



Not Less than 517 Arbitrary Arrests in March 2016 Increasing prisoners' toll rather than releasing them

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I. Introduction:

The issue of detainees is the only concern that had no progress although included in the statement of the cessation of hostilities, and in this particular case we recommend the following:

First: the arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances, which are still happening even now according to the monthly report of the Syrian Network for Human Rights, must be stopped immediately, and government forces must disclose all of the detainees' fate, and allow parents to visit them immediately.

Second: All individuals who have been detained merely due to the exercise of their political and civil rights must be unconditionally and immediately released. Additionally, women and children must be released and stop dealing with them as war hostages.

Third: Grant independent international observers such as the members of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry set up by the United Nations on the Syrian Arab Republic and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to visit all the official and non-official detention centers, without prior arrangement, without any limitation or qualification.

Fourth: Form a UN committee to monitor the release of the detainees periodically according to a timetable for the requested all those detained, mainly from the Syrian government, which holds 99% of the total of the detainees.





I. Report Methodology

SNHR documented the arrest of not less than 117 thousand persons, since the beginning of uprising in March 2011. (99% of the governmental forces- Do not include the outcome of the detainees to criminal backgrounds and include the cases of detention on the background of the internal armed conflict, mainly due to the opposition activity of the authority of government)

This mounting number of arrested individuals is due to several reasons:

1. A great number of detainees were imprisoned since their relatives, siblings, or family members were involved with armed opposition groups or since they provided humanitarian aid to people in need.
2. Most of the arrest cases are conducted randomly against people who are not involved in protests, relief aid, or military actions.
3. The Syrian regime continues to imprison a great number of civilians who did not participate in the uprising despite judicial orders for their release.
4. Government forces control densely populated areas like the main cities in each governorate and use a systemized policy of arbitrary arrests against civilians in these regions.
5. It is worth mentioning that there are multiple forces, affiliated to government authorities, who are responsible for arbitrary arresting civilians and detaining them in certain prisons that are not subjected to judicial supervision where detainees are not treated according to the Syrian stipulated laws.

A great number of arrest cases are driven by blackmails or sectarian grudges. SNHR records show that more than 95% of the detainees in government and its militias' prisons are of Sunni majority.

The widespread arrests motivated by extortion or sectarian grudges, especially in unstable security areas. These areas experience ongoing conflicts and are either under the control of several groups, or not controlled by conflict parties. As a result, local armed militias, who are not affiliated to any of the conflict parties, emerged and contributed to the current conflict.

Details about detainees can be found through the search engine on SNHR website, you may also add the name and details of any detainee as the concerned team will check the data and upload it if proved accurate.





III. Report Details:

March 2016 was distinguished in the arrests' toll since government forces conducted widespread arrests campaigns against civilians from «Barzet Al-Demashki Neighborhood» where government troops detained dozens of residents of the besieged neighborhood while attempting to return to their homes. Government forces continued chasing and arresting activists and their families within the controlled cities and communities. The focus of these detentions was against the university students and government officials and activists of humanitarian action even those who are members of humanitarian organizations such as the Red Crescent or the licensed civil associations. In March also, detention operations were carried out by the governmental forces, against merchants in various sectors, and the most important of the banking sector financial remittances in Damascus, Aleppo and Hama.

ISIL also continued in the policy of arbitrary detention against civilians in-ruled areas under its control. The detention operations included doctrines violators and forcibly imposed by the Organization, as well as communications stores and internet cafes, and civilians who are trying to flee from the areas of the control of the Organization to the areas of the control of the factions of the armed opposition.

Kurdish Self-Management Forces continued the policy of arbitrary detention, enforced against civilians and political activists opposed to the directions in the areas under its control, which focused the arrests in the city of «Al Hasakah», and the city of «Afrin» the countryside of the province of Aleppo

