



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

Dr. Khalil Agha Released Six Days After His Kidnap in Exchange for A Ransom Reached \$120,000

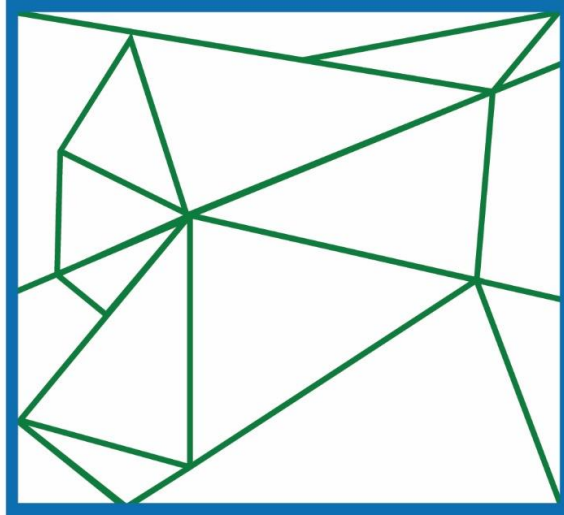
About Syrians for Truth and Justice

[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.

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In the evening of August 12, 2018, the kidnappers released the doctor Khalil Agha, director of the Sahel Free Health Directorate, after they had kidnaped him on August 7, 2018, in Ein al-Beida village located in Latakia countryside in exchange for a ransom reached \$120,000. The identity of the kidnappers is still unknown and the accusations point to the responsibility of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS).

On August 13, 2018, the doctor Khalil Agha held a press conference in the building of the Sahel Health Directorate, located between Latakia northern countryside and Idlib western countryside, explaining the circumstances of his arrest prior his travel to Turkey.

Dr. Khalil said that the party kidnapped him said they belonged to HTS, and over his kidnap period, the kidnappers were playing jihadist songs loyal to ISIS group that calls itself the Islamic State, along with other songs loyal to HTS and speeches belong to Abu Mohammed al-Jolani and Abu Baker al-Baghdadi.

Dr. Agha added that the kidnappers asked him about the organizations he is working with and the reasons of his travel to Turkey, in addition they accused him of dealing with foreigner organizations in order to locate the jihadists. According to the doctor, the treatment of the kidnappers was similar to that of the Syrian regime's method of investigation and questions that they were addressing to him, [Enab Baladi reported](#) on the course of the conference¹.

Previously, STJ had published a detailed report on the incident when unidentified armed group stormed the Sahel Specialist Hospital and beat the cadres and the guards, then entered the office of the director Dr. Khalil Agha and kidnapped him; [several hospitals suspended work in protest](#). Abduction of the medical staff and assaulting them was repeated in Idlib city, and STJ monitored [four incidents of abductions carried out by unidentified persons](#) against doctors in June 2018, and before that in April.

¹ "Carried out Abductions in Idlib and Gained Ransoms Exceeded \$300,000", Enab Baladi, August 13, 2018. (last visit August 13, 2018). <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/246337>