



# The Tenth Anniversary

## of the Foundation of the Syrian Network for Human Rights

**Building a Database That Includes Hundreds of  
Thousands of Incidents, Their Details, Photos and Videos**



The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) was founded at the beginning of June 2011, a few months after the start of the popular uprising for freedom, in March of the same year. From the earliest days, the Syrian regime confronted peaceful protesters with live bullets, arrests, enforced disappearances and torture, leading Fadel Abdul Ghany to come up with the idea of establishing a network of activists to document victims and detainees on a daily basis which could issue periodic reports for submission to UN agencies, international organizations and the media. A number of activists, both male and female, who shared his belief in the importance of this work, joined voluntarily, with many fearing that the names and details of the victims would be lost due to their large number and the multiplicity of their locations, especially as the demonstrations against the Syrian regime quickly grew and expanded, with the regime reacting by increasing its brutal efforts to crush them via killings, arrests and murderous repression of every form.

Initially, the SNHR's activities began on a small scale and were limited to preparing a brief daily report on the human rights situation in Syria, including incidents of killing and arrest.

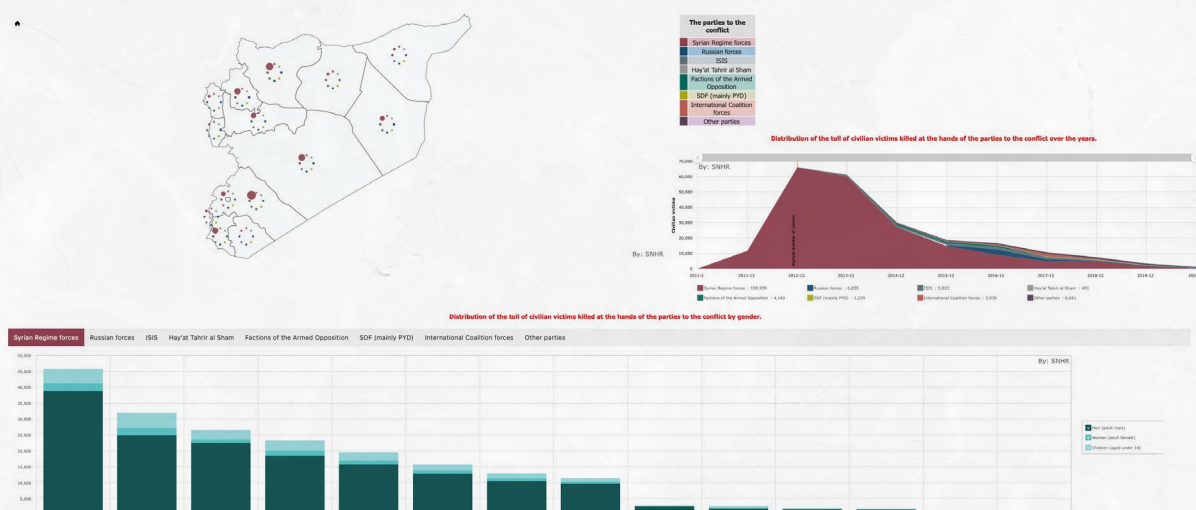
A few months later, this vital work progressed to preparing cumulative reports based on this daily documentation of rapidly escalating events, with SNHR starting to issue monthly reports, the first of which was the Victims' Death Toll report, providing details on the death toll of Syrian citizens killed during the previous month, their distribution according to the location of each killing, and the death toll among children and women. With the team members undergoing a number of human rights and legal training courses, its activities expanded to include working on thematic reports dealing with specific issues such as documenting massacres, sieges, live bombings, the use of new types of weapons and the number of times they were used, as well as the places they targeted. In addition to the Syrian regime, multiple parties have also emerged on the scene of the Syrian conflict, that practiced other types of violations and persecuted those working in the field of documenting their violations, increasing the intensity and difficulty of this already dangerous work.

Our work has evolved over the years, as we have learned from our mistakes, and faced numerous immense challenges, many of which are still present in one way or another. Over time, we have assembled an empowered and highly skilled team with extensive experience in documenting violations on a daily basis, as well as expanding our network of contacts with residents, local activists, media workers, medical personnel, and Civil Defense teams. In order to further develop our relations with the victims and their families, we designed forms on different types of violations, which are now available on our website, enabling survivors and victims' family members to complete and submit them, after which we communicate with them to help however we can. The regular use of our news and reports by media has helped increase awareness of our work and boost our reputation in the Syrian community, with the confidence and trust among the victims, their families, eyewitnesses and local activists remaining, as always, key to our main work.





Since 2011, we have established major databases archiving and categorizing incidents of violations, within which we document a vast amount of information on various types of violations using a rigorous working methodology that is periodically updated to keep pace with the changes taking place in the Syrian conflict. We reflect the information documented on our databases through the extensive range of materials we issue, including human rights reports on various issues, with some years over the past decade seeing intense levels of violations, leading us to issue seven monthly reports on different areas, namely: victims, detainees, torture, violations against media workers, violations against the medical sector, barrel bombs, and targeting of vital facilities. At present, we issue three monthly reports, namely: victims and torture, arrest, and the human rights situation in Syria, with the last covering multiple types of violations and developments in events. We also issue thematic reports that deal with specific issues according to need and priority, in addition to daily news articles, statements, and a daily report on the death toll that has not stopped since the earliest days.



Since its establishment up until June 2021, SNHR has issued approximately 1,170 reports and approximately 290 statements, in addition to thousands of news articles, in which it addressed multiple types of the most notable human rights violations. Since its establishment, the SNHR has also organized and participated in some 57 important events on human rights in Syria, alongside a variety of international actors and victims. SNHR has also participated in filing three cases related to the criminal accountability process in European courts, as well as providing training to a wide range of Syrian media workers, in addition to a number of political offices of factions of the Syrian opposition, and to human rights activists from other Arab countries suffering from conflicts.



The SNHR is a member of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP), the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, the International Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC), the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), and Every Casualty Counts (ECC) network.



It should also be noted that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has relied on the Syrian Network for Human Rights as a primary source in all of its statistics on the analysis of victims of the conflict in Syria. Since August 201, SNHR has also been working in cooperation with the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria (COI), and we have corresponded with a number of special rapporteurs over the past ten years, in particular the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; we also participate in the Universal Periodic Review and many other UN mechanisms.

To date, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has signed about 27 agreements and memoranda of understanding to share data on human rights violations in Syria with [many regional and international institutions and bodies working](#) in the field of human rights or active in the Syrian case, including:

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), [International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism \(IIIM\)](#), the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on grave violations committed against children in times of armed conflict, [United States governments](#), the German Heinrich Böll Foundation, [the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project \(ACLED\)](#), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons' (OPCW) [Investigation and Identification Team \(IIT\)](#), Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor (Euro-Med), Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), [Global Public Policy Institute \(GPPI\)](#), [Aid Worker Security Database \(AWSD\)](#), Human Rights Data Analysis Group (HRDAG), EuroMed Rights, Paris School of Economics (PSE), [New York Times](#), Oxford Research Group (ORG), Durable Solutions Platform (DSP), and the Syria Campaign.



The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) is a primary source for many foreign ministries of states friendly to the Syrian people, and in the situation reports issued by those states, in addition to a wide range of human rights and research institutions, civil society organizations and political institutions, as well as to a wide range of local, Arab and international media outlets, as our reports, statements and news spread in hundreds of media outlets around the world, multiple times.

The SNHR's work aims to support the demands of the popular uprising for freedom, dignity, democracy and human rights, to protect the rights of victims who have been subjected to the most heinous types of violations in retaliation for demanding a political change from dictatorship and family rule towards democracy and freedom of opinion and choice. SNHR also aims to expose the largest possible number of perpetrators of violations before local public opinion, to prevent them from remaining in power or being rehabilitated, and to ensure that as many as possible are included on the international sanctions lists since they are a threat to security and to humanity, as well as preserving and cataloguing the history of events to prevent the Syrian regime and the parties to the conflict from manipulating or attempting to falsify them. Readers can get more information about SNHR's work from our [profile](#) on our website.

Our feelings on the tenth anniversary of SNHR's founding are mixed with a reality full of grief and sorrow for the unimaginable suffering endured by the Syrian people and state, as a result of courageously confronting one of the most notorious, authoritarian, dictatorial regimes in the world to demand freedom and fundamental human rights; despite the passage of ten years since we began, we are still documenting the routine occurrence of the most egregious human rights violations against the Syrian citizen, including extrajudicial killing, enforced disappearance, torture, death under torture, and forced displacement. We continue to hope that these violations will end soon and that we can focus instead on working to help achieve a political transition, that we shall contribute to a transitional justice process guaranteeing the rights of victims and achieving justice and accountability, and that we will make progress towards the promotion of various forms of human rights in Syrian society.

We extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to everyone who has worked with us and supported our activities, in particular to the victims and their families, survivors and eyewitnesses, volunteers, and local activists, without whose trust and cooperation we would not have been able to continue our work.



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