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Seven Years Since Their
Disappearance!

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A group of civil society organizations concerned with Syrian affairs demands the immediate disclosing of the fate of the four activists kidnapped in the Douma incident in December 2013, holding the kidnappers accountable, and having the international stakeholders in the Syrian issue bear their responsibilities

Today completes seven years since the disappearance of the four activists. On December 9, 2013, the joint office of the Violations Documentation Center (VDC) in Syria, the office of the Local Development and Small-Projects Support (LDSPS), and that of the Rising for Freedom magazine in the city of Douma in the countryside of Damascus were attacked by an armed group that kidnapped activists Razan ZAITOUNEH, Wael HAMADA, Samira ALKHALIL, and Nazim HAMMADI. Despite the fact that all the military factions left the area after the forces of the Syrian regime took control of it, the fate of our colleagues remains unknown to this day.

At a time when the fruits of their labor are being revealed through the documentation of violations and crimes committed, the collection of testimonies, pictures, and data about the chemical attack in Eastern Ghouta in 2013, and the filing of judicial complaints against the perpetrators of these crimes, in addition to the ongoing work in supporting local communities and free civil work in areas outside the control of the Syrian regime, the fate of these activists remains unknown. This is true despite all efforts made by families and friends of the kidnapped to reveal their fate, including communication with many parties and a legal complaint against 'Jaysh al-Islam', the main suspect in the kidnapping incident.

Over the past seven years, no real efforts have been made by the countries concerned in the Syrian issue to reveal their fate. Some of them have a kind of guardianship over the military factions and in turn have the ability to put great pressure on them. However, the efforts of politicians, diplomats and representatives of these countries were limited to statements and condemnations that did not help in revealing the fate of the kidnapped.

The case of the four kidnapped activists represents a practical example of the condition that the Syrian revolution has reached. The latter has aspired to establish a civil democratic state based on freedom, justice and citizenship, respecting human rights and dignity, but it was left alone under the mercy of a criminal dictatorial regime and opportunistic groups that take religion as a cover for their non-national interests.

In defense of the moral and national values on which the Syrian revolution was based, and for their sake and for the sake of thousands of disappeared and detained in Syria, we renew today our commitment to work via all possible means to reveal their fate, defend their rights and the rights of all Syrians to justice and accountability, and to fight impunity as a basic guarantor and condition to build a democratic state based on the separation of powers, the protection of human rights and citizenship, and the rule of law in Syria.

Signatory Organizations:

1. Adel Center For Human Rights
2. Amals Healing and Advocacy Center
3. Basamat for Development
4. Baytna

5. Caesar Families Association (CFA)
6. Dawlaty
7. Democratic Republic Studies Center (DRSC)
8. Families for Freedom (FfF)
9. Hawwa | Woman Empowerment Association
10. Hurras Network
11. Kesh Malek Organization
12. Kurdish Organisation for Human rights in Syria (DAD)
13. Lamar Academy
14. Local Administration Councils Unit (LACU)
15. Local Development and Small Projects Support (LDSPS)
16. Maan "Together" for Supporting Women's Issues
17. Musawa
18. Pro-justice
19. Qatra for Humanity
20. Safa Development Association
21. SEWAR
22. SHAML Syrian CSOs Coalition
23. Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM)
24. Syrian Lawyers Aggregation (SLA)
25. Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR)
26. Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR)
27. Syrian Organization for Women Detainees
28. Syrian Woman's Network (SWN)
29. Syrian Women Committee Org.
30. Syrian Women's Political movement (SWPM)
31. Syrians for Truth and Justice - STJ
32. Tala'ana Alhurriah Magazine
33. The Day After (TDA)
34. The Syria Campaign
35. Urnammu
36. Woman Support Association (WSA)
37. Women Now for Development



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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