



مجموعة العمل من أجل فلسطينيي سورية
Action Group For Palestinians of Syria

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التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"Palestinian Refugee Detained in Turkey"

- 329 Palestinian Refugees Missing in War-Torn Syria
- Palestinian Refugee Samer AlSahli Held in Syrian Gov't Jail since 2011
- 72 Torture Tactics Wrought by Syrian Regime on Prisoners

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Latest Developments

Palestinian refugee from Syria Saer Munib AlLaham has been detained in Istanbul for illegally entering the country and failing to obtain the temporary protection card “kimlik”.

Activists said Saer has been held in a Turkish gendarmerie detention center on the country’s Asian side. He is very likely to be pushed back to Syria.

Activists and refugees’ families have appealed to the Palestinian Authority, Palestine Embassy, and all other concerned bodies to urge the Turkish authorities to backtrack on their crackdowns on Palestinians from Syria and provide them with the physical and legal protection they quite urgently need.



Unofficial statistics indicate that 8,000 Palestinians from Syria have sought shelter in Turkey, where they have been facing dire socio-economic conditions and denied access to the local labor market.

Turkish embassies continue to prevent Palestinian refugees from Syria from obtaining visas. As a result, hundreds of Palestinians have embarked on life-threatening journeys via illegal immigration



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roads to reach Turkey, fleeing war-tattered Syria, among other war-stricken zones.

Recently, Turkish police stepped down crackdowns and abduction sweeps targeting irregular migrants and non-holders of the kimlik visa card in Istanbul.

Nearly 2,400 Palestinian families from Syria have sought shelter in Turkey, including 1,200 families in Istanbul, where they have been facing an abject situation.

Khayra Ummah organization estimated that 400 Palestinian families from Syria without kimlik visas have been taking refuge in Turkey, including 300 families in Istanbul.

Meanwhile, 329 Palestinian refugees, including 37 women and girls, have gone missing since the outbreak of the Syrian warfare, AGPS has found out.

Most of those who have disappeared in the country are residents of Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees, south of Damascus.

Activists have accused pro-government militias of targeting Palestinians in arbitrary abduction sweeps carried out under the security guise. Scores of families have been blackmailed over the release of their missing relatives and have paid large sums of money to brokers, crooked lawyers, or government officials to get pieces of information about their conditions and whereabouts.

AGPS believes that the number is far higher due to the gag orders enforced by the Syrian authorities on the detainees' fates and names, along with the reluctance of the refugee families to reveal



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the names of their deceased or missing relatives for fear of retaliation.

AGPS believes that the arbitrary internment and enforced disappearance of Palestinian refugees in war-torn Syria amounts to a war crime.

Affidavits by ex-detainees provided evidence on the involvement of Syrian government officers in harsh torture tactics, including electric shocks, heavy beating using whips and iron sticks, and sexual abuse against forcibly-disappeared Palestinians, in a flagrant violation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, commonly known as the United Nations Convention against Torture (UNCAT).

AGPS continues to urge the Syrian government to disclose the fate of scores of Palestinians forcibly disappeared in state-run dungeons, release the bodies of those tortured to death, seriously work on halting harsh torture tactics, launch fact-finding probes into crimes of torture, and to bring those involved in such crimes before courts.

Along the same line, Palestinian refugee Samer Tawfiq AlSahli has been secretly locked up in Syrian government jails for eight years running.

Samer, born in 1987, was arrested at a government checkpoint pitched in Jdeidat Artouz, in Rif Dimashq. His condition and whereabouts remain unknown.



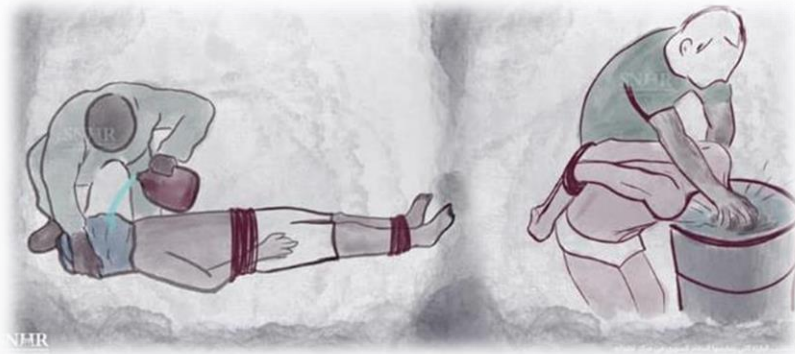
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According to AGPS data, at least 1,768 Palestinian refugees have been secretly held in Syria's state-run penal complexes.

