

Schnellrecherche der SFH-Länderanalyse vom 10. August 2015 zu Syrien: Personen, die für humanitäre Organisationen arbeiten

Frage an die SFH-Länderanalyse:

- Wie ist die Situation von Personen, die in Syrien für humanitäre Organisationen arbeiten?

Die Informationen beruhen auf einer zeitlich begrenzten Recherche (Schnellrecherche) in öffentlich zugänglichen Dokumenten, die uns derzeit zur Verfügung stehen.

1 Personen, die in Syrien für humanitäre Organisationen arbeiten

Personen, die für humanitäre Organisationen arbeiten, werden von der syrischen Regierung wie auch von bewaffneten Gruppen verfolgt. Sie werden getötet, willkürlich verhaftet, gefoltert, vergewaltigt und erpresst. Verschiedenste Organisationen wie UNHCR (Oktober 2014), *Amnesty International* (4. Mai 2015) oder das *US Department of State* (25. Juni 2015) weisen seit dem Ausbruch des Krieges im Jahr 2011 darauf hin. Seither wurden gemäss dem *UN Generalsekretär* 66 humanitäre Helfer getötet. Darunter elf UN-Mitglieder, 38 Helfer und Aktivisten des syrischen roten Halbmondes und sieben Helfer des palästinensischen Roten Halbmondes. UNHCR (Oktober 2014) benennt humanitäre Helfer explizit als gefährdete Personen.

In einem Bericht über Menschenrechtsverletzungen der syrischen Regimekräfte und bewaffneter oppositioneller Gruppen an der Zivilbevölkerung von Aleppo beschreibt *Amnesty International* im Mai 2015, wie humanitäre Helfer von der Regierung wie auch von bewaffneten Gruppen verhaftet, gefoltert, vergewaltigt und getötet werden. Bewaffnete Gruppen entführen humanitäre Helfer und erpressen Lösegeld.

US Department of State, 25. Juni 2015:

*«There were widespread abuses and violations of persons whom the government arbitrarily and unlawfully killed, tortured, and detained. Government forces conducted systematic attacks against civilians in hospitals, residential areas, schools, and camps holding internally displaced persons (IDPs); these attacks included indiscriminate bombardment with improvised explosive devices commonly referred to as “barrel bombs” (containing a combination of jet fuel and TNT, usually dropped by a helicopter). **The regime continued the systematic and widespread use of torture and rape, including against children.** It used the massacre of civilians, as well as their forced displacement and starvation, as military tactics. The government rigorously denied citizens the right to exercise civil liberties, such as freedom of speech and press, movement, peaceful assembly and association, and the right to a fair public trial. **The government detained without access to fair trial tens of thousands of individuals associated with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), human rights activists, journalists, humanitarian aid providers, religious figures, and physicians. (...)***

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Other human rights problems included the following: targeted killing of protesters, bystanders, journalists, and medical professionals; kidnappings and disappearances; torture and abuse, including of women and children; squalid prison and detention center conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention; political prisoners and detainees; denial of fair public trial; arbitrary interference with privacy, family, home, and correspondence; and the use of rape and assault as punishment and an instrument of war. The government restricted press, internet, and academic freedoms. The government continued to restrict freedoms of religion and movement. There was massive abuse of refugees and stateless persons. **The government continued to restrict NGOs and individual activists from organizing, especially those working on civil society and democracy matters. The regime consistently limited medical providers' access to persons in critical need. Corruption was rampant throughout the government.** Violence and societal discrimination against women and minorities continued, and workers' rights remained restricted. (...)

The regime and ISIL targeted aid providers systematically and severely restricted humanitarian access to territories under their respective control. In late October the UN secretary-general reported armed groups expelled humanitarian workers from areas they held and that 27 UN staff members were detained or missing, including 24 UNRWA staff members. The secretary-general indicated the total number of humanitarian workers killed since 2011 was 66, including 17 UN staff members, 38 Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) staff members and volunteers, seven Palestine Red Crescent Society volunteers and staff members, and four staff members of international NGOs. Activists reported aid workers in ISIL-controlled territory were at high risk of abduction or violence. In October the United Nations reported ISIL continued to block its employees from providing humanitarian assistance in territory ISIL controlled.» Quelle: US Department of State, Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2014 – Syria, 25. Juni 2015:
www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2014/nea/236622.html.

