

Statement of Condemnation and Call for an Investigation into Attacks on Kurdish Families Returning to Girê Spî / Tell Abyad



- A Serious, Transparent And Impartial Investigation Must Be Launched, Those Responsible Held Accountable, And The Right To Safe And Dignified Return And Property Restitution Guaranteed

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The organizations signing this statement are following with grave concern the attacks targeting displaced Kurdish families as they returned to the city of Girê Spî / Tell Abyad in the northern countryside of Raqqa on Monday, 26 October 2026. The incidents were accompanied by threats, acts of intimidation, and damage to property.

The Girê Spî / Tell Abyad area has witnessed large-scale displacement, particularly among its Kurdish population, following the Turkish military operation and the subsequent takeover of Tell Abyad, Serê Kaniyê / Ras al-Ayn, and surrounding areas by Turkish forces and factions formerly affiliated with the “Syrian National Army” in October 2019. Since then, thousands of families have been unable to return to their homes and properties.

The undersigned organizations reaffirm that the right of displaced persons to return safely and with dignity to their areas of origin, and to recover their homes, land, and property, is a fundamental right that must not be violated, denied, or obstructed through force, threats, or discrimination. Property-related disputes must be addressed through the law and the competent institutions, rather than through violence or the imposition of faits accomplis.

The organizations call upon the relevant security and administrative authorities within the transitional government to fulfil their responsibilities to protect returnees and safeguard their property. They further call for a serious, transparent and impartial investigation into these attacks, for those responsible to be held accountable in accordance with the law, and for effective measures to be taken to prevent their recurrence, without selectivity or impunity.

The organizations also warn of the grave consequences of discrimination and incitement on ethnic or social grounds. They stress that protecting the rights and dignity of all citizens is an indivisible obligation, and that civil peace cannot be achieved by disregarding grievances or pressuring those affected to relinquish their rights. Rather, it requires justice, equality, and the rule of law.

The right of return, the protection of property, and respect for human dignity are fundamental rights that must never be made contingent upon threats or prevailing power dynamics. Safeguarding these rights is an essential responsibility for ensuring justice and strengthening trust among the diverse components of Syrian society.

Signatories

Individuals

Kholoud Al-Asrawi – Human Rights and Political Activist

Mariana Karkoutli – Legal Investigator

Organizations (alphabetical order)

1. ACCESS Foundation
2. Ambassadors Association for Persons with Disabilities
3. Aras Organization
4. Artist Organization for Culture and Development
5. ASHNA for Development
6. ASHTI Foundation
7. DAN for Relief and Development
8. DemoS Organization
9. Fajr Organization
10. Ghosn Development Team
11. Green Braids Environmental Association
12. GreenTrees
13. Humanitarian and Development Cooperation Foundation (HDC)
14. Internationale Nothilfe e.V. (IEH)
15. Khutwat Women's Association
16. MADAD for Development and Peacebuilding (MDP)
17. Malva for Arts and Culture
18. Nudem Foundation for Media and Development
19. Nujin Association for Community Development
20. PEACE SHE LEADER NETWORK
21. PÊL – Civil Waves
22. Renk Organization for Development
23. Roni Foundation for Development
24. RÊ Organization for Rehabilitation and Development
25. Rose Foundation for Support and Empowerment
26. Small Dreams for Women's Support and Empowerment
27. Syrian Association for Women's Support (Shawshka)
28. Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ)
29. Syrian Women League
30. Taa Marbouta
31. Vejin Initiative
32. Wa'i Civil Movement
33. White Hope
34. Yekpar Association for Culture and Art
35. Roj Kar for Relief and Development



ABOUT STJ

Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) started as an idea in a co-founder's mind while attending the U.S. Middle-East Partnership Initiative's (MEPI) Leaders for Democracy Fellowship program (LDF) in 2015. The idea became a reality and flourished into an independent, non-profit, impartial, non-governmental human rights organization.

STJ's beginnings were more than humble; initially, it only reported stories of Syrians who experienced arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearance, or torture. Planted in fertile soil, the seed of this project grew into an established human rights organization licensed in the Middle East and the European Union. STJ today undertakes to detect and uncover violations of all types committed in all Syrian parts by the various parties to the conflict.

Convinced that Syria's diversity is a wealth, our researchers and volunteers serve with unfailing dedication to monitor, expose, and document human rights violations that continue unabated in Syria since 2011, regardless of the affiliation of the victims or perpetrators.