



## Statement

### **SNHR Is the Second Most Cited Information Source in the European Asylum Support Office's Report on Common Analysis and Guidance Notes in Syria**

On November 30, 2021, [the European Asylum Support Office \(EASO\)](#) released its report on Common Analysis and Guidance Notes in Syria.

The report is intended as a tool for policymakers and decision-makers in the context of the [Common European Asylum System \(CEAS\)](#). It aims to assist in the examination of applications for international protection by applicants from Syria, and to foster convergence in decision practices across EU Member States. It mainly covers the period between January 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021.

The report relies on several human rights sources, most notably, in order of the number of quotes included:

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA): 58

Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR): 36

The report also cites other sources such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (COI), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the Violations Documentation Center in Syria (VDC). We have reviewed the 234-page report, and here will briefly summarize the most prominent points among its contents.

The report states that the conflict has significantly affected the state's role, reach and institutional capacity in areas under the control of the Syrian regime's government. The report adds that foreign actors, including Iran, Russia and the Lebanese Hezbollah, and pro-Syrian regime's government militias, exert significant influence over parts of the territory nominally under the control of the Syrian regime.

The report further notes that the Syrian regime forces pursue punitive policies against local populations, carrying out:

- Arrests/ detentions against civilians in the areas under regime's control, adding that the detainees were held incommunicado and denied access to a lawyer.
- Rape of and sexual violence against women, girls and occasionally men during ground operations, raids and in detention, considered to amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The report emphasizes that pro-regime militias are also involved in a number of criminal activities, such as extortion of companies, and stealing, looting and smuggling of guns and drugs. It further notes that impunity is pervasive and there are no functional civil remedies for human rights violations.

Regarding the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the report indicates that:

- The Democratic Union Party (PYD) and the affiliated Asayish are engaged in arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances and torture of political opponents such as the Kurdish National Council (KNC), arrests of journalists, members of human rights organizations, and individuals who refused to cooperate with Syrian Democratic Forces.
- The Syrian Democratic Forces/ People's Protection Units (YPG) carried out indiscriminate killings during the raids against ISIS, practiced arbitrary detentions of civilians, in addition to cases of enforced disappearance of persons perceived to be affiliated with ISIS or armed opposition groups.
- The SDF also recruits children.
- Thousands of women, men and children continue to be unlawfully interned or detained, some of them held in deplorable conditions in makeshift camps unfit to meet their basic needs.
- Temporary closure of schools that refused to adopt the educational curriculum imposed by the Syrian Democratic Forces in Deir Ez-Zour governorate.
- The Arab population suffers from a lack of services, ethnic discrimination, forced conscription, and the failure to release prisoners.

- The report refers to the involvement of individual members of the Syrian Democratic Forces in corruption, extortion and abuse of power, in addition to the marginalization of Arabs in matters of governance.

The report presents the findings of violations committed by the Armed Opposition factions/ Syrian National Army, and indicates that they have launched indiscriminate attacks on residential areas, summary killings and unlawful attacks that killed and injured civilians. The report also documents kidnappings, abductions, torture, extortion and assassinations of civilians. The report adds that some of these factions also practice child recruitment. The report refers to looting, theft and confiscation of Kurdish property, following the opposition factions' taking control over Afrin.

The report further notes that Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (HTS) has committed serious human rights violations. In this context, the report mentions HTS' recruitment and use of children in military operations, in addition to detentions of civilians, kidnappings and torture. The report adds that Hay'at Tahrir al Sham has conducted formal military campaigns, assassinations, and hostage takings, as well as suicide bombings. The report additionally refers to the restrictions imposed by the HTS on the population in the areas under its control, as well as to extortion of civilians, and kidnappings for ransom.

The report also states that despite the defeat of ISIS and the end of its control over any areas, the organization has formed cells throughout Syria, which carry out assassinations, kidnappings, extortion and terrorism against civilians.

The report analyzes the economic and humanitarian situation in Syria, indicating that the Syrian economy is in a state of meltdown, with 74% of the country's infrastructure damaged. The report further notes that even though there is no shortage of food in Damascus, food prices are so high that they exceed the purchasing power of the vast majority of the city's residents. The report also indicates that the Syrian regime had not started reconstruction of the most damaged areas of Damascus.

With regard to the health situation and the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the report notes that the hospitals in Damascus city have exceeded their capacity and that the health sector will suffer more with the increase in infections among health sector workers. The report points out that the Syrian regime's government does not disclose the real numbers of casualties, referring to estimates that the regime has only announced about 1.25% of the actual death numbers and that a cumulative total of 39 % of the Damascus city's population had been affected during the pandemic as of September 2020. The report states that unemployment rates had already reached 50% at the end of 2020, adding that nearly 90% of the population in Syria was living under poverty line at the beginning of 2021.

The report emphasizes that the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces do not provide protection to civilians, and stresses that Syria is still not safe for the return of refugees. In this context, the report refers to the violations that returnees are subjected to, which include arrests, torture and enforced disappearance.

In conclusion, the Syrian Network for Human Rights stresses that its contribution to all international reports on the human rights situation in Syria fulfils a duty towards revealing the truth, preserving the rights of victims, and exposing the perpetrators on the largest possible scale, and hopes that its database and the extensive information it contains, compiled over the past ten years, contribute to providing a service in documenting the true history

and chronicling the record of true events in Syria, helping to thwart the vigorous attempts by the perpetrators of violations, foremost among which are the Syrian regime, Russia and Iran, to change the narrative of events, and to deny or justify heinous violations. We also stress that we will continue to make the greatest possible effort to document violations and incidents objectively and credibly to achieve the goal of protecting civilians in Syria, defending the victims' rights, holding all perpetrators accountable, and helping to start the country along the path of positive change towards democracy and respect for human rights, in keeping with our motto: **"No Justice without Accountability"**.

To read the full report by the European Asylum Support Office, please visit [this link](#) <sup>1</sup>:

---

<sup>1</sup> Note: The report is only available in English.