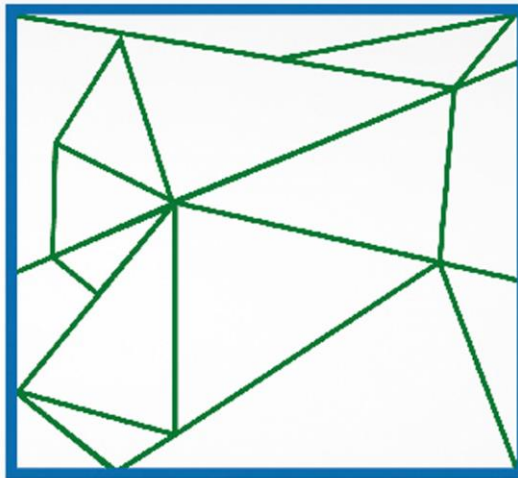


## Press Release: STJ Responds to Allegations Regarding its Report on the Legislative Decree on Increasing the Military Salaries in Syria

سوريون  
من أجل  
الحقيقة  
والعدالة  

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Syrians  
For Truth  
& Justice



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Report on the Legislative Decree on Increasing the Military  
Salaries in Syria**

On 28 March 2023, Mr. Muhsen AlMustafa published a [Tweet](#), accusing Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) of having “briefed in several lines” a research paper that he had prepared with the Omran Center for Strategic Studies. Mr. AlMustafa added that STJ ignored the “[original work](#) and did not cite it as a source”. According to his claim, the text is not “copy-pasted” but the process is “very clear in the ideas, the narration, and in some titles” used by STJ. In his tweet, Mr. AlMustafa was referring to STJ’s [report](#) on the Legislative Decree No. 25 of 2022 on amending the salaries of the Internal Security Forces soldiers.

These allegations were taken seriously by STJ. Accordingly, an internal committee of three researchers was formed, headed by STJ’s legal advisor. The committee reviewed these allegations and carefully read the report of STJ and the study of Omran Center.

**The committee reached the following conclusion which STJ adopts in this press release:**

❖ Points of Difference:

The Study of the Omran Center is based on numerical analysis and the language of numbers. It is an economic study with an in-depth look at the philosophy of the "Syrian regime" regarding increasing military salaries to keep military men by its side. **On the other hand, the STJ paper is a brief-report that addresses the favoritism of the military regarding salary increases and tax exemptions. The report discusses this issue from a legal perspective and not economically. It is based on the various decrees and laws related to increasing salaries and granting tax exemptions. The report compares and analyzes the content of the legislation and reaches a result that recently these laws benefit only the military and not the civilians.**

Moreover, the study of the Omran Center is extensive and covers a period from 1994 until now. It compares the salaries of the military and civilians and shows that the salary of a PH.D. holder is equal to, or less than, the salary of a soldier. The study compares the increase in salaries and the rate of inflation. **However, STJ does not address any of these points in its report.**

Furthermore, the study of the Omran Center includes a comparison between salaries and their purchasing power compared to the Syrian pound and the US dollar. It also discusses the impact of the financial crises in Lebanon. The study mentions the source of the military salaries and the emigration of the educated. **Nevertheless, none of these issues is addressed in STJ’s report.**

**On the other hand, the report of STJ refers to the “pretext of fighting terrorism”, social justice, and the distribution of burden.** These issues are not addressed in the Omran Center’s study.

Finally, **unlike STJ**, the study of Omran Center excludes legislative decrees related to pensions.

❖ Points of Intersection:

According to the committee, both papers focus on the idea of the government's tendency to increase the salaries of the military rather than the civilians, particularly in recent years, and granting tax exemptions on these salaries. Both papers discuss (in different ways) the aim of this approach, which is to support the military sector and reward military men for their services.

In its report, STJ mentions the titles and dates of relevant decrees that were issued favoring the military. It explains that this phenomenon began to appear clearly in recent years (since 2018, according to the decrees). This information is unambiguously mentioned in the decrees themselves. Not to mention that reaching the same conclusion does not mean that STJ derived its result from the study of the Omran Center because anyone who studies the laws related to increasing salaries can reach this conclusion. Noting that the laws and references on which the report was based, are all cited in the report. STJ has reached the conclusion of favoring the military by studying, comparing and analyzing these laws.

Moreover, the government's approach to support the military is not recent. It is well known to everyone who has knowledge of the Syrian case and the ruling system in Syria. Several laws issued by the Syrian government are being studied and analyzed by different people, agencies, and organizations, and no one can take credit for that alone. For example, dozens of studies and research papers are issued on [Law No. 10 of 2018](#) (on urban planning). The vast majority of these studies state that the real purpose of this law is to confiscate the property of Syrians, particularly the opposition and the displaced. No one can claim that they invented this conclusion and that the rest of researchers are "ignoring the original work".

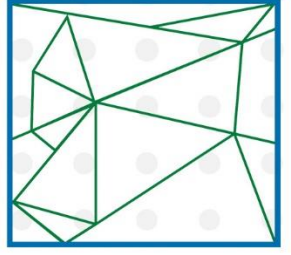
It is noteworthy that STJ has been working for years to study, analyze, and present Syrian decrees and laws, and for that purpose, STJ has a specialized team of legal researchers. Decree No. 25 of 2022 is one of several papers that constitute a whole project of STJ. Examples of the laws studied and analyzed by STJ: [the Real Estate Documents Restoration Law No. 33 of 2017](#), [the Tenancy Law No. 20 of 2015](#), [the Cybercrime Law No. 20 of 2022](#), [the Anti-Torture Law No. 16 of 2022](#), [the Amnesty Decree No.7 of 2022](#), and [the Penal Code Amendments Legislative Decree No. 15 of 2022](#).

STJ regrets the unjustified campaign against the organization was subjected to due to false allegations. STJ calls the readers and followers to always be objective and seeks accuracy and professionalism before publishing any accusation that contributes to the defamation of STJ or any organization. For several years, STJ has been subjected to similar pressure because of its objectivity and impartial documentation of violations committed by all parties without favoritism.

Syrians for Truth and Justice, 31 March 2023.



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## 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)