

Joint Statement: Towards Accountability, Justice, and Ending Impunity in Syria

We, the undersigning organisations, welcome the French prosecutor's decision to issue arrest warrants against three senior Syrian security officers: first and foremost Major General Ali Mamlouk, the Director of the Syrian National Security Bureau, Major General Jamil Al Hassan, the Head of Air Intelligence Branch and Abdel Salam Mahmoud, the Head of the Air Force Intelligence Interrogative Branch. We call upon the international community to support the initiatives of countries such as France and Germany which enable victims and/or those legally representing them to seek accountability for perpetrators and to reach justice. We also call for support for efforts to launch a genuine accountability process under international supervision and that guarantees and works towards establishing sustainable peace in Syria.

The negotiations and political process in Geneva will not be able to establish a sustainable peace for any future state in Syria without a genuine accountability process and revealing the fate of Syria's disappeared is at its core. Therefore, we believe that it is our duty and the duty of countries that believe in human rights to prioritise enabling victims to reach justice and ensure there is no impunity for war crimes and crimes against humanity being committed in Syria up to this day.

Today, we reap the benefits of cooperation between families of victims with Syrian and international human rights organizations, as well as national judicial authorities, which has resulted in arrest warrants against a number of senior figures within the Syrian security apparatus. We reaffirm our belief in the possibility of justice and renew our readiness to work and cooperate on documenting violations and building judicial files with international and local organizations, as well as international and domestic judicial authorities in countries of asylum among others. We do this in order to secure the rights of victims and place criminal accountability as an indispensable condition for building the future of Syria.

We renew today - and more than ever - our emphasis on the need to:

- Allow international litigation to be made available in third countries to victims of crimes committed in Syria through a non-politicized process of prosecution.
- Provide financial and technical support to the relevant apparatuses to investigate international crimes and to facilitate access and representation of Syrians residing in other countries so they can be witnesses or victims before the judicial authorities in countries of litigation.

- Support crime documentation and litigation efforts with victim groups and their families in the fight against impunity.
- Support victim and community initiatives that seek justice for victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria and their families.
- Support and ensure the work of the independent and impartial mechanisms and commissions of the UN and international organizations and enable them to exercise their functions effectively in order to follow up and prosecute those involved in major crimes committed in Syria since 2011 under international law.
- Support all efforts at the international level to launch a transparent and impartial accountability and justice process under international supervision and guarantees that works to establish a sustainable peace in Syria.

15 November 2018

Signatory Organizations

1. AlKawakibi Organisation for Human Rights
2. Aso Organisation for Combating Violence Against Women
3. Association of Detainees and the Missing in Sednaya Prison
4. Badael
5. Basamat for Development
6. Baytna Syria
7. Caesar Families Association
8. Center for Civil Society and democracy
9. Dawlaty
10. Democratic Republic Studies Center
11. Fraternity Foundation for Human Rights-Birati
12. Freie Deutsch Syrische Gesellschaft e.V in Hamburg
13. Gulf Center for Human Rights
14. Human Help Community
15. Human Rights Organization in Syria
16. Hurras Network
17. Kawakbi Center for Transitional Justice and Human Rights
18. Kesh Malek
19. Kurdish Committee for Human Rights/Observer
20. Local Development and Small Projects Support
21. Mena Rights Group
22. Mouwatana for Civil Action
23. Musawat
24. Peace and Civil Society Center

25. PÊL- Civil Waves
26. Pro Justice
27. Rethink Rebuild Society
28. Save the Rest Campaign
29. Shaml Coalition
30. Syrian Activists for Monitoring
31. Syrian Archive
32. Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression
33. Syrian Center for Statistics and Research
34. Syrian Civil Defense - White Helmets
35. Syrian Feminist Lobby
36. Syrian Forum
37. Syrian League for Citizenship
38. Syrian Legal Development Programme
39. Syrian Legal Network -NL
40. Syrian Network for Human Rights
41. Syrian Observatory for Human Rights
42. Syrians for Truth and Justice
43. Syrian Women's Network
44. The Day After
45. Urnammu
46. Violations Documentation Center
47. Women Now