

2191 Days



9 December 2019

Joint Statement on the fate of the Missing, Detained and Forcibly Disappeared and guarantee the freedom and safety of human rights defenders in Syria

Six years ago, the joint office of the VDC, LDSPS and Rising for Freedom in Douma in Eastern Ghouta (north of Damascus) was raided by armed men who abducted four human rights defenders, Razan ZAITOUNEH, Wael HAMADA, Samira ALKHALIL and Nazim HAMMADI. The parties controlling the region have changed and tens of thousands of people have been displaced, but the fate of our colleagues remains unknown.

For them and for thousands of forcibly disappeared and detainees in Syria, today, we, the undersigned organizations, renew our commitment to work in every possible way to reveal their fate and defend their rights to justice and accountability. We pledge to fight impunity, as a basic guarantee for building a democratic state based on the separation of powers, the protection of human rights and citizenship, a state governed by law.

As efforts continue to be made to achieve truth, justice and accountability for their abductors and those who perpetrated major crimes against humanity in Syria, the de facto authorities in diverse regions of Syria retain their policies of using forced disappearance and arbitrary detention as their main practice to hide their crimes by committing more crimes. As parties to the conflict continuously keep on marginalizing and making Human Rights Defenders disappear, paths towards a political solution are accelerating.

We remind the parties and guarantors of the political solution negotiations in Syria that revealing the fate of the missing, releasing the detainees, ensuring justice and holding the perpetrators of major crimes against humanity accountable is the best guarantee to end the culture of impunity and lay the first cornerstone for any future stability and peace in Syria and the region.

From here, we, the undersigned organizations, emphasize the following:

- ▶ We will continue to defend the fundamental rights of all Syrian citizens, seek truth and establish justice and work to hold those responsible for major crimes accountable.
- ▶ We will continue to pursue the establishment of a transparent, fair and national accountability mechanism with international guarantees that investigate crimes and ensure accountability, reparation, and non-repetition, as only this guarantee will ensure a sustainable peace in Syria.
- ▶ We reaffirm our call on the countries and guarantors involved in the building of a political solution in Syria to face their responsibilities towards producing a political solution that establishes sustainable peace. By giving priority to restoring trust between parties to the conflict, first and foremost we urge those responsible to reveal the fate of the disappeared and detained in Syria, and pressure all parties of the conflict to commit to justice and cooperate.
- ▶ We call upon the international community and the United Nations to fulfill their responsibilities to defend human rights and work hard to uncover the fate of the missing and detained in Syria, and ensure the freedom and safety of human rights defenders in order to ensure the launch of a political process that establishes a democratic state in Syria.

Signatories

Access Center for Human Rights

ActiveWatch

Al Haq Organisation for Defending Human Rights

Al Mezan

Al-Marsad – Arab Human Rights Centre in Golan Heights

Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights

Arab Network for Human Rights Information

Aso Association against Violence Against Women

Association de Soutien aux Medias Libres

Association Marocaine des Droits Humains

BADAEL

Baytna Syria

Bercav organization

Caesar Families Association

Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies

Collective of Families of the Disappeared in Algeria

DAWLATY

Fédération Euro-Méditerranéenne contre les disparitions forcées

Gulf Centre for Human Rights

Human Rights Club

Human Rights Concern - Eritrea

Hurras Network

Impunity Watch

International Federation for Human Rights

International Media Support

Justice for life
Kawakbi Center for Transitional Justice and Human Rights
Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and the Rule of Law
Kesh Malek Organization
Kurdish Committee for Human Rights /Observer
Latvian Human Rights Committee
Lebanese Center for Human Rights
Legal Clinic "Adilet"
Local Administration Councils Unit
Local Development and Small-Projects Support
MENA Rights Group
Musawa
Nophotozone
Organisation Marocaine Des Droits Humains
Palestinian Centre for Human Rights
PAX for Peace
Pro-justice
Rights Realization Centre
Sham1 Syrian CSOs Coalition
Sisters Arab Forum for Human Rights
Syria Legal Network/ NL
Syrian Center for Media and Freedom Of Expression
Syrian journalists Association
Syrian Lawyers Aggregation
Syrian League for Citizenship
SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
Syrian Women's network
Syrians for Truth and Justice
The Syria Campaign
URNAMMU
Verband Deutsch-Syrischer Hilfsvereine e.V.
Violation Documentation Center
Women Now For Development
World Organisation Against Torture - Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders