

June 2019

سوريون  
من أجل  
الحقيقة  
والعدالة  
Syrians  
For Truth  
& Justice



## Turkish Gendarmerie Gun Down a Displaced Woman and Deport Syrian Asylum Seekers

Turkish Border Guards Opened Indiscriminate Fire on Syrians staying in Kafr Lousin Camp and others Trying to Enter Turkey Illegally, beside Removing Asylum

## ***Turkish Gendarmerie Gun Down a Displaced Woman and Deport Syrian Asylum Seekers***

*Turkish Border Guards Opened Indiscriminate Fire on Syrians staying in Kafr  
Lousin Camp and others Trying to Enter Turkey Illegally, beside Removing  
Asylum Seekers Forcibly to Syria*

The Turkish border guards (Gendarmerie) fatally shot a displaced woman, residing in Kafr Lousin camp, and injured her child on June 11, 2019, and on May 24, 2019, they beat and tortured 21 people, including three media activists, attempting to cross into Turkey illegally, they also deported 18 refugees, among them one media activist, trying to enter the Greek territory through smuggling routes, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of the same month. The border gendarmerie furthermore handed over five Syrian Kurds, from the city of Afrin, to Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham/HTS, to be held accountable for trying to illegally enter Turkey on April 10, 2019. Indeed, the HTS sentenced the youths to one-month imprisonment and a fine of \$1000; which amounts to more than half a million Syrian pounds.

## I. Casualties in direct shooting at Kafr Lousin DP camp, near the Syria-Turkey border:

An eyewitness to the shooting incident, who is a resident of Kafr Lousin camp, reported that the Turkish border gendarmerie fired directly at the camp from their nearby guardhouse for no reason, killing a woman called Ranim Khattab, 20, and causing serious injuries to her child, on the evening of June 11, 2019. He recounted:

**"We used to see the Turkish agents firing un-aimed shots into the air from their guardhouse, which is less than one kilometer away from Kafr Lousin camp, in every single day since we fled here from Qalaat al-Madiq town in April 2019. But what happened on June 11, 2019, was shocking; the guards targeted the camp directly by their bullets, firing at the rudimentary dwellings we built to shelter in.**

**The displaced in the camp rushed to seek protection behind the walls but Ranim and her son didn't; they just kept setting near their house, maybe they didn't get what was happening. However, Ranim got a bullet in the thorax and died five minutes after being hospitalized while her child was seriously wounded."**

The witness assured STJ that the agents had no reason to open fire, since there was no one attempting to access into Turkey or even approaching the boundary wall, which is 700m away from the camp, noting that the area is clearly visible from the guardhouse.



The blue square shows the Kafr Lousin camp on the Syrian-Turkish border.





The blue square shows tents of the Kafr Lousin camp, while the yellow square shows the location of the guardhouse. The yellow line at the top left is the Syria-Turkey border.

## II. Forced deportation to Syria:

On May 26, 2019 the Turkish authorities forcibly deported 18 Syrian refugees, including a media activist, to Syria, for attempting to access the Greek territory illegally.

The media activist Farouk R., who was among those deported, recounted in detail his harrowing journey to STJ researcher, as he confirmed being subjected, with the other 18 Syrian refugees, to two days' detention and severe beatings beside being forced to sign and thumb on a 'voluntary return' paper before being forcibly removed to Syria through Bab al-Hawa Border Crossing, despite holding a valid Turkish temporary protection ID card (Kimlik).

He said:

**"After staying in Turkey for 11 months, holding Kimlik, I decided to take smuggling routes into the neighboring Greece, but unfortunately the gendarmerie forces were on the lookout; they caught me and other 500 refugees while trying to cross into the Greek territory. They rounded us up and drove us to Edirne Removal Centre. There, they separated the Syria refugees, who were 18, from those of other nationalities by an iron wall. I tried to appeal to the officer in charge telling him that my life would be in danger in Syria, since I am a media activist, but he reacted by beating and insulting me like other Turkish agents did to the rest of the Syrian refugees. We, the Syrians, were transferred, to Antakya, the capital of Hatay**

Province, while those of other nationalities were taken to Istanbul. We were kept in a camp; it was more of a dungeon, then they took us to the Removal Centre, where we were beaten and forced to sign Arabic written 'voluntary return' papers. They also put a five-year ban on my re-entry to Turkey. I asked the officer to allow me to contact an attorney, but he refused. Eventually, we were taken to Bab al-Hawa Border Crossing and we entered Idlib on May 28, 2019."

The activist asserted that all the Syrian refugees held with him were forcibly deported to Syria under the same conditions, although some's spouses reside in Istanbul. Only one young man transferred to Urfa accompanied by a relative.

The activist Farouk R. had fled his hometown Az Zyabeyeh, in southern Damascus, towards al- Quneitra, to be forcibly displaced to Idlib after the government forces controlled the province in July 2018.



