

December 2018

ولمّا رأيت
سنة

I feel sorry for my
children because
they'll suffer the same

Statement of Sanad Muhammad



**"I feel sorry for my children because they'll suffer the same
fate as me"**

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Sanad feels sorry for his four children and wonders what their future could be like since they were born stateless. They will not be able to pursue education, to elect or to travel abroad.

Sanad Muhammad was born in Al-Qamishli in 1980. He is married with four children, and working as a salesman in a local clothing shop. Muhammad's family was divided as a result of the special census conducted in 1962, some becoming *maktumeen*,¹ and others, citizens. Sanad spoke to STJ field researcher who interviewed him in March 2018:

My father became a *maktum* while my mother became a citizen as a result of the special census. Following the issuance of Decree No 49 on naturalization of *ajanib*², we made several attempts to resolve our legal status, but to no avail. I'm married to my cousin, she is a citizen while my children are all *maktumeen*. I have suffered a lot, I have not completed my studies since I knew that it would be pointless. We, *maktumeen*, are not permitted to register any property under our names, even the landline phone, or to practice the professions we aim at. We are just allowed to work as blacksmith, carpenter or porter. I feel sorry for my children because they will suffer the same fate as me."

Sanad made numerous attempts to obtain Syrian nationality, and he notes that he has suffered a lot through that, where the Civil Status employees used to cancel some of his papers, and request the amendment of others:

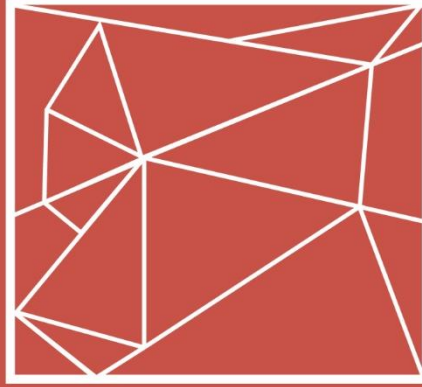
"Each time they asked me to obtain a new document. One time they told me that most of my papers were canceled, so I came back and applied again. It costs me a lot of time, effort and money, to request them, and since then I have been following up the matter but to no avail. So many *ajanib* managed to get nationality, while we remained *maktumeen*."

¹ Sing. *maktum*/*maktumah*, i. e., unregistered stateless people.

² Sing. *ajnabi*/*ajnabiyah*, literally »foreigners« i.e. stateless. unregistered stateless people.

سوريون
من أجل
الحقيقة
والعدالة

Syrians
For Truth
& Justice



About Syrians for Truth and Justice:

STJ is an independent, nongovernmental organization whose members include Syrian human rights defenders, advocates and academics of different backgrounds and nationalities.

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

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