



## Not Less than 741 Arbitrary Arrests in April 2016 The cessation of hostilities agreement did not affect the outcome of detainees

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## I. Introduction:

The issue of detainees is the only concern that had no progress although included in the statement of the cessation of hostilities, and in this particular case we recommend the following:

First: the arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances, which are still going on even now according to the monthly report of the Syrian Network for Human Rights, must be stopped immediately, and must disclose all of their own destinies, and to allow parents to visit them immediately.

Second: the release, unconditionally, of all detainees who have been detained merely due to the exercise of their political and civil rights, and the release of all women and children in additions to stop taking hostages of war.

Third: granting independent international observers such as the members of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry set up by the United Nations on the Syrian Arab Republic and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to visit all the formal and informal detention centers, without prior arrangement, without any limitation or qualification.

Fourthly: the formation of a UN committee to monitor the release of the detainees periodically according to a timetable for the requested all those detained, mainly from the Syrian government, which holds 99% of the total of the detainees.

## II. Methodology:





SNHR is facing additional challenges in daily and continuous documenting the detainees since 2011 till now. One of these challenges is the fear of many parents to cooperate and to publish the news of the arrest of their children even if secretly; also, if the detainee is a female in particular. The Syrian society believes that this will expose them to more danger and torture. Instead, the security agencies make a lot of negotiations which often go for process of blackmailing parents and sometimes they might reach thousands of dollars. Although the number of detainees on SNHR lists exceeds 117 thousand people, including women and children, but we emphasize that our estimates indicate that the number of detainees exceeds 215 thousand prisoners, 99% of them, basically, with government forces.

Now, Syrians have deep convictions that the international community, with all its establishments, is incapable of pressuring the Syrian authorities to release any detainee. However, most of the release cases were recorded after prisoners swap deals between government authorities and armed opposition groups.

99% of the detainees are prohibited to talk to a lawyer or their family members. Further, none of those government or security personnel who were confirmed to perpetrate crimes was held accountable to it; on the contrary, they are protected by the government itself.

SNHR documented the arrest of not less than 117 thousand persons, since the beginning of uprising in April 2011. (99% of the governmental forces- Do not include the outcome of the detainees to criminal backgrounds and include the cases of detention on the background of the internal armed conflict, mainly due to the opposition activity of the authority of government)

**This mounting number of arrested individuals is due to several reasons:**

A great number of detainees were imprisoned since their relatives, siblings, or family members were involved with armed opposition groups or since they provided humanitarian aid to people in need.

Most of the arrest cases are conducted randomly against people who are not involved in protests, relief aid, or military actions.

The Syrian regime continues to imprison a great number of civilians who did not participate in the uprising despite judicial orders for their release.

Government forces control densely populated areas like the main cities in each governorate and use a systemized policy of arbitrary arrests against civilians in these regions.

It is worth mentioning that there are multiple forces, affiliated to government authorities, who are responsible for arbitrary arresting civilians and detaining them in certain prisons that are not subjected to judicial supervision where detainees are not treated according to the Syrian stipulated laws.

A great number of arrest cases are driven by blackmails or sectarian grudges. The widespread arrests motivated by extortion or sectarian grudges, especially in unstable security





areas. These areas experience ongoing conflicts and are either under the control of several groups, or not controlled by conflict parties. As a result, local armed militias, who are not affiliated to any of the conflict parties, emerged and contributed to the current conflict.

Details about detainees can be found through the search engine on SNHR website, you may also add the name and details of any detainee as the concerned team will check the data and upload it if proved accurate.

### III. Report Details:

The abusive detentions, in April, the governmental forces raised operations of detention that expanded to civilians from “Damascus suburbs” in general and the citizens of Al Zabadani and Madaya in particular where the government troops detained dozens of residents of the besieged neighborhood while attempting to return to their homes. The governmental forces Continued in chasing and arresting the activists and their families within the controlled cities and communities. The focus of these detentions was against the university students and government officials and activists of humanitarian action even those who are members of humanitarian organizations such as the Red Crescent or the licensed civil associations. In April also, the detention operations carried out by the governmental forces, included merchants in various sectors, and the most important of the banking sector financial remittances in Damascus, Aleppo and “Hamah”

The ISIS organization also continued in the policy of arbitrary detention against civilians in-ruled areas under its control. The detention operations included doctrines violators and forcibly imposed by the Organization, as well as communications stores and internet cafes, and civilians who are trying to flee from the areas of the control of the Organization to the areas of the control of the factions of the armed opposition.

