



# **Syrian Artists: Between Freedom and Oppression**

## **Most Notable Violations against Artists in Syria**

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## First: Executive Summary

Violations against artists are as follows:

- **First: Extrajudicial killing:** SNHR documented the killing of 22 artists:

- **Government forces:** killed 14 artists including four artists who were tortured to death
- **Armed opposition:** killed four artists
- **Extremist groups:** Daesh killed one artist
- **Unidentified armed opposition:** killed three artists

- **Second: Arrest and kidnapping:** we recording 57 arrest-and-kidnapping cases:

- **Government forces:** 50 cases including nine artists who are still under arrest or forcibly-disappeared.
- **Armed opposition:** two artists who were released later
- **Extremist groups:**
  - **Daesh** kidnapped one artist
  - **An-Nusra Front:** two artists; one of them was released later
  - **Unidentified groups:** killed two artists

We relied mainly in this report on our researchers and their networks within the local communities, and on testimonies recorded by the artists we directly contacted and met. For more information on our documentation [methodology](#), please visit our website.

## Second: Introduction

Artists' positions on the popular uprising in Syria were various; some of them supported the uprising and its demands while others stood with the ruling authorities. There was also a third group who preferred to stay quite.

Like anybody else, those who supported the popular uprising were subjected to killing, torture, enforced-disappearance, and other forms of human rights violations.

On the other hand, the ruling authorities rewarded the artists who supported it. Additionally, some of those artists were used by the ruling authorities in media campaigns that aimed to tarnish the image of the popular uprising and the artists who supported it as well as in election campaigns and other media campaigns that support the authorities such as Duraid Lahham, Sulaf Fawkharji, Salma Al-Masri, Mustafa Al-Khani, Wael Sharaf, Ahmad Rafa', and singer Shadi Asswad.

Furthermore, some of those artists visited some of the government forces' military points wearing military uniforms to support government forces.

Syrian artists had a notable impact on the popular movement, and they were harassed and threatened after they supported the peaceful protests as their status helped the spread of the popular uprising significantly.

Nevertheless, many of Syria's artists were heavily involved in the popular protests where they participated in peaceful demonstrations and funerals for the victims killed at the hands of government forces.

The first clear involvement was a humanitarian statement, which deliberately didn't include any political demands and only demanded that humanitarian aids, such as food, medicine, and milk, to be delivered to the children of Daraa which was besieged by government forces at that time. The statement was called: "The Milk Statement" and was published by the writer Rima Fliehan on her Facebook account on 29 April, 2011. Rima asked other people to sign the statement and many artists did including Muna Wasef, Yara Sabri, Maher Slibi, Kanda Aloush, and others. 1200 people, of different social segments and political beliefs, signed that statement at least.

The Syrian authorities' respond to the statement was absolutely violent where it carried out a wide security campaign that involved arresting, terminating, and hurting those who signed the statement.

Also, the Artists' Association issued a statement accusing all the artists who signed the Milk Statement of treason and urged the authorities to trial them accordingly. The official and supporting media launched wide media campaigns to distrust, smear, and distort the image of the artists who signed the Milk Statement. The artists who support the ruling authorities participated actively in those campaigns. Additionally, some of the production companies decided to boycott those artists and any works they are involved in.

These practices drove some of the artists to appear on the official TV channel and saying what the ruling authorities' asked them to.

The most notable event for artists was what came to be called "The intellectuals' demonstration" which was on Wednesday 13 July, 2011 when a number of artists and intellectual figures coordinated a demonstration that was supposed to start from Al-Hassan Mosque in Al-Midan neighborhood. A few minutes before the start of the demonstration, 19 artists and intellectuals were arrested including Mai Skaf, the Malas brothers, the writer Rima Fliehan, the writer Eyad Shurbaji and others. Although, they were released four days later, tens of other artists and participants were beaten and threatened.

According to SNHR archives, 2011 and 2012 witnessed the highest number of violations and crimes against artists. The decrease in the size of violence and crimes against them since 2013 can be justified by a number of reasons:

1. Their diminishing civil involvement over the past two years.
2. Most of the artists chose to flee Syria.
3. Many others decided to stay quite.

A number of factors led to the aforementioned reasons such as:

### **1. Systematic targeting:**

The systematic terrorization and violence by the Syrian authorities against the opposing artists (opposing artists: those who opposed the Syrian government) promoted a state of fear among artists. Artists were subjected to many forms of crimes and violence that included killing, arresting, kidnapping, pursuing, and threatening.

## 2. Artistic and economic boycott

The Syrian government and the artists and producers who support it made sure to stop dealing with the opposing artists.

[A statement which was published by a number of production companies in which they expressed their intention to boycott the artists who signed the Milk Statement and accused them of treason.](#)

## 3. Media campaigns

The official media launched many media campaigns to smear the image of the opposing artists and accuse them of treason. These campaigns called for damaging and trialing those artists. Also, many supporting artists (supporting artists: the artists who supported the ruling authorities against the protests) were interviewed in an attempt to alter the public opinion. Many of the opposing artists were threatened, insulted, and even beaten by Shabihis (militias) in the streets, cafes, or restaurants as a result of this agitation done by the official media.

## 4. The absence of civil movement

The shift from peacefully protesting to military action which led to the armed clashes that is taking place across Syria represented an unsafe environment for the artists to practice their peaceful activities. Many of the artists decided to stay impartial or silent and some of them even decided to change their opposing position towards the Syrian government because of the violence.

## 5. The emergence of extremist groups

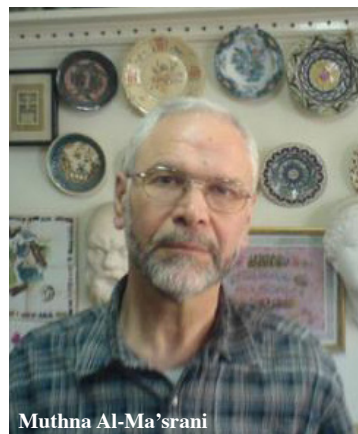
A number of extremist groups emerged in the areas that are no longer controlled by government forces which prevented artists to go to these areas and practice their civil and artistic activities because many of these groups' beliefs are against art.

## Third: Government forces

### A. Extra judicial killing

1- **Muthna Al-Ma'srani**, from Homs city, fine artist, graduated from a fine arts college in Russia and taught arts for a long period of time in Homs city.

On Tuesday 7 February 2012, Al-Ma'srani was killed by a government forces sniper in Homs – Al-Insha'at neighborhood. Al-Ma'srani was targeted directly while he was leaving a mosque after Usr Prayer.



Muthna Al-Ma'srani

2- **Rabea Abdulhamid Al-Ghazzi**, from Damascus, 32-year-old, musician and civil activist, he started as a drummer before he formed his band which was named “Me (Ana)” with a number of his friends. He also was a fashion designer for a number of Syrian TV series. He has been known for his peaceful activism against the Syrian government since the beginning of the protests.

At the dawn of Friday 25 May, 2012, security forces targeted him in the middle of Baghdad Street in Damascus while he was driving his sister's car (his sister, Rin Al-Ghazzi, is also an activist and a former prisoner) where he was shot exactly in the neck. The bullet entered the left side of his neck and went out of his right ear. After killing him, security forces put his dead body in the car and tossed it near SARC (The Syrian Arab Red Crescent) hospital.



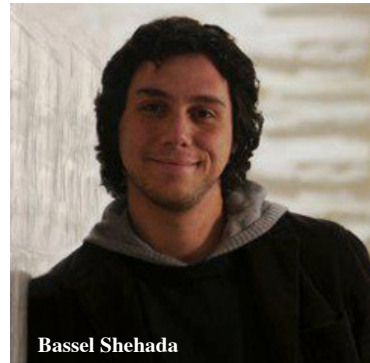
Rabea Abdulhamid Al-Ghazzi

Security forces were heavily present at his funeral, which was on Saturday,. A number of snipers were stationed on the buildings near Lala Basha Mosque. Security forces beat the people who attended the funeral at the mosque and the cemetery with sticks while verbally insulting them.

3- Director **Bassel Shehada**, From Damascus – Al-Qassa neighborhood, 28-year-old, he studied informatics engineering at Damascus University and cinematic direction in the USA for a year. When the popular protests erupted in Syria, he came back to Syria to tell the world what is happening. He was arrested by security forces in Damascus after he participated in the intellectuals' demonstration on Wednesday 13 July, 2013 and was released four days later.

He directed a number of movies such as “Songs of freedom” and a movie on the 2006 Lebanon War. He won the award for best Syrian project at Dox Box festival. Also, he won an award for his recorded movie “Brakes” last year.

Bassel moved to Homs in April 2012 and gave courses on photography and cinematic direction to the activists of Homs. Afterwards, he stayed in Homs to cover news and make documentary movies about the city.



Bassel Shehada

On Monday 28 May 2012, as Bassel was killed by government forces’ heavy artillery shelling on Bab As-Sbaaa and As-Safsafa neighborhoods in Homs. Also, his assistant and cameraman Ahmad Al-Asam was killed as well while he was shooting a video of the destruction caused by the shelling.

4- **Wael Qastoun**, from Homs – Marmarieta village, 48-year-old, fine artist, he participated in many art exhibits in Homs city and had two exhibits for his works in 2009; the first one in the people’s hall in Homs and the second one was at the fine arts hall in Homs. Also, he organized an exhibit for his works in 2010 in Marmariea and another one in Homs in 2011. Most of his works revolved around the woman.



Wael Qastoun

Wael was arrested in 2012 by security forces because of his opposing activists. On Sunday 22 July 2012, security forces informed his family that he died inside the detention center. He was transferred to the military hospital in Homs. Wael died under torture.

