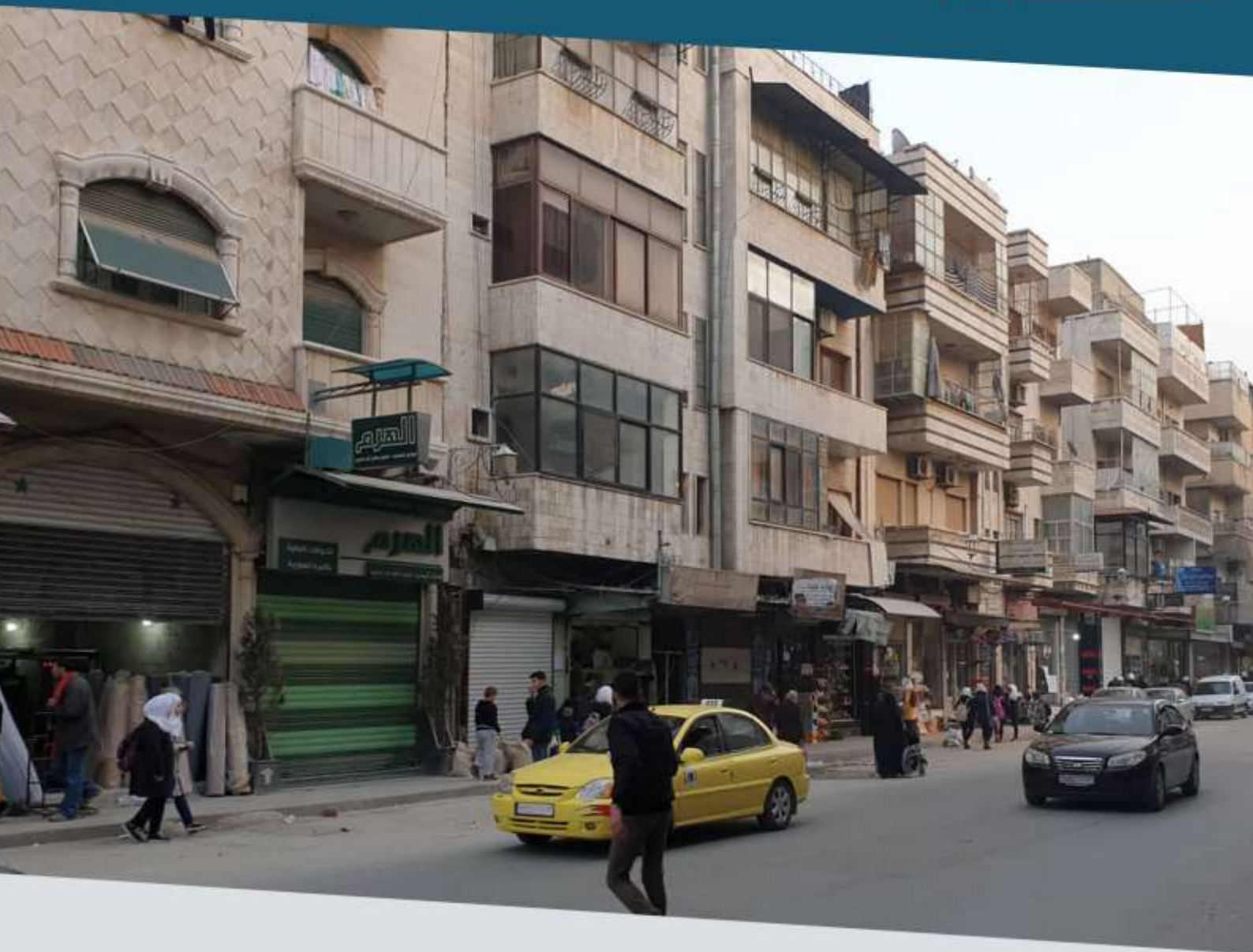


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سوريون
من أجل
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Syrians
For Truth
& Justice



On Different Charges: Over 10 Young Men and a Woman Arrested in Hama City

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The field researchers have documented the arrests which took place in January 2019, noting that only three of the arrestees were released

In January 2019, the city of Hama bore witness to no less than 11 arrests, conducted by Syrian security services, the victims of which were a woman, university students and IDPs. Three of them were released at a later date while the fate of the rest is yet unknown. The field researchers of Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ have documented the details of the arrests and contacted several of the arrestees' friends and relatives.