The Krudish Self-Managemnet Forces continued the policy of arbitrary detention, enforced against civilians and political activists opposed to the directions in the areas under its control, which focused the arrests in the city of «Al Hasakah», and the city of «Afrin» the countryside of the province of «Halab»

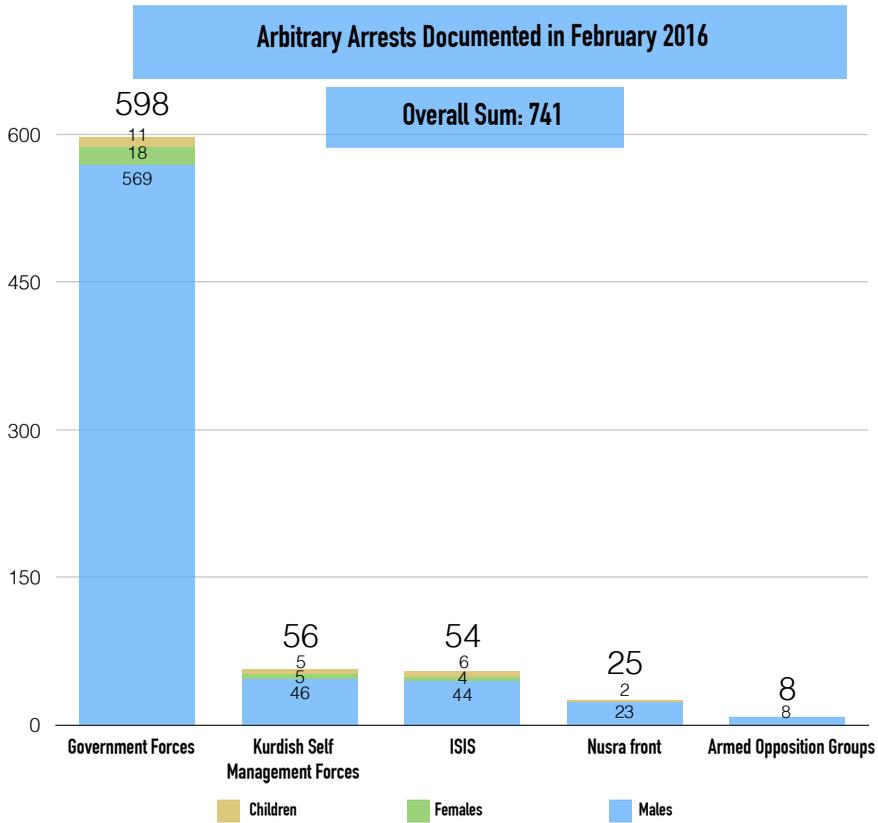
During April, we recorded a rise in the rate of cases of arbitrary detention, by Nusra Organization, to journalists and activists in Idlib Province in general, and the civilians who have links with affiliates to the Syrian opposition armed forces.

- The following table depicts the arbitrary arrests in April 2016. We assure that these numbers are the bare minimum of what we were able to document due to the current security and logistics obstacles.

