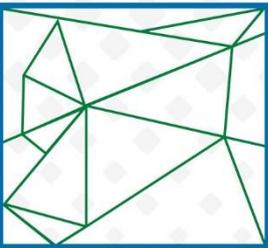


# Northeastern Syria: 29 Children Recruited Over the First Half of 2022



## **Northeastern Syria: 29 Children Recruited Over the First Half of 2022**

*The RY enlisted at least 27 minors, while the YPG commissioned  
no less than two between early 2022 and late June*

Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) documented the recruitment of at least 29 male and female teenagers in the areas held by the Autonomous Administration, within the provinces of Aleppo and al-Hasakah, over the first half of 2022. The enlistments were perpetrated by the Revolutionary Youth (RY)—an entity licensed by the Administration, and the People’s Protection Units (YPG)—an affiliate of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). The RY was responsible for 27 of the cases, while the YPG carried out the remaining two.

In all 29 reported cases, the recruits are under-18, among them 15 females and 14 males.

Notably, child recruitment is a common practice in the area. In 2021, STJ verified 24 enlistments, carried out by the same entities. The details of the 2021-cases are aggregated into STJ’s designated database.

The recurrent use of children for military purposes has been enraging families, who have taken to the streets to express their concerns. On 28 November 2021, several families [protested](#) in front of the UN headquarters in Qamishli/Qamishlo city. They denounced child enlistments carried out by military entities affiliated with the Autonomous Administration.

While families refuse to remain silent on the matter, the Autonomous Administration and its affiliated recruiters often turn a deaf ear to the demands of parents. Related to the lack of an official response, STJ [documented](#) the story of 17 year old Muhammad Zakaraya Habash. On 13 June 2022, the YPG units operating in Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city, recruited Habash. The boy’s family reported that the YPG sent him to their Shaqif Military Center.

The family asked to contact their son and demanded that he be returned to his home in Ashrafieh neighborhood. However, their appeals were ignored by the center’s authorities and some of the commanders of the Autonomous Administration in the area.

In this report, STJ presents the details of three recruitment cases, and dedicates two sections, under which are listed the names of the minors recruited in 2021 and 2022, along with the recruiters.

## **Teenage Boy A. Ja’afou**

A. was born in 2008 and hails from Kerzayhel village, in Afrin region. A. and his family fled hostilities in Afrin and settled in Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city. For details on the enlistment of A., STJ reached out to two sources informed of the incident, including an eyewitness and a relative of the teenager. The eyewitness narrated:

“Around 2:00 PM, on 22 June 2022, A. and four other teenagers were hanging out in Afrin Park, near the Younes Saba’awi School, in Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood. The boys were playing when they were approached by a man, who identifies himself as Aziz. He told the boys that he will buy them cigarettes and food. The boys were naturally overjoyed and accepted. However, one of the boys left the group and escaped. A. and the remaining three boys stayed. Nearly 10 minutes later, Aziz returned, accompanied the boys out of the park, and forced them to get into a car. They left the place.”

For his part, A’s. relative recounted:

“A.’s father searched for his son for three days. He inquired into his whereabouts at the RY center in Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood. The RY denied having him. Three days

later, the father received a call. He was informed that A. was in Manbij and that he will be relocated to al-Hasakah within hours to participate in combat. The caller also told the father that he should be proud of his son. The family failed to obtain any other information about their son.”

The relative added:

“The RY recruited A.’s older brother two years ago. Back then, the boy’s father had to pay a significant sum of money to return his son and then send him abroad.”

### Teenage Girl A. Abdullah

A. was born on 2 June 2009 and hails from Krehbreh village, administratively affiliated with al-Qahtaniah district, in al-Hasakah province. To gain insights into the case, STJ reached out to one of the little girl’s relatives. The relative said:

“On 11 May 2022, A. and her mother were shopping in one of the neighborhoods in Qamishli/Qamishlo city. As they navigated the market, A. suddenly disappeared. We had no idea where she went. We searched for her for two days and posted her photo and name on Facebook. Later, we learned that the RY had her. Her father went to several official entities, but they all refused to disclose her whereabouts. Later, the family received information that she was in a camp in Magloujah area in Mount Abdulaziz, west of al-Hasakah. However, the family has not yet been able to reach her.”

The source added that the family referred to the Office for the Protection of Children in Armed Conflicts of the Autonomous Administration in Qamishli/Qamishlo city, which was closed. They then contacted one of the office’s officials, who told them that they had stopped working a while ago.

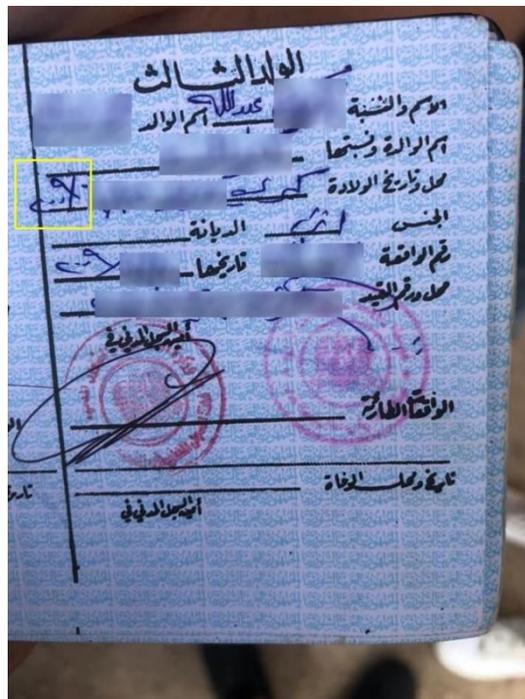


Image (1)- The family of the girl (A. Abdullah) provided Syrians for Truth and Justice with an official document issued by the Syrian government, showing the girl’s birth (2009), meaning that she is now 13 years old.

## Teenage Girl H. Moussa

H. was born on 3 January 2008. According to a relative that STJ talked to:

“On 19 May 2022, H. and her younger brother were playing near the public park. They quarreled. This caught the attention of an RY member, who was at the RY center, adjacent to the park. The RY member intervened and took the siblings into the center. Two hours later, the RY sent the brother home and kept H..”

The relative added:

“When the family learned of the incident, H.’s father headed to the center immediately and demanded that they return his daughter. In the beginning, the RY members denied she was there and then said that they sent her to her aunt’s house. However, she was not there. After a week of heated talks between the family and the center’s members, the members admitted that they recruited her. They refused to decommission her and said that she was attending training at a closed camp. They did not allow the family to see her.”

The source added that the family resorted to several official entities in Qamishli/Qamishlo city, including the Children Protection Office. However, all their efforts were to no avail. The family continues to wait for their daughter to be returned home, even though the RY threatened to kill the father if he asked about his daughter again.



Image (2) - a document issued by the Syrian government proving that the child soldier was born in 2008, meaning she is now 14 years old.

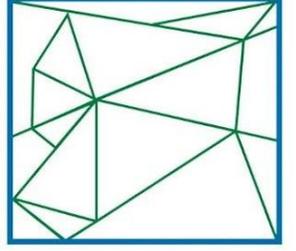
## Teenagers Recruited in 2022

1. Teenage girl S. Melhem, 15, was enlisted by the RY on 16 January 2022. She hails from Fatoumeh village, in Ayn al-Arab/Kobani region.
2. Teenage boy M. Hasan, 15, was enlisted by the RY on 16 February 2022. He hails from al-Hasakah city.
3. Teenage girl S. Darwish, 14, was enlisted by the RY on 1 March 2022. She hails from Ashma village, in Ayn al-Arab/Kobani region.
4. Teenage girl N. Habash, 16, was enlisted by the RY on 1 March 2022. She hails from Ashma village, in Ayn al-Arab/Kobani region.
5. Teenage boy M. Isma'il, 14, was enlisted by the RY on 5 March 2022. He hails from Tal Hajeb village.
6. Teenage boy D. Muhammad, 14, was enlisted by the RY on 5 March 2022. He hails from Tal Hajeb village. He was subsequently reunited with his family.
7. Teenage boy M. Abdullah Issa, 15, was enlisted on 6 March 2022. He hails from Shiran village, in Ayn al-Arab/Kobani region.
8. Teenage boy M. Shaikh Baker, 16, was enlisted on 12 March 2022. He hails from Illajaneh village, in Ayn al-Arab/Kobani region.
9. Teenage girl R. Muhammad Shaikho, 16, was enlisted on 30 March 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
10. Teenage girl Z. Subhi Koujar, 16, was enlisted on 31 March 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
11. Teenage girl K. Topal, 13, was enlisted on 2 April 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
12. Teenage boy A. Hasan, 14, was enlisted on 8 April 2022. He was relocated to a center in Tall Rifat town.
13. Teenage girl J. Abdo Dahdoh, 13, was enlisted on 21 April 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
14. Teenage girl S. Kar Abdo, 15, was enlisted on 22 April 2022, from Ashrafieh neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
15. Teenage girl A. Abdullah, 12, was enlisted on 16 May 2022 in Qamishli/Qamishlo city.
16. Teenage girl H. Moussa, 13, was enlisted on 19 May 2022 in Qamishli/Qamishlo city.
17. Teenage girl S. Ja'far Hamid was enlisted on 21 May 2022 in al-Shahbaa area, in Aleppo's countryside.
18. Teenage girl S. Hussain hailed from al-Malikiyah/ Dêrik area. She was killed during clashes with Turkish forces in Iraq on 22 May 2022.
19. Teenage girl L. Hussain, 13, was enlisted on 22 May 2022 in Qamishli/Qamishlo city.
20. Teenage boy I. Shawqi Youssef was enlisted on 8 June 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
21. Teenage boy M. Shawqi Youssef was enlisted on 8 June 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
22. Teenage boy M. Habash, 17, was enlisted by the YPG on 13 June 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
23. Teenage girl Kh. Hamak, 13, was enlisted by the RY on 15 June 2022, from Baghdik village, in Ayn al-Arab/Kobani region, in Aleppo's countryside.
24. Teenage boy A. Jafou was enlisted on 22 June 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.

