeted the	Afrin	Aleppo	Unidentified	Artillery shells

Date	Victim	Incident	Area	Province	Actor	Weapon
	defence personnel	Syrian Civil Defence Centre in the town				
19/06/2021	Hassan Hashum, Ahmed Al-Nader and Fateh Haj Ibrahim, civil defence personnel	They were injured due to the shelling that directly targeted the Syrian Civil Defence Centre in the town	Qastoun	Hama	Regime forces	Artillery shells
03/07/2021	Five Civil Defence personnel	They were injured due to the shelling that directly targeted the Syrian Civil Defence Centre in the town	Sheikh Yusuf	Idlib	Russian Air-force	Ariel missiles
17/07/2021	Kamel Zureik and Mahmoud Othman, members of the Civil Defence	They were injured due to the direct targeting of their team during the response to the artillery shelling on the village	Sarja	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
05/08/2021	Member of Civil Defence	Wounded by shelling targeting a surface crane on the outskirts of the village	Hazwan	Aleppo	SDF	Missiles
03/11/2021	Two civil defence members	injured by landmine	Kwlian Tahtani	Aleppo	Unidentified	Landmine

2. Human Elements in the Medical Sector

Deaths

Date	Victim	Incident	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
13/06/2021	Two medical doctors	Missile bombing on Al-Shifa Hospital	Afrin	Aleppo	SDF	Grad Missiles

3- Targeting Offices & centres of Emergency Rescue Sector

Date	Targeted Building	Damages	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
19/06/2021	Artillery shelling direct on the Syrian Civil Defence Centre	Severe material damages	Qastoun	Hama	Regime forces	Artillery shells
03/07/2021	Four Bombing raids by war-planes on the civil defence centre in the town	Severe material damages	Sheikh Yusuf	Idlib	Russian Airforce	Ariel Raids
25/07/2021	Shelling in the vicinity of the Civil Defence Centre in the city	Severe material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	SDF	Rockets launchers

4- Targeting of Hospitals & Medical Centres

Date	Establishment	Damages	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
17/02/2021	Shelling on the vicinity of Al-Shifa Hospital in Al-Filat Street	Medium material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	SDF	Rockets launchers

Date	Establishment	Damages	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
05/03/2021	SDF members stormed the General Surgical Hospital, where they destroyed the hospital's equipment and furniture	Severe material damages	Al Shuhail	Deir ez-Zor	SDF	Raid
21/03/2021	Bombing of the hospital of Al-Atarib city	Severe material damages	Al Atarib	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery shells
12/06/2021	Bombing of Al Shifa hospital on Fillat Street	Severe material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	SDF	Artillery shells
08/09/2021	Two shells fell on the medical centre in Jabal Al-Zawiya, formerly known as "Marian Medical Centre"	Severe material damages	Mar'ian	Idlib	Unidentified	Shells

5- Targeting Vehicles

Date	Vehicles	Damages	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
12/06/2021	Shells fell on Al-Shifa Hospital, located on Al-Filat Street	Severe material damage to the hospital's ambulance	Afrin	Aleppo	Unidentified	Artillery shells
25/07/2021	Shelling damaged an ambulance and two service cars belonging to the Civil Defence Centre in the city	Medium material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	SDF	Artillery shells

Date	Vehicles	Damages	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
05/08/2021	Shelling targeted a surface crane on the outskirts of the village, which led to the burning of an ambulance belonging to the Civil Defence	Severe material damages	Hazwan	Aleppo	SDF	Missiles
03/11/2021	Explosion targeted civil defence ambulance	Severe material damages	Kwlian Tahtani	Aleppo	Unidentified	Landmine



An ambulance damaged in a bombing of a hospital in Idlib in May 2019

Media and Journalism

Journalists and media professionals remain at a high risk in Syria, as they suffer from a hostile environment in the authorities areas, in addition to being targeted directly for either killing or kidnapping. Hundreds have disappeared in the Assad regime's prisons for years, in addition to dozens of others in the prisons of other factions such as the SDF, PYD, ISIS, Tahrir al-Sham and the National Army factions. It is believed that many media professionals have died under torture in Assad's prisons, with records of various others being killed in the prisons of the other factions.

The targeting rate of media professionals has decreased significantly, as the Syrian Human Rights Committee documented the death of one journalist in 2021.

SHRC adopts the definition of 'journalist' or 'media professional' for anyone who works within a registered media organisation and relies on their profession in media as a main source of livelihood, whether it be reporting journalism or other types of journalism such as photography. On the other hand, SHRC adopts the definition of 'media activist' for anyone who works in an unregistered media organisation such as Facebook pages, and who does not depend on media as a primary source of income and livelihood.

All local actors active in Syria have participated in restricting media professionals in different ways.

The definition is applied loosely by both SHRC and other organisations working within the field of documentation, as it is not possible to always accurately verify whether the work carried out by media professionals is their main source of livelihood or not, and whether or not the media organisation they may be working for is officially registered, inside or outside of Syria. Furthermore, SHRC categorises media workers within armed factions as 'media activists', unless evidence is provided that they have participated in armed conflict.

This year, Syria ranked 173 out of 180 worldwide in the Media Freedom Index, which is issued annually by Reporters Without Borders.

As per the documentation of SHRC, all local actors in Syria this year have partook in restricting media professionals in one way or another. As such, SHRC documented the arrest of 33 media professionals in 2021; with SDF and security agencies linked to it being responsible for 19 of the arrests,

followed by regime security agencies with 7 arrests, Tahrir al-Sham with 6 documented arrests and the National Army with one arrest.

Some of the most prominent cases of restrictions media professionals have been subjected to inside Syria this year have been:

- On 20th June, the PYD issued a resolution to cancel the registration of "Kurdistan 24 Satellite Channel" studio, under the pretext of the media organisation encouraging hate speech.
- On 25th August, Orient TV announced that Tahrir al-Sham had taken the resolution to close their office in Idlib under the pretext of 'professional violations'. Tahrir al-Sham did not release an official explanation or justification for their decision.
- On 7th December, the PYD decided to close the office of Rudaw Media Network in the city of Qamishli, after Asiyash forces who are loyal to PYD stormed the media organisation's office and arrested six journalists working for them.

In addition to the targeting of journalists and media professionals inside Syria, SHRC has also documented cases of violations against Syrian journalists outside of Syria. The most prominent cases this year have been:

- On October 31st, Turkish state forces arrested Syrian journalist Majid Sham'aa who works for Orient TV, after they streamed an episode from their programme "Street Polls", in which the episode dealt with the issue that later became known as 'Banana Gate'. After the widespread of the episode wherein a Turkish citizen claims that Syrians living in Turkey buy bananas in large quantities whilst he does not have the capacity to do so, Sham'aa was arrested and sent to Gaziantep in preparation for deportation to northern Syria. On November 8th, Turkish authorities reversed their decision and released him.
- On 18th November, Jordanian state security services stormed the house of media activist Ibrahim Awwad and placed him under arrest. Awwad was then deported to Al-Azraq refugee camp in the Jordanian province of Al-Zarqa. Awwad previously worked as a media personnel in Faylaq al-Awal, an opposition armed faction that existed in southern Syria up until 2018. Since, he left for Jordan for treatment after being injured whilst doing his job. It is believed that this arrest came after his television appearances in which he attacked the emerging policy among Arab countries in normalising ties with the Assad regime.

Documenting Violations against Journalists

Killing of Journalists and Media Workers

Date	Incident	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
17/07/2021	The Russian war-planes targeted a civil defence team while it was carrying out its tasks to rescue the injured due to previous bombing in the town of Sarjah in the Idlib countryside, which led to the killing of the civil defence journalist, Hammam Al-Asi.	Sarjah	Idlib	Russian air-force	Ariel Missiles

Injured Journalists and Media Workers

Date	Incident	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
06/01/2021	Unidentified masked gunmen opened fire on Syria TV correspondent Baha Al-Halabi as he was leaving his house in the northern neighbourhood of Al-Bab city in the eastern countryside of Aleppo, seriously wounding him.	Al Bab	Aleppo	Unidentified	Gun fire
02/03/2021	An unknown woman attacked the Syrian News Agency (SANA) cameraman, Samer Khuzmeh, with a sharp object, seriously wounding him.	Aleppo	Aleppo	Unidentified	White weapons

Date	Incident	Area	Gover-norate	Actor	Weapon
03/05/2021	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham summoned the journalist Omar Haj Qadour for security check. During the investigation, the members of the organisation asked him to delete a post on his personal page on the Facebook platform, in which he talks about media freedom in Syria. They also perforated his journalistic card, telling him that repeatedly publishing such articles would subject him to harsher penalties.	Idlib	Idlib	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)	Verbal warning
08/05/2021	Elements believed to be affiliated with the "Revolutionary Youth" organisation of the Democratic Union Party attempted to storm the office of the Rudaw Media Network in the city of Qamishli, causing significant material damage to the office.	Qamishli	Hasakah	Revolutionary Youth / Democratic Union Party	White weapons
24/05/2021	Media activist Khaled Al-Homsi was shot by an unknown person riding a motorcycle on the road between the city of Al-Bab and Al-Nahda Project in the countryside of Aleppo. Al-Homsi did not suffer any damage as a result of the shooting. Al-Homsi is a reporter for Orient TV.	Al Bab	Aleppo	Unidentified	Gun fire

