

Statement on filing a complaint on an enforced disappearance case for the United Nations' Working Team

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

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The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, independent group that is considered a primary source for the OHCHR on all death toll-related analyses in Syria.

Citizen Abdul Hamid Zahlawi

has been forcibly disappeared since 2014

The SNHR has briefed the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on the case of the citizen Abdul Hamid Zahlawi, a housewares seller from the Bab al Sba neighborhood in Homs city, who was aged 24 at the time of his arrest. SNHR urged the UN body to demand that the Syrian authorities release him immediately. Mr. Zahlawi was arrested arbitrarily on February 5, 2014, by the Syrian Regime's State Security forces following a raid on his place of residence in al Gardenia neighborhood in Badr al Din Hamed Street in Homs city, and was taken to an undisclosed location. He was last seen in early April 2014 by a former detainee in the Military Security branch, Branch 215, in Kafrsousa neighborhood in Damascus city, to which he was transferred as a deposit¹ for Branch 291 of the General Intelligence Department. He has not been seen since that date at any security branch or prison. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR as well as to his family.

The Syrian authorities have denied any connection with the disappearance of Abdul Hamid Zahlawi. The SNHR has been unable to determine his fate, as have his family members, who fear that they may be arrested and tortured by regime personnel themselves if they continue to ask about his whereabouts and fate, as has happened in numerous previous cases.



¹ In virtually all of the regime's security branches, there are detention facilities of varying size. In some cases, when the detention facilities of certain branches run out of space, branches transfer detainees to other detention centers, such as prisons or military bases, but continue to be considered the party holding such detainees. These transferred prisoners were referred to as "deposits," (Ida` in Arabic)

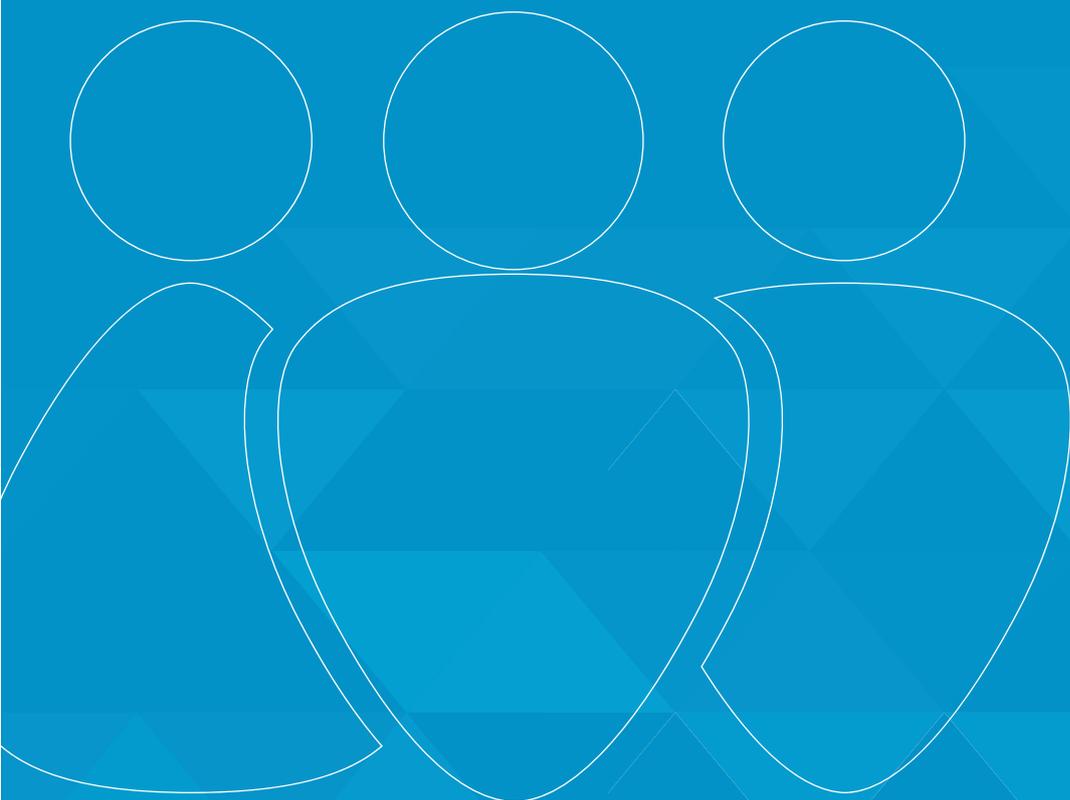


The SNHR has called on the United Nations Committee on Enforced Disappearance to intervene and to demand that the Syrian authorities release Mr. Zahlawi immediately, as well as to expedite investigations into the fate of thousands of other forcibly disappeared citizens whose whereabouts and current conditions must also be revealed.

Although the Syrian government is not a party to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, it is indisputably a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Arab Charter on Human Rights. Enforced disappearance constitutes a violation of both instruments.

SNHR also confirmed that there are well-founded fears that many of those forcibly disappeared by the Syrian regime since 2011 may have been subjected to torture and possibly killed in regime detention, with the number of citizens forcibly disappeared by the regime continuing to grow.





@snhr



Info@sn4hr.org

www.sn4hr.org

