



مجموعة العمل من أجل فلسطينيي سورية
Action Group For Palestinians of Syria

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الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"Palestinian Journalist Muhannad Omar Forcibly Disappeared by Syrian Gov't"

- 39 Palestinian Women Missing in War-Torn Syria
- Palestinian Refugees Rally in Damascus over Trump's Pro-Israel Statements
- Palestinian Poet Mahmoud Mufleh Awarded Order of Cultural Merit in Egypt

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Latest Developments

Palestinian journalist Muhannad Mohamed Omar has been enduring a mysterious fate in Syrian government lock-ups for the seventh year running.

Omar was kidnapped by the government troops from the office of AlAlem Channel on February 29, 2012 on account of his affiliations with the opposition outfits.



The journalist was born in Yarmouk in 1985. He is the father of two kids. He taught Arabic literature at AlBaath University in Homs and worked as a journalist at AlQuds International Foundation, before he moved to AlAlem news channel in Damascus.

On May 15, 2011, he joined protests calling for return to the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, which he had entered sometime later with a group of Palestinian youth.

He wrote several blogs on the situation of the Palestinians of Syria and the human rights violations perpetrated by the Syrian government since the outbreak of the conflict. His condition and whereabouts have been shrouded in mystery.



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AGPS documented the incarceration of 1,737 Palestinians in Syrian government lock-ups, among them dozens of women and minors.

Along the same line, 39 Palestinian women and girls have gone missing since the outbreak of the Syrian conflict. The list includes nine refugees from Yarmouk Camp and 10 from ALTadhamun neighborhood.

According to activists, several abductions were carried under the security guise. Arrestees' families have often been subjected to blackmail and extortion.

Over 300 Palestinian refugees, male and female, have gone missing in war-ragged Syria, half of whom are from Yarmouk Camp, south of Damascus.

According to affidavits by ex-detainees and breakaways, Palestinian women and girls have been subjected to harsh psycho-physical torture tactics in Syrian penitentiaries, including electric shocks, heavy beating using iron sticks, and sexual abuse.

Such practices represent flagrant violations of the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict of 1974, Article 5, which criminalizes all forms of torture and mistreatment against women and children.

Inherently a taboo misdemeanor in the MENA region, violence against women, be it sexual, physical, or verbal, has remained under-reported among the Palestinian refugee community in Syria, with reasons wavering between fear of retaliation, embarrassment,



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fear of punishment for those below the age of criminal responsibility, and distrust in law enforcement.

AGPS believes that the number is far higher due to the gag orders enforced by the Syrian regime on the detainees' fates and names, along with the reluctance of the casualties' families to reveal the names of their deceased or missing relatives for fear of retaliation.

Meanwhile, dozens of Palestinian refugees and representatives of Palestinian factions joined a vigil staged outside of the UN office in Damascus on March 28, 2019, in response to the US President Donald Trump's recognition of Israel's sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights.



President Donald Trump last Thursday overturned longstanding US policy regarding the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, announcing "it is time" for the US to "fully recognize Israel's Sovereignty" over the region.

"After 52 years it is time for the United States to fully recognize Israel's Sovereignty over the Golan Heights, which is of critical strategic and security importance to the State of Israel and Regional Stability," Trump tweeted.



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The announcement hands Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu a significant foreign policy victory, less than three weeks before Israelis head to the polls to decide whether he should remain in power. The move comes just days before Netanyahu is set to join Trump at the White House and follows weeks during which Netanyahu has renewed his push for the US to recognize the Golan Heights as part of Israel.

Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria during the Six-Day War of 1967 and formally annexed the territory in 1981. But that annexation has not been recognized by the international community, which has regarded the Golan Heights as occupied territory and Israeli settlements there as illegal under international law. The UN special envoy for Syria, Geir Pedersen, recently reiterated that position.

"The Security Council is very clear that the Golan is Syrian territory, and the first aspect of (Resolution) 2254 is of course the territorial integrity of Syria," he said in a news briefing in late February.

In the meantime, Palestinian poet Mahmoud Husain Mufleh received on March 21, 2019, the Order of Cultural Merit for 2018 in Egypt during a celebration held by the Palestinian Cultural Assembly.

The honor was awarded to Mufleh in recognition of his outstanding literary career and his outspoken support for the Palestinian cause and the nation's causes.



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In a statement posted on his Facebook page, Mufleh thanked all those who stood behind the award.



Earlier this month, Mufleh received an honorary PhD in poetry from the International Academy of Arts and Media in Egypt.

“We’ve been severely affected by the New Nakba. We’re now like a bird sparrow dispersed by a bullet fired by the hunter. We’re scattered here and there and everywhere”, said Mufleh on the day he had received the honorary PhD. “Some of us fled to the country of snow and fog, others drowned at sea and were swallowed up by fish. Scores of others were sent to jail but have never come out of it. A heavy blow has been dealt to us.... But we should remain steadfast until the sun rises again.”

Mufleh was born in the Palestinian town of Samakh, in the Israeli-occupied Tiberias city. In 1948, he moved to Daraa city in Syria with his family following the wave of mass displacement which thousands of Palestinians had been subjected to at the hands of the Israeli occupation.