

June 2018



Compulsory Conscription Continue in Raqqa and Manbij and Protests Against It

Arrests Under the Law on Mandatory Self-Defence Duty Stipulated by Defense Committee of Autonomous

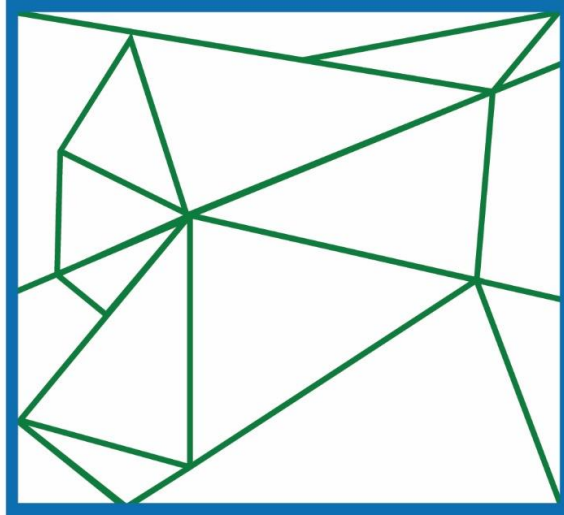
About Syrians for Truth and Justice

[Syrians for Truth and Justice \(STJ\)](#) is an independent, non-governmental and non-profit organization whose members include Syrian human rights defenders, advocates and academics of different backgrounds and nationalities. It also includes members of other nationalities.

The initiative strives for SYRIA, where all Syrian citizens (males and females) have dignity, equality, justice and equal human rights.

سوريون
من أجل
الحقيقة
والعدالة

Syrians
For Truth
& Justice





Compulsory Conscription Continue in Raqqa and Manbij and Protests Against It

*Arrests Under the Law on Mandatory Self-Defence Duty Stipulated by Defense Committee of
Autonomous Administration on July 21, 2014*

Pro-Autonomous Administration forces carried out storming campaigns against scores of youths for the purpose of recruitment in Raqqa province and Manbij city during May 2018 and early June, the current, and sent many young men to forced conscription, which was approved under the Mandatory Self-Defense Duty Law on July 21, 2014, as confirmed by several local sources to STJ.

STJ had prepared a special report regarding the conscription in al-Hasakeh province entitled "[Recruitment under "Self-Defense" Increased in al-Hasakeh Province- Recruiting Dozens of Youths in Training Camps although they are Excluded from Compulsory Military Service](#)". The report illustrates the recruitment from the viewpoint of the international laws that are applicable during the Syrian conflict as well as other relevant laws.

on June 5, Mohamed Othman, a local media man from Raqqa, said in an interview with STJ, that elements of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) has detained three youths in ar-Remeilah neighborhood in Raqqa city since the beginning of this month/June, and has sent them to mandatory recruitment, pointing out that the civil registry (domicile) of these young men follow the northern countryside of Raqqa. No arrests recorded against the youths from the residents of Raqqa itself during June.

However, the activist added that in May 2018, he had counted the arrest of 15 young men from Raqqa city who were sent to conscription, and had registered about five storming operations of houses in the same month. In this regard, local media outlets spoke of [the arrest of 30 young men](#) at an-Nae'em Roundabout and as-Sa'a Roundabout in Raqqa on May 30, 2018.

The activist illustrated that the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) deploys temporary checkpoints, known as flying checkpoints, around the city, concentrated in the neighborhoods of ar-Remeilah, al-Mushleb and Saqiya, in which elements of Arab, and Kurd components are on the day shift whereas only elements of Arab component are on the night shift.

According to Mohammed Othman, the pace of arrest campaigns for conscription is different, since the elements intensify their activity over a month and a half and then stop for about 10 days because it is linked to the start of new camps. Othman said that persons called up for conscription are of military age i.e. who were born in 1986 or in 2000.

الدورة العاشرة
6/5/2018

تبدأ من 15/5/2018

1/1/1986
2000

إلى جميع المواطنين
من هم أعمارهم ضمن

01 ساهم في حماية بلدك

02 حمايتكم من حمايتنا

03 احمي وطنك بالانضمام إلينا

04 أنت معنا لأننا أنت تحمي بلدك

كل تأخير عن موعد
أعلاه يعتبر تخلفاً

مراجعة مركز واجب
الدفاع الذاتى

Media Bureau of the defense and self-protection in
the province of Kobani

A release by the pro-Autonomous Administration Defense Committee in which it call up the youths in Raqqa to join one of the training camps under Self-Defense Duty.

Photo credit: [the activist, Mohammed Othman](#).

In the same context, the Legislative Council of the Civil Council in Raqqa along with several elders have ratified on bylaws of the Mandatory Self-Defense Duty Law, in a meeting held at its headquarter on May 21, 2018, on condition that the law on compulsory conscription for youths of Raqqa will be ratified later, [according to what the council has posted on its official Facebook account](#).



Furthermore, the Council published a [video footage](#) showing what they claimed to be elders of Raqqa clans in which they demand recruitment the young men. However, Mohamed Othman, the activist and other local activists denied the identity of those people appearing in the video saying, "Those are not the elders of our clans and we do not know their real names; those same people have already appeared in a filmed caption and declared allegiance to the Islamic State Organization (ISIS) years ago."

In response to the Civil Council's ratification of bylaws of the compulsory conscription law and to the arrest of a number of youths in several areas, [a delegation of dignitaries of Raqqa clans](#) demanded the council to end the arrest of young men since the law has not been ratified in a formal manner yet, according to a member of the delegation who stated to local news agencies. In addition, families of 80 arrested young men came out in a demonstration at as-Sa'a Roundabout in Raqqa city on June 2, 2018, to protest against the arrest of their sons and sending them to forced conscription, [according to what local sources reported to news agencies](#).

In the city of Manbij, located in Aleppo province, a local activist from the city but lives in Turkey and declined to disclose his identity for security purposes, said in an interview with STJ that during May 2018, the SDF had sent over 300 youths to recruitment camps, through arrest campaign in ar-Rabita Street, as-Sabe' Bahrat Roundabout, ash-Shmasiyah checkpoint, and on the military checkpoints installed at the entrances of Manbij.

The activist added that the SDF send the youths to their headquarters in Tishrin Dam or in Kobane/Ayn al-Arab and in Qamishli on the basis of assessment of their military experience and their health status. He explained that the number of detained young men cannot be counted accurately due to the arrests at night at various checkpoints, as well as families of the detained youths fear to announce the arrest of their sons for fear of being harmed, the activist said:

"The arrest campaigns for the purpose of compulsory conscription in Manbij began five months ago and many of the city's young men were arrested. This caused a large popular discontent and public protest, consequently, the protesters were able to force the SDF to release their sons, so the latter began to attract young people and families with monthly salaries and sums of money in order to make some young men join them."