



Physicians for
Human Rights



Press Release

SNHR Signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) and Begins Sharing Data

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), providing for the establishment of a coordination and cooperation mechanism to share information and data documented by SNHR on human rights violations against detained medical personnel.

The memorandum of understanding focuses on sharing data and evidence on human rights violations related to the issue of medical personnel whose arrest and detention were documented by the SNHR between March 2011 and the end of December 2012. In early August 2021, the SNHR shared these data, through which we aim to contribute to a research project that seeks to develop an understanding of how medical personnel have been targeted for arrest and persecution since the earliest stages of the conflict in Syria, particularly by the Syrian regime; this data will then be employed in analyzing the impact of these actions on various other factors, especially in treating those injured by Syrian regime forces targeting peaceful demonstrations, and to demonstrate that the widespread and deliberate targeting of medical personnel has prompted hundreds of these vital workers to flee outside Syria. The project will also address the wider issue of detainees and missing persons in general in Syria.

[Physicians for Human Rights \(PHR\)](#) is a US-based non-governmental, non-profit organization that uses medicine and science to document and advocate against mass atrocities and severe human rights violations around the world. The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) and PHR have worked together many times over the past ten years, and we affirm our support for PHR's work in this important research project, which comes within the framework of our united efforts as a contribution to the course of accountability and justice, and to expose the practices of the Syrian regime, which are considered among the most egregious, if not the most egregious, in the whole world in persecuting, arresting and torturing medical personnel.

Multiple Memoranda of Understanding:

This new memorandum of understanding is the latest in a number of memoranda of understanding signed by the SNHR with several bodies, most notably: United Nations bodies, including the International Impartial and [Independent Mechanism \(IIIM\)](#), to assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons responsible, according to international law, for the most serious crimes committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011. The IIIM has received a large quantity of data extracted from the SNHR database.

In January 2020, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) also signed a Principles of Cooperation agreement with [the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons' \(OPCW\)](#) Investigation and Identification Team (IIT), enabling SNHR to contribute to the investigations into the incidents that the team is currently conducting and will conduct in the future, since the SNHR possesses an extensive database documenting the use of chemical weapons in Syria since the first use of this weapon documented by SNHR in December 2012.

In October 2019, the SNHR signed [a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the United States of America](#), providing for the establishment of a coordination and cooperation mechanism to share information and data documented by SNHR concerning human rights violations in Syria and on the individuals involved in such violations in order to participate in the investigations carried out by the Government of the United States of America into some of these violations, and to place the greatest possible number of those involved in these violations on the lists of economic and political sanctions; this will constitute a major impediment to any effort to rehabilitate the Syrian regime and all its organs, and serve as an important form of accountability that was previously unavailable.

[In February 2020, the SNHR signed a Memorandum of Understanding](#) with Humanitarian Outcomes on contributing to its [Aid Worker Security Database \(AWSD\)](#) project, which is accredited by the United Nations, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and numerous humanitarian NGOs around the world. The AWSD is the most comprehensive global database of the major incidents of violence recorded against aid workers since 1997 to date. The MoU stipulates the establishment of a joint coordination and cooperation mechanism aimed at documenting and archiving violations and violence affecting aid workers. This will effectively assist in the study, analysis and description of aid work in Syria, providing comparisons with the rest of the world based on the AWSD's findings.

In addition, the SNHR has signed a wide range of bilateral agreements with a number of research centers for data-sharing, most notably: [the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project \(ACLED\)](#) and [the Global Public Policy Institute \(GPPi\)](#), with our policy providing that we should not share any data without first co-signing a formal agreement or memorandum of understanding detailing the criteria for the use of this data; the general terms for data-sharing can be found on [our website](#).

The SNHR will continue to build alliances in order to expose and detail the crimes and atrocities perpetrated by offenders in Syria, prevent their rehabilitation, and disclose the involvement of their allies, as well as to pave the way for their prosecution, and finally to provide the definitive true account of human rights violations in Syria and prevent the Russian, Iranian and Syrian regimes' research centers and organs from presenting their false narrative of events in Syria in order to preserve and protect our history and collective memory, and to protect the dignity and rights of the victims.

The SNHR places all its capabilities and data at the disposal of any legitimate international, judicial or economic body in order to contribute to the imposition of any form of accountability and punishment against the Syrian regime and its allies, and against all perpetrators of violations in Syria, calling on all the countries of the world to do everything in their power to ensure that no government or regime is able to violate the Geneva Conventions and that every effort is made to hold those which do so accountable; such efforts would also contribute significantly to deterring any other regimes from considering following the example of the Syrian regime by allying with Russia or China to provide them with protection in the UN Security Council and thus being granted impunity to continue to commit crimes indefinitely.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights will continue to document the violations and expose the perpetrators as much as possible, classifying this work as an integral part of its duty to defend human rights in Syria and a way to honor the organization's motto which it has always upheld: "No Justice without Accountability".



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