5- Director **Tamer Al-Awwam**, from As-Suwaida – Ta’ara village, born in 1977, he studied cinematic direction in Germany. After he came back to Syria, he started making movies on the violations against the Syrian people and its suffering at the hands of security forces. He made many documentary movies on the Syrian revolutions such as “Thykryat Ala Al-Hajez” (Memories on the Security Checkpoint).



Tamer Al-Awwam

Tamer was hit by shrapnel during the heavy indiscriminate shelling against Aleppo – Al-Itha’a neighborhood on Saturday 8 September, 2012. He was taken to the field-hospital but he died on Sunday 9 September due to his severe injuries.



6- Director and designer **Tamim Khairllah Al-Ashqar**, from Damascus suburbs – Jayroud city, born in 1986, he worked for many Syrian and Arabic production companies including Tiger Productions, Spacetoon, National Geographic, and Az-Zuhra for Media Production. He worked as a producer, cartoon designer, and director. Many of his works have won Arabic and International awards. He was married and had two kids.



On Tuesday 25 May 2012, government forces artillery bombed Douma indiscriminately; one of the shells hit Tamim and killed him immediately.

7- Writer and novelist **Ibrahim Khariet**, studied philosophy at Damascus University and he was a member of the story and novel association, an expert manuscript reader, and member of the Arabic Writers Union. He was also a teacher at a number of Der Ezzor high schools. Ibrahim was born in Der Ezzor city in 1943.



He wrote many novels such as: Al-Qafela Wasahra, Al-Hesar, Qesas Riyfiya, Al-Ightyal, Hekayat Sakhera.

On Thursday 27 September 2012, government forces raided Al-Qosour neighborhood and field-executed many people inside their houses. Ibrahim Al-Kharrat was killed along with his sons Soumar and Rani.

8- Novelist **Mohammad Rashid Abdullah Rwielei**, born in Der Ezzor in 1947, he studied Arabic literature and he was the former head of the Arabic Writers Union in Der Ezzor. Some of his most notable works include: Hadbaa, Lail Ath-Thahira, Al-Wasiya, Ar-Rebat, and many more researches and books.



Because of his activism against government forces' violent practices, he was kidnapped by security forces and local militias. On Thursday 22 November, 2012, his dissolved body was found in Der Ezzor city after he was killed and his dead body was tossed along with other civilian victims.

9- **Tareq Salama**, Syrian-Palestinian actor, 39-year-old, he was involved in a number of TV shows such as: Funjan Ad-Dam, Seraa' Ala Remal, and Yasmin Atieq.

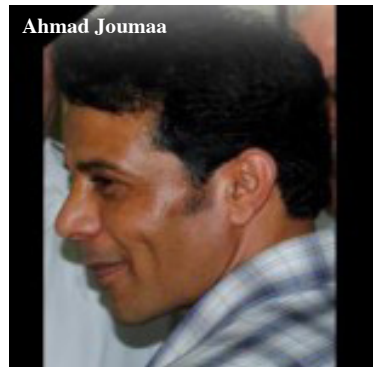
On Sunday 23 December 2012, government forces artillery bombed Al-Yarmouk camp and Tareq was killed while he was trying to aid his family.



Tareq Salama

10- **Ahmad Joumaa**, fine artist, majored in photography and graduated from the college of fine arts at Damascus University in 2004. He participated in a number of local and international exhibits and won the critics' award for young artists in 2004 and came in the first place in the competition organized by the European Commission, Ferdous Foundation for Urban Development, and AKTO University in Greece.

On Thursday 10 January 2013, he was found dead in his workshop in Al-Midan neighborhood. He was killed by a sniper, and initial investigation showed that he was shot from the next building where government forces snipers were stationed. Afterwards, residents took his dead body to the university hospital in Aleppo where the doctors found out that he has been dead for a month.



Ahmad Joumaa

11 - Popular singer **Abdurrahman Rostoum**, known as "Abu-Hassan Hrietani" from Aleppo suburbs – Hrietan town.

On Sunday 6 March 2013, his body was found among tens of bodies that were thrown in Qweiq River by government forces. SNHR noted that he disappeared nine months ago when security forces arrested him at a checkpoint in Aleppo – Arashdien area and nobody knew anything about him during that time.

The name of Qweiq River was changed to the Martyr Victims after it became more of a cemetery where government forces dump bodies. 100 dead bodies were found in March 2013 only.



Abdurrahman Rostoum

12- **Yassin Baqoush**, born in Damascus but originally from Libya. He was known for his comedic roles in TV shows such as Sah An-Naum and Melh Wa Sukkar in addition to a number of movies. He participated in tens of comedic TV shows. His most famous role was the comedic character “Yassinou”. In his latest years he participated in a number of comedic and historical projects such as Yassin Tours, Yassin Fe Al-Matbakh and he played the role of a Jewish clerk in the history TV show “Saif ben The Yazan”. He also acted in a number of plays on the stages of Damascus. On Sunday 24 February 2013, his car was bombed with an RPG in Damascus – Al-Assali neighborhood. Eyewitnesses and locals told us that the shell was fired by government forces. The residents managed to get his dead body out of the car before it burned.



13- Director **Ma'moun Noufal**, directed a number of minor works, born in Jermana city in 1970. Married and had two kids. He was arrested on 8 November 2012 over his aid work when security forces found a bag of medications with him where he admitted that he wanted to give it to ill people.



After nine months in prison, State Security branch informed his family on 23 August 2013 that Ma'moun died and asked them to come to take his body. Nevertheless, his family told us that they didn't receive the body where they were told that he died on 6 June 2013 (two months earlier) and told them to go to Damascus mosque (Al-Mojtahed) to get the body but they only found his belongings.

14- Fine artist Fadi Abdullah Murad, born in Homs, 34-year-old, his father was a well-known fine artist.

On Tuesday 8 January 2013, Fadi was arrested on his way back from work in Damascus. SNHR, or his family, weren't able to know anything about him during his time in prison and he became a forcibly-disappeared person.

On 7 April 2014, security forces gave his I.D.

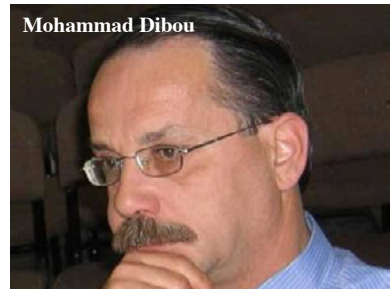


to his family and told them that he died of a heart attack in prison. However, our investigation showed that he died because of the very vicious torture he was subjected to in prison. Additionally, Fadi was in good health when he was arrested.

## B. Arrest and kidnapping

Most of the artists were kidnapped or arrested in Damascus or at the Lebanese or Jordanian borders while they were trying to flee or travel. This is because most of the artists live in major cities, especially Damascus, where production companies, studios, exhibits, theaters, and artistic events are held. This is also why most of the violations against artists were perpetrated by government forces as most of the other influential parties operate away from Damascus.

1- **Mohammad Dibou**, from Banyas city – Al-Annaza village, novelist and poet, his most notable works include *Khata' Intekhabi*, and the poem collection *Law Yakhoun As-Sadiq*. He won multiple awards including the Nilson Mandela award in 2007. He also wrote about his time in prison in a book called *Kamn Yas-had Mawtah* (It is as you are witnessing your death).



On Saturday 19 March 2011, Dibou was arrested from his village Al-Anazza after he visited his family in Damascus. This was one day after the first demonstration in Banyas city. After he was arrested, he was taken to a security branch in Damascus. He was released on 15 April 2011.

2- Theater director **Osama Ghanm**, 36-year-old, graduated from the high institute for theater arts in Damascus, and had his PhD from France where he majored in the contemporary French theater. He works as a teacher in the theater arts institute in Damascus.

On Wednesday 13 July 2011, he was arrested by security forces after he participated in Intellectuals demonstration. He was released four days later.



3- **Rima Jad'an Fliehan**, screenwriter, from Aleppo, born in 1975. Rima, who is originally from As-Suwyida, wrote two stories collection and many TV shows such as Qoloub Saghira. Rima was the spokesperson of the local coordination committee and member of the National Syrian Council and the Syrian Coalition. On Wednesday 13 July 2011, she was arrested by security forces after she participated in a demonstration coordinated by intellectual figures in Damascus – Al-Midan and was released later.



Rima published a humanitarian statement named “For our Children in Daraa” calling for the Syrian authorities to end the siege of Daraa. More than 1200 people signed the statement including actors, directors, writers, and journalists. Rima participated in a number of demonstrations in Damascus, As-Suwyida, and Homs.

Rima is prohibited from traveling by the ruling authorities. Many security apparatuses tried to arrest her and many arrest warrants were issued against her. She was finally able to travel to Jordan.

Rima told SNHR about what the Syrian authorities did to her and her family:

“I have been banned from travel since 2008 because of my social and human rights activism especially with regard to women’s rights.”

“After I published Daraa statement, the Syrian authorities threatened to kill me multiple times especially Maher Al-Assad office. Also, I was assaulted many times by Shabihis who waited for me in front of my house. I was forced to let my kids leave me for about two months after they tried to hurt my daughter, who was only 11-year-old at that time. I had to change my residence too”

“Many media campaigns tried to smear my image along with five others who signed the statement. We were accused of treason.”

“Also, the artists’ association and production companies boycotted us and they decided to stop dealing with us completely. This is still going on until now.”

“I organized and participated in the Intellectuals’ Demonstration and was arrested during the demonstration for four days. On the day I was released, I immediately participated in a funeral for a victim and Shabihis immediately assaulted my home which forced me to change my residency and keep my children in a safe place in As-Suwyida.”

“I was pursued by the Air Force Intelligence and Al-Manteqa security branch in Damascus and the Political Security branch in As-Suwyida. Three arrest warrants were issued against me so I had to leave with my children to Syria. Afterwards, the authorities seized everything I had in Syria and I am under trial at the terrorism court despite the fact that I only have been a peaceful civil and human right activist.”

