

August 2017



Mother Said: Abduction, not Arrest

Account of the Disappeared Abdallah Mazen as-Saud by Military Security



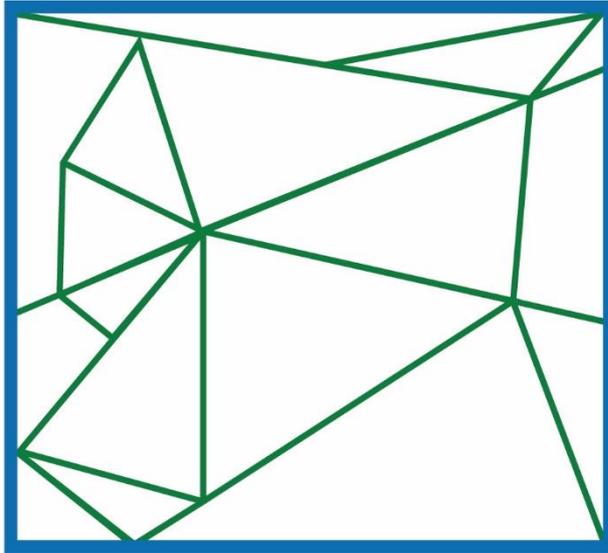
About Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ

[Syrians for Truth and Justice /STJ](#) is a nonprofit, nongovernmental, independent Syrian organization. STJ includes many defenders and human rights defenders from Syria and from different backgrounds and affiliations, including academics of other nationalities.

The organization works for Syria, where all Syrians, without discrimination, should be accorded dignity, justice and equal human rights.

سوريون
من أجل
الحقيقة
والعدالة

Syrians
For Truth
& Justice





Abdullah Mazen as-Saud, born on May 3, 1989, in Ma'arat Nu`man Idlib country side, was a student at Aleppo University, Faculty of Arts-Department of Sociology, second year, he is single. Abdullah participated in the Syrian uprising since the beginning. On March 5, 2011, he was arrested for the first time at the State Security Branch in Aleppo, for two months, because of some leaflets on social media sites.

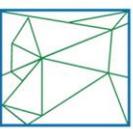
Abdurrahman as-Saud, Abdullah's brother¹ told [Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ](#) about the day of his brother's disappearance:

“On Tuesday, February 12, 2012, Abdullah and I were driving our car to Aleppo, we stopped at al-Ahram petrol station on Aleppo Highway to provide gasoline. However, there was always a military security patrol located at this station, some elements of the patrol wore military uniforms, olive colored, and others were dressed in civil clothes. Suddenly some elements approached our car and asked our identity cards, then asked us to escort them to the branch saying it was a routine visit and it would not take more than a quarter an hour. Indeed they took us to the Military Security Branch in Aleppo, seized our private car, which completely disappeared after the incident. However, as for me, the visit lasted for three months instead of a quarter of an hour, whereas, my brother Abdallah was never released. Later, we learned that he was wanted and that there were some denunciations against him.”

Abdullah and Abdurrahman's mother was interviewed along with his brother about the period of their disappearance, they said:

“When my two sons were arrested, we had no information about what happened to them or their whereabouts, or the party that abducted them so ... The process was therefore described as abduction rather than arrest. At first, I thought that they were abducted and killed, (this usually happened in the area

¹ The interview was conducted on 17 July 2017 via the Internet.

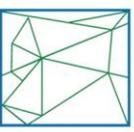


where the abduction happened as they threw the bodies on the roadside). Then, I contacted their friends to help me find their bodies on the roads that link Aleppo, Saraqib and Ma'arat Nu'man in Idlib countryside. On Thursday, February 23, 2012, which means three days later, my third son, Omar, and I participated in demonstration at Aleppo University yard. Anyway, during the demonstration, Omar was arrested for two days then released on Saturday as he was able to convince them that he was a student and had nothing to do with the demonstration. During the interrogation, the interrogator said: Did not you and your brothers get enough from demonstrations in Ma'arat Nu'man to come to Aleppo as well? At that time, Omar realized that his brothers were in the same branch. The coincidence was when Omar met Abdallah in the bathrooms, so we were assured that Abdallah and my other son Abdurrahma were at the Military Security Branch in Aleppo."