Date	Incident	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
18/07/2021	The car of the journalist Qusai Al-Ahmad and his brother, the cameraman Muhannad Al-Ahmad, exploded due to an explosive device placed under it when the car was parked in front of their house in the city of Afrin in Aleppo countryside. Qusay Al-Ahmad is a reporter for the Qatari channel, Al-Jazeera Mubasher, while his brother works as a cameraman for the same channel.	Afrin	Aleppo	Unidentified	Explosive device
29/07/2021	The journalist Atef Al-Mohammed (known as Atef Al-Saadi) was shot by the regime forces while he was covering the clashes in Al-Mu-zayrib area in the western countryside of Daraa.	Al Mu-zayrib	Daraa	Regime forces	Gun fire
24/09/2021	Members of the "Revolutionary Youth" organisation affiliated with the Democratic Union Party (PYD) beat a group of media professionals with sticks while they were covering protests by residents in the city of Qamishli over price hikes. The journalists who were attacked are: 1. Diana Muhammad, correspondent of the Aso News Network. 2. Issa Al-Khalaf, photographer for Rudaw TV. 3. Vivan Noaman Fattah, correspondent for Rudaw TV. 4. Shafzan Mahmoud, reporter and photographer for Pulse Al Shamal Network and FM Radio.	Qamishli	Hasakah	Revolutionary Youth / Democratic Union Party	White weapons

Date	Incident	Area	Gover-norate	Actor	Weapon
28/09/2021	The office of Rudaw TV in the city of Qamishli was attacked with Molotov cocktails, which led to the burning of the office. It was not known who carried out the attack, but the channel is being targeted with the declared incitement by the Kurdish Autonomous Administration and the Democratic Union Party	Qamishli	Hasakah	Unidentified	Molotov cocktails

Arrest of Journalists

Date	Incident	Area	Gover-norate	Actor
05/01/2021	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham released media activist Nour al-Shlo, after she was kidnapped by the security committee of HTS in front of the court in Idlib on 19/9/2020.	Idlib	Idlib	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham
09/01/2021	SDF forces arrested media activist Ayham Abdel Aziz al-Khalaf on the pretext of filming without permission. Al-Khalaf is a reporter for the "Abd al-Furat" news network.	Al Buray-rah	Deir ez-Zor	SDF
17/01/2021	Regime forces in Aleppo arrested journalist Wadah Mohi Al-Din, a journalist who works as bureau director of "Spot Light" magazine in the city of Aleppo, on the background of his criticism of the robbery practices in the markets of Aleppo city on his personal Facebook page, and took him to the Criminal Security branch in Damascus. Muhyiddin was released on 2/5/2021 under the presidential pardon issued the previous day.	Aleppo	Aleppo	Regime forces
21/01/2021	The National Army arrested the media activist Hayan Hababa, who works for the Violet Organization. He is from the village of Al-Naqir in the southern countryside of Idlib, and resides in the city of Azaz, and took him to an unknown destination.	Azaz	Aleppo	National Army

Date	Incident	Area	Governorate	Actor
23/01/2021	SDF forces arrested media activist Fanar Mahmoud, a member of the "Kurdistan Yekiti Party in Syria", from the city of Qamishli in the northeastern countryside of Al-Hasakah Governorate, against the background of his criticism of SDF practices on his personal Facebook page, and took him to an unknown destination. He was released on February 18, 2021	Qamishli	Hasakah	SDF
24/01/2021	Members of the Criminal Security Branch arrested Hala Al-Jarf, a broadcaster on Syrian TV and the daughter of a retired pilot, as she was returning from her town, Al Salamiya in Hama countryside. The arrest came against the backdrop of criticism she wrote on her Facebook page of the living situation in Syria. Al-Jarf was released on 4/5/2021 according to the presidential pardon issued the previous day.	Al Salamiya	Hama	Regime forces
26/01/2021	Members of the security forces arrested media activist Younes Suleiman, director of the "Citizens Suspended" Facebook page, in connection with his publication of a translated material accusing Presidential Adviser Buthaina Shaaban of corruption.	Damascus	Damascus	Regime forces
05/02/2021	SDF forces arrested media activist Ali Saleh al-Wakaa while he was in Hajjin city hospital in Deir ez-Zor. Al-Wakaa is a reporter for the Paz News Agency.	Hajjin	Deir ez-Zor	SDF
06/02/2021	SDF forces raided the home of media activist Ayman Ammash Alaw in the town of Gharanij in Deir ez-Zor, but he was not at the house at the time of the raid.	Granij	Deir ez-Zor	SDF
01/03/2021	SDF forces arrested the journalist Ahmed Hassan Ahmed (known as Ahmed Al-Sufi), a correspondent for ARK channel, while he was on his way to cover a celebration near the city of Al-Malikiyah. He was released on the same day.	Al-Malikiyah	Hasakah	SDF

Date	Incident	Area	Governorate	Actor
07/03/2021	The regime forces arrested Kinan Waqqaf, a journalist working for Al-Wahda newspaper, from Tartous city, after he was summoned by the Criminal Security Branch in Damascus, on the grounds of his criticism of the living conditions and corruption in the regime-controlled areas on his personal Facebook page, and took him to unknown destination. Waqqaf was released on May 2, 2021, according to the presidential pardon issued the previous day.	Damascus	Damascus	Regime forces
25/03/2021	SDF forces raided a house in the town of al-Baghrouz in the eastern countryside of Deir ez-Zor governorate, and arrested Abbas Hassan al-Sharida al-Massoumi, a media activist from the town, on the grounds of his criticism of the living and service conditions in al-Baghrouz town on his personal Facebook page, and took him to an unknown destination.	Al-Baghrouz	Deir ez-Zor	SDF
05/04/2021	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham arrested media activist Khaled Husseinou near the village of Kafr Lusin, north of Idlib. Hussainou is a reporter for SMART Media Corporation.	Darat Izza	Aleppo	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham
10/04/2021	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham arrested media activist Muhammad al-Zein from his home in the village of Ma'ratah in Jabal al-Zawiya, south of Idlib	Darat Izza	Aleppo	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham
10/04/2021	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham arrested media activist Muhammad al-Sabbagh, in the city of Darat Izza in the western countryside of Aleppo	Darat Izza	Aleppo	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham
24/04/2021	SDF forces arrested the journalist Fadel Hammad while he was in the city of Qamishli, and released him on the same day. Hammad is the director of the radio and television center of the official Syrian channel.	Qamishli	Hasakah	SDF

Date	Incident	Area	Governorate	Actor
15/06/2021	SDF forces arrested Ahmed Mustafa al-Hassan, a media activist and correspondent of the SY+ platform, from the village of Kabash Gharbi in the northwestern countryside of Raqqa governorate, as he passed one of its checkpoints in the city of Raqqa, against the background of his criticism of the poor service situation in the city of Raqqa, which is under the control of SDF forces. , And he was taken to an unknown destination. He was released on 19/6/2021.	Raqqa	Raqqa	SDF
16/06/2021	SDF forces arrested journalist Kameran Saadoun while he was accompanying a Dutch journalist who was preparing a report in the city of Raqqa. Saadoun was released the next day.	Raqqa	Raqqa	SDF
23/06/2021	The regime forces arrested Bassam Safar, a journalist and writer working as an editor in the cultural department of North Press Media Agency, from the city of Salamiyah, east of Hama Governorate, and he lives in the city of Damascus. He was released on 7/31.	Al Salamiyah	Hama	Regime forces
17/07/2021	SDF forces arrested Izz al-Din Zain al-Abidin Mulla, a journalist with the Kurdistan Democratic Party in Syria, from the city of al-Malikiyah in the northern countryside of al-Hasakah, to an unknown destination. He was released on 5/8/2021.	Qamishli	Hasakah	SDF
17/07/2021	SDF forces arrested Muhammad Salih Ahmad. Ahmed works as a freelance journalist with a number of media organisations.	Qamishli	Hasakah	SDF
18/07/2021	SDF forces arrested Barzan Hussein Liani, a reporter for ARKTV Agency, from the town of Ma'badah, northeast of Al-Hasakah Governorate. He was released on November 6, 2021.	Ma'badah	Hasakah	SDF
04/08/2021	The Military Judiciary of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham arrested Jaysh al-Ahrar journalist Adham Dashrni for allegedly insulting the Salvation Government on his Facebook page.	Unidentified	Unidentified	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham

Date	Incident	Area	Governorate	Actor
13/08/2021	SDF forces arrested the media activist, Thamer Muhammad Al-Shehadeh, who works as a media worker in the SDF's Al-Shafa municipality council, as a photographer in the eastern countryside of Deir ez-Zor. He was released on August 22, 2021.	Al Shu'fah	Deir ez-Zor	SDF
31/08/2021	Regime forces arrested journalist Mahmoud Ibrahim who works for Al-Thawra newspaper, accompanied by a group of mothers who gathered at the door of the Directorate of Education in Tartous to protest the way the directorate deals with their children and not accept them in the School of Outstanding Students, despite their high educational attainment compared to their peers who were accepted despite their lower marks.	Tartous	Tartous	
04/09/2021	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham arrested the two media activists, Bashar and Muhammad al-Sheikh, from the town of Kafr Nabudah, northwest of Hama governorate. They live in the Anatolia camp for the displaced near the village of Kafr Lusin in the north of Idlib governorate, after their place of residence in the camp was raided, and they were taken to an unidentified destination.	Kafr Nabudah	Hama	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham
07/12/2021	A force of the Asayish of the Kurdish Autonomous Administration stormed the office of the Rudaw Media Network in the city of Qamishli, and closed it. It also arrested six journalists: 1. Fahad Sabry - Office Manager, 2. Ahmed Ajamo - Producer, 3. Barzan Farman - news reporter, 4. Nidal Rasoul - Photographer, 5. Hussein Othman - Relations Coordinator, 6. Safqan Orkesh - Announcer	Qamishli	Hasakah	Asayish forces (SDF)

Education and Educational Institutions

The past 10 years have had a detrimental effect on the educational process of Syrian children, as the United Nations estimates there to be more than 2.4 million Syrian children both inside and outside of Syria not enrolled in any educational capacity, 40% of which are girls. The UN further estimates that this number has risen significantly in 2021 due to the outbreak of coronavirus in Syria and neighbouring countries.

