



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

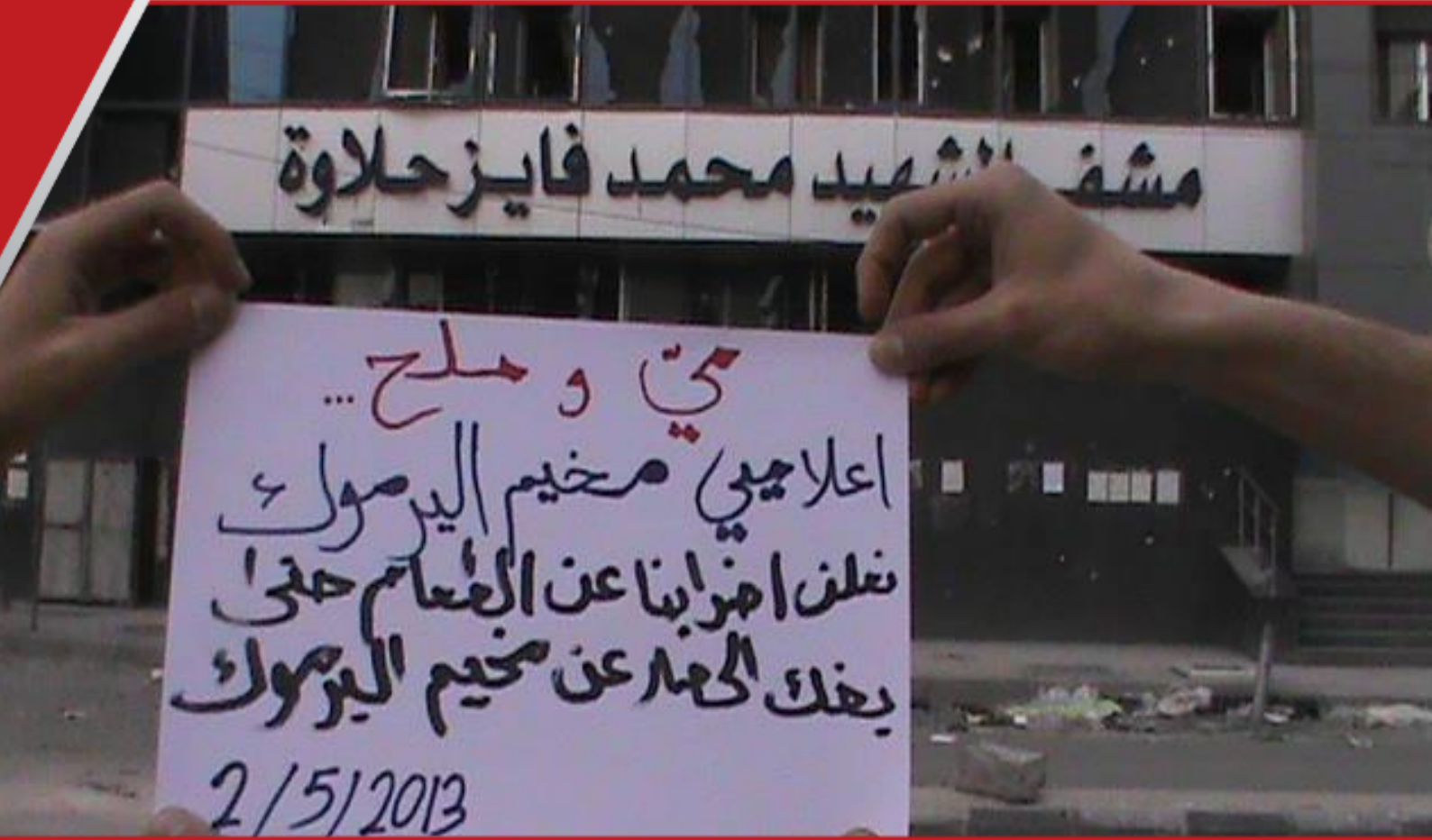
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التقرير اليومي

الخاص بأوضاع اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في سورية

Daily report on the situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria



"On World Press Freedom Day . . . AGPS Documents Death of 18 Palestinian Journalists in War-Torn Syria"

- Palestinian Refugee Tortured to Death in Syrian State Prison
- Lebanese Security Forces Release Palestinian Refugee after 16 Days
- Turkey: Over 79,000 Illegal Migrants Caught on Migration Route

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Victims

AGPS documented the death of Palestinian refugee Wardan Yousef Matroud Hejazi, born in 1982, as a result of harsh torture in Syrian government jails.

The Syrian security forces told his family that he died on April 25, 2019.

Wardan, father of three children, was arrested at his family home in ALAyedeen Camp in Hums on February 26, 2015.

AGPS documented the death of 591 Palestinian refugees under torture in Syria's government-run penal complexes.



Latest Developments

On the World Press Freedom Day, marked on May 3, AGPS said it kept record of the death of 18 Palestinian journalists since the outburst of deadly hostilities in March 2011, among whom academics and volunteers.