4- **Yam Mashdi**, screenwriter, her most notable works include Qalam Hamra and Takht Sharqi.

On Wednesday 13 July 2011, she was arrested by security forces over participating in the Intellectuals' Demonstration which took place in Damascus – Al-Midan neighborhood. She was released four days later.



Yam Mashdi

5- Twin Mohammad and Ahmad Malas, two stage actors, the play “Kul Aam Wa Enta Bekhair”, which they played at their home on 5 February, 2011, was one of their first plays. They were arrested by the Syrian authorities. Their most notable work is the TV show Thawrat Daw’ which they wrote, directed, and acted in. Also, they acted in a number of films such as Bab Sharqi, which was one of the first movies about the Syrian revolution, and Thulathyat Al-Karaz.

On Wednesday 13 July 2011, the Malas brothers were beaten by security forces after participating in the Intellectuals’ Demonstration in Damascus – Al-Midan neighborhood. They were arrested along with 17 other artists. They were released four days later.



Mohammad and Ahmad Malas

SNHR spoke to the Malas brothers who said that they were arrested for days before they left Syria because due to the many security harassments by security forces.



Eyad Sharbaji

6- **Eyad Sharbaji**, from Damascus suburbs – Darayya, born in 1977, he is a screenwriter and a journalist. He wrote for many known TV shows such as Bouaqt Dawa’, Maraya, Almakshouf, Arbayat, and CBM. He has been a part of the peaceful movement against the Syrian government since the beginning. On Wednesday 13 July 2011, Eyad was arrested along 17 other artists after participating in the Intellectuals’ Demonstration. He was beaten by security forces and was released four days later.

Eyad fled to Jordan in January 2012 and then to the USA where he is living now. SNHR spoke to Eyad who told us about some of the violations he and his colleague artists suffered from:

“I was in Syria when the artists Ali Farazat and Jalal At-Tawil were attacked. The regime used violence smartly against artists. On the personal level, I was beaten during my arrest. After I was released, I had to disappear and escape, they threatened to kill my daughter in a message I found in front of my house. They made sure to keep the identity of the one who threatened me a secret which was exactly what they did with Ali Farazat. We don’t know exactly who threatened us but we know that it is them... Maher Al-Assad handled the artists file and he is the one who made sure to keep those people silent. Everyone in the art scene knows that.”



Samar Yazbak

7- **Samar Yazbak**, screenwriter and journalist, was born in Jabla city in Latakia suburbs in 1970, she majored in Arabic literature and wrote many novels, stories, TV episodes, and documentary movies. She also wrote for many Arabi newspapers. She won multiope rewards including the best scenario award for her movie “Samaa Watea” from the U.N. and the media ministry. In October 2012 she won Bantar Award for her diaries “Bawwabat Ard Al-Adam” which she wrote during the Syrian conflict. She also won Sakharov award for freedom of opinion in Sweden.

She wrote a number of novels including Raehat Al-Qerfa, Salsal, Teflat As-Samaa, and Neran Mutqatea which was one of her most notable novels as it included testimonies about Syrian prison and the writer's own brief experience in prison.

She participated in the peaceful protests from the start in March 2011 and worked on documenting what the crimes and violations she saw and wrote about her experience in the book "Imer'a fe Taqatou' An-Neran" (A Woman in the Crossfire). Samar was detained and questioned multiple times during the first months of the peaceful protests in Damascus the last of which was in May 2011 when she was arrested for a few hours by a security branch in Damascus. During that time she was beaten and tortured. Also, she was forced to watch other prisoners being tortured brutally. They threatened her that they would do the same to her if she didn't abandon her opposition position and her family disowned her. Additionally, the ruling authorities, in coordination with local coordination committees, spread publications in the coastal areas including her hometown Jabla city demanding her to be killed and accusing her of treason considering that she is from Alawite sectarian group. As a result of the press, security pursuit, and threats, she was forced to flee to July 2011. However, she visited the rebel-held areas in Idlib suburbs in northern Syria in 2012 and 2013 to conduct interviews, cover news, and document residents' testimonies.



Shadi Abu-Fakhr

8- Director **Shadi Abu-Fakhr**, born in As-Suwyida city in 1978, studied applied chemistry with a master in economics. He worked as a cinematic producer for the Public Institution for Cinema and was the producer of the movie Talal Al-Bahr which was directed by Talal Derki and released in 2011.

On Saturday 23 July 2011, Shadi was arrested by the Air Force Intelligence in Damascus and was detained for two months during which he was brutally tortured. Afterwards, he was transferred to Adra prison and then to the Political Security branch in Damascus where he stayed for 12 prisons before he was transferred back to Adra prison. He was released on Thursday 2 January 2012.



9- **Hanadi Zahlout**, writer, political activist, and human rights activist. She is from Sanoubar village in Latakia – Jabla city. She studied agricultural at Tishreen University. She started publishing political stories on sites that oppose the Syrian government in 2004 before she worked on childhood and motherhood cases with Syria Women Monitors along with the writer Samar Yazbak and the writer Rima Fliehan.



Hanadi Zahlout

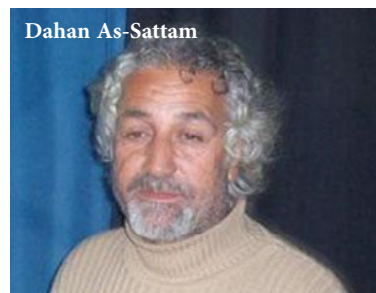
In 2008 she started working at the ministry of agriculture in Damascus. Hanadi won the award for human rights defenders from the U.S.A. state security in June 2013.

On Thursday 4 August 2011 Hanadi was arrested by security forces from Mudliant Café in Damascus suburbs – Jermana along with five of her activist friends. She spent five months in prison; two months at the political security branch (50 days of those two months were in solitary confinement) before she was transferred to Adra prison where she kept at the murder wing. During her time in prison, she suffered from health problems in her spine because of the torture and beating. Hanadai was prohibited from calling her family during her time prison. She was released on 30 November 2011, and a few days after she was released she was arbitrarily terminated from her job at the ministry of agriculture.

On Thursday 16 February 2012, Hanadi was arrested again along with her colleagues at the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression. Among the activists that were arrested were the head of the center Mazin Darwish, Hussein Ghrier, and 12 other activists who were in the center. She was released three days later along with three of her female activists after they were all detained at Al-Muzza military prison in Damascus. However, Hanadi and her colleagues had to check in with the prison every day for 67 days. One time when she was at the prison in May an explosion happened and armed clashes erupted near the prison and consequently they were detained for 12 days. As a result, Hanadi left Syria and headed to France.

10- Theater director and screenwriter **Dahan As-Sattam**, directed a number of plays including

Fe Ard Al-Bahr, Entethar, As-Sa'a Ath-Thaniya, Al-Faresa Wa Ash-Sha'er, Bela Shohoud. He also acted in a number of TV shows such as Saqr Quraish, Hekayat Al-Lail Wa An-Nahar, Ashya' Tushbea Al-Hon, Nesaa men Al-Badiya, Hodoua' Nasbi, Touq.



Dahan As-Sattam

On Wednesday 17 August 2011, Dahham was arrested by the Air Force Intelligence in Al-Hassaka city. For four months, no one knew anything about him until he was released.

11- Ali Farazat, well-known cartoonist, born in Hama on 1951. He is considered one of the best cartoonists in the world and his works have been published in many Arabic and international newspapers. Ali won many international awards including Sarakhov award which is awarded by the European Parliament. And the freedom of journalism award by “Reporters without Borders” in 2011, an award by Le Mound newspaper, Jabran Twini award, the first award at Sofia International Festival in Bulgaria (1987), and the Prince Klaus award in Netherlands in 2003.



Ali Farazat

Farazat acquired a permit for a newspaper called Ad-Doumari 2011 which instantly became widely popular. However, the ruling authorities revoked the permit in 2003. Consequently, he used the old Doumari newspaper headquarter to start a gallery for satirical art. He was known for his boldness in his cartoons.

On Thursday 25 August 2011, Ali was kidnapped, beaten, and tortured by government forces. He was kidnapped at the entrance of Al-Umawien Square in Damascus. They tossed him on the highway leading to Damascus airport after beating him viciously with sharp tools and sticks. They focused on his face and fingers and insulted him. They told him to stop making cartoons criticizing the ruling authorities.

Farazat left Syria along with his family.

SNHR talked to the cartoonist Ali Farazat who told us about the incident with government forces:

“On 25 August 2011, I left my office at 5:00 in the morning. When I was in my car I noticed a small white car that was following me closely. I knew it was from the intelligence when I saw the windows color which was black. At Al-Umawien Square, which was the most famous square in Damascus, the car suddenly hit me and told me to stop in the middle of the square. Three men came out of the car with thick sticks. They opened my car and starting beat me then they pulled me out and put me in their car after blindfolding and handcuffing me. While we were in the car, they kept punching me and hitting me with sticks and then they broke my fingers and my arm. And warned me from insulting “my masters” while insulting me. After half of hour of beating, I became unable to move and felt like I couldn’t feel anything. After a while, they tossed my out of the car, but my legs got stuck

in the car so one of them held it and threw it while I was dragging from the car which was moving at a medium speed. I stayed on the ground for a while unable to move my muscles before I hardly took the blindfold off to realize that I was on the highway leading to the airport. My white shirt has turned red, and my hands were swollen and bleeding heavily. My fingers were broken. No car stopped for me because of my horrible look at that time. I was certain that I am going to die as the bleeding continued. Suddenly, a tire of a truck blew so they had to stop. I threw myself in the bad and begged the driver to get me to Damascus. I told them I had an accident. Luckily, the men in the truck were decent and took me home but they said they can't take me to a hospital because they didn't want to be questioned given that they don't know me. When I got home, I knocked on the door of my landlord who barely recognized me. He took me to Ar-Razi Hospital. After they helped me at the hospital, some of the doctors who knew me advised me to leave before security comes and question me."

