



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 Families Urge Syrian Gov't to Release Bodies of Torture Victims"

- Palestinian Refugee Iyad Sweilam Forcibly Disappeared in Syria
- Vigil Held in AlMuZeireeb over Cordon Imposed on Deraa
- Jaramana Camp for Palestinian Refugees in Syria Gripped with Water Crisis
- Swedish Authorities to Reconsider Asylum Application by Palestinian Family from Syria

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Latest Developments

The families of Palestinian refugees tortured to death in Syrian government dungeons have renewed calls to the Syrian government to release their relatives' bodies so as to bury them in known cemeteries.

The families held the Palestinian factions and the Palestine Liberation Organization responsible for the fate of Palestinians secretly held and fatally tortured in Syrian lock-ups.

Activists said withholding dead bodies is another crime perpetrated by pro-government militias in Syria.

Withholding the bodies of slain civilians is prohibited under international law, except in cases where pillage and mistreatment are feared to occur. The Fourth Geneva Convention, the Hague Convention, and the Rome Statute consider the despoliation and mistreatment of dead bodies war crimes.

AGPS has recorded the death of at least 631 Palestinian refugees under torture in Syrian government penitentiaries, among them minors and elderly people.

Three victims were pronounced dead in early 2021.

AGPS believes 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 casualty's families to reveal the names of their deceased or missing relatives for fear of retaliation.



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Most of the victims' bodies have been withheld by the Syrian authorities, which is prohibited under international law except in cases where pillage and mistreatment are feared to occur.

AGPS has documented the secret detention of 1,797 Palestinian refugees in state-run penal complexes across war-torn Syria, among them 110 women and girls.

Affidavits by ex-detainees provided evidence on the involvement of Syrian government officers in harsh torture tactics, including electric shocks, heavy beating using whips and iron sticks, and sexual abuse against Palestinian detainees, in a flagrant violation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, commonly known as the United Nations Convention against Torture (UNCAT).

Along similar lines, Palestinian refugee Iyad Farouk Sweilam has been secretly held in Syrian government prisons for the eighth consecutive year.

Iyad was arrested on March 23, 2012 by Syrian security forces at his house in AlKabon, in Rif Dimashq.

In another development, dozens of Palestinians and Syrians sheltered in AlMuzeireeb town, in the southern Syrian province of Deraa, have joined a vigil held in protest of the blockade imposed by the Syrian security forces and their Russian allies around Deraa city, after a number of residents refused Russian demands to return their private weapons.



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The residents lifted banners reading “hands off Deraa”.

Over recent days, Syrian security forces have tightened military grip around Deraa and its outskirts, south of Syria.

Local sources told AGPS that all access roads to the city centre have been blocked except for the Sajneh road, where three military checkpoints have been pitched.

Palestinian refugees have expressed concerns over a new wave of forced military conscription and arbitrary manhunts in the area.

In another development, Palestinian refugees sheltered in AlHamam neighborhood in Jaramana Camp, in Rif Dimashq, continue to launch distress calls over the water blackout, which has been ongoing for weeks due to damaged water pipes.

Civilians have found no other way to secure potable water than to buy water supplies from privately-owned tanks at a price of up to 10,000 Syrian pounds a tank.

Residents of Jaramana Camp, located a few kilometers away from central Damascus, continue to set off alarm bells over the lack of basic services and dire socio-economic conditions rocking the area as a result of the steep rental fees, high rates of unemployment, the price hike, and poor sanitation.

Jaramana camp is 8km from Damascus on the road to Damascus International Airport. The camp was established in 1948.



UN data indicates that before the start of the conflict in 2011, there were over 18,000 Palestine refugees living in Jaramana camp. During the Syrian crisis, the number of Palestine refugees in the camp and the surrounding area increased to 49,000 due to an influx of displaced Palestine refugees from other areas, including the camp of Yarmouk. As a result, Jaramana has become one of the most densely populated areas of Damascus.

Many of the refugees worked as street vendors, government employees or in nearby industrial plants. Some inhabitants find work in the informal sector through collecting garbage for recycling. The majority of women are domestic workers in Damascus to supplement family income. Like other areas in Syria, displacement, unemployment, inflation, protection and security risks are among the main concerns shared by Palestine refugees and Syrians alike.

Meanwhile, a Palestinian refugee called Salma said the Swedish Migration Department will reexamine her demand for humanitarian asylum which had been rejected some five years ago.

Salma and her four children fled the ravaged Yarmouk Camp to Lebanon before they reached Sweden, where the migration authorities refused to grant her asylum on claims that she came from a safe destination—Lebanon. Salma appealed the decision and presented a document confirming the Lebanese authorities' refusal to receive Palestinians from Syria.



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Human rights activists said Sweden no longer considers Syria an unsafe place for refugees. In order for visa applications to be accepted, the refugee should provide proofs of personal threats.

Recently, a new debate has been opened by the migration committee at the Swedish parliament to determine post-coronavirus migration policy in the kingdom. The proposed draft law seeks to replace the temporary asylum law that will remain into effect until next summer

Official Swedish statistics have indicated that 3,296 Palestinian asylum-seekers categorized as “stateless” received citizenship documents in Sweden in 2019.

Over the past few years, thousands of Palestinian and Syrian refugees, among other migrants, who have applied for asylum in Sweden were granted two-year visas.

Eligibility criteria set by the Swedish authorities include a well-paid work contract valid for a minimum of two years and which enters into force before the expiration of the temporary visa. The employer should submit a recruitment declaration at the Swedish tax authority, taking into consideration the conditions defined by the national trade unions.