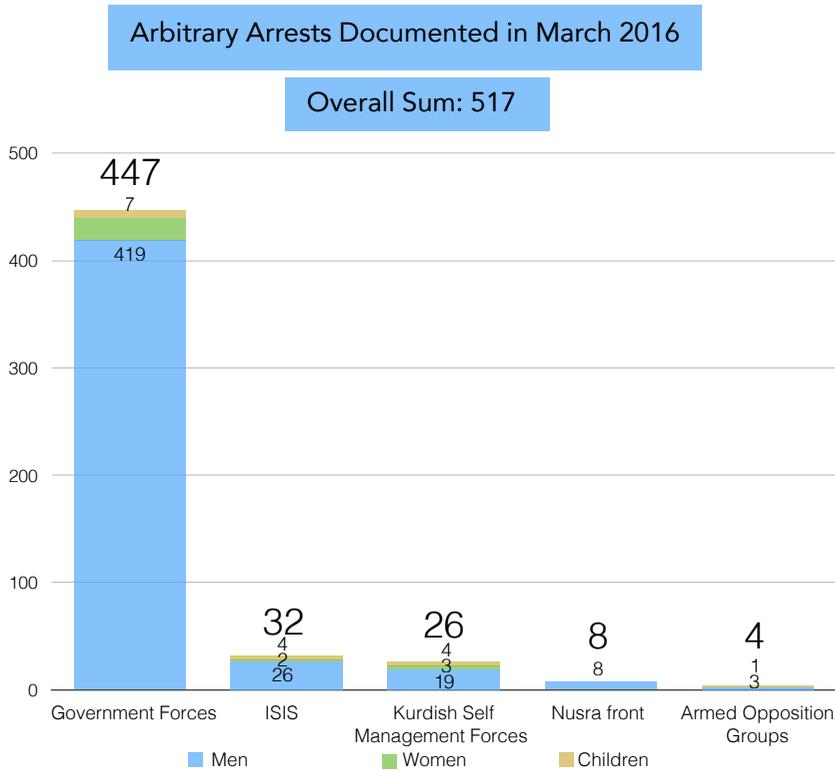
During march, we recorded a rise in the rate of cases of arbitrary detention, by Al Nusra Front, to journalists and activists in Idlib Province in general, and the civilians who have links with affiliates of «Troop 13», which is one of the faction of the Syrian opposition armed forces. The arrests were focused in the cities of «Idlib» and «Maarat Al Naaman» Idlib province.



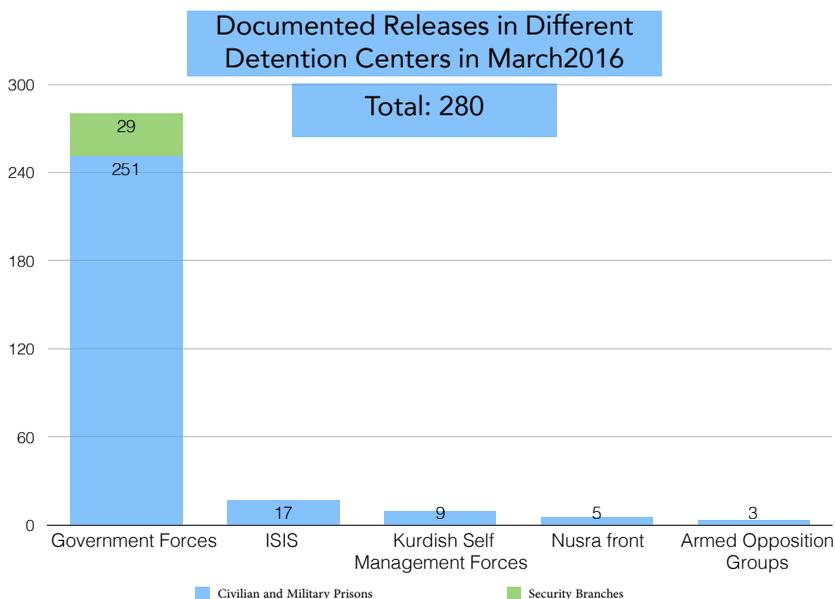


- The following table depicts the arbitrary arrests in March 2016. We assure that these numbers are the bare minimum of what we were able to document due to the current security and logistics obstacles.