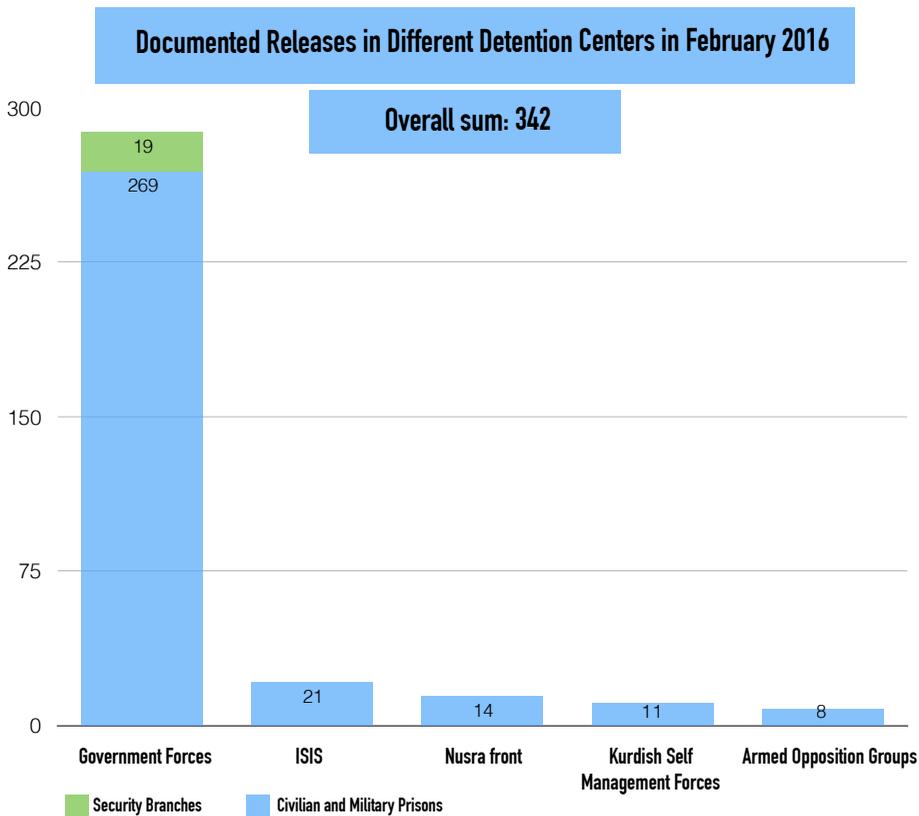




## Arbitrary Arrests Documented in April 2016:

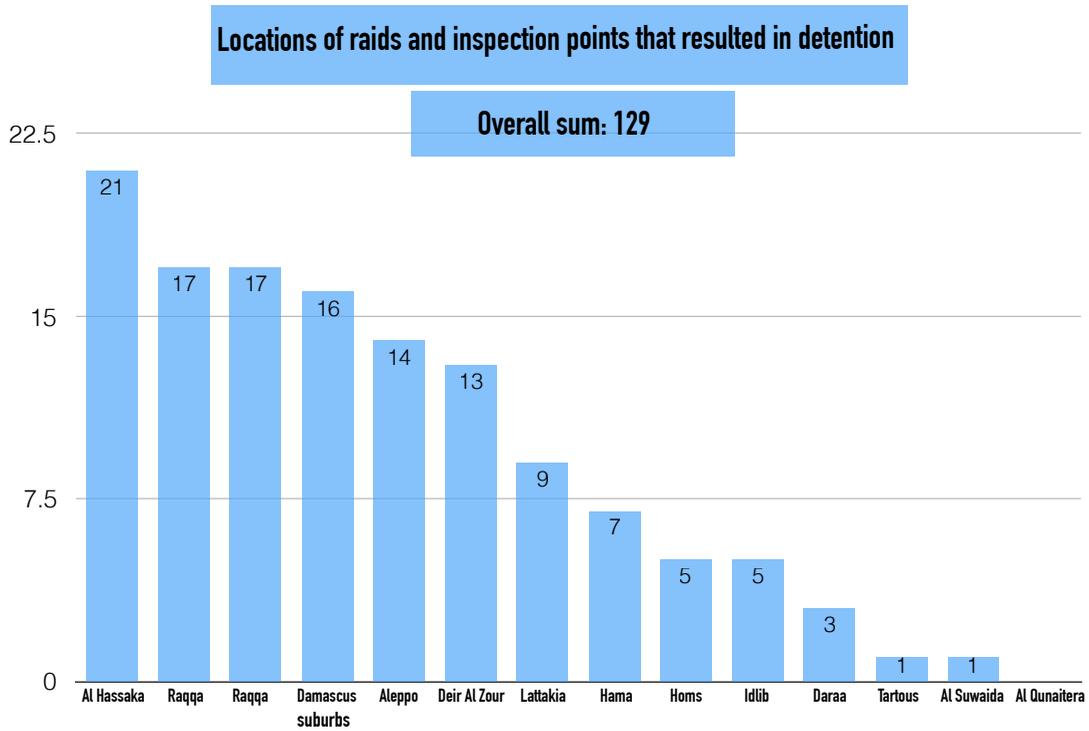


## Documented Releases