Picture of Ali Farazat after he was beaten



"My treatment continued at home. By that time, most of the Arabic and international news channels aired my news. A video of my beating became public but the official media (Ad-Dun-ya TV channel) said that I was beaten and assassinated by armed groups."

"What helped me forget my pain is that young men and women in Damascus and other governorates organized a sit-in in front of my home to sympathize with me and protest what government forces have done against an artist, a pencil, and thoughts."

"Let me say that they might have broken my fingers, but I have broken the prison of fear that we have been trapped for 50 years until the Syrian revolution erupted for freedom, justice, democracy, and civil laws. This is a blessed revolution."



One of his cartoons

12- Novelist **Daher Eta**, 46-year-old, teacher at the High Institute for Theater Arts in Damascus. He won the writing contest for his script *Bara'a Bahar* which was hosted by the Arabic Commission for Theater.

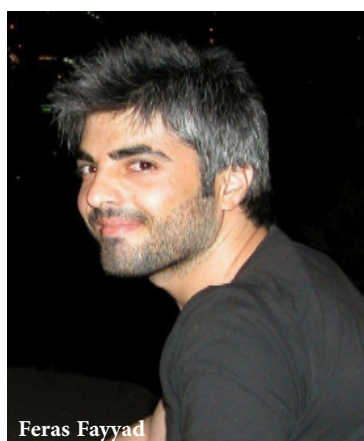
On Tuesday 1 November 2011, he was arrested by security forces in Damascus. He was detained for about a month and a half before he was released on Sunday 11 December 2011.



Daher Eta

13- Director **Feras Fayyad**, born in 1984, he directed a number of short movies such as *Hayat Jadida* (2006), *Urkud* (2007), and *60 Daqia* which was about the sons of the occupied Julian Hills and their hopes and future in addition to working on the recorded movie *Demshaq Akher At-Tajalyat* (2011).

On Wednesday 30 November 2011, he was arrested by security forces at Damascus Airport while he was leaving to Duabi to attend a cultural event and the showing of a movie. He was detained for three months and was released on 20 February 2012.



Feras Fayyad

14- Director **Nedal Hassan**, born in Tartus 1973, he studied the art of cinema in Armenia and graduated in 2011. His graduating project *Al-Bashra Al-Maleha*, which was a ling movie, won multiple awards. He worked with the Public Institution for Cinema on a number of short and documentary films such as *Al-Farah*, *Hekayat Kul Yaum*, *Jebal As-Sawwan* in addition to translating some books.

On Thursday 3 November 2011, Hassan was arrested while he was at the passports and migration administration and went under trial for “insulting the state president” and “spreading false news”. He was detained for about a month and a half and was released on 23 December 2011 after paying a fine.



Nedal Hassan

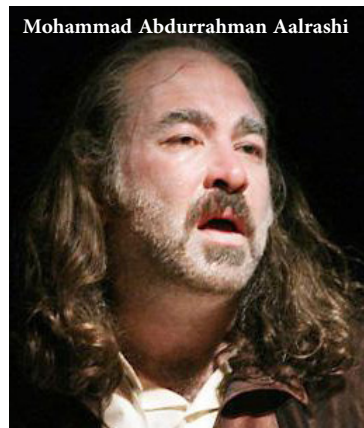
15- Director **Rim Al-Ghazzi**, born in Damascus – Darayya city in 1973, member of the Artists Association. She studied English Literature and also Theater literature at the High Institute for Theater arts.

On Saturday 26 November 2011, security forces arrested Rim in Damascus for participating in a number of protests and demonstrations. She was detained for a month and a half before she was released on 8 January 2012.



16- **Mohammad Abdurrahman Aalrashi**, born in Damascus, graduated from the High Institute for Theater Arts, a well-known theater and TV actor, son of the late actor Abdurrahman Aal Rashi. His most notable projects include the TV shows Yaumyat Mudir Aam, Ukhwat At-Turab, and Molouk At-Tawa'ef.

On Thursday 8 December 2011, he was arrested by the Military Security branch in Damascus from his home as he was a supporter of the revolution and participated in a number of peaceful protests. He was released two days later.

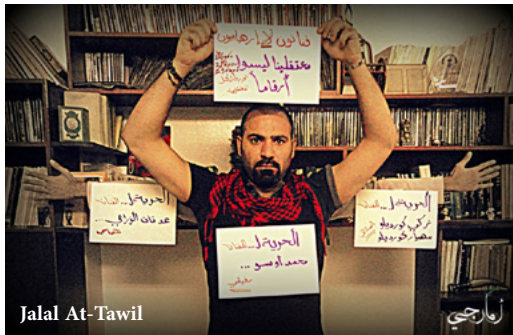


17- **Gefara Nemer**, she was born in 1984, Gefara is a producer and photographer. She graduated from the photography institute in Damascus and the High Institute for Theater Arts.

On Thursday 8 December 2011, she was arrested by the passports and migration administration at Damascus airport as she was going to attend Dubai Cinematic Festival where she was working for Dox Box institution. She was transferred to the Political Security branch in Damascus where she stayed for a week before she was released on 15 December 2011.

Jefara was arrested once before on 13 July 2011 during the Intellectuals' Demonstration in Damascus – Al-Midan neighborhood.





18- **Jalal At-Tawil**, a well-known actor and a teacher at the High Institute for Theater Arts in Damascus. He was one of the first artists to openly oppose the Syrian regime. He has participated in many peaceful protests since the beginning of the Syrian revolution.

Jalal and his family were harassed and threatened many times and because of that he decided to leave Syria. On Wednesday 4 January 2012, he was shot at by the Syrian army in his shoulder while he was trying to cross over the borders from Syria to Jordan and was arrested. He was transferred to the Military Security branch in Daraa. A few days later, the Syrian authorities forced him to go on TV and deny that he was injured and arrested and retracted from his position against the Syrian government and was released in exchange of that.



Jalal was beaten mercilessly by security forces and militias during a wide demonstration in Damascus – Al-Midan neighborhood on 19 December 2011. He was severely wounded in his head and had bruises in his back. He was also terminated from his job as a teacher at the High Institute for Theater Arts.

19- Director **Ghassan Abdullah**, 47-year-old, has dual-citizenship (British and Syrian), he is a director at the Public Institution for Cinema in Syria. He directed the short film Ahlam Muntasaf Ath-Thahira in 2005 and Zaerat Al-Masaa in 2003.

On Sunday 22 January 2012, he was arrested at a military checkpoint while he was on his way from Daraa to Damascus near Sahnaya city in Damascus suburbs. He was released a few hours later.



20- **Khadr Abdulkarim**, from Al-Hassaka – Kandour village, fine artist, 48-year-old, member of the Fine Artists Association, and member of the Defense Committees for Democratic Freedoms and Human Rights.

On Tuesday 31 January 2012, he was arrested by security forces at the passports and migration administration in Al-Hassaka and was transferred to the central prison in Al-Hassana and was released on the next day.



Khadr Abdulkarim

21- **Bahra Hejazi**, 25-year-old, studied fine arts at Damascus University, she worked as a cartoon designer and supervised a number of direction and design training courses for children and youngsters.

Her most notable works include a short animated movie xalled Tamwajat Qalb which was made during a workshop in cooperation with the U.N. development program and the International Center for Journalists.

On Friday 2 February 2012, she was arrested by Military Security in Damascus for no known reason, which is the case for tens of thousands of other detainees. She was detained for two months and was released on 25 March 2012.



Bahra Hejazi

22- Screenwriter Adnan Az-Zera'e, he is from Homs – Baba Amrou, screenwriter and peaceful activist. He co-written a number of TV shows such as Buq't Daua' and Fauq As-Saqf. We believe that the TV show Fauq As-Saqf was one of the main reasons behind his arrest where a few episodes of the show were aired before it was banned.

On Sunday 26 February 2012, Adnan was arrested by security forces at night. He was detained for a month in Al-Khatib branch (locaed in Damascus – Al-Jesr Al-Abyad area) before he was transferred to the State Security branch in Kafrsousa.

Many former prisoners, who were with Adnan in prison, told SNHR that he was brutally tortured and had a few fractures in his ribs. He was forced to call his family and friends and to make appointments with them so the authorities can arrest them. Also, he was directly threatened that he would be killed if any of this family or friends talked to the media about his case.



Adnan Az-Zera'e



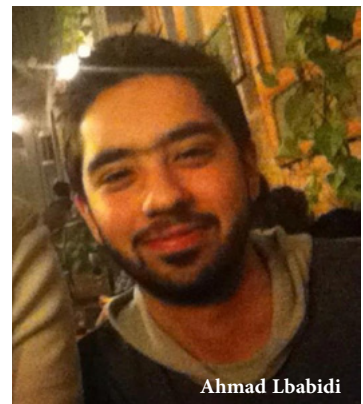
In the middle of 2013, security forces arrested his wife Rahaf Al-Kurdi, threatened her, and released her a few days later. Currently, we don't know anything about Adnan. His name is listed as a forcibly-disappeared person in our archives.

23- **Rim Ali**, acted in a number of TV, theater, and cinematic projects such as the movie Ma Yatlbuha Al-Mostame'oun, the play Al-Ashbah, the TV shows Abu-Zaid Al-Helali, and Nezar Qebbani. She won multiple awards such as the award for best leading actress at Cairo Festival for TV production on her role in the TV show Sadq Wa'dah. On Sunday 8 April 2012, she was arrested by security forces during a peaceful protest in front of the People's Council in Damascus. She was released on the same day. Rim was harassed many times and consequently she left Syria.