UNHCR, Oktober 2014:

«Das Sicherheitsrisiko für Mitarbeiter humanitärer Hilfsorganisationen ist hoch, insbesondere angesichts der Tatsache, dass bereits Dutzende von ihnen getötet, festgenommen oder entführt wurden; auch Fahrzeuge, Lager und Rettungswagen der Vereinten Nationen wurden angegriffen.» S.13

Fussnote 96: „Neunundzwanzig einheimische Mitarbeiter der Vereinten Nationen, darunter 26 UNRWA-Mitarbeiter, sind nach wie vor inhaftiert oder als vermisst gemeldet. Seit März 2011 wurden insgesamt 63 Mitarbeiter humanitärer Hilfsorganisationen getötet. Darunter fallen 15 Mitarbeiter der Vereinten Nationen, 38 Bedienstete und Freiwillige von SARC, 7 Freiwillige und Bedienstete der Palestine Red Crescent Society und 3 Mitarbeiter internationaler Nichtregierungsorganisationen“; Sicherheitsrat der Vereinten Nationen, Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014), S/2014/696, 24. September 2014, Absatz 55, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2014/696. „Syrische Mitarbeiter humanitärer Hilfsorganisationen sind zahlreichen Gefahren ausgesetzt, einschließlich Massenhinrichtungen, Entführungen, Festnahmen, Gewalt und Belästigungen“; Sicherheitsrat der Vereinten Nationen, Report of the Secretary-General

on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), 22. Mai 2014, S/2014/365, Anhang, S. 16, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/53ac00ee4.html>. Siehe auch: ICRC, International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement deplores deaths of two more Red Crescent volunteers in Syria, 3. Juni 2014, <http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/news-release/2014/06-03-syria-sarc-jointstatement.htm>; UN-Pressedienst, Syria: UN humanitarian chief condemns attack on warehouse during aid distribution, 25. Mai 2014, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5384a1034.html>.

Risikoprofile gemäss UNHCR: «**Angehörige bestimmter Berufsgruppen**, insbesondere Journalisten und andere in der Medienbranche tätige Personen, Laienjournalisten; Ärzte und andere im Gesundheitswesen tätige Personen; Menschenrechtsaktivisten; **humanitäre Helfer**; Künstler; Unternehmer und Gewerbetreibende.» Quelle: UN High Commissioner for Refugees, International Protection Considerations with regard to people fleeing the Syrian Arab Republic, Update III, Oktober 2014: www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1930_1426003857_syr-102014.pdf.

Amnesty International, 4. Mail 2015:

«HUMANITARIAN AID WORKERS AND MEDICS

Humanitarian aid workers and medics are also at risk of being arbitrarily detained, tortured or subjected to enforced disappearance in Aleppo. Ayman was a volunteer for the Syrian Arab Red Crescent before he was arrested in Damascus in February 2012. He was first held at State Security Branch 258 in Damascus and was then transferred to Aleppo Central Prison.

He described his experience there:

*“[During the siege on the prison] both sides were shelling us: the FSA and the regime. I always had diarrhoea and a fever. There was no food, not anything. If we called for water they screamed at us. The water was disgusting anyway. **Many people died in the prison from the starvation.** I went from 100kg to 60kg... Women and children were kept in the prison. **The guards would just choose a woman and then rape her.** I was asked to bring the bread to them, so they told me what was happening, and I would hear the sounds. **Because I was younger, [the guards] used me in the prison. I don’t want to talk about the torture I received.**”*

I am ashamed. I am afraid to talk with anyone any more. My psychological situation is so bad now. Prison changed me into a new person. I am stuck in Turkey, with no chance for an education.”

Bassel, a 37-year-old humanitarian aid worker for the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, was arrested in May 2014 from his office in Aleppo. He was charged with providing financial aid to opposition forces, and detained in Aleppo’s State Security branch and Criminal Security Branch. During the 74 days he spent at the State Security branch, he did not have access to a lawyer and was questioned only once. He was beaten on one occasion but was not otherwise tortured; however, he reported that at least 30% of the other prisoners at the State Security branch were being tortured through routine, severe beatings with leather whips, especially on the soles of their feet. The individuals who received the worst treatment,

he said, were humanitarian aid workers and journalists. Before he was released in August 2014, he was forced to place his thumbprint on several white sheets of paper that he assumed they would fill in later and use as his “confession”.

Amnesty International received a report that security forces arrested teacher and Syrian Arab Red Crescent volunteer Ali Ibrahim Muslim at al-Ramoussa checkpoint in Aleppo on 6 November 2014. Two days later, according to family members, the Air Force Intelligence branch in Aleppo told his family that he had died in detention. The reasons for Ali Ibrahim Muslim’s arrest and the circumstances of his death have not been confirmed.