25. Teenage boy A. Khelo was enlisted on 22 June 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
26. Teenage boy H. Bilal was enlisted on 22 June 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
27. Teenage boy A. Ja'fou was enlisted on 22 June 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
28. Teenage boy Ali (Unidentified surname) was enlisted on 22 June 2022, from Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, in Aleppo city.
29. Teenage girl Gh. Mahmoud, 14, was enlisted by the YPG on 26 June 2022 from Qamishli/Qamishlo city.

## **Teenagers Recruited in 2021**

1. Teenage girl N. Shukri, 14, was enlisted on 1 January 2021. The case was documented in a former STJ report.
2. Teenage boy A. Rami, 16, was enlisted on 1 February 2021. The case was documented in a former STJ report.
3. Teenage boy M. Hasan, 17, was enlisted on 9 February 2021. The case was documented in a former STJ report.
4. Teenage boy Kh. Ali, 17, was enlisted on 10 February 2021. The case was documented in a former STJ report.
5. Teenage girl S. Mahou, 16, was enlisted on 12 February 2021. The case was documented in a former STJ report.
6. Teenage girl A. Bahri, 13, was enlisted on 16 February 2021. The case was documented in a former STJ report.
7. Teenage boy F. al-Hamdo, 15, was enlisted on 16 February 2021. The case was documented in a former STJ report.
8. Teenage girl R. Hasan, 13, was enlisted on 19 April 2021.
9. Teenage boy W. Ibrahim, 17, was enlisted on 24 July 2021.
10. Teenage boy A. Amin, 16, was enlisted on 1 August 2021.
11. Teenage girl S. al-Osman, 13, was enlisted on 9 August 2021.
12. Teenage girl F. Nu'man, 15, was enlisted on 13 August 2021.
13. Teenage boy Sh. Hasan, 14, was enlisted on 10 October 2021.
14. Teenage girl A. Abdulaziz, 16, was enlisted on 2 November 2021.
15. Teenage girl M. Farid, 12, was enlisted on 16 November 2021.
16. Teenage girl H. Antar, 16, was enlisted on 21 November 2021.
17. Teenage girl A. Ibrahim, 15, was enlisted on 21 November 2021.
18. Teenage girl A. Khalil, 15, was enlisted on 21 November 2021.
19. Teenage boy A. Mustafa, 14, was enlisted on 22 November 2021.
20. Teenage boy A. Issa, 13, was enlisted on 23 November 2021.
21. Teenage boy Kh. Hussain, 15, was enlisted on 24 November 2021.
22. Teenage girl D. Hasan, 13, was enlisted on 26 November 2021.
23. Teenage girl F. Ibo Kashtan, 15, was enlisted on 17 December 2021.
24. Teenage girl S. Kado, 16, was enlisted on 19 December 2021.



## About Us:

Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization monitoring human rights violations in Syria. Founded in 2015, STJ has been based in France since 2019.

STJ is an impartial and independent Syrian human rights organization operating across Syria. Our network of field researchers monitor and report human rights violations occurring on the ground in Syria, while our international team of human rights experts, lawyers, and journalists gather evidence, examine emerging patterns of violations, and analyze how violations break domestic Syrian and international law.

We are committed to documenting violations of human rights committed by all parties in the Syrian conflict and elevating the voices of all Syrians victimized by human rights violations, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, class, and/or gender. Our commitment to human rights monitoring is founded on the idea that professional human rights documentation meeting international standards is the first step to uncovering the truth and achieving justice in Syria.



[WWW.STJ-SY.ORG](http://WWW.STJ-SY.ORG)



[STJ\\_SYRIA\\_ENG](https://twitter.com/STJ_SYRIA_ENG)



[EDITOR@STJ-SY.ORG](mailto:EDITOR@STJ-SY.ORG)