24- **Ahmad Lbabidi**, born in Damascus, 22-year-old, studied medicine at Damascus University, he started acting at the age of 10. He was considered one of the most talented young actors in the Arabic World. He worked with the director Hatem Ali on many history projects. His most notable works include Alu Jamil Alu Hanaa, Salah Ad-Din Al-Ayoubi, and Saqr Quraish.

On Saturday 14 April 2012, he was arrested in Damascus and was released on Wednesday 16 May 2012.



25- Drawer **Nezar Jasim Al-Hamad**, from Der Ezzor – Al-Mohasan, 35-year-old, graduated from the Applied Arts Institute, he works on cartoons. His most recent project was the 15-episode cartoon “Jaziart Al-Mughamrat” where he was an assistant-director.

On Saturday 21 July 2012, he was arrested by security forces at a checkpoint in Damascus suburbs – Ad-Dwyl'a town. He was taken to the prison at Al-Muzza military airbase. We haven't been able to know anything about him as he is now forcibly-disappeared.





Zaki Kurdillou

26- **Zaki Kurdillou**, from Aleppo – Izaz city, 50-year-old, graduated from the High Institute for Theater Arts. Zaki is a theater and TV actor.

On Saturday 11 August 2012, government forces arrested him along with his son Mehyar from his residence in Damascus city – Dammar neighborhood. We haven't been able to know anything about him as he is now forcibly-disappeared.



Mehyar Zaki Kurdillou

27- Mehyar Zaki Kurdillou, from Aleppo – Izaz city, 24-year-old, studying theater arts and a theater actor. He is the son of the artist Zaki Kurdillou.

On Saturday 11 August 2012, government forces arrested him along with his father from his residence in Damascus city – Dammar neighborhood. We haven't been able to know anything about him as he is now forcibly-disappeared.



Urwa Nyrbiya

28- Director and actor **Urwa Nyrbiya**, born in 1977, graduated from the High Institute for Theater Arts. Urwa is a film producer and the director of Dox Box festival in Syria. He played the leading role in the movie “Bab Ash-Shams” and was an assistant-director in a number of Syrian movies. He co-founded a production and distribution company and directed a number of recorded movies. And was a judge at a number of international festivals.

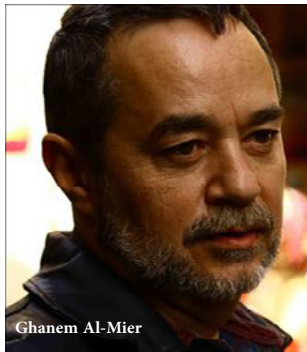
On Wednesday 22 August 2012, he was arrested by government forces at Damascus airport as he was heading to attend a festival in Cairo. He was released on 12 September 2012.



Omar Usou

29- Artist and screenwriter **Mohammad Omar Usou**, from Damascus, 26-year-old, he is a Syrian actor and screenwriter. Usou won the first award at Damascus Festival for TV for his TV show “Bukra Ahla” which he wrote and starred in 2005. He was involved in a number of TV shows such as Kasr Al-Khwater and Kathir men Al-Hon Kathir men Al-Unf in addition to many projects he wrote and acted in.

On Saturday 25 August 2012, Usou was arrested by security forces from his home in Damascus – Al-Muzza neighborhood for participating in the peaceful demonstrations against the Syrian government in Rukn Ad-Din neighborhood and other neighborhoods. He was released about a month later on Tuesday 25 May 2012.



Ghanem Al-Mier

30- **Ghanem Al-Mier**, sound engineer, he majored in sound engineering in France and worked in the French movie industry before he returned to Syria to work on many short and long movies with the ministry of culture and the Public Institution for Cinema. On Tuesday 2 October 2012, military security arrested Ghanem in Tartus city while he was working on a movie with the director Mohammad Malas, he was released 42 days later on 14 November 2012.



Afu Kabre'lyan

31- Director **Afu Kabre'lyan**, from Aleppo, graduated from the High Institute for Theater Arts in Damascus. He directed and produced a number of interactive theater projects at a number of public schools. He is also teaches history of cinema in Akad private Institute in Aleppo. He also gave a number of lectures on theater drama.

On Monday 7 November 2012, security forces arrested Kabre'lyan in Aleppo city. He was released on 26 November 2012.



Rou'a Motaz Ja'far

32- Fine artist **Rou'a Motaz Ja'far**, from Hama – Salmiya city, 26-year-old, studied fine arts at Damascus University and worked as a teacher at the fine arts college in As-Suwyida and worked with disabled children teaching them drawing. Also, she participated in a number of fine arts exhibits in Damascus.

On Wednesday 21 November 2012, she was arrested along with her friends during a sit-in called “The Brides’ Sit-ins” in Medhat Basha urban market in Damascus. The protestors raised banners against violence, killing and destruction during the silent protest.

Rou'a and her three friends were released on Wednesday 8 January 2013.



Waddah Azzam

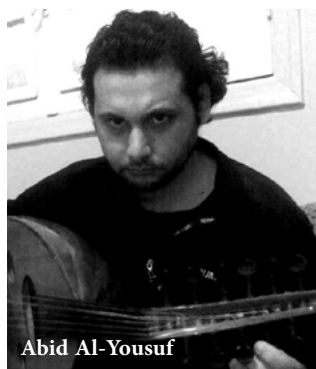
33- Writer and poet **Waddah Azzam**, from As-Suwyida – Ad-Dwyrā village, studied media at Damascus University. He was arrested by state security in Damascus suburbs – Jermāna city on 9 December 2012. His case was referred to the terrorism court on 28 March 2013 which transferred him to Adra central prison. He was released on 28 September 2014.



Abir Farhoud

34- Artist **Abir Farhoud**, 28-year-old, studied fine arts and majored in sculpture. She graduated in 2009. Abir also has participated in a number of voluntary humanitarian campaigns for deaf and mute people as well as kids.

She participated in a silent sit-in for the martyrs. Abit was beaten by Shabihas during the sit-in despite the fact that the sit-in was approved by the government. On Saturday 15 December 2012, we documented that Abir was arrested by the military security branch 215. She was released on 3 May 2013.



Abid Al-Yousuf

35- Musician **Abid Al-Yousuf**, from Der Ezzor, born in 1986, teacher at Homs University and a string instruments maestro with an orchestra. He was involved in many theater projects across Syria and the Arab World. He has been a member of the Artists' Association since 2004.

On Tuesday 5 March 2013, he was arrested by government forces in Al-Hassaka city. We haven't been able to determine the reason behind the arrest and where he is now.



Tareq Abdulhai

36- Fine artist **Tareq Abdulhai**, from As-Suwyida, born in 1967. He studied fine arts at Damascus University and graduated in 1991. He is a fine artist and photographer. He is also a member of the International Union for Photography and member of the Photography Club in Syria. Additionally, he is an editor for Tashkil cultural magazine.

On Sunday 17 March 2013, he was arrested in As-Suwyida by security forces and was released on 15 April 2013. This is the third arrest for Tareq; he was arrested on 23 August 2011 and was released two months later from solitary confinement while the second time was on 4 November 2012.



37 Screenwriter and theater director **Omar Al-Jba'ie**, born in 1982, graduated from the High Institute for Theater arts where he studied theater. He was involved in a number of plays including *As-Sahrdoudi*, *Salalem* and *Al-a'n Huna* which was an adoption of Edward Bond's script where Omar directed that play. On Thursday 2 May 2013, Omar was arrested. He was released on 3 August, 2013.

38- Mai Skaf, from Damascus, 46-year-old, Mai is a well-known TV and theater actress. She has played many notable dramatic roles since 1991 including *Hend bent Utba* in the TV show "Omar ben Al-Khattab".



On Thursday 16 June 2013, she was arrested at a checkpoint in Damascus while she was on her way home. She was released on the same day.

The Syrian authorities arrested Skaf before on Wednesday 13 July 2011 while she was participating in a demonstration against the Syrian government in Damascus – Al-Midan neighborhood. This demonstration was called "The Intellectuals' Demonstration". She was released later. Mai was one of the first artists to sign the Milk Statement.

39- Writer and poet **Fahd Radwan**, he was an anchor at Damascus radio and the Syrian TV channel. He also was a commentator for a number of documentary programs. He won the golden prize at Cairo Festival for Radio and Television – the genre of talking cultural programs for his program *Wahed Men Akhrien* in 2004. He wrote the script for a number of documentary and cinematic movies. He won more than 20 awards including *Bait Ash-She'r* award in Egypt in 2000 and *Suad As-Sabah* award in Kuwait in 2001.



On Monday 18 June 2013, Radwan was arrested at the Syrian-Lebanese borders as he was heading to Damascus from Beirut. He was shooting a TV show called *Menbar Al-Mauta*. He was released a week later on Thursday 27 June 2013.

40- **Foad Hamira**, screenwriter who wrote the story of a number of TV shows including Ghezlan Fe Ghabat Ath-The'ab, Shetaa' Sakhen, Rejat That At-Traboush, and Mamrat Dayqa.

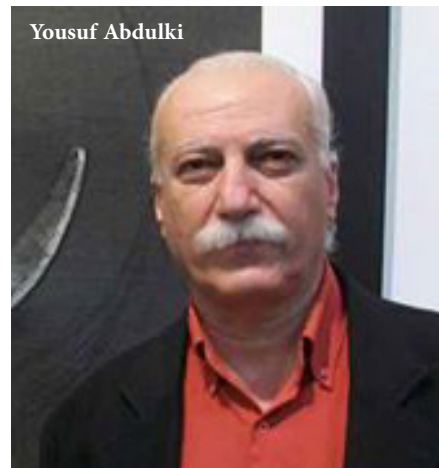
On Thursday 27 June 2013, he was arrested by security forces at the passports and immigration administration in Latakia city. He was taken to the State Security branch in Latakia and four days later he was taken to Damascus for further questioning regarding his political and personal activism. Over the course of his arrest, he was beaten and insulted.

