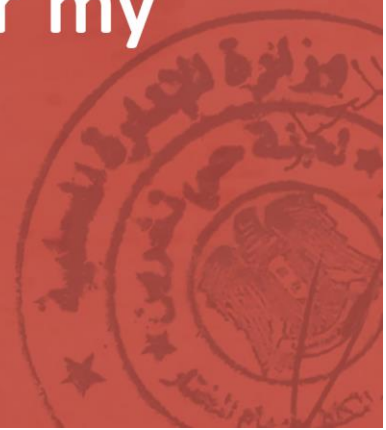


# I don't want the same fate for my children

Statement of Nobar Ismail



## **"I don't want the same fate for my children"**

*Statement of Nobar Ismail*

Nobar was once arrested by Syrian security services, who thought he was a foreigner, as he didn't hold any official proof of his identity. He still suffers especially since his legal status hasn't been resolved, despite the issuance of Decree No. [49](#) in 2011, on naturalization of the *ajanib*<sup>1</sup> class.

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Nobar Ismail was born in the City of [Qamishli in](#) 1986. He is now married with two children and working in the field of media. He still hopes to obtain official documents, that would prove his identity and allow him to exercise his basic rights, as any other Syrian citizen. He briefed STJ field researcher, who interviewed him in March 2018:

**"I was born a stateless, exactly like my father, who told me once that he intended not to register himself when the census was conducted, by fear of being summoned to perform compulsory military service. He also told me that when he got older, he became more aware of his legal status, so he made many times to submit his papers to the Civil Status Department to resolve it, but to no avail. My aunt is also a *maktumah*. She worked hard to obtain required documents and papers, and she paid many bribes. She finally succeeded in becoming a citizen but in illegal ways."**

Following the issuance of [Decree No. 49](#) in 2011, which granted the Syrian nationality to those registered as *ajanib*, Nobar submitted his papers to the Personal Status Department in Qamishli, hoping to resolve his legal status and become a citizen. But his attempt failed, as an employee there told him that his documents with others' were destroyed during transit, by an "armed gang" that intercepted the car transporting them from [al-Hasakah](#) to [Damascus](#).

Regarding the hardships he faced, Nobar said:

**"During the study period, I faced the greatest difficulties, especially when passing to superior levels. I didn't have the right to receive certifications proving that I'd passed. After the baccalaureate, I wasn't able to choose the field I would attend at university. We, stateless, have to directly register in the field in which there were still vacancies after the acceptance of citizens. I studied Translation at Tishreen University, located in Latakia Governorate, and it was very difficult to get a mere transcript, to submit it for an employment, because as a stateless I'm not entitled to the graduation certificate. Following the outbreak of war in Syria, I was no longer able to complete my studies, though I was in last year, because the land routes were closed, and, as a *maktum*, I couldn't take a plane."**

Nobar indicated that, with the onset of the conflict in Syria, and the spread of the Syrian regular forces' military checkpoints throughout the country, he started facing problems and a lot of questions about his status from the checkpoints agents, on the road to his university in Latakia. Indeed, the identity certificate he holds was not usual for them, and most of the security agents did not have the slightest idea of the *maktumeen* issue. He used to be asked if he was a stranger:

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<sup>1</sup> Sing. ajnabi/ajnabiyah, literally »foreigners« i.e. stateless. unregistered stateless people.

"I still remember when security services arrested me at one of the bus garages, thinking I was a stranger. They soon released me after I explained my legal status. I tried once total a gap year from university. The employee searched for my file, and wondered how could I enrol in college without a baccalaureate certificate. I gave him a transcript instead, and told him that I couldn't obtain certificate because I'm a *maktum*. My father used to say that a solution must be found to our status in the future, as it is not reasonable to remain like that. I don't want to say the same to my children, and I don't want them to suffer the same fate as mine. So I thought to travel by smuggling routes to Europe for my children to live a better life, especially since they are also *maktumeen*. I also haven't been able to register my marriage, me and my wife are still singles in the official records since I am a *maktum* and she is a citizen."

Nobar thinks that Autonomous Administration must not stand idly by the stateless issue, but must pressure the Syrian government and negotiate with it in order to resolve *maktumeen's* legal status at least. He also indicated that the Autonomous Administration is recruiting *maktumeen* into the duty of self-defense:

**"In the past, we had no rights nor duties, and now we have no rights, but we have a duty of self-defense."**



## 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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