



## Armed men Kidnap Dr. Khali Agha and Hospitals Suspend Work in Protest

The Kidnap Took Place in Regions Controlled by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, Hurras al-Deen and Turkistan Islamic Party

## About Syrians for Truth and Justice

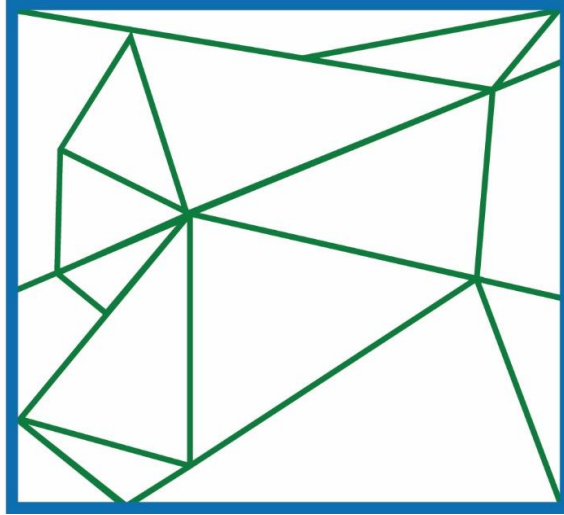
[Syrians for Truth and Justice \(STJ\)](#) is an independent, non-governmental and non-profit organization whose members include Syrian human rights defenders, advocates and academics of different backgrounds and nationalities. It also includes members of other nationalities.

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

سوريون  
من أجل  
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Syrians  
For Truth  
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## **Armed men Kidnap Dr. Khali Agha and Hospitals Suspend Work in Protest**

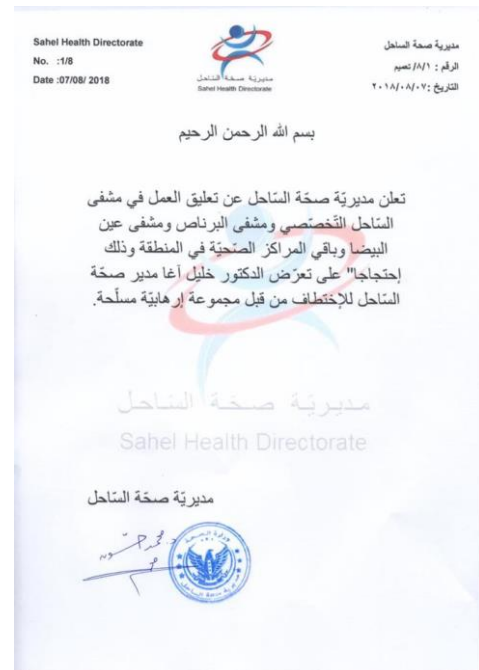
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On August 7, 2018, an anonymous armed group kidnapped director of the Sahel Free Health Directorate of the Syrian Interim Government following storming the Sahel Specialist Hospital. Several hospitals suspended work in protest of the kidnap incident, according to official statements released by the Directorate. No party has declared responsibility so far.

The Sahel Free Health Directorate states that a terrorist armed group stormed the Sahel Specialist Hospital at 6:00 a.m., beat the security guards and handcuffed them threatening of using weapons. Then some of the elements of the group headed to the office of the director Dr. Khalil Agha and abducted him. In addition the group robbed an ambulance of the hospital.

Post the incident, the Sahel Specialist Hospital, al-Bernas Hospital, Ein al-Beida Hospital and other medical posts in addition to dispensaries of the Directorate all announced to suspend their work in protest of the kidnap incident.



Copies of the two official statements issued by the Sahel Free Health Directorate concerning the kidnap of its director, and the announcement of suspending work in all hospitals in protest. Released on August 8, 2018.

On the other hand, Mohammed al-Sheikh, head of the Salvation Government<sup>1</sup> said that the armed group was composed of seven masked men and said that "the Ministry of Interior of the Salvation Government bears full responsibility in keeping security(...)" and he gave the security apparatus and the checkpoints affiliated with the factions 24 hours to arrest the kidnappers and release the doctor otherwise he would resign from his position as head of the Salvation Government. According to an official statement released by him on August 7, 2018.

<sup>1</sup> On October 7, 2017, the Salvation Government was announced in order to administer Idlib province and the areas controlled by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham. The Salvation Government emerged from a constituent body that was emerged in turn from the Syrian General Conference which was convened on September 17, 2017, under calls by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). Sessions of the Conference and the sessions on establishing the Salvation Government were held in Bab al-Hawa crossing border.





Copy of the statement released by Mohammed al-Sheikh, head of the Salvation Government regarding the kidnap of director of the Sahel Free Health Directorate. Statement released on August 7, 2018.

Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)<sup>2</sup>- held areas witness repeated aggressions on the medical staff. Some of the doctors were already kidnapped in exchange for a ransom to release them. Other doctors were exposed to assassination attempts. Moreover, HTS arrested some doctors for different reasons. STJ had published [a report on assault incidents against medical personnel](#) in Idlib province that took place in July 2018, and in [other areas](#) within Syria.

<sup>2</sup> On January 28, 2017, several jihadist factions in northern Syria announced the merger under the name Hayat Tahrir al-Sham- HTS. These factions are: Jabhat Fateh al-Sham- formerly al-Nusra Front, Nour al-Din al-Zenki Movement, Liwaa al-Haqq, Ansar al-Din Front, Jaish al-Sunnah, and Ansar al-Sham Islamiyya Movement. However, after the outbreak of recent confrontations between Ahrar al-Sham al-Islamiyya and HTS in the north of Syria July 15, 2017, Nour al-Din al-Zenki Movement announced its separation from HTS on July 20, 2017