Arbitrary Arrests Documented in March 2016:

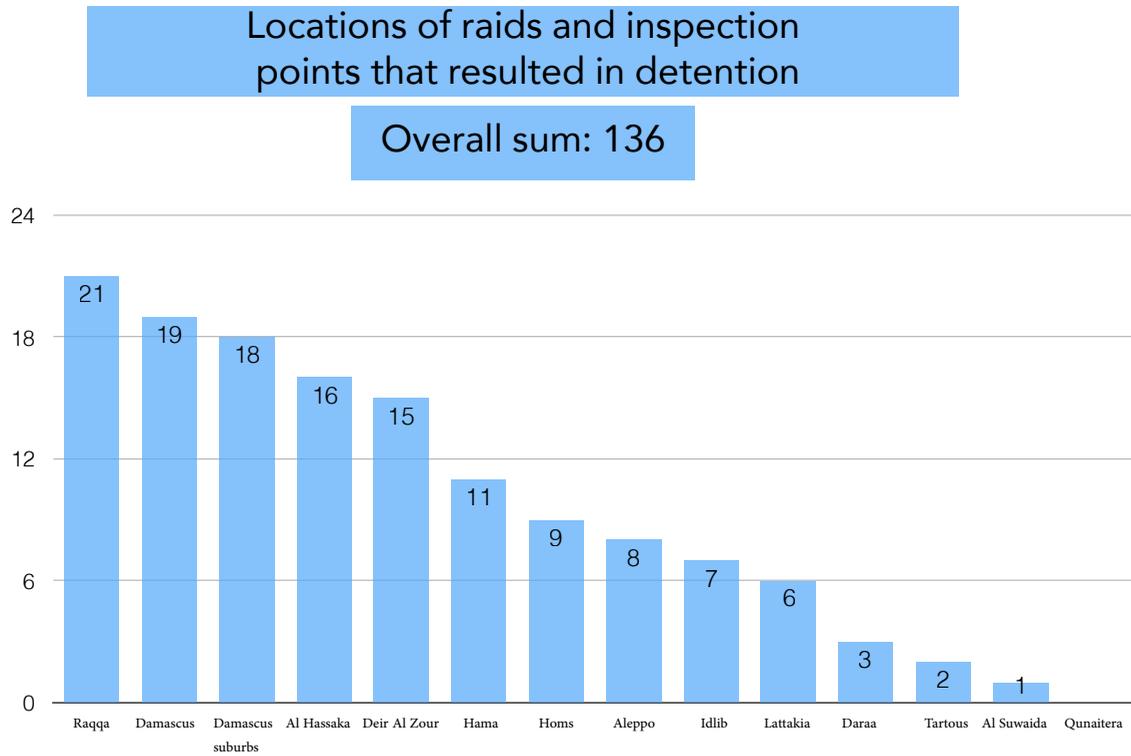


Documented Releases in Different Detention Centers in March 2016:

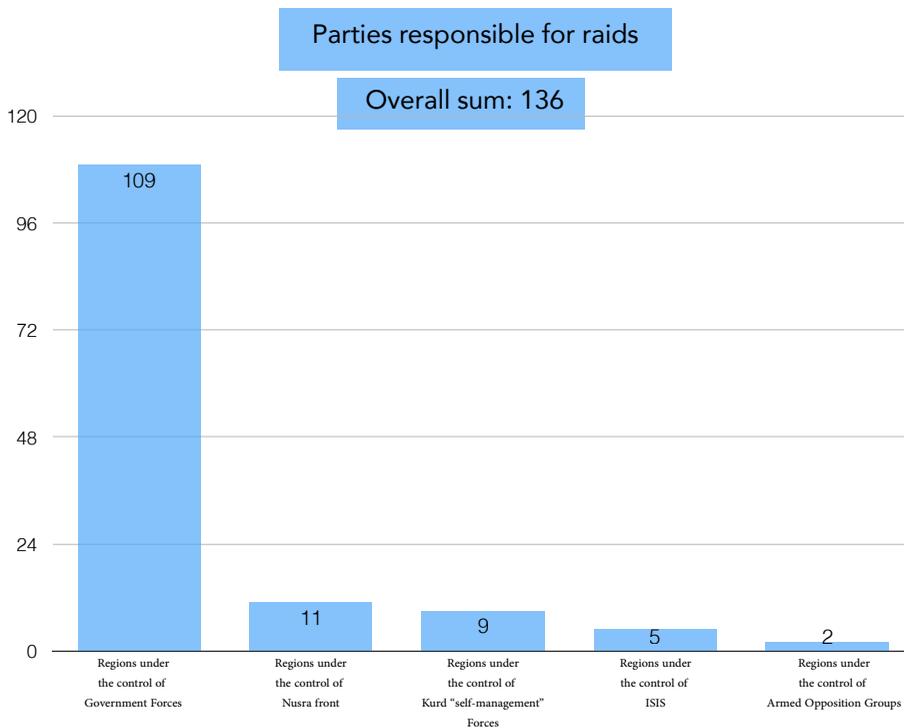




Locations of raids and inspection points that resulted in detention:

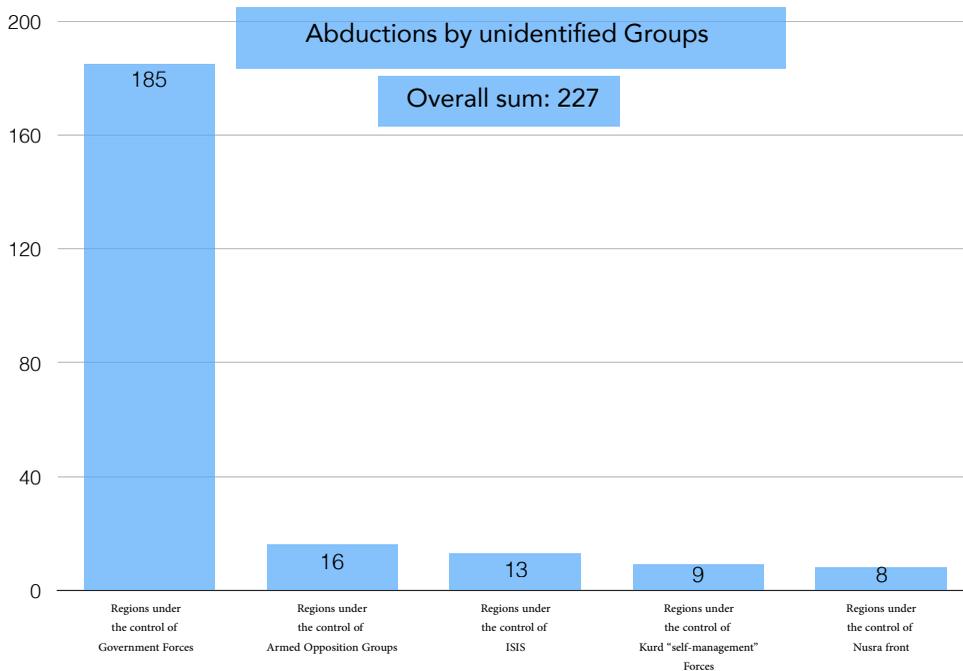


Parties responsible for raids:





Abductions by unidentified Groups:



IV. The Most Significant Arbitrary Arrest Cases in March 2016:

A. Government Forces:

Moheddein Abdul Hameed Al Rajab, from Al Hassaka city, an English teacher, was arrested by government forces from his residents in Al Hassaka city on 18 March 2016. His fate is still unknown for SNHR and his family as well.

Mohamad Haj Ahmad, an engineer, from Termaneen town in Idlib suburbs, 49, was arrested by government forces in Aleppo city when he passed by a government checkpoint on 14 March 2016. SNHR was not able to verify his whereabouts.

Extremist Islamic Groups:

[Media activist Mohamad Karkas](#), from Ma'art Al No'man city in Idlib, a photographer and media activist, was arrested by Al Nusra front on 7 March 2016 while he was covering the news about the protests in Idlib. He was released on 8 March 2016.

Kurdish Self Management Forces:

[Media activist Masoud Issa Hamdi](#), from Khizna town in Al Hassaka governorate, Wikimedian reporter, was arrested by KSM forces when they raided his house in Khizna town and was released on 23 March 2016.





Student Afeen Mohamad Hassan, from Al Qameshli city in Al Hassaka governorate, 23, a university student in the faculty of Archeology, a member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, was arrested by KSM forces on 16 March 2016. Her fate is still unknown by SNHR and her family as well.

Unidentified Groups:

Qamar Abdullah Na'asan, a female from Al Ferdos neighborhood in Aleppo city, was considered as an enforced disappeared individual since she was abducted by unknown individuals in Al Ferdos neighborhood. Her fate is still unknown for SNHR and her family as well.

Recommendations:

1. The Security Council must monitor the implementation of the resolutions: 2042 issued on April 14, 2012, resolution 2043 issued on April 21, 2012 and 2139 issued on March 22, 2014 that put an end to the arbitrary arrests.
- 2- The United Nations and the International Community must shoulder their responsibilities towards hundreds of thousands of detained and missing individuals in Syria.

