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Raqqa: Three Activists Arrested by the Autonomous Administration for Reasons yet Unknown

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*Ahmed al-Hashloun, Jamal al-Mabrouk and Nizar al-Oklah, were
arbitrarily arrested in February 2020*

In three separate raids, the intelligence office in the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) of the Autonomous Administration, arrested three prominent local activists in the province of Raqqa in February 2020, for unknown reasons. The activists were held in SDF headquarters in the cities of [Raqqa](#) and [al-Tabqah](#).

On February 29, 2020, patrols of the intelligence office of the SDF arrested Ahmed al-Hashloun, the executive director of the [Enmaa Al Karama](#) organization, as reported by a friend of the detainee.

The same security force arrested Jamal al-Mabrouk, the coordinator of the Furat Program (one of the development programs that the US Department of State supports in the region), in on February 12, 2020, before arresting Nizar al-Oklah, the chairman of the [Future Makers Team](#), on February 26, 2020.

STJ contacted a friend of the three detainees on the phone- he asked anonymity for security reasons-; he said that al-Hashloun was arrested from his office at the organization's headquarters in the city of Raqqa, around 12.00 pm, without clarifying the reasons and charges against him, and he is currently held in the SDF's intelligence headquarters in the city of Raqqa.

As for al-Mabrouk, he was arrested at approximately 2.00 am from his house in the village of Sawea al-Kabeera at Ja'bar junction near the city of al-Tabqah. Al-Mabrouk has been arrested by a patrol of the intelligence force and he is currently held in the SDF's intelligence headquarters in the city of al-Tabqah. While al-Oklah was arrested from his house in the village of al-Kasra, near the city of Raqqa, and he is currently held in the SDF's intelligence headquarters in the city of Raqqa.

STJ had previously prepared an expanded report on the arrest of prominent activists in the province of Raqqa, including Ahmed al-Hashloun and Jamal al-Mabrouk, who were then released respectively on the 16th and the 29th of October 2019.¹

An activist, who is a friend of the detainees, said that Ahmed and Jamal were arrested previously for alleged accusations of funding the Islamic State/IS (also known as Daesh) and contacting members of the Turkish intelligence. However, they were released after being investigated directly by the International Coalition, which found that these allegations were groundless.

It is worth mentioning that the Autonomous Administration has released the activist Mazen al-Harami on January 10, 2020 after being arrested by a patrol of the public security forces on December 17, 2019 on claims of collaborating with media outlets hostile to the Autonomous Administration.

¹ "Syria: Prominent Activists Arbitrarily Arrested in Raqqa", STJ, August 30, 2019, (last visit: March 2, 2020), <https://stj-sy.org/en/syria-prominent-activists-arbitrarily-arrested-in-raqqa/>

Recommendations:

1. The Autonomous Administration must explain and clarify the legal basis for arrests and detentions- especially those made against civilians and activists- and publish it in a clear language that is understandable for all citizens.
2. Detentions and arrests must only be conducted by the competent authorities, under official permits issued by the public prosecutor's office or by those authorized to issue such orders.
3. Detainees must be allowed to contact their relatives and lawyers, without delay. They also must be informed of the reasons for their detention. Besides, it should be insured that they will either be formally charged and promptly presented before a judge or be released immediately.
4. If charged, the accused must be given a fair trial before an independent court, monitored by domestic and international human rights organizations.

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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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