



Hama Prison 2016 on the pace of Sidnaya Prison 2008 Fears threatens the life of 762 detainees in the Hama Central Prison

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I. Introduction and the Executive Summary:

Hama Central Prison have witnessed several protests by the inside prisoners since 2013. The Governmental Forces detain nearly 762 prisoners from different governorates, such as: Hama, Al Raqqa, and Damascus countryside. The prison is an official civilian detention center located in the eastern area of Hamah city. The detainees' files are subjected to the court of «Combating Terrorism» in Damascus, in the first place, then the Military Court and the court of the military field.

This protest «stubbornness» is considered as the third one the detainees do in Hama Central prison, in protest against the unfair death sentences provisions issued against them by the anti-terrorism court and the court of the military field in one hand, and the governmental forces and the transfer of convicts to Sidnaya Military Prison on the other hand. We have published earlier a report entitled ([“The Anti-terrorism Court”](#) issued verdicts against 56 detainees in Hama Central Prison, Amongst 15 death sentences). The Syrian authorities after the end of second protest punished all the prisoners who participated, through transferring them to prisons that are far from their areas such as Tartous Central Prison, because the conditions of detention are worse, and it is difficult for their families to visit the detainees. We mentioned in a previous report about the detainees' strike ([Political Prisoners in Tartous Central Prison on Hunger Strike For their. 13th day so far](#))





SNHR managed to contact a number of prisoners inside the prison; all the people we talked to them expressed their fear from the governmental forces breaking into the prison for punishment and retaliation; we will do mention in this report only two scenarios due to the similarity of the stories of the detainees.

We recorded the death of one detainee infected with cancer because of the refusal of the prison administration to let him receive treatment. That happened on 5 May 2016, which marks the fourth day of protest inside the prison.

II. Details of recalcitrance of the detainees in Hama Central Prison

May 2016, a group called «The Peacekeeping Forces» related to governmental forces to enter a room called «rioting and terrorism» in Hama Central Prison, where the detainees were held on the background of their participation of the popular movement which broke out in March 2011. This group attacked three dormitories of the «rioting and terrorism» and attacked a number of them by severe beating, and attempted to leading five of prisoners sentenced to death to outside the prison: (Mahmoud A}lwani - Abdul Latif Henno - Khaled Mchaimish - Khaled Zreiko – Anwar Farzat). The entry of what is called «The Peacekeeping Forces» to «riot and terrorism area» and bring the prisoners to other jails is considered as a routine action, but because of the violent practices held in this time, in addition to the state of congestion due to serious delays which may extend for years to consider their files, unjust judgments issued against them, procrastination the Syrian authorities in implementing its promises to make adjustments to the prisoners end their releases, the payment of all the detainees to the declaration of a state of disobedience, and clashed with a group of The Peacekeeping Forces to prevent them from taking the five detainees outside the prison (often to a notorious Sidnaya Military Prison)

The clash between «Peacekeeping Forces» and the detainees in the «Rioting and Terrorism area», led the detainees to detain eight members and the the officer of the forces. They were placed in one of the dormitories Rooms». The rest of the members withdrew and the detainees refused the entry of Peacekeeping Forces « to the dormitory again.

Several hours later, the prison administration fired the tear gas bombs and direct lively shooting toward the walls of «rioting and terrorism», what caused suffocation of nearly 56 detainees. Fires erupted in the corridors of the area. Also the administration ordered to cut electricity, water, and food to the detainees.





3 May, negotiations were held between the prison administration and attended leaders from the security branches in Hamah City, on one hand, and between the detainees on the other hand. Those negotiations mediated with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, and so called «the reconciliation committee» in Hama province, in addition to a number of religious figures in the city, which resulted in the release of the two batches of prisoners who are subjected to the «anti-terrorism court», distributed as follows:

The first batch: released 32 detainees from the prison of the Hama Central Prison, 31 of them are in favor of the «anti-terrorism court» in Damascus (uncontained); only one of them was sentenced to imprisonment for 9 years of «anti-terrorism court in Damascus. The Syrian Red Crescent transferred eight of them to areas under the control of armed opposition factions in the countryside of the Hama, and 24 others for several hours in shelters inside of Hamah city, and then dispersed in the districts of the city for fear of re-arrested by Syrian security services.

The second batch: on 5 May the prison administration released 14 detainees from the prison of Hama Central Prison, all of the detainees in favor of anti-terrorism court in Damascus.

On 5 May, the prison administration demanded from the detainees to end the stubbornness and the release of its members in their custody and demand from the Red Crescent the non-interference in the negotiations and make it directly between the parties. This was done in conjunction with the governmental forces and the deployment of the military mechanisms in the surroundings of the prison with hundreds of infantry forces. The worst part, the administration has brought «the militia of the hawks « a local militias with a sectarian nature, working under the leadership of the regular forces.

In the absence of a neutral mediator, and dissemination of the governmental forces that massive numbers of soldiers and mechanisms, the prisoners refused to hand over 15 of them. The prison administration said that it will release them, they told us that there is nothing to guarantee their lives or preclude the transferred to the hostages.

In the 6 May 2016, the governmental forces attempted to invade Hama Central Prison, and used tear gas bombs and lively shooting toward the buildings where the prisoners are located. This led to serious suffocation and a number of detainees were injured. On this day, the High Commissioner Prince Raad bin Zeid Al-Hus-





sein issued a [statement](#) in which it invited the Syrian authorities to negotiate and the non- use of force, the fear of the deadly attack.

Fadel Abdul Ghani, the director of the Syrian Network of Human Rights says:

«Long hours have passed upon cutting of water and electricity to the prisoners by the prison administration. We must not forget that there are dozens of patients within the prison in need to reach their medicines especially with heart issues and diabetes. In case the insistence of the Syrian authorities to end the stubbornness incursion by force, we are undoubtedly in front of a massacre that is similar to what happened in Sidnaya Prison in July 2008, where the jail break caused the killing of dozens; and at that time, The International Community claimed that they know nothing in advance and now they know.»

The detainee (Y.Y.), from Al Shiha, Hamah countryside, a 50-year-old, was arrested by the forces of the security branch of the airspace from his home in his hometown on 22 September 2013 and is now being exposed to «anti-terrorism court» in Damascus, which issued a term of 18 years imprisonment with a fine of six million Syrian pounds in 15 June 2015, on the basis of confessions extracted under torture and threat without any evidence to prove the charge against him, «attacking military sites».

Y.Y. tells SNHR:

«We have been for four days without food or water, the smell of smoke and tear gas is still in our booth, Red Crescent did not enter our booth but merely approached the gate only. We watch through the windows, the military groupings concentration to break into the prison. if no one has come to rescue us, a big massacre will be happening similar to which occurred in Sidnaya».

The detainee (Z. M.), the 26-year-old, from Damascus countryside, arrested by the governmental forces since 2 December 2012, while passing on one of its checkpoints in the city of Damascus because of belonging to a region under the control of the opposition armed factions. He is currently under the Military Court since 2012 without the right of any provision and without providing any evidence or witnesses to the charges against him.



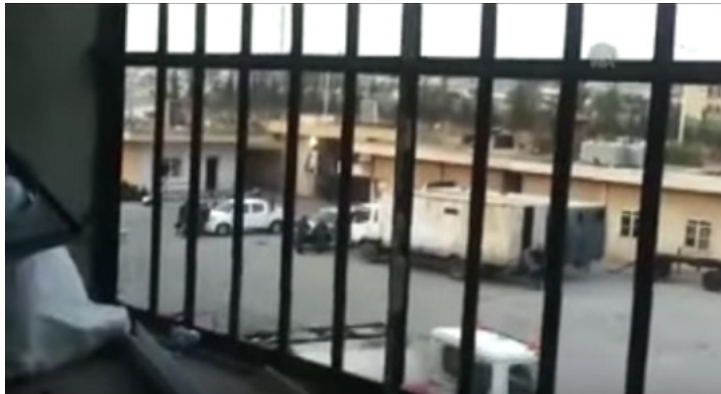


Z.M. narrated his story to SNHR:

«Police threaten us through loudspeakers, they said that we will regret it if we continue our strikes. I want to go out and I do not know till when I will remain suspended without fair judgment. Most of the detainees remained here for at least four years in prison and our stories are similar. Who possess the money to bribe the judge he can get out of here and who does not have it must wait years before the courts to pass sentences of death penalty or life imprisonment. Why don't they present us to fair courts and does not allow a neutral third party to visit the prison and listen to us or even access to our files in the courts.»

II. The Annexes:

Video shows the processing of the governmental forces the process of breaking into Hama Central Prison on 2 May 2016



Videotape shows an attempt of the detainees to break into the prison forces suite on 2 May 2016





Video shows the arrival of 8 of the released detainees from Hama Central Prison to Qalabat Al Madeek City on 3 May 2016



[Video](#) Shows suffocation of detainees at Hama Central Prison due to the usage of tear gas by the governmental forces on 6 May 2016

[Video](#) shows an attempt of the governmental forces invading Hama Central Prison and the eruption of fires in parts of it 6 May 2016

III. Recommendations:

• To The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

1. The Red Cross's visit is not enough since the prisons' administration, ordered by the regime, arranges the prison, prohibit and threatens the prisoners from talking to the Red Cross members. Therefore, the Red Cross visits should be periodic and sudden and without the presence of security officers.
2. Demand the Syrian government to disclose the detainees' names and publish their provisions, disclose the names of the dead detainees and issue their death certificates especially for those who were killed under torture.
3. Pressure the Syrian government to abolish legislation number 14 that was issued on 15 January 1969, and legislation number 69 which grants immunity to the security officers which prohibits their prosecutions.





- **To the UN Security Council:**

In reference to several UNSC resolutions about the detainees in Syria, 2041, 2042, 2139 and 2254, the Syrian government should stop using this file as a leverage to stay in power. The political and humanitarian aid detainees should be released.

Appreciations and Solidarity:

Our sincere thanks go to the prisoners who willingly accepted to risk their lives some to deliver of information, the relatives of the detainees and their friends and all the solidarity with them until getting just for their cause.



Syrian Network For Human Rights
النسكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