In the meantime, a human rights monitor said the Syrian regime inflicts at least 72 kinds of torture on prisoners in its detention facilities.

According to a report by the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), different methods of torture have resulted in the deaths of at least 185 people this year and more than 14,000 over the course of the civil war.

SNHR found out that forms of torture perpetrated by the Syrian authorities range from scalding with boiling hot water and slicing off body parts to rape and other sexual violence, and medical neglect including allowing junior doctors to use prisoners for surgical training.



Another practice involves leaving detainees who are slipping into delirium in cells with healthier captives. Several torture survivors told the Syrian Network SNHR that sharing a cell with such prisoners – who would often be hallucinating or crying hysterically – was “worse than the physical torture inflicted on them by the Syrian regime”.



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The organization established the torture methods from interviews with survivors and witnesses and estimated the death toll partly by examining more than 6,000 pictures of murdered captives exposed by a former photographer known by the alias Caesar.

One witness account claimed prison officers used the back of a grenade to smash the teeth of a detained 15-year-old boy. “On one occasion they sprayed insecticide all over [the boy’s] body, set him on fire then wrapped his body with gauze, and from time to time they peeled the gauze [and] lifted his skin with a blade,” says the witness, himself a torture survivor.

As the report reveals, almost 1.2 million Syrian citizens have been arrested and detained at some point in the Syrian regime’s detention centers, including 130,000 individuals who are still detained or forcibly disappeared by the Syrian regime, since March 2011.

The report stresses that, despite the overwhelming evidence against it, the Syrian regime has not admitted to any torture in its facilities or carried out any investigation. Instead, the regime continues to support the officers who issued the torture orders, promoting them to senior positions, and using other state institutions as part of its torture machine by registering the forcibly disappeared persons killed in its detention centers as deceased at civil registry departments often years after their demise, in violation of Syrian law and the rules of registration of deaths in prisons, which are provided for in articles 38 and 39 of the Syrian Civil Status Law. The Syrian regime also violates the Syrian Constitution, specifically in paragraph 2 of Article 53.



The report reveals that between March 2011 and September 2019, at least 14,298 individuals, including 178 children and 63 women were documented as dying due to torture at the hands of the main parties to the conflict in Syria, including 14,131 killed at the hands of the Syrian Regime forces, 173 of whom were children and 45 of whom were women. In addition to this, a further 57 individuals, including two children and 14 women, were documented as dying due to torture at the hands of extremist groups, 32 of whom, including one child and 14 women, died in ISIS' prisons, while 25 others, including one child, died as a result of torture in Hay'at Tahrir al Sham's prisons.

The report also reveals that 43 individuals, including one child and one woman, were documented as dying due to torture in prisons of factions of the Armed Opposition, with 47 other individuals also documented as dying due to torture at the hands of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, including one child and two women. The report also notes that at least 20 individuals were documented as dying as a result of torture at the hands of other parties.

As the report notes, Syrian Regime forces have systematically and extensively practiced the crime of torture, reaching the extent of deliberately killing victims, violating the right to life, as well as constituting a flagrant violation of international human rights law. Killings as a result of torture constitute crimes against humanity under Article VII of the Rome Statute and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law, which amount to war crimes, forming a systematic and repetitive pattern, and can thus be classified as extermination.



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The Syrian watchdog called on the United Nations General Assembly, the International Criminal Court, the states which are parties to the Convention against Torture, the international community, the OHCHR, the UN Human Rights Council and all other concerned bodies to take the necessary measures in order to establish their jurisdiction over perpetrators of torture and take serious punitive measures against the Syrian regime to deter it from continuing to torture civilians to death.

According to AGPS data, 610 Palestinian refugees were fatally tortured in Syrian government lock-ups, where at least 1,768 others have been secretly held.