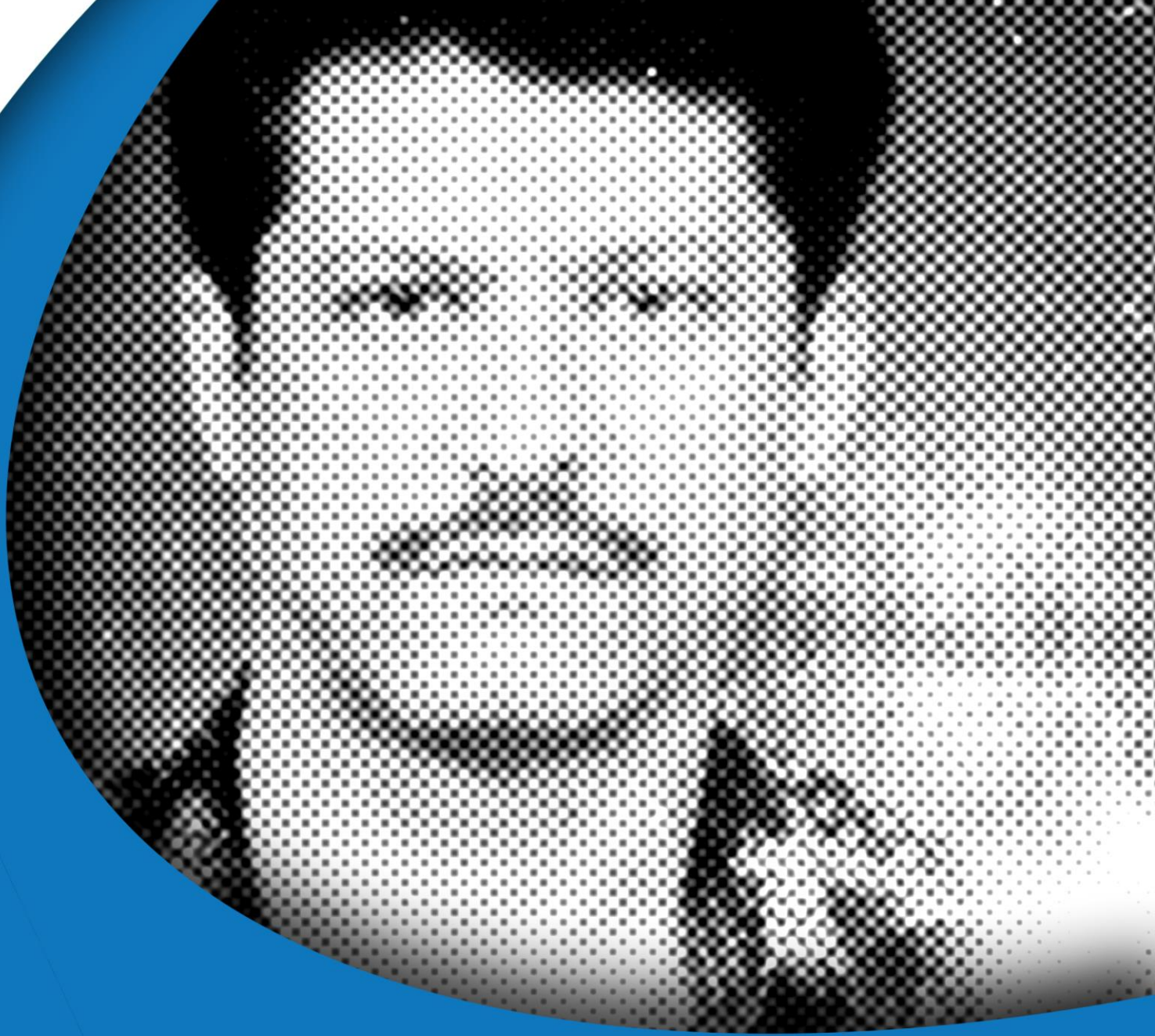


August 2017



## Happiness Delayed until his Fate is Known

Account of the Disappeared Zakaria Abdel Majid Ahmed by District Branch (227)