He was released 12 days later on Tuesday 9 July 2013.



41- Fine artist **Yousuf Abdulki**, from Al-Hassaka – Al-Qameshli, 64-year-old, graduated from the fine arts college in Damascus in 1976. He received a PhD from Paris Eighth University in 1989. Yousuf is one of the most well-known fine artists in Syria.

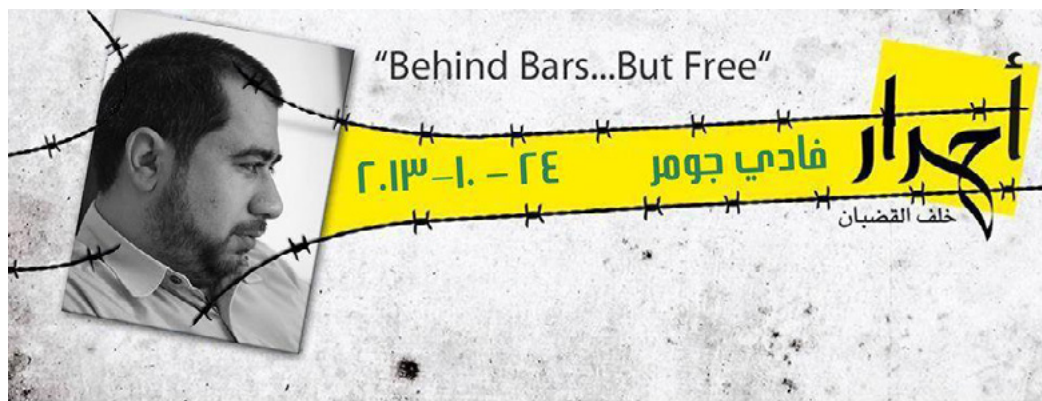
On Thursday 18 July 2013, Abdulki and two of his comrades at the Labor Socialist Party were arrested; Adnan Ad-Debs, Taufiq Umran, and Abdulki were arrested at the Political Security checkpoint at the entry point of Tartus city as they were coming for Mesyaf. They were released on 22 August 2013.



42- Fine artist **Kefah Ali Dieb**, story-writer and fine artist, she won Ash-Shareq Contest for Arabic Creativity as the best writer of children stories for his story collection Nuzhat As-Sulhfaa in 2012. Kefah joined the National Coordination Committee and became an executive member. She formed Karaz team for volunteer work with Rami Al-Hendawi and Zaidoun Az-Zu'bi. The team organized many civil and peaceful events including demonstrations, aiding campaigns, and providing medical care for the wounded.



On Wednesday 7 August 2013, Kefah was arrested by the Military Intelligence near the customs building in Damascus around 10:30 PM after a meeting with Mukhtar Al-Lammani, Al-Akhdar Al-Ibrahimi assistant. She was released on the next day. She also was detained and questions several times before.



43- Poet **Fadi Mahmoud Joumar**, 34-year-old, studied economics and trading. He is one of the most well-known Syrian poets. On Friday 25 October 2013, he was arrested by the Syrian intelligence. He was released on 12 January 2014.

44- Samar Koukash, from Damascus city, 43-year-old, Samar is an actress who graduated from the High Institute for Theater Arts in Damascus in 1995. She was involved in many TV projects. She is the daughter of the director Alaa Ad-Din Koukash and the artist Malak Sukkar. She is a theater and TV actress.



On Tuesday 26 November 2013, Samar was arrested by security forces which took her to the military security branch 215 in Kafrsousa neighborhood. On Thursday 18 December 2014, the terrorism court sentenced her to five years in prison where she was charged with funding terrorism. She was transferred to Adra Women Prison.

45- Laila Awad, from Aleppo, Laila is a Syrian actress and a member of the Artists' Association. She graduated from the High Institute for Theater Arts in Damascus.

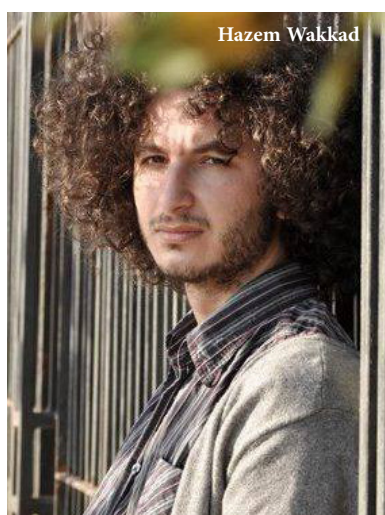
On Saturday 14 December 2013, government forces arrested the artist Laila Awad at the Lebanese-Syrian borders. She was transferred to Al-Khatib security branch in Damascus before she was taken to Adra Women Prison. She was released on Sunday 29 March 2013.



46- Fine artist Hazem Wakkad, artist and peaceful activist, from As-Suwyida, 26-year-old, graduate student at the college of education in Damascus University.

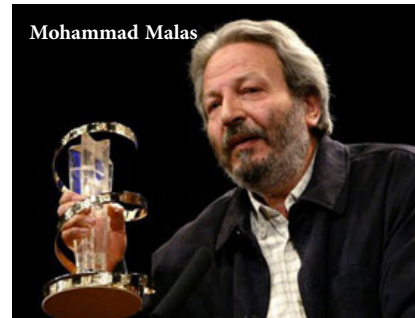
On Friday 10 January 2014, government forces arrested him. He was taken to a security branch in Damascus where he was tortured.

On 5 March 2014, Hazem was forced to go on TV and admit that he "misinformed" and "fabricated news". He was transferred to Adra prison before he was released on Wednesday 29 December 2014.





47- Director **Mohammad Malas**, born in Qunietra in 1945, Mohammad Malas lives in Damascus. He studied cinema in Moscow and graduated in 1974. He directed the short movie *Hulm Madina Saghira* in 1972. He also wrote a number of novels such as *I'lanat Men Madina Kanat Ta'iesh Qabl Al-Harab* and then came the story of the movie *Al-Manam* in 1988.



On Tuesday 4 March 2014, Mohammad was arrested at the Syrian-Lebanese borders by security forces as he was heading to Beirut and then to Geneva to attend a film festival. He was taken to the State Security branch in Damascus and was released on the next day.

48- Poet **Nasser Saber Bondoq**, from As-Suwyida city, 47-year-old, employee at the Arabic Institution for Media in Damascus. He resides in Damascus suburbs – Sahnaya area.



On Monday 17 February 2014, military security forces raided his home, arrested him, and wrecked his time. We have been able to acquire any information about him and he is now forcibly-disappeared.

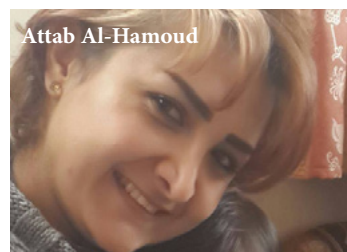
49- Poet **Ajwad Amer**, from As-Suwyida – Shahba city. He participated in a number of demonstrations against the Syrian government.



On Monday 17 February 2014, security forces arrested him at Salim checkpoint in Shahba city. He was released four months later on 16 June 2014. This is the second time he was arrested.

50- Fine artist **Attab Al-Hamoud**, from As-Suwyida – Al-Qarya town. She was a member of the psychological support team which was supervised by the U.N. She participated in drawing workshops which was being held at At-Tala' camp in As-Suwyida which was turned into a camp for IDPs.

On Tuesday 16 December 2014, Atab was arrested by security forces at the Syrian-Lebanese borders as she was going to Lebanon. She was transferred to the State Security branch in Damascus and was released on Monday 29 December 2014.



### C. Threats and pursuit

1- Fadwa Suliman, Syrian artist, born in Aleppo city in 1970. She is originally from Tartus, she is theater and TV actress. She graduated from the High Institute for Theater Arts in Damascus and took a course on theater direction in France.

She was involved in a number of theater projects such as Safr Barlek, Bedoun Ta'leaq, Ihtemat, Al-Anza Al-Anouziya, Bait Ad-Duma, Media, Saut Maria. Also, she worked in a number of TV projects such as: As-Shaqiqat, Yaumyat Abu-Antar Al-Hassad, Sarkha Fe Lail Tawil, Onsouda Al-Matar, Nesaa' Saghirat, Al-Lail, Ramh An-Nar.



Fadwa participated in most of the peaceful protests against the Syrian authorities in Damascus between March 2011 and November of the same year before she decided to Homs city and participated actively in the demonstrations in Al-Khaldiya and Al-Bayyada neighborhoods along with the Abdulbaset Sarout, who played as a goalkeeper for Al-Karama Football Club. After a demonstration in which she participated was aired on Al-Jazeera News Channel, her brother announced that her family has excommunicated her in an interview with the official TV channel where he also accused her of treason and receiving funding.

Fadwa received death threats from security forces and local militias. She was also being pursued by government forces. Consequently, she had to hide and escape and on Friday 24 2012 Ad-Duna TV Channel, which supports the government, aired a rumor that Fadwa was killed by armed opposition. These rumors made Fadwa anxious as it felt they are preparing to kill her. Under the press of these threats, Fadwa left Syria in March 2012 and she is now in France.

2- Yara Salim Sabri, from Damascus, born in 1967, she is the director and actor Maher Salibi's wife and the actors Salim Sabri's and Thana' Debsi's daughter. Her most well-known TV projects include Shajrat An-Narenj, Al-Jothour La Tamout, Al-Fosoul Al-Arba'a, Ahl Al-Ghram, and Takht Sharqi.