These numbers indicate that an entire generation of Syrians will be out of the development process in the future due to its almost or absolute illiteracy, meaning that the effects of generation's illiteracy may be passed down and continued for more than one generation. Consequently job prospects for those with low literacy is significantly small, meaning that the ability of the generation to compete in the job market in order to secure a better future for their children will be less than others.

The numbers become increasingly more dangerous when viewed through the demographic lens, as the vast majority of those deprived of an education resided in the areas that witnessed the mass movement in opposition to the Assad regime, making them primarily Arab, Sunni and from particular provinces. This implies strongly that developmental and economic delays will be reflected exclusively on particular population groups and geographic locations. In turn, this will increase state misallocation of resources, included but not limited to state positions and private sector.

Despite the decrease in attacks on schools and education-based buildings in 2021, SHRC documented 11 attacks on an educational institution. That said, many of the existing school buildings remain out of use as no maintenance work has been done on those schools which were subjected to attacks in previous years. As such, it is estimated that one out of three schools in Syria is not fit for use due to being damaged or destroyed.

As a result of these conditions, schools operating in various areas of control in Syria are often taught with overcrowded classrooms, and in buildings that do not have sufficient water, sanitation, electricity, heating and ventilation. These issues increase in the regions which encompass a larger number of internally displaced people (IDPs), such as Damascus, Lattakia, Idlib and Aleppo Suburbs.

The educational process inside Syria - and in neighbouring countries where Syrians seek asylum - is linked inherently to the economical situation of the residents. Families stop sending their children to school as their economic situation gets worse, in order to save on the expenses incurred by education, or in order to send their children in the labour market, or their daughters into early marriage.

The significant deterioration of the Syrian Pound since the end of 2020 has caused a big decline in the economic situation within the regime held areas, so much so that the United Nations has estimated that 80% of Syrians are living beneath the poverty line. These conditions have not only caused increased the rate of school drop-outs, but has also impacted the quality of the educational process as teachers and education professionals are forced to take up second jobs in order to secure the minimum income needed for a livelihood. Added to this, the fuel crisis in regime-controlled areas led to the reluctance of many teachers in continuing teaching, as the cost of transport within itself consumes most of their salary.

The year 2021 also witnessed a notable decline in the funding allocated to the education sector in Syria. The United Nations and member agencies received only 18% of the funding necessary for this sector due to the lower prioritisation of this sector in the face of the rising prioritisation of basic needs for IDPs and refugees, such as tents, shelter, food and cash assistance. The decline of priority in the education sector due to the rising need to prioritise the displaced is not limited to the United Nations, but is also applied across the board in both international and local non-governmental organisations.

More than 80% of Syrians live under the poverty line, which leads to an increase in school dropout rates and a decline in the educational process.

The interference of the area-controlling authorities in the educational process also continued in 2021. Whilst the Syrian regime completely controls the syllabus and educational process in the areas it controls, this process is subject to pushing and pulling in other areas across the country. For example, in areas under the control of the PYD, the administration is adamant on applying their curriculum across all areas under its control despite not being officially approved by UNESCO. So far, it has succeeded only in applying it to the Kurdish-majority areas such as Ain al-Arab and the towns and cities within al-Hasakah province, often using different methods and varying degrees of strength to achieve its goal, according to the demographics of each region. The majority of residents within PYD-controlled areas reject their curriculum for various reasons, most important of which is that it does not qualify students to enter universities whether inside or outside of Syria. It is worth noting that many officials and employees within the PYD administration send their own children to schools that adopt the curriculum of the Assad regime, whether inside their controlled areas or outside.

The forced imposition of PYD's curriculum led to clashes between them and the Syriac Orthodox Milli and Diocese council. The Syriac Orthodox Milli refused to adopt the curriculum within their schools, but were faced with mounting pressure by the administration through their loyalists from within the Syriac community and through the educational institution founded by the Syriac Union Party and which is entirely loyal to the PYD. The institution

is called "Olf Tao" and is officially affiliated to the education directorate in the Jazirah region, carrying the responsibility of preparing the PYD's curriculum that are specific to the Syriac community, and qualifying the right people to teach it.

In opposition-controlled regions in northern Syria, the interference in the educational process is carried out by the various armed factions. The aim of interference is often to secure jobs for the inner circles of those armed factions, be they associations or leaders, as pressure is applied on the schools to appoint managers and teachers from those favoured by the armed faction regardless of qualifications. Another aim for interference is to obtain a portion of the financial support schools receive from donors.

Education in Countries of Asylum

1- Lebanon

The education of Syrian refugee children in Lebanon encountered many problems in 2021; problems which are a result of the complex crises facing Lebanon already, in addition to the complications related to the situation of refugees in Lebanon. The conditions of distance-learning forced by coronavirus from the second quarter of 2020 deprived many Syrian children of an education, due to their lack of communication devices such as having internet connection and a personal electronic device to connect to. The economic crisis in Lebanon which led to the staggering decline of the Lebanese pound also prompted many refugee families to remove their children from school and push them towards the labour market in order to secure an additional income for the family. Additionally, the significant rise in fuel prices led to a rise in transportation prices which further impacted refugee families in drawing their children out of school, due to an increasing lack of affordability.

According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of Syrian children of school age in Lebanon for the school year of 2020/2021 was 312.5 thousand children, of which only 51% were enrolled in schools and 30% of which had never been enrolled in a school throughout their life.

The struggle of Syrian students in Lebanon in securing the legal requirements as imposed by the Ministry of Education continued, in 2021. The legal requirements stipulate, according to Decree no. 40 of 2017, that applicants for the ninth-grade examinations must submit an official Syrian certificate issued by the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigrants, and the Syrian Embassy. Such documents cost hundreds of dollars which most refugees do not have access to, making it impossible for them to continue their education. The Lebanese government's requirements to submit these documents has made education inaccessible to the vast majority of Syrian refugees, reducing the enrollment rate of Syrian students at secondary level to only 1%.

On 3rd December, Human Rights Watch called on the Ministry of Education in Lebanon to extend the dates for Syrian children registering in schools which was to end on 4th December, as well as calling upon them to end the policies that deprive Syrian refugee children from education due to their deliberate inaccessibility. The organisation stated that thousands of Syrian refugee children are being denied access to education due to policies that require them to obtain certified educational records, legal residency in Lebanon and other official documents that are difficult for most Syrians to acquire.

An investigation carried out by Lebanese TV channel Al-Jadeed, in May 2021, uncovered the corruption of the Lebanese government regarding the education of Syrian children in Lebanese schools. The investigation discovered that the number of Syrian students provided by the government to international donors since 2014 is at least 25% more than the actual number of students taken in, which is equivalent to approximately nine million dollars annually that Lebanese officials have been taking from international funds for refugees.

2- Turkey

In September 2021, the General Directorate of Migration Management in Turkey reported that the number of Syrian children in Turkey of school age is approximately 1.247 million, 800,000 of which are enrolled in schools whilst an estimated 450,000 (more than third) are not enrolled in any type of educational institution. The measures that schools in Turkey adopted due to the coronavirus cast a shadow over Syrian refugee children, placing them at a disadvantage as many of them were unable to continue their education due to a lack of the necessary communication tools and internet connection. Additionally, due to the language barrier, parents who do not know the Turkish language could not help their children in the educational process and follow-up with them as per the expectations of distance learning.

On 1st July 2021, school principals in Turkey informed Syrian teachers who worked in Turkish schools that their contract had ended, without any further justification. The number of these teachers was 12,700, and they had been working in a voluntary capacity in public schools since 2017, within the integration programme for Syrian students that is supported by UNICEF and the European Union. This programme was put in place after the Turkish government took the decision to close all temporary educational centres that were in place at the time.

On 10th September, the Turkish Ministry of Education announced that it had appointed 3000 teachers among those who had been dismissed, on the condition that they had a bachelor's degree and B1 level proficiency in Turkish.

In July, the Turkish Higher Education Council issued a decision that Syrians were not exempt from tuition fees in universities, which went into effect at

the beginning of the 2021/2022 academic year. This decision did not apply to Syrian students previously registered, whose tuition fees remained covered as per the Higher Education Council's decision in 2013 to exempt Syrian students.

It is worth noting that the decision for exemption was not binding for public universities, as approximately 50 public universities out of 129 did not adhere to the decision.

3- Jordan

United Nations' data shows that an estimated 50,000 Syrian children did not attend school during the 2020/2021 academic year.

Similar to the situation in the other refugee-hosting countries, the outbreak of coronavirus led to an increased rate in school dropouts and a decline in educational performance amongst refugee students, as many could not pursue distance learning due to their inaccessibility to the required technology and internet connection. The national lockdown contributed to the deterioration of the economic situation across the Kingdom, and which hit the poorer classes the most, of which the majority of refugees belong to. This prompted a significant number of parents to withdraw their children from the educational process, in order to save on expenses and attempt to push them towards the labour market from an early age, in order to secure an additional income for the family.

