

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 Mahmoud Omar Qawas

has been forcibly disappeared since 2013

The SNHR has briefed the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on the case of the citizen Mahmoud Omar Qawas, from Kafr Lata village in Jabal al Zaweya area in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, who was born in 1970. He was arrested on Tuesday, January 1, 2013, by gunmen affiliated with the Syrian Regime's Military Security forces as he was heading from Kafr Lata village to Lebanon while passing through one of their checkpoints on the Harasta International Damascus-Homs Highway. He was last seen in 2017 by a former detainee in the General Intelligence Forces' Branch in Damascus city. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR, as well as to his family.



The Syrian authorities have denied any connection with the disappearance of Mahmoud Omar Qawas. 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.

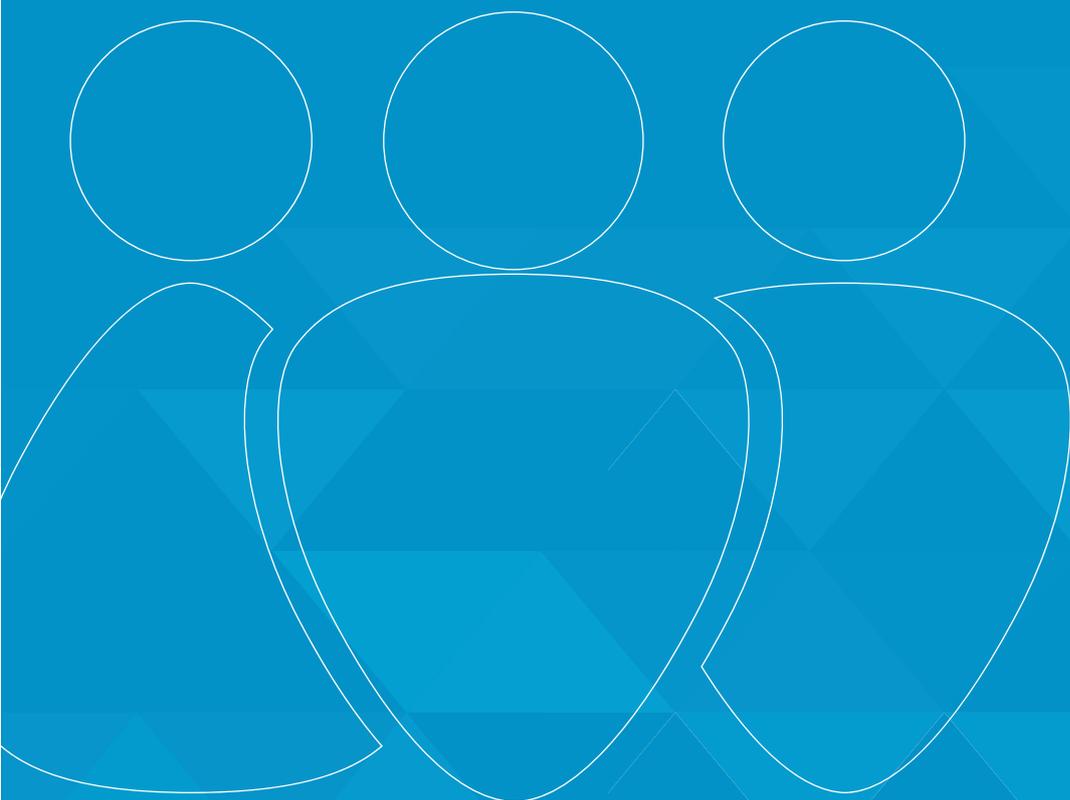
The SNHR has called on the United Nations Committee on Enforced Disappearance to intervene and to demand that the Syrian authorities release Mr. Qawas immediately, as well as to expedite investigations into the fate of thousands of other forcibly disappeared citizens whose whereabouts and current conditions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





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