1. Arrested for Receiving Remittances from Outside Syria:

The Political Security Branch, Military Security Branch and the Air Force Intelligence Branch arrested four young men for receiving remittances from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which they were delivered by al-Haram, Sham and Fouad — licensed money transfer and exchange companies in the city of Hama.

STJ's field researcher spoke to the brother of one of the released persons, who is 35-year-old and called Ahmad. He said:

"On the night of January 4, 2019, personnel of the Political Security Branch raided my brother's house, located in the al-Jalaa neighborhood. My brother was held captive in the named branch [s headquarter]. Then, he was transferred to the capital city, Damascus. There, he was investigated concerning sums of money, sent to his name from Saudi Arabia. The detective told him that he was being monitored for more than a month prior to his arrest. My brother was released two weeks into his arrest, before which he signed a written pledge, as to refrain from receiving any money from abroad to avoid legal accountability."

For his part, Mohammad, a 20-year-old university student from the al-Faraya neighborhood in Hama, told STJ's field researcher the following:

"Late in 2018, the Military Security Branch summoned me for receiving almost monthly sums, amounting to 200 thousand Syrian Pounds each time, sent by my maternal cousin in the UAE. I used to receive them through licensed money transfer and exchange companies in the city. The officer accused me of spending this money on funding terrorist groups. I was beaten and tortured. They demanded that I admit funding these groups and that I give them the names of the persons to whom I sent the money. However, I did not. My cousin was sending me the money to help me through my university education. I was finally released after two weeks of investigation."

Concerning the arrest of Khalid, a 22-year-old young man from the Janoub al-Mala'ab neighborhood in Hama city, a relative told STJ's field researcher the following details:

"Early in January 2019, Khalid was arrested at the Bilal Roundabout's checkpoint, affiliated with the Air Force Intelligence Service. He was subjected to severe beating and torture, and the reason was none but receiving a remittance form a friend based in Saudi Arabia, which he was entrusted with as to deliver it back to his friend's relatives. He was accused of offering monetary aid to families of terrorists. Khalid was transferred from the Air Force Intelligence Department to the Military Security Branch, to be released two weeks later."

2. Arrests for Unknown Reasons:

An eyewitness by the name Zainap informed STJ's field researcher that personnel of the Military Security Department, stationed at the Karaj al-Pullman/Bus Terminal in the Karam al-Hourani neighborhood have arrested, for unknown reasons, three university students, going to the schools of law, agricultural engineering and applied sciences, in addition to four internally displaced persons from the city of Raqqa, who were heading to Damascus. The arrests took place on January 24, 2019.

She added that: **"We boarded the bus heading to Damascus, on the trips scheduled by the Ali al-Saraj Company. I took my seat. Ten minutes later, security personnel in civil outfits got on the bus. They called the names of the four persons displaced from the city of Raqqa and demanded that they get off the bus and accompany them. A second militant continued the inspection of the bus and asked the university students to present their identity documents, university cards and the deferment cards they had. He asked them about their universities and which year they were in. He ordered them to get off the bus as well. The personnel then left the terminal, with them were the seven arrestees."**

STJ's field researcher reported another incident. On January 29, 2019, the personnel stationed at the al-Kawthar checkpoint, at the end of March 8 Street which leads to the Bab Trablous Terminal, detained three young men, who are to perform the reserve military service. The three men were accompanied by their mother, who protested the detention. A wrangle between the checkpoint's militants and the mother erupted, due to which she was also arrested and taken to an unidentified place.

STJ has published several reports covering arrests conducted by Syrian security services in the city of Hama, which aimed at men and women alike.¹

¹ "At Least, 40 Civilians Arrested Recently in Hama," STJ. January 22, 2019. Last visited: July 7, 2019. <https://stj-sy.org/en/1156/>.






"Hama: Mother and Her Infant Girl Arrested by Military Security Services due to Malicious Report," STJ. December 7, 2018. Last visited: July 7, 2019. <https://stj-sy.org/en/1054/>.



History

Syrians for Truth and Justice was conceived during the participation of its co-founder in the Middle-East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Leaders for Democracy Fellowship program, who was driven by a will to contribute to Syria's future. Starting as a humble project to tell the stories of Syrians experiencing enforced disappearances and torture, it grew into an established organisation committed to unveiling human rights violations of all sorts.

Convinced that the diversity that has historically defined Syria is a wealth, our team of researchers and volunteers works with dedication at uncovering human rights violations committed in Syria, in order to promote inclusiveness and ensure that all Syrians are represented, and their rights fulfilled.

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 editor@stj-sy.org