In September, the Jordanian Ministry of Education issued a decision to exempt refugee students from submitting prerequisite documents for the registration in the first semester to the 2021/2022 academic year.

According to the Jordanian Ministry of Education and Higher Education, approximately 16,000 Syrian children attend university in the country, a third of which fund their own studies whilst a quarter receive grants to cover their study expenses. A significant decrease in the number of scholarships available to Syrian university students was witnessed in 2021, as several European institutions either stopped offering new scholarships or suspended existing ones.

Targeting Education Sector through 2021

Date	Educational Institution	Damages	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
14/01/2021	Bombing of the "Martyr Muhammad Al-Sabbagh School"	Medium Material damages	Ariha	Idlib	Regime forces	Rockets launchers
21/03/2021	Shelling on the yard of the "Jeel Al-Ghad" school, known as "Imam Malik School" in the north-western neighbourhood of the city	Medium Material damages	Ariha	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery missiles
24/05/2021	An explosion near the "Sharia High School"	severe Material damages	Jarabulus	Aleppo	Unidentified	Motorcycle bomb
03/07/2021	Shelling of Tishreen School in the western neighbourhood of the town	severe Material damages	Ariha	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery missiles
21/07/2021	Bombing of the "Ismail Lata Basic Education" school, which is adjacent to the "Teachers Preparation Institute" building (within one wall)	severe Material damages	Al-Barrah	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery missiles
30/08/2021	Shelling on the vicinity of "Al-Ittihad Al-Arabi School"	Minor material damages	Afrin	Aleppo	SDF	Artillery missiles
01/09/2021	Shelling of the "Bahar neighbourhood school" in the Daraa Al-Balad area of the city	Medium Material damages	Daraa	Daraa	Regime forces	Artillery missiles

Date	Educational Institution	Damages	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
20/10/2021	Shelling targeting the vicinity of "Abdul Hamid Ghoneimi" school, known as "Ariha Girls School".	Medium Material damages	Ariha	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery missiles
20/11/2021	Shelling targeting the vicinity of the Educational Complex School in the city	Limited material damages	Ariha	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery missiles
24/11/2021	Shelling targeting a primary school in the village	Limited material damages	Kafr Ta'al	Aleppo	Regime forces	Artillery missiles
13/12/2021	Shelling targeting the vicinity of a primary education school	Limited material damages	Ma'ar-zaf	Idlib	Russian airforces	Aerial missiles



Violations in the country over the past 10 years have kept 2.4 million children out of the educational process.

Religious Sites

The reduction of military operations in Syria this year has resulted in a significant decrease in the targeting of religious places compared to previous years. SHRC documented the targeting of 10 mosques in 2021, compared to the targeting of 45 mosques in 2020 and 162 in 2019.

It should be emphasised that the attacks on mosques this year were indiscriminate, as mosques were damaged primarily due to bombs falling in their vicinity or explosions within proximity to them. In previous years, and particularly during the 2011-2016 period, the regime and their allied foreign forces were directly targeting mosques.

There has been no documentation of targeted churches in the various regions across Syria in 2021. On the contrary, documentations of restorations have been recorded by the Assad regime and Russia in areas under their control. Additionally, the opposition's National Army sponsored the restoration of churches in the areas of Ras al-Ain.

Targeting houses of worship in 2021

Date	Mosque	Damages	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
08/02/2021	Bombing in the vicinity of the "Great Mosque"	Medium material damages	Al Bab	Aleppo	Regime forces	Rockets launchers
24/05/2021	Bombing of "Al-Rawda Mosque"	severe material damages	Jarjanaz	Idlib	Regime forces	Explosives
23/06/2021	Bombing of "Kansafra's Great Mosque" in downtown	severe material damages	Kansafra	Idlib	Regime forces	Artillery missiles
04/08/2021	Bombing of the "Saad bin Abi Waqas Mosque" in the Al-Sad Road neighbourhood	Medium material damages	Daraa	Daraa	Regime forces	Artillery missiles
09/08/2021	An explosion in the vicinity of "Fatima al-	Minor material damages	Al Bab	Aleppo	Unidentified	Explosive device

Date	Mosque	Damages	Area	Governorate	Actor	Weapon
	Zahra Mosque"					
17/08/2021	Shelling of the "Dr. Ghassan Ab-azeed Mosque" in Al-Manshiyya neighbourhood in Daraa Al-Balad area	severe material damages	Daraa	Daraa	Regime forces	Tanks shells
21/08/2021	Bombing of "Al-Hussein Mosque" in Al-Sad Road neighbourhood	severe material damages	Daraa	Daraa	Regime forces	Artillery missiles
05/09/2021	Bombing of the "Al-Omari Mosque" in the Daraa Al-Balad area	severe material damages	Daraa	Daraa	Regime forces	Rockets launchers
25/09/2021	Bombing of "Ibrahim Al-Khalil Mosque" in Al-Wasata area	severe material damages	Al Atarib	Idlib	Regime forces	Guided missile



Detention, Kidnapping and Torture

The Assad regime continued arbitrary arrests during the year, albeit at a slower rate than last year. Arbitrary arrests have specifically targeted the people of areas that have undergone 'reconciliations' with the regime, especially in the provinces of Daraa and Rif Dimashq, where the two provinces, respectively, witnessed the largest number of detainees this year, according to the documentation as filed by the Syrian Human Rights Committee.

This year, arbitrary arrests took two main forms: arrest when passing through various security checkpoints, and arrest during raid campaigns. In addition to the two previous forms, a smaller number of arrests were recorded through international travel ports, especially Damascus International Airport and the land crossing with Lebanon, then arrests were made when attending to immigration and passport directorates to issue travel documents.

When assessing the reasons of arrests as carried by Assad's forces, four categories can be distinguished:

The first category includes those who were arrested on the basis of a clear political position, amongst media professionals and civil society activists (for more details, see Media & Press section), and they were the lowest number among the detainees; most of whom were released shortly after their arrest.

The second category includes those who participated in previous opposition activities, such as joining in a demonstration in the early days of the uprising, or who defected from the army, or who fought with one of the armed factions, and then normalised their position with the regime. Apparently, the regime accepted to normalise their positions collectively based on Russian pressure at the time, but started targeting them individually in a slow systematic manner later on, as the regime had never intended to pardon them. The Assad regime considers any sort of opposition a crime that is not subject to the statute of limitations nor to settlements sponsored by Russia.

The third category includes those who partook in current opposition activities, particularly those who participated in demonstrations against the regime or military operations in the province of Daraa, this year.

The fourth category includes regional arrests which targeted civilian residents who primarily did not partake in any opposition-based activities, but belong to families or neighbourhoods linked to opposition activities. Such arrests aim to achieve three goals; to punish those regions collectively, extorting their residents financially in order to secure release of the detained ones, or at least improving their conditions, and to exert pressure on the opposition groups in any future negotiations so that releasing detainees becomes the principal demand rather over any the other issue.

The regime's security services continue in pursuing their policy of enforced disappearance of detainees arbitrarily, so that the place of arrest and the arresting authority could only be known if the detainee was released or moved to a regular prison. It may take days, weeks or even months to find out the place of detention, and in many cases, it may be never known.

In general, it was noted that arbitrary detention had taken a slower pace this year than the previous ones, along with the enforced disappearances which was reduced drastically.

In addition to arbitrary detentions, campaigns to arrest those under the compulsory military service age continued. And the regime's military police were chasing those who were wanted for service, whether at security checkpoints or raid campaigns of youth gathering places, including cafes and universities.

Torture in Syrian Prisons

The use of torture in the various detention centres in Syria has continued to be documented, particularly in the areas under Syrian regime control.

An Amnesty International report published in September 2021 exposed that regime forces subjected Syrian citizens who had returned to their homeland after having sought asylum elsewhere to detention, enforced disappearances and torture, including sexual assault. The report, entitled 'You're going to your death', stated that the organisation verified 14 cases of sexual violence. Amongst these cases of sexual violence five women, a boy aged 13 and a girl aged 5 were raped. The report further stated that the torture violations either took place on border crossings or inside the interrogation centres during the interrogation, on the day of return or shortly after.

The report mentioned that five of the returnees were beaten on their genitals by security personnel, or were stripped naked during the interrogation. One of the witnesses said that he was hit on the testicles by an officer during the interrogation, and was told that he was being beaten there in order to not have children who will harm the country as he did.

Throughout the past year, many witness statements from former detainees were published, in which they recounted the various forms of torture they were subjected to in regime prisons.

Turkish businessman, Waqas Orhan, who had spent approximately 10 years in the regime's prisons before being released in June 2021, said that he was placed in solitary confinement containing 25-30cms of stagnant water, which prevented him from lying down or sleeping leaving him in a state of permanent wetness. Orhan further recalled how detainees would fight over mouldy pieces of bread placed in cups of water.

In another testimony, former detainee Adel Zkort, who spent his detention in the third military prison in Homs, said that the worst torture methods were 'the belt' or 'the balloon neck'. These methods were carried out by attaching a very tough and durable piece of plastic (the belt) on the detainee's phallus to the point of blocking the urinary tract, thereafter leaving the detainee until he is in need of going to the bathroom. At that point, the prison guards begin pouring water into the mouth of the detainee every five minutes in order for the bladder to be full and the detainee be unable to relieve himself. The balloon neck is also used in this method, where a large balloon is cut and the part used for blowing in is placed on the aforementioned area.

