

August 2017

# Small Family Torn Apart After his Absence

Account of the Disappeared Basil Bekdash by the Air Intelligence Service



## About Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ

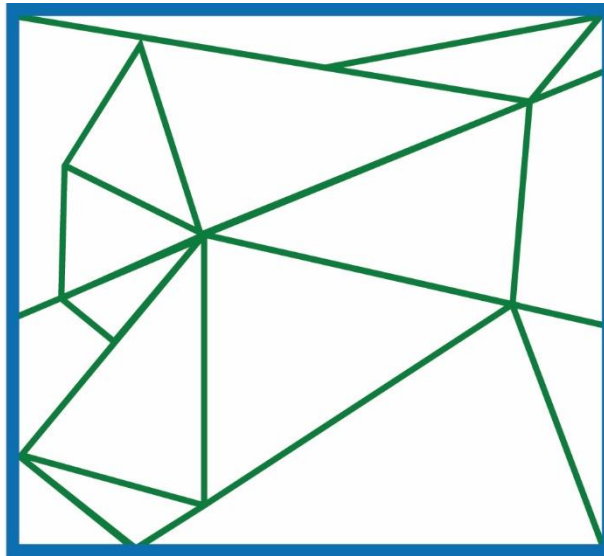
[Syrians for Truth and Justice /STJ](#) is a nonprofit, nongovernmental, independent Syrian organization. STJ includes many defenders and human rights defenders from Syria and from different backgrounds and affiliations, including academics of other nationalities.

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

سوريون  
من أجل  
الحقيقة  
والعدالة  

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Syrians  
For Truth  
& Justice





The disappeared Basil Mustafa Bekdash, from Latakia countryside, born in 1984, holds a high school certificate. He used to be a taxi driver. He is married with a twin daughter they are Jana and Ghina, 8 years old.

Mustafa Naif Bakdash, the father of the disappeared Basil who testified<sup>1</sup> to Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ and said that Basil, being a taxi driver, used to transport people to some areas from which the demonstrations against the rule of the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad took off, like al-Sulaibiya and al-Ramel Palestinian in Latakia. One day in March 2011, he was arrested by an Air Intelligence patrol that exist permanently on al-Yamdia Road in the Turkmen Mountain. Basil's family immediately started asking about him and they learned from one of the elements identified as A. al-Ali who was serving at the Air Intelligence Branch that Basil was charged of "terrorism" therefore he was transferred to Sednaya Military Prison about a month after his arrest.

About a year after the arrest of Basil, one of the released from Sednaya Military Prison called Basil's family from a public landline without identifying his name fearful of surveillance on the phone. He told the parents that he had met Basil at Sednaya Military Prison in September 2011, and that Basil was wearing jeans and a torn jacket, he was skinny and his beard was long, his color turned to be black, and that he could not talk to him very much fearful of the jailers.

Basil's family tried many ways to get him out of prison. They paid large amounts estimated to more than 500,000 Syrian pounds, equivalent to \$ 7,000, in two installments to a broker called A. Abu al-Ala, who had close relations with all the security branches in Latakia, but the broker extorted them without giving them any results, they even could not visit their son in prison. Basil's father spoke about their suffering as a result of the disappearance of Basil, he says:

***"My son's family disintegrated because of his disappearance, as Basil's wife filed for divorce from her disappeared husband was absent for more than three years. The [Sharia Court Judge in Latakia identified as Ali al-Sheikh divorced her. She left her two daughters here with us, went to her parents' house, and got married later, and after her marriage, she demanded to raise her children, so we resorted to the court to prevent that since it is not acceptable for us to let her stranger husband raise the two daughters and this was agreed upon. We are now doing our best to raise Jana and Ghina and compensate them for the care of the father and mother's tenderness. We were subject to considerable financial hardship because of the sums and expenses we had paid following the disappearance of my son; we had to borrow some of these amounts from our relatives. My son's family broke up after his arrest and the children separated from the parents, but we still have hope for his return.](#)*"**

<sup>1</sup> The interview was conducted on 16 July 2017, at the disappeared's father's house in Mukhayim al-Wafideen in Lattakia countryside.





Photo of Basil Bekdash – Source: His family