in Different Detention Centers in April 2016:

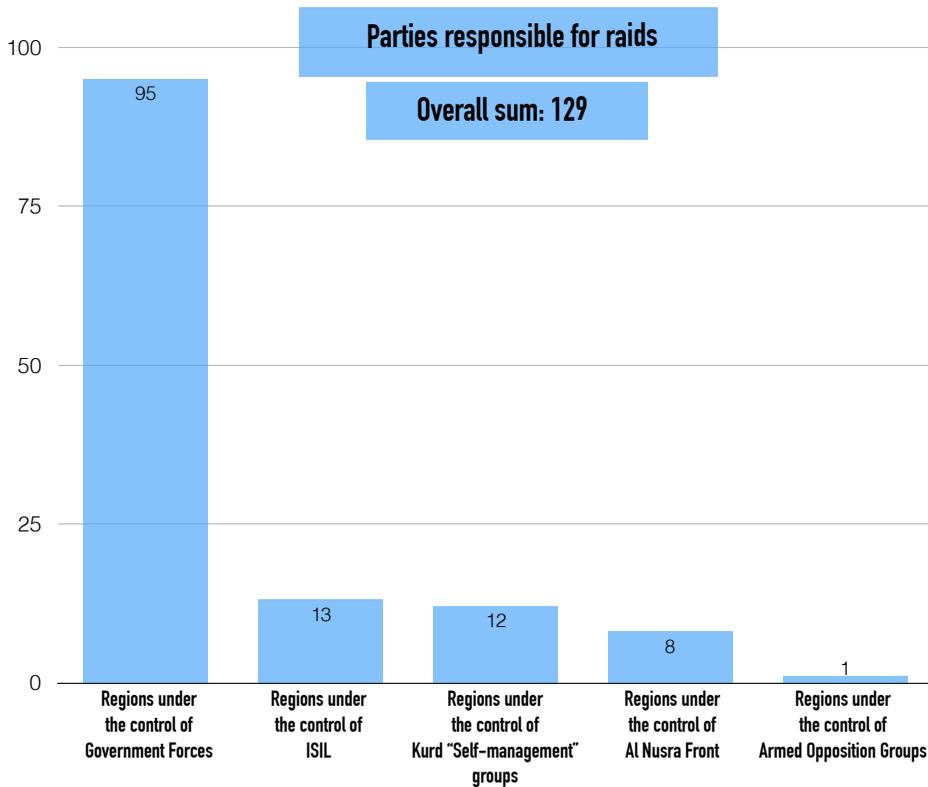




Locations of raids and inspection points that resulted in detention:

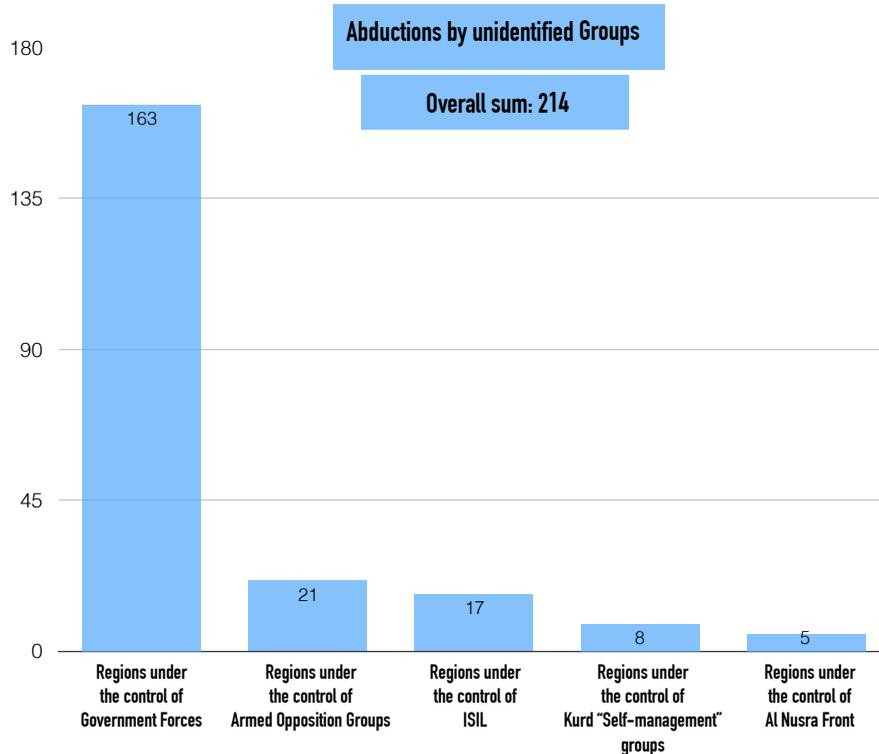


Parties responsible for raids:





## Abductions by unidentified Groups:



## III. The Most Significant Arbitrary Arrest Cases in April 2016:

### A. Government Forces:

Human Rights Activist [Marwan Hamza from Shabha](#), Al Suwaida, was arrested on 22 Feb 2016 by government forces at the checkpoint while he was moving from in the industrial area on the International Damascus Road on 9 April 2016

Teacher Mohammed Yusuf, the 27-year-old, teacher of primary stage; from Bloudan in Damascus countryside. He was arrested by the governmental forces on 10 April 2016, while crossing Qaws Bloudan Checkpoint under the control of the governmental forces. His fate is still unknown for his family as well as SNHR.

[Sheikh Muwafaq al-Qudhmani](#); is from the twon of Shaqa suburb of Al Hasakah governo-rate. He is 47 and is considered as one of the nobles in the town of Shifa. He was arrested on 2 April 2016 by the governmental forces as he was passing of a checkpoint on the Syrian Lebanese borders, released on 8 April.





### **A. Extremist Islamic Groups:**

Professor [Abdel Mawla sheikh](#), from the city of «Kafr Nobol», Idlib Governorate, teacher, on 10 April, 2016, was detained by Al Nusra members, after raiding his house in the city of Kafr Nobol, released in the same day.

[Professor Khaled Awad al-Zaidan](#) is from the village of Hass, suburb of Idlib Governorate, teacher and educational-orient. On 23 April 2016 armed members of Al Nusra snatched him from his place in the village of Hass led him to an unknown place. His destiny is still unknown to his family as well as SNHR

### **B. Kurdish Self Management Forces**

The media activist [Roni Mohammad Bakaji](#) is from the governorate of Al Hasakah. He is a media activist and the correspondent of Yakiti site in the governorate of Al Hasakah. On Monday, 11 April 2016, the armed members belonging to the Kurdish self management arrested him when he was leaving from a church in the city of Al Malikiya in the countryside of governorate of Al Hasakah, after he was covering a seminar on civil peace established in the church. He was released the same day after being severely beaten. He was in a total need to get treatment in Al Malikiya hospital in the governorate of Al Hasakah.

The Engineer [Britta Haji Hassan](#); from Aleppo, head of the local council of the city of Aleppo. On 28 April, 2016, he was detained by the Kurdish Self Management Forces from his place in the village of Mariameen, suburb of Aleppo. His fate is still unknown for his family and SNHR.

### **C. Unidentified groups:**

Media activist [Saif Al Ahmad](#) is from the city of Talbisah, suburb of Northern Homs. He is correspondent at Orient Channel. On 9 April, 2016, he was kidnapped by an unknown armed group while heading from the city of Talbisah to Al Rastan city. The kidnappers hit him severely and they confiscated his reports before dropping him, on the same day, on the edge of the road between the villages of Al-zaafra and Deir Foul in the countryside of northern Homs. The identity of kidnappers is still unknown.

## **Recommendations:**

1. The Security Council must monitor the implementation of the resolutions: 2042 issued on April 14, 2012, resolution 2043 issued on April 21, 2012 and 2139 issued on February 22, 2014 that put an end to the arbitrary arrests.
- 2- The United Nations and the International Community must shoulder their responsibilities towards hundreds of thousands of detained and missing individuals in Syria.