In his testimony that was published on Orient TV, Zkort also mentioned that he was tortured via metal tubes with pointed tips. This torture method entailed the detainee being tied down in a kneeling position and having the tubes entered into his rectum to inflict pain and sheer bodily violation. Zkort also mentioned the 'candle chair' torture method, whereby a chair without a base has a candle lit underneath it, slowly burning the sensitive areas of the detainees during their interrogation.

American photojournalist, Kevin Patrick Dawes, recently spoke about his bitter experience in the Assad regime's prisons, which he was detained in from 2012-2016 until he was released under Russian mediation. Dawes now suffers from a permanent disability due to the torture he was exposed to, which resulted in damage to the nerves, his wrists and one of his feet as well as various psychological effects. He recalled being held in

underground cells where the sun did not reach and was subjected to severe beatings, he said, "I have seen terrible things, I have seen them torture children". Throughout the conversation Dawes mentioned the story of the British surgeon Dr. Abbas Khan and how he got to know him as he was kept in the cell beside his, later Dr. Khan's mother would relay news of Dawes' detention to the American embassy, and was able to release him whilst Dr. Khan was killed in detention. Dawes went on to refute the Assad regime's account that Dr. Khan had committed suicide by hanging himself, saying: "No one can believe this story as there is absolutely not possibility for one to hang themselves in this place."

In addition to the torture in the Syrian regime's prisons, use of torture has been documented in the prisons of SDF forces as well in the prisons of the opposition's National Army.

According to testimonies obtained by SHRC as well as various statements that have been published by former detainees in SDF's prisons and other security agencies that are associated to the PYD, the prison guards in their prisons practice torture methods so severe such as beating the detainees with hard tools, that can lead to the death of the prisoner. This was the case for many of the instances documented by SHRC this year, in addition to depriving detainees of access to healthcare including specific medication for chronic diseases, which was the cause of death for at least six detainees in 2021.

SHRC further documented of a number of torture cases by the National Army, these cases were recorded on video by the perpetrators themselves. Of the most prominent of these is a video that was published on September 2021; the clip shows a group from an armed faction called 'Suqour al-Sunnah', who are affiliated to Division 20 based in the town of Sulouk, torturing a young man called Ali Al-Sultan Al-Faraj for apparently criticising the armed faction in a comment on Facebook.

SHRC documented 98 people killed under torture in Assad's prisons this year, many of which had been killed in previous years but were only revealed this year. For the vast majority of cases, families of the victims are neither handed their bodies nor informed of the deaths, the regime suffices itself by merely changing the status of the victim to a deceased person in the Civil Status Department, so that the families know the approximate year of death but cannot determine the exact date of the death.

The Kurdish Autonomous Administration

The Kurdish Autonomous Administration continued its policy of mass arbitrary arrests in 2021. These arrests targeted three main demographics:

First: Kurdish political activists and journalists who oppose the PYD, most of which are affiliated to parties within the Kurdish National Council, or work for organisations that are close to it.

Second: Arab opposition activists and demonstrators who protest against the policies of the Autonomous Administration, whether regarding poor services, high prices or the forced conscription policy of the SDF against Arab residents in their controlled areas.

In most cases, the majority of arrests from the first and second categories are released with minor exceptions, as there have been several documentations of detainees dying due to torture from these categories in the prisons of the Autonomous Administration.

Third: Those accused of belonging to ISIS, which the SDF and particularly their anti-terrorism unit, YAT, carry out raids and airdrops on usually with the support of the International Coalition, arresting a number of people with each raid. No legal document is presented to justify the arrests during the aforementioned operations. The place in which the detainees are transferred to is unknown, some detainees are later released whilst the traces of others disappear completely.

Arrests of those charged with compulsory conscription as per the conscription law issued by the Autonomous Administration in 2019, also continued in 2021. On 3rd May 2021, the legal age for those charged with the law was amended to include ages between 18 to 31, rendering the margin of people the law covers much larger than before despite the opposite promises of Administration officials in their repeated meetings with tribe leaders, elders and dignitaries in the areas they control.

Soon after the law was passed, SDF forces launched a mass campaign to find all the people the law encompasses. Hundreds were arrested in the various Arab-dominated areas under SDF control.

The city of Manbij and its countryside (which is of Arab majority) witnessed a wave of popular demonstrations starting from 31st May 2021, after a massive campaign of arrests that targeted over 150 young men from the region with the aim of enrolling them into forced conscription camps. Five

civilians were killed during the protests, and dozens more were injured as a result of being shot at by SDF and their affiliated forces.

The casualties led to rising tensions in Manbij, which resulted in the retraction of SDF forces pursuing the arrest campaign. In fact, in an unprecedented reaction from the Autonomous Administration, on 5th July they paid 30 million Syrian pound to each family of the victims, in addition to an extra 250 million Syrian pounds to every injured in order to cover the expense of treatment for their injuries. This reaction was born out of a fear that the protests would extend further in the region across both Arab and Kurdish areas, and that external parties would take advantage of tension in the area.

That said, the events did not completely stop the Autonomous Administration from pursuing those wanted for forced conscription. Though they stopped the mass arrest campaigns, they resorted to individual arrests as the arrest campaigns caused certain areas to come to a complete standstill. For example, the province of Deir ezZour witnessed a complete halt in the education sector more than once as teachers refrained from going to work in fear of being detained. Markets also witnessed a significant decline in both buyers and sellers due to the reluctance of wanted persons to leave their homes in fear of arrest.

In various areas within the Autonomous Administration's control, kidnappings of minors continued in order to recruit them into the People's Protection Units or the Revolutionary Youth Organisation, which is an extremist organisation affiliated with the PKK operating in Syrian territory. The majority of kidnappings target young Kurdish girls, between the ages of 14 and 17. The kidnapped girls are sent to closed camps where the children are 'brainwashed' with the party's ideology, after which they become lifelong soldiers within the party.

The past year of 2021 witnessed a number of demonstrations by the mothers of the kidnapped girls, demanding the disclosure of the fate of their daughters. The fate of any of the kidnapped girls has not been revealed despite the demonstrations, as all concerned parties deny responsibility for the kidnappings.

Displacement, Asylum and Refugee Affairs

Displacement

Statistics conducted by the “Response Coordinators team” earlier this year estimated the number of displaced people in northern Syria to be approximately 2.1 million, out of 4 million residing in the Syrian opposition areas; whilst the camp population totals 1.5 million displaced people living in 1,293 camps, including 282 sporadic camps erected on agricultural lands, and whose residents have no access to any international humanitarian assistance.

Al-Hol Camp conditions

Al-Hol camp was established to populate 10,000 people, but it currently exceeds several times its basic capacity.

An estimated 60,000 displaced people live in Al-Hol camp. According to statistics issued by the Kurdish Autonomous Administration, the camp houses approximately 11,000 ISIS men, 2,000 of whom are foreigners whilst the rest come from Syria and Iraq. However, some local estimates state that the actual number of ISIS members does not exceed hundreds.

The camp suffers from severe medical neglect, in addition to extreme overpopulation and the spread of fatal diseases leading to the death of residents, particularly children.

In a report issued in September 2021, “Save the Children” documented that 62 children died in the camp from the beginning of the year until the date of the report, i.e. about two children per week.

Besides the deplorable humanitarian conditions in the camp, its residents witness two types of violations:

First: Violations committed by the authorities responsible for the camp, i.e. the Autonomous Administration and SDF, as they are in effect besieging the camp by preventing exit from it, even though many of the displaced people inside the camp came for safety from nearby areas during the battles with ISIS, and wish now to return to their homes.

Furthermore, SDF security agencies blackmail the camp's residents. These agencies are engaged in trade and smuggling to and from the camp, therefore through them bribes can be paid and smugglers can get out of the camp, just as goods and even weapons and drugs can be brought in for large sums of money.

Other parties besides the SDF also participate in smuggling operations to and from the camp, the most prominent of which is the Assad regime and its apparatus. Smuggling operations often take place through the delivery tanks and vehicles of the Syrian Red Crescent operating in the camp, especially those operating in the "sanitary and water" sector, benefiting from the fact that their vehicles are often exempted to complete thorough inspections when entering or leaving the camp. There often are cooperators from within the camp guards facilitating the smuggling operations. Several smuggling operations from the camp through the vehicles of the Red Crescent were exposed however no disciplinary follow-up or action were taken.

Second: Violations committed by ISIS members in the camp, particularly in the women's section, as ISIS female members impose political and religious orientations on the rest of the displaced women and children and commit violent actions against them. According to "Save the Children", 73 people were killed due to violence inside the camp from the beginning of 2021 until September.

Children in the camp, whose number according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is estimated at 40,000, are suffering from humanitarian and legal injustice. Many of these children lost their parents during the battles with ISIS, and thus live in the camp without care, which renders them more vulnerable to propaganda programmes conducted by ISIS inside the camp.

Additionally, many of these children lack identity and legal documents that prove their nationality. Even children whose mothers were married to ISIS members were not officially registered at their birth with the countries of their fathers' origin, and after the death of their parents were left without legal proof of identification.

Al-Rukban Camp conditions

The suffering of the displaced people living in Al-Rukban camp, which currently populates 11,000 people, continued in 2021. The camp is besieged by regime forces which prevents aid from reaching it from the

Syrian border, whilst UN Security Council resolutions do not allow humanitarian aid to enter directly through the Jordanian border.