The Turkish temporary protection ID card (Kimlik) of the witness Farouk R., which he had before being forcibly deported to Syria.

### III. Syrians shot and beaten at the Turkish border:

21 Syrians, including 12 women and 3 media activists were insulted and beaten by the Turkish border guards, as attempting to cross into Turkey illegally, from Harem district in Idlib on May 24, 2019.

Mazen al-Shami, a media activist, told STJ how he was beaten and tortured with his family and 21 other people, he said:

**“We were 21 men and women jumped the border fence near Harem in rural Idlib trying to reach Turkey, but it was rather surprising the presence of a temporary gendarmerie checkpoint there. The checkpoint agents captured us instantly, confiscated all the electronic devices we were carrying and broke most of them. Then we were told to stand in a row and put out official documents and cell phones on the ground in front of us. When the agents found out that me and my two sons are media activists -by searching our phones- they ordered us to get out of the row and started beating us. They kept doing that from 2 to 5 a.m., that was on May 24, 2019.”**

He added:

**“We all, the captured, were beaten, except women and children, and later taken to Reyhanlı police station, where we were tortured individually; as each one of us was thrown in a room and beaten by rifles’ stocks and thick cables beside being waterboarded by forcing our heads repeatedly into a basin of water. The severe beating duplicated the complications I already had from recent surgery, as it caused me rectal bleeding. My sons and I were also bruised and burned by rifles’ hot barrels.”**

The witness confirmed that their tortured continued from 5 a.m. till 5 p.m., meanwhile his family was put to forced labor, before being all transferred to the Bab al-Hawa Border Crossing and returned to Idlib. He also noted that all the gendarmerie agents he met wore no military rank bars and that there was an Arab among them, who heavily involved in their tortured.

Al-Shami published a footage showing the torture marks on his body and the other activists’ (the following images taken from that footage).









On the 28 and 29 May 2019, several media and online news outlets quoted al-Shami confirming the meet with some Turkish officials in Kilis border city, who apologized for what happened, and admitted him with his family to the Turkish territory.<sup>1</sup>

In a similar incident, on May 19, 2019, seven Syrian youths caught trying to enter Turkey illegally, as one of them, who is from Qudsaya in Damascus suburbs, confirmed to STJ on June 10, 2019, saying that they were held with the smuggler, who was freed after an hour, while they kept in detention until the next day.

The same witness added that the gendarmerie fired at them directly after they jumped the border fence at the village of Kherbet Eljoz. Only two of them managed to flee, while the rest had been beaten severely for a whole hour and then put into labor and cleaning work until the next day, along with confiscating all the electronic devices they were carrying.

#### **IV. Handing over youths from Afrin to HTS:**

Four Syrian Kurds and a child from Afrin were beaten and tortured by the Turkish border guards for attempting to enter Turkey taking smuggling routes from Atme town, north of Idlib. They were then handed over to HTS which imprisoned them for a month and forced each to pay \$1000 in exchange for his release on April 10, 2019.

---

<sup>1</sup> "Tukey Apologizes to the Media Activist Mazen al-Shami and Admits him for treatment after being beaten with his family by its Border Guards", Al-Dorar Al-Shamia, May 29, 2019: <https://eldorar.com/node/135938>.



One of the five youths, who asked for anonymity for himself and the other youths for security purposes, talked to STJ saying:

**"I, along with other three youths and a child from Afrin, made a deal with a smuggler to get us to Turkey against payment of \$700 each, but when we jumped the Atme border fence we got caught by the gendarmerie who took us to the border post, where they beat the smuggler and us severely, knowing that we are Kurds from Afrin. We were subjected to a prolonged interrogation lasted for three days. They asked us mainly about our affiliation to The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), but when they make sure we have no links with it, and that we were going to Turkey for employment purposes, the gendarmerie handed us over to HTS through the Bab al-Hawa Border Crossing, where we were held in the crossing prison and interrogated again. Then the smuggler was set free and we were transferred to a prison in Harem."**

He added:

**"In Harem prison, we were deployed to separated cells in which there were former IS fighters and criminals. After two weeks, we were allowed to contact our relatives to tell them secure the amount of the 'bail'- as called by HTS-required for our release, which was \$1000 for each. Indeed, we were released and returned to Afrin after our families paid the full amounts."**

سوريون  
من أجل  
الحقيقة  
والعدالة  
Syrians  
For Truth  
& Justice



## About Syrians for Truth and Justice:

**STJ** is an independent, nongovernmental organization whose members include Syrian human rights defenders, advocates and academics of different backgrounds and nationalities.

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

---

🌐 [www.stj-sy.org](http://www.stj-sy.org)

📘 [syriaSTJ](#)

📱 [@STJ\\_SYRIA\\_ENG](#)

📍 [Syrians for Truth & Justice](#)

✉ [editor@stj-sy.org](mailto:editor@stj-sy.org)