Yara and her husband were accused of treason by the official media. She received death threats from security forces after she signed the humanitarian statement the Milk Statement which was published by the writer Rima Fliehan on 29 April 2011. Under the press of these death threats, she was forced to appear on the official media along with other artists to apologize for signing the statement.

Afterwards, she, and her husband, left Syria to UAE and she continued supporting the humanitarian and aiding causes in Syria. Her official Facebook page publishes names of prisoners regularly and highlights some of the cases that need health and financial support.

SNHR contacted Yara Sabri and she told us:

“After signing the statement for the children of Daraa, my husband Maher Slibi, Kanda Aloush, Muna Wasef, Rasha Shabtji, and I were attacked by the official media. We were accused of treason and the authorities forced us under the threat of death to appear on the official TV channel to apologize for the statement and praise the president and the Syrian army. Although we did this, the authorities were not pleased with our performance so the defamation continued on a larger scale and in every way possible that I received daily threat messages on my phone from MTN, a telecommunication company owned by Rami Makhoulf who is the cousin of Bashar Al-Assad.”

3- Ahmad Khalil Al-Jall, painter and peaceful activist, he was born in Idlib suburbs – Kafr Nabbel in 1982. He started writing statements against government forces on the walls in February 2011. He was one of the first to organize demonstrations against the Syrian government in Kafr Nabbel which made him wanted by government forces that raided his home three times searching for him.

Ahmad Al-Jall



He then was involved in the founding of the media office in Kafr Nabbel with the media activist Raed Fares. The two worked on designing the famous banners in Kafrnabbel which were shown every Friday in the town, Ahmad drew the banners while Raed was the one who comes up with the idea and statements that were written on it. These banners spread widely because of their smart and sarcastic point of views on what was happening in Syria.

### C. Violations against properties

1- On Wednesday 14 April 2014, Air Intelligence forces raided the workshop of the fine artist [Yousuf Abdullki](#) in Damascus and wrecked it.

2- The musician Malek Al-Jandli, a composer and pianist from Homs. He is living in the USA and was born in Germany in 1972.

Malek performed with many internationally well-known orchestras on famous theaters in Europe, USA, and Syria. He received his Bachelor from Queens University with honors before having his master in business from Northern Carolina University.

Al-Jandil was the first Syrian and Arabic musician to compose the oldest known musical notes which was founded in Ugarit Ras Shamra city in Syria. The notes are estimated to be from the Fourth Century BC. On Friday 9 September 2011, security forces attacked Malek's parents' home in Homs city. Malek's parents were beaten brutally for Al-Jandli's position against government forces' violence.



Malek Al-Jandli



## Fourth: Armed opposition

### A, Extrajudicial killing



1- **Shadi Shalhoub**, from Damascus suburbs – Ma'loula village. He is the trainer of Al-Farah Chorus in As-Sayda church in Damascus – Al-Qassa' neighborhood.

On Wednesday 23 October 2013, he was killed in Damascus – Al-Qassaa by a mortar shell that was fired likely by an armed opposition faction.



2- **Ahmad Ma'mou**, from Aleppo in 1985, a choreography artist who participated in many Arabic and international festivals including the opening ceremonies of the Olympic Games in Qatar in 2006 where he participated in two dances co-organized by Syria and Qatar: Tabat wa Tara and Aby-Hayyan At-Tawhidi. Ahmad designed dances in many plays such as Eqa'at, Al-Warda wal Taj, and Hi Shakespeare.

On Monday 24 March 2014, Ma'mou was killed by missile shrapnel that fell on Ash-Shaikh Daher Square in Latakia city. The missile was likely fired by an armed opposition faction.



3- **Wesam Khwye**, fine artist and musician, 33-year-old, graduated from the fine arts college in Damascus in 2004 where he majored in visual communication. He then studied Oud at the High Institute for Music and Theater in Damascus. He graduated in 2008.

On Wednesday 24 April 2014, Wesam was killed by a mortar shell in Damascus suburbs – Jermana city. SNHR investigations showed that the shelling was by an armed opposition faction.



4- **Suzi Selman**, graduated from the High Insitu-ite for Theater Arts, Suzi acted in many dramatic projects such as Nasr, TV show Afkarekatier, and her most recent project Hadath Fe Demsh-aq. Suzi participated also in the cinematic move 29 Shebat in addition to a number of theater plays.

On Wednesday 25 June 2014, a mortar shell fell on her home in Bab Touma and killed her. It is likely that the shelling was by an armed oppo-sition faction.



## **B. Arrest and kidnapping**

1- Musician **Mohammad Fatyan**, from Aleppo, born in 1984. He graduated from the High Insti-tute for Music, he is a composer and a Nye play-er. He also teaches music and the first Syrian to host a solo concert for Nye in Syria in 2008. He formed a musical band called Asamyna in 2004 and Arasham in 2009. He played with many in-ternational orchestras and bands. Mohammad

composed many music themes for TV and theater projects such as the play Hejrat Antygoun.

On Sunday 10 February 2013, he was kidnapped by Dera' Al-Islam battalion in Damascus suburbs – Joubar.

SNHR talked to Fetyan who told us that he was doing his mandatory military ser-vice when he was kidnapped. He was released after 34 days and he was tortured and threatened to be killed.

2- Fine artist **Khalil Ham Sourak**, from Ar-Raqqa, born in 1969. He studied at the fine arts center. His works revolve mostly on burning wood. He hosted many solo and joint galleries and was a volunteer teacher at Ar-Rajaa' association for people with special needs. He also taught drawing for the culture department in Ar-Raqqa – Child Culture. He wrote many articles on fine arts and children arts. And worked in the children theater and won over 64 Arabic and International awards. On Saturday 21 September 2013, he was arrested by Ahrar Ash-Sham Movement in Ar-Raqqa city before he was released on the next day.



Khalil Ham Sourak,

## Fifth: Extremist groups

### Daesh

#### A. Extrajudicial killing

1- **Khaled Al-Qadi**, from As-Suwyida – Anaz vil-lage. He graduated from the fine arts college in 1999 where he majored in decoration. On Thursday 25 July 2013, he killed in a car bombing by Daesh in Jermana – As-Syouf Square.



Khaled Al-Qadi

#### B. Arrest and kidnapping

1- **Abdulwahhab Al-Mulla**, from Aleppo city, 27-year-old, he is an actor and singer. One of his earliest works was Hada Kul She Sar. He also participated in many other projects and sketches and song many revolutionary songs. Abdulwahhab Al-Mulla (Abu-Stief) was known for his critical radio show “Thaurat 3 Nojoum which was produced by Aleppo News Network.



Abdulwahhab Al-Mulla

On Thursday 7 November 2013, he was kidnapped by Daesh from his home in Aleppo city – Masaken Hannou neighborhood.

### C. Threat and pursuit

**Ahmad Khalil Al-Jall**, painter and peaceful activist, from Idlib suburbs – Kafrnbul, he was born in 1982. He started writing statements against the Syrian government in February 2011 and was one of the first to organize demonstrations against the Syrian government which made him wanted by government forces that raided his home three times looking for him.

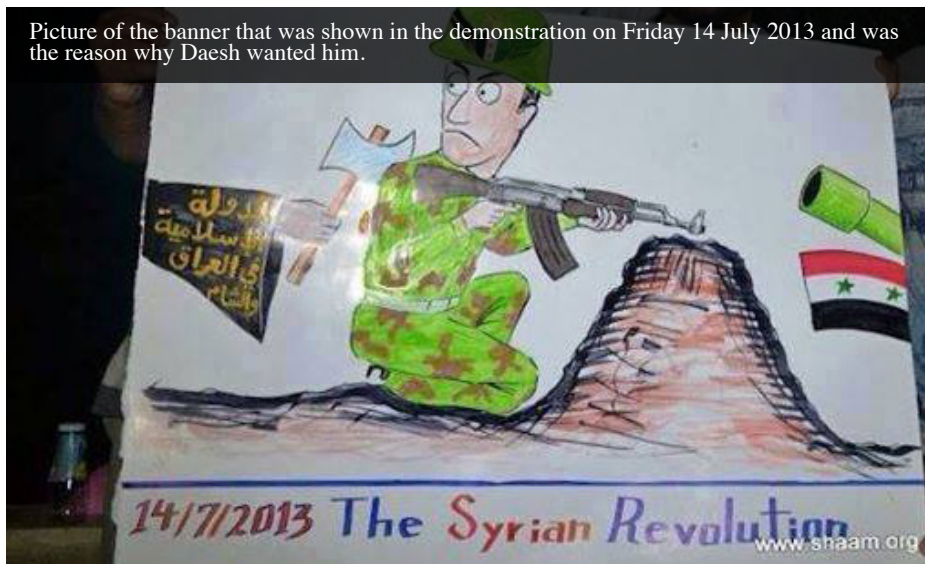
He then was involved in the founding of the media office in Kafr Nabbel with the media activist Raed Fares. The two worked on designing the famous banners in Kafrnabbel which were shown every Friday in the town, Ahmad drew the banners while Raed was the one who comes up with the idea and statements that were written on it. These banners spread widely because of their smart and sarcastic point of views on what was happening in Syria.

On Saturday 28 December 2013, an armed group working for Daesh raided the media office of Karnbul town looking for Ahmad and Raed after they drew a cartoon that was shown at a demonstration in Kafrnbul seven months ago. The cartoon was of a Daesh fighter stabbing the armed opposition factions from the back. This happened a few days after Daesh took over the town. Ahmad was wanted by both government forces and Daesh.

Ahmad told SNHR about his arrest

“I hid at a friend’s house in the town after I learned that Daesh wants me. I was certain that this was a life or death matter for they were going to kill me because of the banter. While I was hiding I drew another cartoon that was worse than the first one. It was of a scary alien (government forces) and out of it comes this huge serpent (Daesh). The cartoon idea was that Daesh is merely serving government forces agenda.”