The camp is located within the area of US control, known as the 55-kilometre-zone, and thus both the Syrian regime and Russian forces cannot directly approach the camp.

The United States provides minimal aid to the camp, which helps keep the displaced people there alive.

Russia is seeking to pressurise the camp's residents in order to push them to move into regime areas. Although previous years have seen the movement of thousands of residents into the regime's areas, the remaining ones in the camp refrain out of fear of being arrested or even executed, which is what happened to many who left the camp previously.

Smuggling gangs are also active in the Al-Rukban camp, especially the smuggling of goods and commodities, as well as money transfer services from relatives of the displaced. The smuggling operations take place from the areas controlled by both the SDF and regime forces.

Internal Displacement

The cessation of military battles between actors led to a noticeable decrease in displacement rates in Syria this year. No large-scale waves have been recorded, except for certain cases within the Governorate of Daraa during the attack of the Fourth Division and Iranian militias on areas within Daraa from July through to September.

The battle in Daraa caused the displacement of 81 people from the neighbourhoods of Daraa al-Balad towards northern Syria, most of which were among those who rejected the proposed solutions by the negotiation committee.

The month of May witnessed an agreement regarding the displacement of one village in Quneitra. On 20th May, a convoy carrying approximately 150 people (30 fighters with their families) from the village of Um Batna in the Quneitra suburbs left for the city of Al-Bab in Aleppo suburbs. The displacement took place based on an agreement reached between the Assad regime's military intelligence and influential figures in the region, following an attack targeting a military point for Iranian militias near the village, on 1st May.

The displaced waited for 24 hours at the Abu Al-Zandin crossing in the city of Al-Bab, as the opposition's National Army refused to give them permission to enter, later allowing them to divert to Deir Hassan camp in Idlib suburbs, instead of heading to Al-Bab.

On 27th September, 32 influential figures of Hazano town in northern Idlib issued a statement ordering the evacuation of a displaced camp in the area within 24 hours. The decision was based on a fight between the townspeople and camp residents that took place the previous day on the Idlib - Bab Al-Hawa road, and which led to two people being injured, including the head of the local council of the town. The decision however was not implemented following mediations from several parties.

Asylum & Refugee Affairs

The Syrian refugee crisis has continued for the tenth year in a row. By the end of 2021, the number of refugees registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had reached 5.68 million, an increase of approximately 100,000 refugees from the end of 2020.

In general terms, it is noted that the number of refugees has relatively stabilised since 2018 due to the cessation of major military battles. However, this stability, with the continued increase albeit at decreasing rates, reveals the weak rates of "refugee return", a project that Russia has adopted since 2018, and has sought to promote on both media and political levels.

The project faces a number of main problems, the most prominent of which is the fact that Iran and the Assad regime are not convinced of the idea of refugee return, as this term is in principle absent from their entire political and media literature, given that the return contradicts their project for demographic change in Syria. In addition, Russia has not offered any security guarantees to the refugees, despite its ability to apply pressure on the Syrian security apparatus and Iranian militias.

Consequently, operations in 2021 continued to target refugee returnees, most of whom came from Lebanon with a small percentage coming from Europe, where the arrest of dozens of returnees was documented despite all of the cases having submitted prior requests to obtain a security document allowing their return (similar to obtaining entry visa). In most cases, the returnees had only pursued their return upon being certain that they were not wanted by the regime and had never participated in any activities opposing it.

The year 2021 witnessed negative stances from Denmark towards the Syrian refugees in the country, despite their number not exceeding a few hundred. In late April 2021, the Danish government submitted a bill to parliament that would allow the government to transfer refugees who are not accepted into Denmark and who cannot be repatriated to Syria, to a third country. This bill was accompanied by the announcement of the signing of an agreement between Denmark and Rwanda, which includes the readiness of the latter to be the host country.

In April, the Danish Immigration Office informed hundreds of Syrian refugees whose asylum applications were rejected that it would return them to Syria, based on their assessment of the situation in Damascus and its suburbs as safe and appropriate for the return of refugees. It is worth noting that the Danish government took this stance despite the assessment that was prepared and published by them included testimonies from a number of Syrian organisations confirming that the situation is not safe, neither in Damascus nor any other part of the country.

Syrian asylum-seekers trying to enter the EU from Belarus faced pushbacks and other human rights violations on the Polish border, and were subjected to horrific torture, ill-treatment, inhumane conditions, extortion and various types of abuse at the hands of Belarusian forces.

Amnesty Internationals revealed harrowing testimonies that people including families with children, often in need of immediate help, have been beaten with batons and rifle butts and threatened with security dogs by Belarusian forces, as well as being forced to repeatedly cross the border in dangerous conditions by both Belarussian and Polish authorities.

The conditions of refugees in countries of asylum

The outbreak of the Corona Virus in 2020 led to a noticeable decline in the financial support provided to Syrian refugees, and to humanitarian issues across the world in general due to the international focus on combating the virus, and the large allocations in donor countries to deal with the local effects that the virus left on different economies.

On 29th March 2021, the fifth sitting of the Brussels Conference was held on supporting the future of Syria and the region. The conference was attended by 79 delegations representing 52 countries, eight regional organisations, international financial institutions, 16 United Nations agencies and three humanitarian organisations.

In the fifth sitting, donors pledged \$4.4 billion in addition to \$2 billion for 2022 and 2023 to support Syrian refugees and displaced persons. Additionally, international financial institutions and donors pledged nearly \$7 billion in soft loans.

It was reported that in the fourth sitting of the Brussels Conference in 2020, \$4.9 billion was pledged. In the third sitting of the conference, held in 2019, \$7 billion was pledged. At the second sitting of the conference, held in 2018, \$4.4 billion was pledged. At the first sitting of the conference held in 2017, \$6 billion was pledged.

The following is a detailed breakdown of the situation on Syrian refugees in the three main neighbouring host countries during 2021:

1) Lebanon

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 970,000 Syrian refugees live in Lebanon, whilst the Lebanese government says that it estimates the total number of Syrians at about 1.5 million. The gap between the two numbers is significantly large which is due primarily to reasons related to the Lebanese government's desire to obtain greater international support, and to use numbers in internal political rivalries. This gap (if the government numbers are correct) may also be due to the fact that the description of Syrians in Lebanon is not clear. Some Syrians have been residing in the country pre the events of 2011, others are residents for work or study purposes, and others are the "displaced people" according to the official description of the Lebanese government, which refuses to give them official documents indicating their legal status, further complicated the process of census and integration into Lebanese society. According to UNHCR statistics, 81% of those registered with it are women and children.

The coronavirus crisis has doubled the suffering of Syrian refugees in Lebanon from several aspects, of which the most important are:

- The lack of necessary sterilisation and hygienic materials, including face masks and hand sanitisers, in addition to the difficulty of implementing social distancing measures in refugee camps, which already lack the most basic necessities for a decent life.
- The use of coronavirus restrictions by state institutions and municipalities in order to impose an additional discriminatory policy against refugees. A ban was applied particularly on Syrians before Lebanese citizens, for

example making visits prohibited to them, and most municipalities specified one person to go out to buy necessities for all camp residents. Syrian organisations working in the camp on medical issues said that the number of patients' visits decreased by 80% due to the restrictions imposed on them.

- The Lebanese government has practically refused to include Syrian refugees in the vaccination program against coronavirus, despite promises from Lebanese officials to implement a fair policy in distributing the vaccine. It is noted that the death rate of Syrian and Palestinian refugees due to coronavirus is four or three times the national average, respectively.
- Refugees - like the rest of the population in Lebanon - were affected by the suspension of work during the ban period, and the decline of the Lebanese economy even after the ban was lifted for various reasons. However, refugees are distinguished from the rest of the population by their lack of social networks that would help them to overcome this crisis, even at a minimum level.

In addition to the special treatment that coronavirus restrictions had on refugees, hate speech and racist discriminatory measures in 2021 continued to be widely present in the Lebanese scene.

On 29th April, the municipality of Bar Elias in the Bekaa governorate imposed a curfew after 8pm on Syrian refugees only.

On 30th August, the municipality of Rmeish in Bint Jbeil called on all Syrians residing there to leave within a maximum period of 15 days and demanded that all property owners within the town who had leased to Syrians terminate the lease contracts within this period.

On 12th November, the municipality of Ras Baalbek in the northern Bekaa issued a decision to limit the daily hours in which Syrians are allowed to work, at seven hours a day for less than two dollars, in addition to a curfew for Syrians after seven in the evening until six in the morning, with a ban of receiving guests from outside the town. The town later reversed this decision.

On 18th September, the Maronite Patriarch Bechara Al-Raai called for the forced return of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon to their country, because it was not possible for them to return voluntarily. Al-Raai considered that the war in Syria to be over, adding that they must return to their country and relieve Lebanon of their "burdens." He added: "They live better than

the Lebanese themselves, who are getting poorer. They – Syrian refugees- have jobs, they do business, and they don't have to pay taxes, and at the same time they receive aid from international organisations every month.” Al-Raai said that the “Pope of the Vatican ” changed his position on Syrian refugees in Lebanon after Al-Raai sent him a letter explaining to him the dangers of their presence in Lebanon, and the possibility of political manipulation, given that they are all Sunni Muslims.

2) Turkey

Turkey alone hosts approximately 65% of the refugees registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which by the end of 2021 reached an estimated 3.7 million refugees.

