

Press Statement: Survivors Tell Horrific Stories of Egregious Violations inside the Cellars of Hamida al-Taher Checkpoint

[Syrians for Truth and Justice](#)/STJ in a [new report](#) said that egregious human rights violations had been committed inside the detention center known as Hamida al-Taher checkpoint in [Daraa](#) province, southern [Syria](#), according to testimonies collected recently from survivors and detainees.

[Hamida al-Taher checkpoint](#) was installed in December 2011 and it is administratively affiliated to the Military Security Branch in Daraa, which follows the Department of the Military Intelligence in Syria (Military Security), it is located in an important strategic location for the Syrian regular forces. The checkpoint was named after a nearby park (Hamida al-Taher Park).

Hamida al-Taher checkpoint is not like other security and military checkpoints as it has evolved from a security checkpoint to a huge security facility that contains secret rooms underground, in the basement of Afaq Educational Institute, which has become a place to practice the most heinous forms of torture according to people interviewed by [STJ](#).

One survivor of Hamida al-Taher checkpoint said that she had been beaten and tortured during the interrogation sessions, while at the same time she witnessed many other cases of torture against other women in the detention, she described her experience in the checkpoint saying:

"Seven days after the arrest, I was kicked out of the "solo", where an element started torturing me by hitting me with a rifle butts on all parts of body and telling me:" Here every day we kill a person, and you may now be the next." I was then placed in a small room 3 × 2 meters for two days with another girl, arrested a few days before me, she was accused of being a media activist. During those two days, two elements came in, punched, slapped and kicked us with whips in their hands, they also insulted us, and they deliberately beat the sensitive areas of our body. "

Another witness who was arrested by elements of the checkpoint said in his testimony that the checkpoint elements conducted sexual violence against other detainees, especially the young ones, in addition to suffocating other detainees.

[The report lists testimonies and stories](#) of seven detainees and survivors by elements of Hamida al-Taher checkpoint in different occasions; in addition, the report based-team has spoken to several local activists to explain the mechanism of the checkpoint's work and the overall context. The report came in (29) pages.