## About Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ

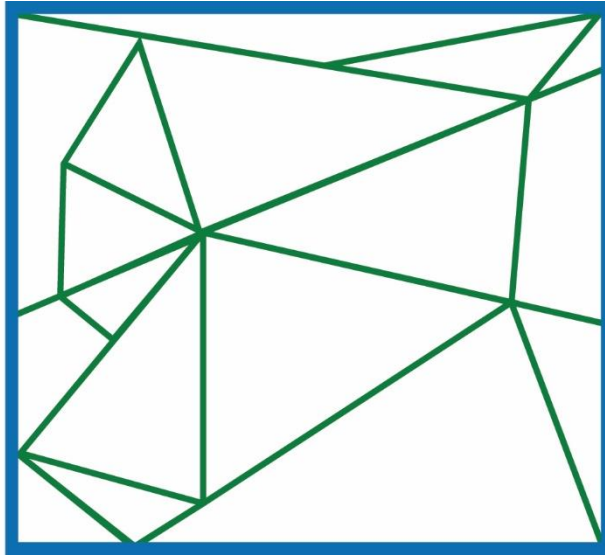
[Syrians for Truth and Justice /STJ](#) is a nonprofit, nongovernmental, independent Syrian organization. STJ includes many defenders and human rights defenders from Syria and from different backgrounds and affiliations, including academics of other nationalities.

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





Zakaria Abdel Majid Ahmed, born in Damascus in 1967, his mother is Latifa. He is married with seven children; they are Bashar, Majd, Bushra, Maher, Muhammad, Ruba and Bakr. He used to work in freelance just before his disappearance.

October 10, 2012, several heavily armed elements of the District Branch 227, dressed in military uniforms, broke into his house located in Daf al-Shok area in Damascus, and asked about the eldest son, Bashar, because of his participation in the demonstrations that took place in al-Zahira neighborhood, Damascus against the President Bashar al-Assad's regime. They also insulted the father in the presence of his wife and his children, his 22-year-old son Majd said. However, Bashar was not at home at that moment, so the security elements arrested his father and took his own car after assaulting and beating him and his two sons. Moreover, they told the family that they would release the father if only Bashar surrendered voluntarily; the mother's pleas to release her husband never worked.

Following the arrest of Zakaria, the father, elements of the District Branch raided the family's house several times looking for Bashar, the son, so the whole rest of the family were forced to flee to Jordan and left the house that was later seized by the security elements who settled another family loyal to them in the house. This takeover was illegally carried out without any official documents to show the "Attachment", Majd, the son said.

One year after their asylum in Jordan, late of 2013, the family returned to Syria upon a request by the mother who hoped to know the fate of her disappeared husband Zakaria whom news was lost completely. The family did returned to Syria, not to its confiscated house, but it was forced to stay at the grandfather's house located in the western town of al-Ghariyah in Daraa. Zakaria's family tried to know any information about him; they met several brokers/intermediaries who claimed that they were able to know the father's whereabouts or take him out of detention. As a result, the family paid large sums of money that exceeded one and a half million Syrian pounds, equivalent to approximately \$6000 at the time, but in vain.

According to Majd, prior to six months, early of 2017, one of the brokers told him that his father Zakaria was held in Sednaya Military Prison and asked for 2 million Syrian pounds in exchange for only an evidence to his saying. However, the family was unable to afford this amount; in addition, it no longer trusted those brokers who sometimes claimed to be officers in the security branches without identifying their true names.

Zakaria's family suffered lots of material losses that began with the security elements' taking possession of the disappeared's car, their [seizure](#) of the family's house, besides the family paid



of a lot of money to the brokers to know the fate of the father, they had to sell their motorcycle in order to afford some of these sums as well. Majd described this suffering saying:

***"My father's absence had a significant financial effect on us as he was the main breadwinner. Following his arrest, we suffered greatly, especially because of the current conditions, the lack of job opportunities, and the circumstances of the ongoing war and displacement. We still depend mainly on the aid provided by the United Nations, but this assistance does not meet the needs of the entire family, which forced us, the young, to work in the field of freelance (construction work) in order to make our daily living. Above all, the Syrian military aircraft bombed our house in the western town of al-Ghariyah with an explosive barrel bombs in 2015 causing serious injuries to my brother who subsequently recovered from it.***

***Our lives have been turned upside down and was completely destroyed after my father's arrest as my younger brother, Bakr, recognizes my father only through the photos because my mother was pregnant when my father was arrested, and Bushra, my sister, married after the incident but her marriage was full of grief more than happiness because of my father's absence. Every day, my mother cries waiting for my father's return from the unknown; she is still implanting hope in our souls that he is still alive and will return someday."***



Picture of Zakaria Abdel Majid Ahmed – Source his family

