



## The Death of 1,592 Individuals under Torture in 2015 34 amongst which were Killed in December

### Report Contents:

- I. Report Methodology
- II. Executive Summary
- III. The Most Significant Cases of Death Under Torture
- IV. Conclusions and Recommendations
- Acknowledgment and Condolences

### I. Report Methodology:

Since 2011, the Syrian regime has refused to recognize any arrests it had made as it accused Al-Qaeda and the terrorist groups of committing these crimes. Also, the Syrian regime doesn't recognize any torture cases or torturing to death. SNHR acquires its information from former prisoners and prisoners' families where most of the families get information about their beloved ones who are in prison by bribing the officials in charge.

At SNHR, we rely on the families' testimonies we get. However, it should be noted that there are many cases where the Syrian authorities don't give the families the dead bodies. Also, many families abstain from going to the military hospitals to bring the dead bodies of their beloved ones or even their belongings out of fear that they might themselves get arrested.

Also, most of the families assure us that their relatives were in good health when the arrest was made and it is highly unlikely that they died of an illness.

Fadel Abdulghani, head of SNHR, says:

*"The principle of "Responsibility to Protect" must be implemented as the state has failed to protect its people and all the diplomatic and peaceful efforts have failed as well. Crimes against humanity are still being perpetrated on a daily basis in Syria mainly at the hands of the state authorities."*

Therefore, SNHR faces serious difficulties in the documentation process because it is banned and pursued. In light of such circumstances, it is difficult to completely verify the number of victims as the process remains mainly based on ongoing documentation and investigation even with taking into consideration families' testimonies

Please visit the following [URL](#) for more information on our methodology in documenting victims



# Toll of victims of death under torture in Syria

since 1 January 2015 till the end of December 2015



According to Syrian Network For Human Rights

## II. Executive Summary:

### 1. Under Torture's Victims' Death Toll during 2015:

SNHR recorded not less than 1592 cases of death under torture inside official and non-official government detention centers and prisons in 2015. The victims' details are detailed as follows:

**A. Government Forces (army, security forces, local and foreign militias) killed 1,546 individuals detailed as follows:**

- 1,419 civilians, including 7 children and 4 women
- 127 armed opposition members
- Amongst the total number of victims who died under torture, there were 659 victims who were identified from Caesar leaked images in the "Photographed Holocaust" study.

**B. Extremist Islamic Groups:**

- i. ISIL killed 10 individuals under torture
- ii. Al Nusra Front killed 19 individuals under torture

**C. Armed Opposition Groups killed 9 individuals under torture**

**D. Kurdish Self Management Forces killed 4 individuals under torture**

**E. Unidentified Groups killed 4 individuals under torture**





Cases of victims being tortured to death have been recorded ceaselessly since 2011 which clearly reflects the excessive and systematic force that is being used against detainees. Damascus suburbs governorate had the highest number of victims who were tortured to death with 524 victims, while the toll of other victims was divided as follows according to the Syrian governorates:

- Daraa: 435
- Hama: 183
- Homs: 104
- Deir Al Zour: 90
- Idlib: 85
- Damascus: 64
- Aleppo: 39
- Lattakia: 21
- Raqqa: 18
- Hassaka: 12
- Al Qunaitera: 9
- Tartous: 5
- Al Swaida: 3

**The most significant death under torture cases in 2015 are:**

23 university students, 11 teachers, 9, media activists, 6 doctors, 5 engineers, 4 lawyers, 2 volunteers in the Syrian Red Crescent, 2 athletes, a nurse, a pharmacist, a paramedic, an artist, 7 children, 4 women, 6 elderly, and 16 cases of related family members.

**Death Toll of Under Torture Victims during December 2015:**

SNHR recorded not less than 34 cases of death under torture inside official and non-official government detention centers and prisons in December 2015. The victims’ details are detailed as follows:

- A. Government Forces (army, security forces, local and foreign militias) killed 33 individuals under torture.
- B. Unidentified Groups killed one individual under torture.

Damascus suburbs and Daraa governorates had the highest number of victims who were tortured to death with 8 victims, while the toll of other victims was divided as follows according to the Syrian governorates:

- Hama: 4
- Idlib: 3
- Damascus: 2
- Deir Al Zour: 2
- Homs: 2
- Aleppo: 2
- Lattakia: 1
- Hassaka: 1
- Qunaitera: 1

**Distribution of victims who were killed under torture according to the conflict party:**

Conflict Party	Government Forces	Unidentified Groups
Governorate		
Daraa	7	1
Hama	4	
Idlib	3	
Homs	2	
Deir Al Zour	2	
Aleppo	2	
Damascus suburbs	8	
Damascus	2	
Lattakia	1	
Al Qunaitera	1	
Al Hassaka	1	





## The most significant cases of death under torture in December 2015 are:

A university student, a Christian young man, an elderly, and a case of family related individuals.

### III. The Most Significant cases of death under torture:

#### - University students:

Hamad Tarek Majeed, a university student from Daraya city in Damascus suburbs, 23, was arrested on 16 February 2013 by the military security after they raided the hotel he was staying in, in Damascus. He was killed under torture a month later in Saydnaya prison that belongs to the government forces. On 18 December 2015, we were informed by his family that they identified their son's body through the Caesar leaked images.



#### - A Christian Doctor:

Simon Fareed Yakoub, from Al Skayelbeyi city in Hama governorate, Christian, doctor 36, was arrested on 26 November 2015 by the government forces on Al Qateifa checkpoint on Damascus road while he was heading there to perform a medical operation in one of Damascus's hospitals. On 10 December 2015, government forces handed the victim's body to their family after he died under torture in one of its detention centers.



#### - An Elderly:

Abdul Kafi Mohamad Al Bakour, an elderly from Teldo town in Homs, 70, was arrested by government forces a year ago on one of the crossing points with Lebanon. On 15 December 2015, his family confirmed his death under torture in one of the government detention centers.





- Cases of related family members:

Mousa Matrza and his brother Taha from Kanaker town in Damascus suburbs were arrested by government forces. Taha was arrested three years ago and his brother Mousa was arrested a year ago. On 23 December 2015, we learned from their families that they died under torture in one of the government detention centers.

### Conclusions and Recommendations:

SNHR notes that this huge number of torture victims who are falling on a monthly basis, with taking into consideration that this number is the minimum we were able to get information about, indicates clearly that this is a systemized policy adopted by the head of the ruling regime and all its parties and branches. This policy was carried out in a widespread manner which is a crime against humanity and also a war crime.

Some of the extremist groups have practiced torture acts that can be classified as war crimes as well as some of the armed opposition factions.

## Recommendations

### Security Council

- To transfer the Syrian case to the International Criminal Court.
- To impose sanctions on all the commanders that were involved in torture practices which violate the international criminal law and security council resolutions on Syria especially resolutions 2042 and 2139.
- To bind the Syrian government and the various influential parties to fully cooperate with the Human Rights Council investigation committee in order to conduct a thorough investigation on torture inside detention centers.
- To grant human rights organization access to any location in Syria.

## Acknowledgment

We would like to thank everyone who helped to deliver data to SNHR and specifically the activists who cooperated with us. Furthermore, our most heartfelt condolences go out for the victims' families and relatives who agreed to cooperate with us despite their grave losses.