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The casualties died while covering scenes on the battleground or while providing civilians with relief assistance across the ravaged Syrian territories.

The list includes nine journalists who died under shelling, five who were tortured to death, and four others who were fatally shot.

AGPS has learned that the casualties are photojournalists and activists Fady Abu Ajaj, Jamal Khalifa, Ahmad AlSahli, Bassam Hamidi, Ahmad Taha, and Bilal Sa'id. They were killed in onslaughts targeting Yarmouk Camp for Palestinian refugees.



Photojournalist Jehad Shehabi died in an air strike on Hjeira town, south of Damascus, while activist Yamen Dhaher was killed in a raid on Khan Eshieh Camp. News correspondent Tareq Ziad Khader was pronounced dead in Daraa Camp, south of Syria.

Yarmouk residents Niraz Sa'id, Khaled Bakrawi, Hassan Hassan, and Alaa Naji, along with Bilal Ahmad, from Muadhamiyat AlSham, were tortured to death in Syrian government prisons.



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Iyas Farhat was the first journalist to be killed in Yarmouk as he covered a rally protesting the murder of 14 members of the Palestine Liberation Army in the bloody warfare north of Syria.

Ghassan Shehabi, director of AlShajara Center to document Palestinian heritage, along with activists Ahmad Kousa and Mounir AlKhatib were gunned down by a government sniper in Yarmouk Camp.

Scores of activists, journalists, and correspondents have, meanwhile, been locked up in Syrian government dungeons for years. The list includes Muhannad Omar, Ali Shehabi, Rami Hajou, Ali Musleh, and Ahmad Jalil.

Facts on the ground prove that the number of casualties is much higher. Difficulties in documentation stem from the absence of official statistics, lack of concern as regards the number of Palestinian casualties, journalists in particular, the intricacy of the name-identification process, and the families' reluctance to reveal the victims' names for fear of retaliation.

AGPS condemns the apathy maintained by the international community and Palestinian leadership as regards the extrajudicial killing, harsh torture, and arbitrary detention of Palestinian journalists and activists in war-ravaged Syria.

In another development, Palestinian refugee from Syria Abdullah Hasan Atiyeh, born in 1972, was released from a Lebanese detention center, 16 days after he had been detained in Sidon.



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Abdullah, who was displaced from Yarmouk Camp to AlMiyah wa Miyah camp, south of Lebanon, was arrested on April 17, over name resemblance.

His family kept appealing to the Palestine Embassy and concerned institutions in Lebanon to push for his release, saying Abdullah illegally entered Lebanon in the hunt for a safe shelter but got his legal status worked out by local authorities shortly after. The family added that he regularly renews his visa every six months.

Abdullah was reportedly arrested one day after he showed up at local police stations to renew his stay.

Nearly 28,000 Palestinians from Syria have been enduring a volatile legal status in Lebanon as the Lebanese authorities categorize them as tourists rather than asylum seekers. Lack of access to the local labor market and the absence of relief assistance have made the situation far worse for the Palestinians who fled Syria to Lebanon.

Meanwhile, sources close to the General Authority for Palestinian Arab Refugees in Syria said the Authority has made serious efforts in partnership with UNRWA to change its distribution plan and expand the list of concerned families.

The efforts culminated in agreements to hand over 24,000 Syrian Pounds to members of families whose breadwinner is a woman, elderly person aged 60 and above, a person with disability, or a minor (below 18). The other families will receive 16,000 Syrian Pounds per every single member during the holy Ramadan month.



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Sometime earlier, URNWA in Syria said it will opt for urgent measures to curtail in-kind and cash aids allotted to the Palestinians of Syria.

A serious funding crunch has been wrought on UNRWA by the US decision to cut aids for Palestine refugees, forcing the agency to operate with a large shortfall over the past few months.

In the meantime, the Turkish authorities said that the first four months of this year 79,000 illegal migrants were intercepted while the number of those taking to the seas from Turkey's coasts decreased 17.6 percent. The country also stepped up the deportation of migrants sneaking into the country to get to Europe and the rate of the deported rose 34 percent.

Figures by the General Directorate of Migration show 79,002 illegal migrants were stopped between January 1 and April 25. A majority of them were Afghan nationals. A total of 32,942 Afghan migrants were intercepted in this period while authorities stopped another 11,691 Pakistani migrants and 6,432 migrants from Syria between January and late April.

Over recent years, Turkey has tightened security measures on its borders and cracked down on human smugglers, resulting in a decline in the number of illegal migrants looking to reach Europe from its borders.

The country has been the main route for refugees trying to cross into Europe, especially since the beginning of Syria's eight-year



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conflict. Some 268,000 irregular migrants were held in Turkey in 2018, according to the Interior Ministry.

Turkey and the European Union signed an agreement in 2016. The deal stipulates that Greece is to send back migrants held on its Aegean islands back to Turkey. In return, Turkey is to send Syrian migrants it hosts to various European Union countries. For those managing to reach Europe, Greece remains a dangerous route due to the controversial "pushback" practice.