Abdurrahman described the detention conditions, he said:

"Following our arrest, my brother Abdullah and I were parted and put in two separate cells, but I met him again when they transformed us to al-Balloon Prison in Homs, then to the Military Police Branch located in Qaboun, Damascus, after that they transferred us to Branch 215 affiliated to the Military Intelligence Division. We stayed for four days without being investigated, but we were beaten and tortured continuously. Then we were transferred to Branch 291, a special section designated to detain soldiers, but due to overcrowding of other security branches, they transferred large numbers of civilians to this branch as well.

After they separated us from each other in Branch 291, They began the interrogation. I was accused of demonstrating, but my brother Abdullah was accused of being a media activist, a member in a coordination in addition to participating in demonstrations. That was the last time I saw Abdullah in Branch 291, late of March 2012, specifically when they finished the interrogation."

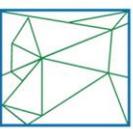


Since then Abdullah's family lost news of him for two consecutive years, until one of the former detainees/released from Atarib in Aleppo countryside who was detained in Palestine Branch 235, contacted the family and told them that he had met Abdullah there. Therefore, the family followed the released detainees news from all branches, and they managed to know all the branches that Abdullah was transferred to. He was deported from Branch 291 to Palestine Branch 235, and then to the Administrative Branch 248, then to Sednaya Military Prison, knowing that the family got news about Abdullah's death in the detention, but it was found later that the news was untrue because of the similarity of information about Abdullah's name with other detainee's information.

Abdullah's family tried to know something and asked about him in several branches, including the Military Police Branch in Damascus, but they could not get any information. The last news About Abdullah was two years ago, in 2015, when two persons released from Sednaya Military Prison told the family that Abdullah was in the Red building inside the prison.

Abdullah's family was subjected to a lot of financial blackmails, each time they tried to conduct a process of Search, a search process for the names of the wanted people in the database of the security apparatuses in Syria, they paid 100,000 Syrian pounds, which equals \$500 at the time; this process used to conduct by some lawyers.

In addition, the family paid many bribes to some elements of the Military Police in Damascus to determine the fate of Abdullah whether he is still alive or dead. The largest blackmail was by an officer of the Republican Palace identified as Ammar al-Younis who claimed that he was able to release Abdullah; he falsified some papers indicating that Abdullah had been transferred among the security branches; he also claimed that he was able to put Abdullah's name in the lists of Presidential Amnesty. His parents had already appointed a lawyer to follow the papers of the Officer Ammar, but when the lawyer discovered counterfeiting the documents, the officer arrested him. Abdullah's family had paid the officer two



million Syrian pounds, approximately \$10,000 at the time. In the last time, the officer asked for 10 million Syrian pounds, equivalent to \$50,000 to release Abdullah. Anyway, his family later knew that many families were also subjected to blackmails by the same person, even though they paid money, but in vain.

Abdullah's mother spoke about her suffering after the disappearance of her son, she said:

“Abdullah missing affected us a lot, as we always hoped to see him again especially when we heard any news about him, or when we received any promises from brokers or lawyers, but then the hope faded and evaporated over time and all hopes focused on a mere news about whether my son was alive or dead. Our suffering was not because of the money we paid, money comes, money goes, but the real suffering was the hope they planted in our hearts every time. Every time the brokers told us that he would be released within days, we started arranging the house to receive him, and we stop preparing the dishes he loved until he comes to prepare them for him, but we always encountered disappointment because he never came.”

Abdurrahman, Abdullah's brother, said that suffering of the detainees is very large, so that he sometimes wished death to his brother to rest of the agony that accompany him, he said:

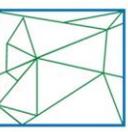
“What Abdullah encounters daily is thousand times more difficult than death.”

When photos of the detainees who died in the vaults of the Syrian Security facilities, photos of Caesar, were published, Abdullah's family searched for their son's photo. Indeed his brother could find a photograph of a person look like Abdullah, but this person, the one in the photo, was very thin and distorted, which raised the doubt that this person is their son, given this person had lost too



much weight. Abdullah's mother could not confirm that it was her son's photograph.







Photos of Abdullah Mazen as-Saud – Source: His family



Photo of Abdullah with his friend Ahmad as-Said who's also disappeared since 5 years – Source: His family