The situation of Syrian refugees in Turkey was lauded as exemplary to a large extent, as many international organisations praised Turkey as a global model with the way it dealt with refugees. However, recent years have witnessed a noticeable change in the situation of refugees in the country, and Syrian refugees specifically, as they make up the vast majority of refugees in Turkey.

The noticeable change is primarily due the refugee issue becoming a major factor in domestic politics, and which is due to two main factors: the first of which is the significant deterioration in the economic situation for the past four years, which triggered Turkish citizens to adopt a negative attitude towards refugees, due to the repetitive statement by government officials that they spend a significant amount on them. This has also led to the widespread misinformation that refugees receive large salaries and aid from the government at the expense of citizens of the country. The second factor is the weaponisation of the refugee issue by Turkish opposition parties, turning it into an electoral issue by blaming the current ruling party for the presence of refugees in the country.

Although opposition parties in Turkey have adopted the anti-refugee discourse, they remain within narrow margins as the parties largely refrain from officially adopting the policies they otherwise declare and speak of. As such, most crude statements have been made by second or third rate politicians and leaders. However, the establishment of ‘Victory Party’ by Umit Ozdag in August 2021 after his dismissal from IYI Party, moved the discussion on Syrian refugees to an advanced level as the discourse of the new far-right party fixates entirely on anti-refugee rhetoric and their expulsion from Turkey.

Throughout 2021, negative attitudes towards refugees worsened and which were reflected in various physical and verbal assaults on Syrian refugees in a number of different cities. These assaults often occurred after personal disputes between a Turkish citizen and a Syrian person, or after an attack by a Syrian person which is responded to with widespread retaliatory attacks that target the rest of the Syrian residents in the region.

The most prominent of these hostile campaigns took place in August 2021, after a Syrian youth stabbed a Turkish man in Ankara, which led to the outbreak of violence against Syrian refugees in the city where both personal and public property were destroyed in an expression of anger towards Syrians; and the violence spread to other areas in the country.

This year also witnessed an escalation of racist rhetoric and policies from several municipalities, towards refugees. Most notably was the Municipality of Bolu, whose mayor is Tancu Özcan, a member of CHP (the opposition's Republican People's Party), adopts an openly racist stance against refugees.

Özcan emerged as mayor of the district due to the promises he made during his electoral campaign, where he promised to cut off the aid provided by the municipality to Syrians in need, in addition to promising to not to grant permits to Syrians to open any businesses in the area. The promise was delivered by Özcan after he assumed his office as mayor, as was revealed through several racist statements of his towards refugees and in particular Syrian refugees. Of Özcan's most glaring announcements, was his proposition in July 2021 to raise the water bill and taxes for Syrians in Bolu ten times more than the usual resident. This proposal caused a nationwide controversy and elicited strong criticism from state officials and politicians from other political parties, including the Republican People's Party to which he belongs.

On July 27th 2021, the Turkish judiciary took action to investigate Ozcan on charges of abusing his position and spreading hate-speech following a complaint submitted by the public prosecutor and human rights associations concerned with the refugee issue. The investigation prompted the municipality to stop voting on the proposal.

On 22nd September, Özcan said that the municipality administration decided that foreigners in Bolu should not go out after 9PM, gather in groups, gaze at women and should reduce the amounts of spices in their meals because these behaviours disturb Turkish citizens in the city.

On 22nd November 2021, the municipality council of Bolu approved the mayor's decision in setting the marriage fee for foreigners to 100,000 Turkish Liras, in comparison to the 800 Liras for citizens and non-citizens in other areas across the country. They further agreed on collecting water bills from foreigners in dollars as the price of water per cubic metre was set at 2.5 dollars. Fifteen members of the council belonging to both IYI Party and the CHP voted for this decision, whilst two of them abstained and 13 others from AKP (the ruling Justice and Development Party) and MHP (Nationalist Movement Party) rejected it.

On 18th September, Mayor of Hatay Metropolitan Municipality, Lütfü Savaş, said that there is an intellectual and social difference between Syrians and Turks, stating that Syrians lag behind the Turkish nation by a period of time ranging between 35-40 years. His statement came in the context of the arrival of Afghan refugees to Turkey, where he claimed that the Afghans are at least a hundred years behind the Turkish people. In the same conversation, Savaş concluded that the integration of refugees into Turkish society is not possible as a result of the cultural difference he had referred to.

3) Jordan

An estimated 670,000 Syrian refugees live in Jordan, which makes up approximately 12% of refugees registered by UNHCR. Roughly 20% of the Syrian refugees live in camps, primarily in Zaatari Camp, which is home to 120,000 refugees and is the largest camp for Syrian refugees in the world. Refugees who do not reside in camps are centralised for the most part in the capital Amman, or in the provinces of Irbid and al-Mafraq which border Syria.

The difficult economic situation in Jordan is the biggest obstacle to Syrians in Jordan. According to a study carried out by a Norwegian institute, more than half of Syrian refugees in Jordan live below the poverty line.

The living situation for refugees deteriorated extensively with the conditions imposed by coronavirus, as measures by the state banning travel and commutes for a long period of time, during nation-wide lockdowns, led to many refugees losing out on sources for their livelihood as they depend on daily work to generate an income.

International Trials and Prosecutions

The year 2021 witnessed a legal movement in several European countries to prosecute those accused of committing crimes against humanity in Syria.

On 24th February, the court of the German city, Koblenz, sentenced Iyad al-Gharib Jad'an to four and a half years in prison, on charges of participating in crimes against humanity, specifically the deprivation of freedom and torture.

Al-Gharib is a former sergeant in the Syrian intelligence, who has been on trial in Germany since March 2020 along with former officer, Anwar Raslan. The sentence against al-Gharib was reduced due to the absence of prosecutors and witnesses against him, unlike the case with Raslan.

The launch of the trial of Raslan and al-Gharib was the first in the world against those accused of committing war crimes in Syria.

On 2nd December, the German prosecutor demanded a life sentence against Raslan, finding him guilty of committing crimes against humanity.

On 28th July, the German Public Prosecution announced the filing of a lawsuit against the Syrian doctor, Alaa Moussa, on charges of torture in a regime military intelligence prison in Homs Governorate, in 2011. The Frankfurt State High Court charged him with crimes against humanity and causing injuries to others. Eighteen cases of torture were identified in which Moussa, who was arrested in Germany a year ago, was involved in.

On 4th August, German authorities arrested a militia from the "Free Palestine Movement" armed faction, Muwaffaq al-Dawah (nicknamed: Abu Bakr). The Federal Prosecutor's Office charged him with committing war crimes in the Yarmouk Palestinian Refugee Camp in Damascus.

Al-Dawah was a member of the "Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command" and then of the "Free Palestine Movement" militia group, which is loyal to the Syrian regime. Both organisations took part in the siege and bombardment of Yarmouk Camp from 2013 to 2018.

The German Public Prosecutor accused Al-Dawah of participating in the bombing of the camp at a time, when Palestinian refugees gathered to receive food aid in 2014, and which caused the death of 7 people, including children.

On 9th August, a French appeals court confirmed the Correctional Court's 4-year prison sentence against Rifa'at al-Assad, in a case of fraudulently collected assets valued at ninety million euros.

On 17th June 2020, the Correctional Court in the French capital, Paris, had sentenced Rifaat al-Assad to four years in prison, and confiscated many of his luxury properties. Thereafter al-Assad lodged an appeal to challenge the entire lawsuit. Court of Appeal hearings for the case began on 5th May, 2021.

The investigation into al-Assad's properties was launched in 2014 after a complaint by "Transparency International" and "Sherpa" organisations was lodged, during which the court confiscated two palaces and dozens of apartments in Paris, a property that includes a palace and horse farm in Val d'Oise, offices in Lyon, and 8.4 million euros from sold properties. In addition, a property in London worth ten million pounds was also frozen.

On 7th October, 2021, it was announced that Rifa'at al-Assad had returned to Damascus after 36 years in exile. It was not revealed how he got out of France despite being under prosecution there. It is believed that his departure was facilitated by French security services.

On 26th August, the court in the German city of Dusseldorf issued prison sentences against two Syrian refugees. The first was sentenced to life imprisonment for committing war crimes, and the second, Sami Al-Saeed, to nine years in prison for providing assistance in the execution of war crimes.

The charges were connected to the murder of a regime military captive officer, where in the charge of the first person was in killing the regime officers, whilst the charge of Sami al-Saeed, was in filming the execution, which happened in 2012 in Deir ez-Zor governorate. The first person was additionally accused of belonging to the Al-Nusra Front. Al-Saeed is a media activist from the city of Mohassan in Deir ez-Zor governorate, and worked as a correspondent for Al-Arabiya satellite channel.

On 10th September, the Dutch judicial police arrested Anas Seif Eddin Ibrahim, a Syrian refugee in the Netherlands. His arrest came on the basis of a complaint submitted by a number of Syrian refugees in the Netherlands, who accused him of monitoring their movements and filing reports against them to Syrian regime intelligence. In accordance with the allegations presented in the lawsuit, Ibrahim was arrested, confirming that

he frequently visited Syria, met with high-ranking military and political figures of the regime and displayed his photos with them on social media.

On 29th October, the Public Prosecutor in the German city of Hamburg accused a Syrian refugee of being a member of the “terrorist” organisation Ahrar al-Sham, and of participating in the siege of the two areas of Kefriya and Foua. This accusation was formed due to his appearance in a video, when he was an armed member of the organisation, recording the justification of the siege of the aforementioned areas.

