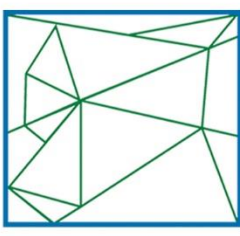


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Syrians
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August 2017



Mohsen Taher, Leader of Kurdish National Council, Released

Pro-Autonomous Administration Asayesh Forces had Already Detained Taher in May 2017

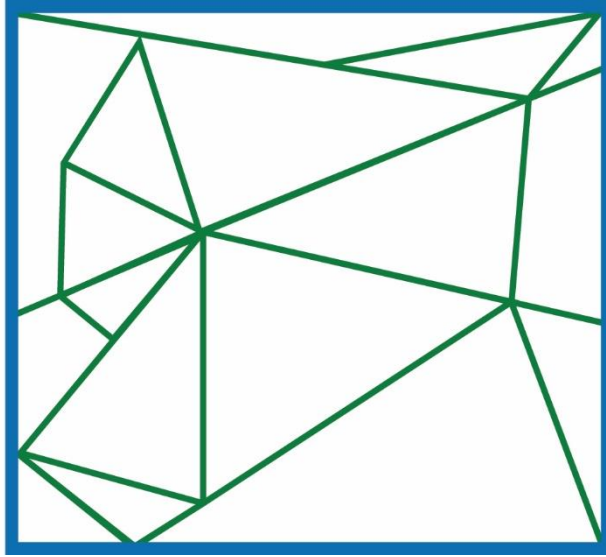
About Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ

[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.

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Mohsen Taher, Leader of Kurdish National Council, Released after more than two Months of detention

*“Pro-Autonomous Administration Asayesh Forces had Already Detained
Taher in May 2017”*



Image shows Mohsen Taher, a member of the “Political Bureau” of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP-Syria) and the head of Local Councils in the General Secretariat of the Kurdish National Council KNC, during a sit-in with the loyalties of KNC in front of their headquarter in Qamishli on May 7, 2017, just before pro-Autonomous administration Asayesh forces arrested him on May 9, 2017.

Photo credit: STJ



On Saturday, July 29, 2017, the Asayesh forces affiliated to Autonomous Administration in north-eastern Syria released Mohsen Taher, a member of the Political Bureau of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)-Syria and the head of Local Councils in the General Secretariat of KNC in Syria, after more than two-month detention. On May 9, 2017 he was arrested in front of the office of the KNC in the Siyahi district, [Qamishli](#), as he along 12 other members of the secretariat Of the Council, tried to reopen the headquarters which sealed with red wax by the Autonomous Administration on May 2, 2017.

The decision of closing the headquarters on March 13, 2017 was against the background of the [circular](#) issued by the Autonomous Administration, which committed to close all non-licensed headquarters and offices by the Political Parties Affairs Committee of the Legislature Council based in [Amuda](#).

The released Mohsen Taher told STJ that Asayesh forces initially took him to Gerkin prison, west of Qamishli, as he stayed for 22 days, and then he was transferred to Alayah prison in the east of Qamishli. He continued talking about the charges at the prison:

"They arrested me for two reasons; the first, I reopened the headquarters of the KNC in Qamishli, and the second, I participated in demonstrations and set-in which were unlicensed by Autonomous Administration, but I was not subjected to any physical or psychological torture during the detention, as the prison staff treated me well. During the 82-days of detention, I was taken twice to the court, where they asked me general questions, and then they wrote my statement and got me sign on it.

Tahir said that he was detained in the custody along with four other politicians in Alayah prison east of Qamishli, Bashar Amin and Amin Hussam as well as Nafee Abdallah and Suleiman Oso, who were later released by Autonomous Administration on July 10, 2017. Taher affirmed that he didn't witness any torturing to his fellow detainees. He added:

"Many of my colleagues are still in Autonomous Administration prisons, such as Fouad Ibrahim, a member of the Local Council of the KNC in [al-Malikiyah/Derek](#), Barzan Hussain, reporter of Ark TV, as well as Abdel Rahman Abu, a member of the Central Committee of the Kurdistan Democratic Union Party (PDK)-Syria in Afrin, and the journalist Alaa Salim, in addition to Dham Mohammed, a member of the Logical Committee of PDK in al-Malikiyah/Derek."



On the other hand, Tahir denied releasing the journalist Alan Salim, who was arrested on August 15, 2016, during covering the funeral of Habib Qadri, an element of the Rojava Peshmerga¹. He also denied releasing Fouad Ibrahim as well, the Local Council member in the KNC in Al-Malikiyah/Derik, who was arrested on March 24, 2017 given his actions. Taher noted that they were not detained in Alaya prison, and they had no news about their condition in the prison, or even where they were detained or about the reasons for the release, he added:

"I was released against the background of the reports of Medical Commission of Autonomous Administration, which revealed my poor health, especially as I suffered from hypertension, some infections, backache and Prostate. However I saw the doctor at the prison about three times, but now I am going to follow up on my treatment as soon as people's visits and congratulations finish."

According to the leader of the KNC Mohsen Tahir, this detention had negative impact on his family members, particularly on his children, aged between 5.7 years, as they were informed that their father is visiting Iraqi Kurdistan. He also mentioned that his daughter, who is a university student, wasn't able to attend her college, as well as his wife who held considerable responsibilities in his absence.

It is worth mentioning that on May 7, 2017 the members of the KNC reopened the Council headquarter after Autonomous Administration closed it on May 2, 2017, following the set-in by its loyalties in front of the headquarter, and recognizing the leaders to reopen all the headquarters and offices which closed by the Autonomous Administration on the pretext of not being licensed. Mohsen Taher, in his speech during the set-in, had called the Democratic Union Party to stop arresting the leaders of KNC and closing their offices.

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¹ It is a military force located in Iraqi Kurdistan KRG and is composed of Syrian Kurdish defector elements of Syria's army, as well as a number of volunteers, estimated at several thousand.