

The Syrian Regime Uses Detainees as Recruits

The Disgraceful Deal



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The Syrian Network for Human Rights, founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, non-profit independent organization that is a primary source for the United Nations on all death toll-related statistics in Syria

At al Suwayda Prison

On April 12, major general Farouq Umran, head of the police force in al Suwayda governorate, visited al Suwyada Central Prison to meet a number of detainees with political and criminal charges. The detainees were offered the following: to join the Syrian regime forces, or local militias, or even under the command of foreign militias -mainly Iranian and Iraqi militias- as a first step that shall be followed later by more procedures to release the names chosen by the prison administration.

Following the offer, the Activity Commission (A number of detainees who coordinate demands and official papers between the rest of the detainees and the prison administration) visited the detention wings in al Suwayda Prison in order to round up the names of those who want to fight and join the ranks of the Syrian regime forces.

The prison administration agreed to release the detainees with criminal charges, murder, theft, drugs..., while all those who are detainees on “terrorism” charges were denied a release (In this context, the Syrian regime deems any individual taking part in an active and actual opposition to it a form of “terrorism”).

At Adra Prison

In June 2016, we recorded that a Syrian regime security committee visited Adra Central Prison in Damascus suburbs with exactly the same offer: to release them provided they join the forces fighting for the Syrian regime. The committee gave an agreement document to the detainees who wish to be recruited by the Syrian regime, where the detainee had to sign it with his fingerprint, and they will be contacted at a later date regarding their release. We contacted a number of detainees at Adra Central Prison who told us that the agreement wasn't applied in the political detention wings, and only included detainees with criminal charges or those who were sentenced to long prison terms.



At Homs Central Prison

In 2015, SNHR team documented the release of 176 individuals by the Syrian regime including two women. The detainees were being held at Homs Central Prison and were imprisoned on criminal charges with terms ranging from 10 years to life. They were released in groups and in an abrupt manner. We received information that they were used in combat or intelligence operations.

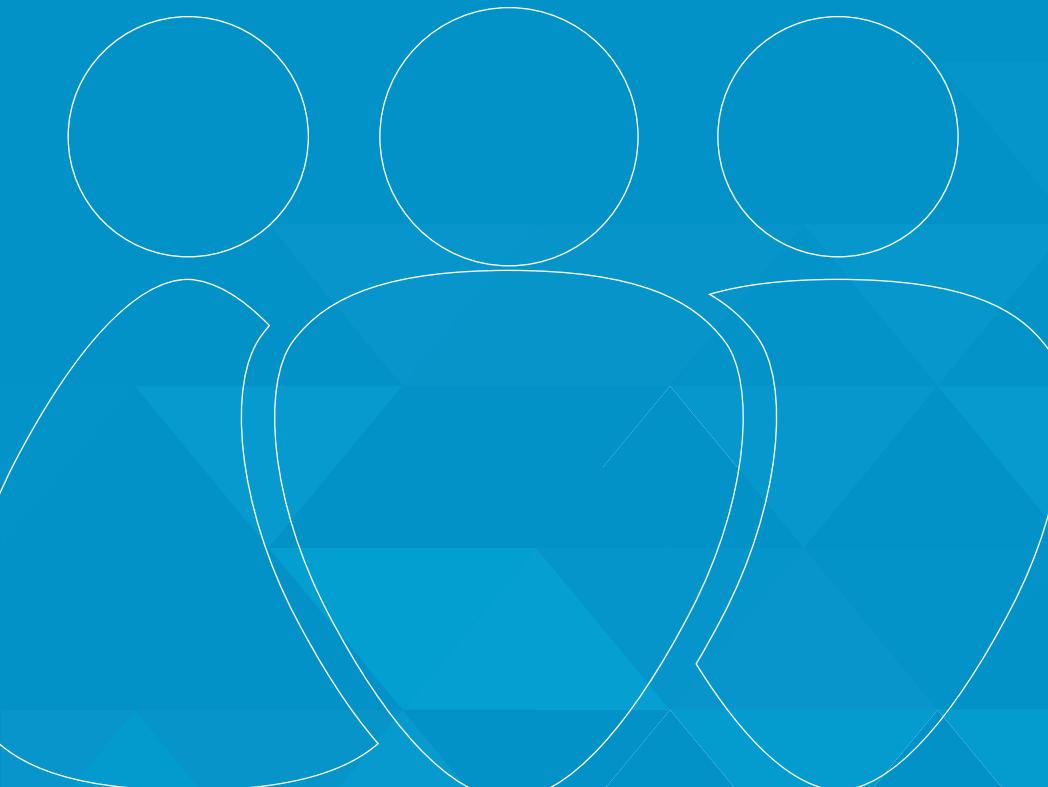
Detainees have to be freed from the Syrian regime's grip at any costs

SNHR believes that this despicable deal the Syrian regime offered to prisons only reaffirms what we have pointed out time after time – in the Syrian regime's eyes, prisoners are nothing more than a card to play, or exploit, or employ to support its interests. This reflects the regime's spite and hostility towards the Syrian people, as the Syrian regime is willing to sacrifice every last one of them just to stay, with its allies, in power. Apparently, the Syrian regime is working to decrease the number of current detainees to make room for new ones.

Compensating the shortage in manpower by detainees and raising the age of recruitment cap

Lastly, we would like to note that this shameful deal reflects the huge shortage in manpower that the Syrian regime and its allies are suffering from, as the Syrian regime raised the age for reserve forces to 40 years of age, which forced many of those who would be asked to come back for recruitment to hide or flee Syria in the most recent form of forced displacement.





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