On 27th November, a court in the German city of Dusseldorf sentenced a German national to ten years in prison for committing a premeditated murder in the city of Manbij, in Aleppo suburbs, while serving with ISIS. Prior to this date, in March 2016, the court had sentenced the same person to four and a half years in prison on charges of belonging to the organisation.



Despite the decline in hostilities, the numbers of Syrian refugees and displaced persons continued to rise in 2021

International Sanction Mechanisms

The year 2021 witnessed a continuation of the application of the international sanctions mechanisms that has been in force since 2011.

On 15th January, the European Union announced the inclusion of Syrian Foreign Minister, Faisal Miqdad, on its sanctions lists. Miqdad was appointed to his post on 22nd November 2020, after the death of his predecessor, Walid Al-Moallem.

On 27th May, the European Union announced the extension of its sanctions imposed on the Syrian for another year, until 1st June, 2022. The sanctions include freezing the assets of 283 regime figures, in addition to banning the export of certain products to Syria.

On 28th July, the US Treasury announced the addition of more people to Caesar's sanctions list, which includes a number of Syrian military and security figures and entities.

The list includes the following figures:

1. Asef Al-Dakr: Brigadier General of Military Intelligence.
2. Malik Ali Habib: Major General of Military Intelligence.
3. Ahmed Deeb: Brigadier General, engineer of the General Intelligence Department.
4. Wafiq Nasser: Brigadier General of the Military Intelligence Division, heading Branch 290 (Military Intelligence in Aleppo) since August 2020.
5. Ahmed Ihsan Fayyad Al-Hayes (Abu Hatem Shaqra): leader of the "Ahrar Al-Sharqiya Gathering" faction of the National Opposition Army, accused of killing "Hevrin Khalaf", former head of the Future Syria Party.
6. Raed Jassem Al-Hayes (Abu Jaafar Shaqra): The Military Chief of the "Ahrar Al-Sharqiya Gathering" faction since 2017, the cousin of Abu Hatim Shaqra.
7. Hassan Suleiman Al-Shaaban: A security official in the "Ahrar Al-Sharqiya Gathering" faction.

8. Faruk Farkachev Faizmatov (Farouq al-Shami), a Tajik citizen who works as a war journalist with a number of foreign factions in Idlib.

The list also included a number of entities, namely:

1. Ahrar al-Sharqiya Gathering: A faction within the opposition's National Army.
2. Saraya Al-Areen: A militia headquartered in the city of Qardaha in Lattakia suburbs. It was established in 2012, and is headed by Yasar Talal Al-Assad. The militia was fully affiliated with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard until 2018, when Russia demobilised its "guardianship battalion", and began to gradually reduce the number of its members. The demobilised members of this militia however were already moving to work in the "Al-Areen Company for Guard Services", which is run by both brothers Osama and Amer Al-Maliki, and who work primarily for Iran's favour.
3. Branch 215 (Raids and Storming Brigade): The branch is affiliated with the Military Intelligence Service, located in the Kafr Sousa neighbourhood in Damascus and headed by Brigadier General Staff of Military Intelligence "Osama Sayyoh" (not subject to sanctions).
4. Branch 216 (Patrols Branch): The branch is affiliated to the Military Intelligence Service, located in the Al-Qazzaz neighbourhood in Damascus and headed by Brigadier General, Staff of Military Intelligence, "Suleiman Musa Qanat" (not subject to sanctions).
5. Branch 227 (District Branch): The branch is affiliated with the Military Intelligence Service, located in the Kafr Sousa neighbourhood in Damascus and has been headed by Brigadier General in Military Intelligence "Kamal Al-Hussein" since August 2020 (not subject to sanctions).
6. Branch 235 (Palestine Branch): The branch is affiliated with the Military Intelligence Service, located in the Al-Qazzaz neighbourhood on the Airport Road in Damascus and has been headed by Brigadier General, Staff of Military Intelligence, "Majid Ibrahim" since August 2020 (not subject to sanctions).
7. Branch 248 (Military Interrogation Branch): The branch is affiliated with the Military Intelligence Service, located in the Mezzeh neighbourhood in Damascus and has been headed by Brigadier

General, Staff in Military Intelligence, "Ahmed Qusaybati" since August 2020 (not subject to sanctions).

8. Branch 251 (Al-Khateeb Branch): The branch is affiliated to the General Intelligence Department, located in the Al-Khateeb neighbourhood in Damascus and headed by Brigadier General Engineer in the General Intelligence "Ahmed Ali Deeb" (included in sanctions).
9. Branch 290 (Military Intelligence Branch in Aleppo): The branch is affiliated with the Military Intelligence Service and has been headed by Wafiq Nasser since August 2020.
10. Sednaya Prison: It is affiliated to the Military Intelligence Service and located in Sednaya in Rif Dimashq.

This list does not include any companies or businessmen who work for the regime's interest, as was the case in previous versions of the Caesar's Act sanctions. For the first time, the sanctions also targeted a military faction of the armed Syrian opposition, as well as another armed faction affiliated with the regime and supported by Iran, due to its participation in a military action that threatened to disrupt the existing ceasefire in Idlib. The importance of this Act is that it is the first Syria-related sanctions list to be issued during the Biden Administration.

On 12th August, the British Treasury issued a decision to lift the sanctions imposed on the Syrian businessman, Tarif al-Akhras who was added to the European Union's sanctions list in September 2011 as one of the businessmen who benefits from and supports the regime. The European Union rejected the appeal submitted by Akhras, in April 2016, requesting the lifting of sanctions against him.

The British Foreign Office said this action followed a regular review of UK sanctions.

This is the first time that the British government has removed a person's name from the list of sanctions imposed under the new rules adopted after Britain's exit from the European Union.

On 2nd October, the British government lifted its sanctions on five figures connected to the Syrian regime. The decision included the removal of:

1. Nizar Al-Assad: One of the most prominent businessmen supporting the Syrian regime. The reason for removing his name from the sanctions lists was not justified.
2. Ahmed Al-Qadri: A businessman whose name was removed due to his death in September 2020.
3. Muhammad Ma'an Zain al-Abidin Jazbeh: Former Minister of Industry, whose name was removed due to his death in January 2020.
4. General Ali Habib: Former Minister of Defence, whose name was removed due to his death in March 2020.
5. Salam To'omah: Former Minister of Agrarian Reform, whose name was removed due to his death in July 2021.

On 11th October, the Council of the European Union issued a decision extending the sanctions system that permits the imposition of preventive measures against entities and persons responsible for the development and use of chemical weapons in Syria, and who provide financial, technical or material support for this, for an additional year until 16th October, 2022. The extension of European sanctions included:

1. The Scientific Research Centre, an institution responsible for developing and manufacturing Syrian chemical weapons.
2. Colonel Tariq Yasmina, a liaison officer between the Republican Palace and the Centre for Scientific Studies and Researches.
3. Khaled Nasri, the head of "Institute 1000" at the Centre for Scientific Research.
4. Dr. Khaled Zoughaib, the Head of the Institute 2000 at the Scientific Research Centre.
5. Colonel Firas Ahmed, the Head of the Security office at the "Institute 1000" at the Scientific Research Centre.
6. Dr. Saeed Saeed, a researcher at the Institute 3000 at the Scientific Research Centre.

On 15th November, the European Union announced the addition of four Syrian regime ministers to the European sanctions lists. The ministers are:

1. Amr Salem: Minister of Internal Trade.

2. Boutros Al-Hallaq: Minister of Information.
3. Mohamed Seif El-Din: Minister of Labour.
4. Diala Barakat: Minister of State.

On 8th December, pursuant to the Caesar Act, the US Treasury imposed sanctions on five security and military figures in the Syrian regime, they are:

1. Tawfiq Muhammad Khaddour: Commander of the 22nd Air Division, who was the commander of the 30th Brigade that dropped barrel bombs carrying chemicals on Eastern Ghouta, in February 2018.
2. Muhammad Yousef Al-Hasori: Major-General 70 in the T-4 military base, who had carried out air strikes himself on civilian areas in Syria, one of which is believed to have been those which targeted Khan Sheikhoun with chemical weapons, in April 2017.
3. Adeeb Nimr Salama: Assistant Director of Air Force Intelligence who is responsible for recruiting the "Shabiha" and transforming them into organised militias, starting from 2012.
4. Kamal Al-Hasan: The commander of Branch 227 (District Branch) of Military Security, having previously led Branch 235 (Palestine Branch) of Military Security. Branch 227 is the branch from which most of the victims whose photographs were smuggled by the Caesar photographer, were in.
5. Qahtan Khalil: Major-General in the Air Force Intelligence, head of the security committee in the south, and one of the officers accused of being directly responsible for the 2012 Daraya massacre.

The Syrian Human Rights Committee (SHRC)

The Syrian Human Rights Committee (SHRC) is an independent human rights organisation concerned with defending general liberties and human rights of the Syrian people through several practices, which include:

Exposing the human rights violations, assaults and aggressions against Syrian citizens and publishing such incidents to the international media, addressing and following-up on such reported incidents with all concerned entities.

Conducting research, studies, and reports on the human rights conditions in Syria, while utilising scientific research methodologies and investigative verification.

Raising awareness and promoting the principles of human rights in the Syrian society and encouraging its members to continuously demand their rights through peaceful means.

SHRC adheres to cooperating with all entities concerned in the defence and advocacy of human rights principles, while preserving the independence of the committee.



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SYRIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE (SHRC)

INFO@SHRC.ORG

WWW.SHRC.ORG