Picture of the banner that was shown in the demonstration on Friday 14 July 2013 and was the reason why Daesh wanted him.





## An-Nusra Front

### A. Arrest and kidnapping

1- **Wasim Meqdad**, 28-year-old, musician and a medical student at Damascus University. He held many revolutionary concerts in Damascus – Al-Yarmouk camp.

On Wednesday 11 September 2013, he was arrested by An-Nusra Front from his residence in Al-Yarmouk camp. He was released on Wednesday 18 September, 2013.



2- **Novelist Aref Al-Khatib**, from Idlib – Ar-Rami town, 73-year-old, member of the Arabic Writers Union. Aref Al-Khatib is one of the most notable writers of Children literature in the Arabic world. On Saturday 15 November 2014, An-Nusra Front arrested Aref Al-Khatib after they raided his home.



### B. Violations against properties

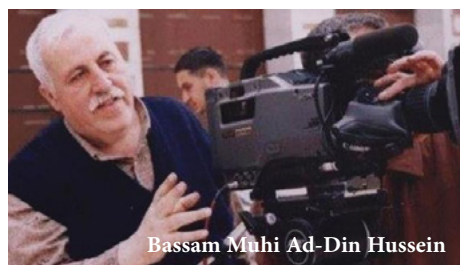
**Ayham Al-Ahmad**, pianist and a peaceful activist, he was walking in the streets of Al-Yarmouk camp in Damascus during the siege playing and singing for the people. He was known for his songs collection Al-Yarmouk Ishtaqtlek Ya Khya. On 18 April 2015, An-Nusra Front burned Ayham's musical instruments



## Sixth: Unidentified Groups

### A. Extrajudicial killing

1- **Bassam Muhi Ad-Din Hussein**, from Tartus city, born in 1955, has a master in cinematic and TV direction from the National Academy for Theater and Cinema Arts in Bulgaria – Sofia. He has been working at the Public Institution for Cinema since 1984. He is a member of the Artists' Association.



His movies include Al-Urjuha, Rehlat Omar, Ar-Rajaa' Al-Akhir, Al-Urs, Al-Qe-naa', Sada Al-Hadarat (a long documentary on Syria).

On Sunday 6 August 2012, he was assassinated by armed men whose identities we haven't been able to identify. He was shot in front of his home in Damascus suburbs – Jadedat Artouz.

2- Theater actor **Ahmad Me'mar**, he was involved in a number of plays and he is a member of Al-Qal'a theater band. He was preparing to Al-Shabiba theater festival in Aleppo city.



On Thursday 22 August 2013, he died of wounds sustained in a suicidal bombing at Kaboughrilou restaurant in Al-Bassel sport facility in Aleppo – Al-Mokambou neighborhood.

3- **Emad Lathqani**, had a PhD in art philosophy and art criticism. He was killed by armed men who burned his home in Latakia on 25 July 2014.

[One of Emad's paintings](#)



## B. Arrest and kidnapping

1- Fine artist and photographer **Mohammad Wael Saeed**, 40-year-old, graduated from the fine arts college where he majored in photography in 1996. He is a photographer and was interested in documenting Syrian areas through photography. He is an art director at Tishreen newspaper.

On Tuesday 1 January 2013, Mohammad was kidnapped around 6:30 in the morning on his way to his home in Adra Al-Ummaliya.



2- Fine artist **Mohammad Tliemat**, from Homs city, 74-year-old, he was mysteriously kidnapped about two years ago. His family said that he was arrested by an unknown group on his way to his workshop in eastern Homs. The kidnappers asked for a 20 million Syrian pound as a ransom. After negotiation, they asked for 6 million which her wife paid to the kidnappers. Nevertheless, the kidnappers haven't set them free, and they also robbed his office and farm where they stole more than 100 hundred of his paintings. Tliemat was merely an artist and wasn't involved in politics.

[One of Mohammad Tliemat's paintings.](#)

## Seventh: Evidences and Attachments

### A. Video footages about the Milk Statement

An interview on the government TV channel that was aired on 5 May 2011. Six days after the Milk Statement was published.

[An interview with Muna Wasef, Rasha Sharbtji, Yara Sabri, Kanda Aloush in which they justified signing the Milk Statement.](#) It was as they retracted from their stance. They said that they didn't have confirmed information about the milk and medicine in Daraa during the siege and their information might be false. They said also that they signed the statement in order to encourage the government to get more information.

[Artist Sulaf Faukharji and her husband the actor Wael Ramdan](#) attacking the artists who signed the Milk Statement on Ad-Duna TV channel, which supports the Syrian government. Sulaf and her husband accused them of treason and receiving money for signing the statement.

A report on the president Al-Assad meeting a number of Syrian artists to seek support within the artistic community. The report was aired during the interview about the Milk Statement on 15 May 2011.



*B. Interviews with Zuhair Ramadan, head of the Artists' Association, in which he accused the artists who signed the Milk Statement of treason.*

*An interview that was aired on Al-Jadid TV channel on 29 April 2014*

*Zuhair Ramadan talked with Al-Jadid TV channel about the Artists' Association's decision to terminate a number of artists and refer them to a disciplinary committee headed by a judge from the ministry of justice. Regarding the charges, Zuhair Ramadan said that we made this decision after what those artists said and did where they insulted the leadership symbols in Syria, used the west to undermine Syria, and insult the army and described it as a killer and dictator. The list of the terminated artists include Jamal Slimean, Maksim Khalil, Mai Skaf, Abdulhakim Qtiefan, Mazen An-Natour, Abdulqader Al-Manla, Lwez Abdulkarim, Samieh Shqier. Ramadan said also that they are considering terminating more artists.*

*An interview with AghaniAghani TV channel that was aired on 22 April 2014.*

*Head of the Artists' Association Zuhair Ramadan accused some of the opposing artists of treason and selling their country for a few dollars, he said that one of those artists is Asala Nasri.*



*C. A number of videos of interviews with supporting artists in which they expressed their unconditional support for the president Bashar Al-Assad*

22 May 2011

A seminar on Ad-Dunya TV channel that included Bassem Yakhour, Amal Arfa, Abbas An-Nouri, Saif Ad-Din Sbie'ie. The artists talked about what happening in Syria and assuring that they are supporting the ruling authority to manage the crisis in Syria



Ad-Dunya TV channel – [Abbas An-Nouri](#)

Ad-Dunya TV channel – [Bassem Yakhour](#)

[Abbas An-Nouri's interview](#) with the government TV channel

[Raghda in an interview with Al-Jadid TV](#) channel in which she said that she supports Bashar Al-Assad and his army forever

[Raghda in an interview on Talfyzoun Al-Balad](#) in which she said that she supports Bashar Al-Assad and his army forever

The artist Roudya Attya slamming [the artist Asala Nasri](#)

**D. Video footages of artists in demonstration and events in support of the ruling authorities**

[Zuhair Abdulkarim praising the army after Yabroud was taken over by Hezbollah](#)

[A number of supporting artists participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Damascus](#)

[Wael Sharaf promoting Al-Assad electoral campaign](#)

[Syrian actors participating in demonstration supporting Bashar Al-Assad](#)

Actress Raghda pledging to support president Bashar Al-Assad during a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad



[Syrian actors participating in demonstration supporting Bashar Al-Assad](#)

[Fadya Khattab participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Damascus on 21 September 2011](#)

[Na'iem Hamdi participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Damascus on 21 September 2011](#)

[Zuhair Abdulkarim participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Tartus on 21 September 2011](#)

[Feras Ibrahim participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Damascus on 21 September 2011](#)

[Jamal Al-Ali participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Damascus on 21 September 2011](#)

[Suzan Najm participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Damascus on 21 September 2011](#)

[Ghada Bashir and Hadi Beqdounas participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Damascus on 21 September 2011](#)

[Mohammad Khair Jerah participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Damascus on 21 September 2011](#)

[Randa Mar'shli participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Damascus on 21 September 2011](#)

[Aref At-Tawil participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Latakia city on 21 September 2011](#)

[Raghda participating in a demonstration in support of Bashar Al-Assad in Aleppo on 21 September 2011](#)

#### ***F. Artists in demonstrations against Bashar Al-Assad***

Jalal At-Tawil participating in a demonstration in Al-Qaboun neighborhood (Damascus city) where he uttered statements against Bashar Al-Assad 18 July 2011





Mohammad Al Rashi participating in a demonstration in Al-Qaboun neighborhood (Damascus city) where he uttered statements against Bashar Al-Assad 18 July 2011



[Mohammad Usou participating in a demonstration in Rukn Ad-Din neighborhood \(Damascus city\) where he uttered statements against Bashar Al-Assad 19 July 2011](#)

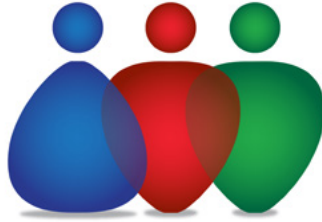
[Nawwar Bolbol participating in a demonstration in Ghouta neighborhood \(Damascus city\) where he uttered statements against Bashar Al-Assad 6 August 2011](#)

[Farres Al-Helou participating in a demonstration in Al-Qaboun neighborhood \(Damascus city\) where he uttered statements against Bashar Al-Assad 16 July 2011](#)

[Hammam Hout participating in a demonstration in Bostan Al-Qaser neighborhood \(Aleppo city\) where he uttered statements against Bashar Al-Assad 29 March 2013](#)

## Acknowledgment

**Our thanks and appreciation go out for the victims' families and all the artists who contributed majorly to this report.**



Syrian Network For Human Rights  
الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان