

## International Day in Support of Victims of Torture in Syria

*The Syrian regime kills six people under torture every day*

*1st: the Syrian regime  
2nd: Al-Qaeda-affiliated groups  
3rd: The armed opposition  
Recommendations*

### **1st: the Syrian regime**

Every day, [SNHR](#) team documents no less than six people killed under torture inside the official and unofficial detention centers. This number represents the daily average of victims who are killed under torture. Those victims are among more than 215,000 prisoners in addition to 85 thousand enforced-disappeared at least.

The Syrian regime doesn't distinguish between physicians, engineers, or humanitarian activists as everybody is being treated by the same methodology inside the four security branches.

Among the arrested are under-aged children whom are being tortured brutally. Furthermore, Women have been subjected to torture including sexual violence and sexual extortion for the simplest things like going to the bathroom or having decent food.

[SNHR](#) has documented since the beginning of the revolution the killing of no less than 4853 people under torture including 93 children and 32 women.

Fadel Abdulghany, head of [SNHR](#), says:

"The terrifying number of torture victims indicates that torturing is a systematic policy for the Syrian regime. Torturing during armed conflicts is a violation of the International Humanitarian Law and the International Criminal

Law. The acts of torture committed by the Syrian regime and its pro militias can be openly classified as war crimes and crimes against humanity. The International Community, represented by the Security Council, should protect the Syrians from torture in its various forms.”

The most brutal security branches are: Military Intelligence branch no. 215 and branch no. 227, Air Force Intelligence branch in Mazzeh, Political Security and Air Force Intelligence branches in Aleppo, Military Force branch in Homs, and Air Force Intelligence branch in Hama.

2012 constitution doesn't tolerate torture as it states:

“It is prohibited to torture or treat anyone humiliatingly; punishment of doing the same is determined in accordance with the provisions of the law.” In addition, article 391 of the Syrian Criminal Code suggests that anyone who beats someone using unallowable ways in order to get a confession or information is to be sentenced to 3 months-3 years.

This has not been implemented in the slightest as any other laws adopted by the Syrian regime or any conventions and truces it has signed. Additionally, Decree 46 of the year 2008 granted policemen, Political Security branches, and customs control impunity regardless of the crimes they perpetrate as it assigns their trials exclusively to the military judiciary and it also grants the right to sue them exclusively to the minister of justice. To this day we haven't heard about any lawsuit against any officer or military personnel of any rank despite the thousands of crimes they perpetrated.

Methods of Torture:

The network was able to count 45 torture methods; we will divide them into three types:

- Torture Techniques (8 positions)
- Various Methods of torture (22 cases)
- Psychological torture (12 cases)

### **First: torture Techniques: we documented 8 positions, the most systematic and widely used one:**

1-Ghost Technique: It occurs through putting handcuffs on the detainee's hands and hanging him/her to the ceiling of the investigation room by a rope while he/she stands on a chair. The chair is withdrawn to let him/her hardly touch the ground by the big toe.

There is a similar ghost technique in which one foot is tightened together with the hands by the same rope. The detainee many stay for many hours, a day or two days in such position, consequently his/her hands are cut.

2- Tying Up, Kicking and Booting, where the hands are tied with the two feet of the detainee to look like the car boot to be kicked and beaten on all parts of his body.

3- Wind Carpet Technique: it occurs by putting the detainee on a plank in the mid of which exist joints that allow the folding of the board so that the detainee's hands and feet get tied to the front and back of the plank, and his face on the ground of it. Then, the front side of the plank is lifted as

to fold it so that the body of the detainee gets folded until the backside of his head touches the heel of his feet. This leads to a dangerous stretch in the ligaments and nerves of the spine, which results the most dreadful kind of pain a person can suffer from. Meanwhile, another person is beating the detainee.

4- Crucify: the hands and legs of the detainee are tightened like a crucified person then they beat him/her specifically on the sex organs.

5- Hanging: the hands are tied behind the back, and then the detainee is hanged up and beaten with sticks and wires.

6. Smashing, where a detainee head is placed between the wall and the door of the prison, the door is closed on the head of the detainee.

7. Electric chair, a metal chair, the detainee is seated on it, and then they put on the electrical current.

8. German chair, a chair made of metal, its back can be moved backward to pressure on the neck and spine of the detainee.

## **Second: Different Methods of Torture, we documented 23 methods used in most cases:**

1- Using all methods of beating on all body parts by different tools such as stake and electric cables, called colloquially Robai, to beat on the soles and tread on the head.

2- Completely uprooting fingernails.

3- Removing hair from different organs of the body.

4- Cutting out flesh by forceps from sensitive organs.

5- Rapping detainees; males or females.

6- Forcing the detainee to rape his/her mate.

7- Cutting out some parts of the detainee body; such as a finger, flesh, or stabbing in the back or stomach.

8- burning detainee's skin using chemical acids or smoked cigarettes.

9- Exposing the detainee after being enforced to take off all clothes to extreme cold.

10- Depriving the detainee from medical care totally as there is a lack of medical care in large number of prisons.

11- Preventing the detainee to use the toilet but once or twice a day, forcing him/her sometimes to urinate on himself/herself. If the detainee is allowed to use toilet, the period may not exceed a minute. The detainee is also prevented from taking shower, going out and breathing fresh air.

12- Keeping a large number of detainees in a small cell (keeping 45 detainees in a 15 meter cell, Air Force Intelligence, Aleppo).

13- Pouring cold water over the body after being hit and wounded.

14- Breaking the ribs.

15- Providing insufficient amount of water and food which are not enough for a quarter of detainees.

16- Standing up on foot and hung up from hands for successive days.

17- Using underground cells without ventilation.

18- Detaining women and men in the same cells.

19- Pouring boiling oil or water over legs to burn the skin.

20- Cutting the ear using the clipper used to trim the trees.

21- Stressing ears and nose using mallet.

22- Hanging up and then tying something heavy to the penis.

23- Electric shocking, especially in breasts, knees, and elbows.

Third: Psychological torture

In [SNHR](#), we managed to document 14 cases, the most used and systematic ones:

1- Forcing the detainee to watch his/her mate being raped.

2- Threatening the detainee with rapping.

3- Enforcing the detainee to watch his/her mates sufferings from torture or dying.

4- Threatening the detainee with arresting his wife, mother or sister and rapping or torturing her in front him after allowing him watch naked girls in the prison.

5- Threatening the detainee with torture to death or slaughter with knife.

6- Offending and assaulting the detainee's religious beliefs.

7- Forcing the detainee to undress in front of his/her mates.

8- Putting the detainee in a cell, in which somebody is dying.

9- Keeping the detainee in a cell with a dead body.

10- Assaulting the detainee by obscene insult

11- Forcing the detainee to admit crimes he did not commit or they will double the torture.

12- Ordering the detainee to prostrate before Assad's portrait.

13- Deluding the detainee that he/she is going to be released and opening the cell's door, then bringing him/her back for torture.

14- Taking the detainee to the prison's doctor for treatment. The doctor hits him/her on the painful part, then the detainee is taken back to be re-tortured. So that none ask again for doctor.

## **2nd: Al-Qaeda affiliated groups:**

Al-Qaeda affiliated groups, such as ISIS, perpetrated acts of torture that can be classified as crimes against humanity against civilians and rebels. We've recorded at least 12 victims killed under torture whom were arrested by ISIS.

### **3rd: The armed opposition groups against government:**

Some of the rebels had tortured some governmental and Shabiha (militias), and in some cases civilians. We've recorded at least the killing of 37 people under torture.

### **Reccomendations**

#### **The Security Council**

- 1- Pass a resolution to transfer the Syrian case to I.C.C. and to stop supporting the principle of impunity.
- 2- Warn the Syrian government of the consequences of using brutal torture methods as it affects civil peace and coexistence within the society.
- 3- Apply the principle of “The Responsibility to Protect” (R2P) that was submitted by the UN in 2005.

#### **Human Rights Council**

- 1- Pay greater attention to the case of dying under torture which is one of the most horrible crimes.
- 2- Demand the Security Council and the concerned international organization to uphold their responsibilities regarding this critical issue.
- 3- Press on the Syrian government to stop torturing and opening its prisons and detention centers in order to assess the humanitarian condition inside.
- 4- Hold the allies of the Syrian regime –Russia, Iran, and China- the moral and historical responsibility in regard to the Syrian regime’s violations in this field.

#### **The Arab League**

- 1- Urge the Security Council to pay greater attention to this critical issue.
- 2- Press diplomatically and politically on the Syrian regime’s allies –Russia, Iran, and China- to stop them from providing the Syrian regime with political cover and hold them the historical and moral responsibility in regard to all the Syrian regime’s violations.