Finally, according to reports received by Amnesty International, two medics from Aleppo were subjected to enforced disappearance. Abu Ibrahim, a doctor from Zarzour hospital, was arrested from an ambulance on 1 December 2012. His whereabouts have been unknown since then. Mahmoud Issa was arrested on 26 June 2012 in front of his house in the Martini neighbourhood in Aleppo; he was last seen by another detainee in the Air Force Intelligence branch in Aleppo. Since then, his family members have received no information on his whereabouts.

VIOLATIONS BY ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has documented the detention of at least 996 individuals by non-state armed groups in Aleppo governorate since 2011, including 44 women, 142 children and 810 men. According to the SNHR, as of March 2015, the fate or whereabouts of at least 226 individuals in Aleppo who were abducted by armed opposition groups remains unknown. Amnesty International has documented several cases of serious detention-related abuses by armed opposition groups in Aleppo.

Adnan, a humanitarian aid worker, was held for two months in a centre run by the Nur al-Din al-Zanki Brigades (Zanki Brigades), one of the largest armed groups operating in Aleppo and a current member of the Levant Front. On 11 July 2014, a group of men from the Zanki Brigades abducted him from al-Huda field hospital and took him to a nearby prison inside the military base of the Zanki Brigades, located near Hoor village. He noted that the location of the prison, inside the base, put it at risk of being targeted: “We would often hear the rockets going by. They must know the building can be targeted, because it has been hit so many times in the past.” He described his experience in the prison:

“They brought me into the [prison], and I immediately saw them beating some others with electrical cables. Then they called me in to question me. They put a black bag on my head and tied it at the bottom, so I couldn’t see anything. There were more than six people shouting at me. They accused me of dealing with the regime. I could always hear the others being beaten, but because of my status in the community, they didn’t bother me as much as the others... I have a Ph.D., and because I was called a doctor they thought I knew about medicine. I saw hundreds of medical cases during my time in the prison, and most of them were from torture or the terrible conditions. Because of my medical duties, I saw every part of the prison, which held around 90

people. The solitary confinement cells were tiny, one metre by half a metre. There were nine of these, always occupied. God help them.”

Adnan said the prison authorities would sometimes bring witnesses from the Zanki Brigades’ “Shari’a court” into the prison:

“They would bring in witnesses so that they could finish the case. There was a man who was charged with the rape of a woman, and they brought three witnesses from his case inside the prison. They were kept inside and suspended from their wrists so that they would say something against him. There was so much pain.”

Near the end of his time in the prison, Adnan was again threatened with torture. “I said I wouldn’t sign anything, and they brought out a wooden slab,” he said. “They tied me to the slab and covered my eyes. **In the end I decided to pay instead of being tortured. [The guard] stood there like he had had a victory.**” **In addition to a fine, the authorities demanded that he pay the equivalent of US\$15 for each day he had stayed in the prison.** “If someone can’t pay this,” he said, “they will keep him inside until their family brings the money. If there is no money, they will wait 20 days, and then they will take his car, house, whatever they can get.”

Amnesty International also spoke with Akram, a lawyer and human rights activist who was detained in early 2014 by the Nourain Armed Brigade, a group that was then a part of Harakat Ahrar al-Sham al-Islamiyya. In January 2014, he was taken from a checkpoint near his home, in the southern suburbs of Aleppo, and held for several weeks. The group took him to their detention centre in the nearby village of Alam Siheir. Akram described his time there:

“I was held at a place known as the ‘Moroccan base’. When we arrived, they handcuffed me and put a bag on my head. They put me into a refrigerated room, where it was so cold and there was no light. When they started the investigation, they were hitting me and accusing me of encouraging people to fight the Islamist groups. In the first 30 minutes, if I tried to talk, they beat me more... They called my wife, and they told her I would be executed. She was pregnant, and at this news, she lost her baby. There were around 100 people in the prison at one time, and I saw 500 people coming and going. In my cell, there were two other people. One of them was executed, and the other was brought back from his investigation black and blue... For me, the torture was usually to go into the refrigerated room for around two hours, and then when they took me out, they would torture or kill other people in front of me. I saw them kill at least 10 people. They were educated in torture and execution by the regime. My wife started pressuring the group, and then offered them money, so I was released in the end.”

According to Akram, many armed opposition groups torture and mistreat detainees in makeshift prisons across Aleppo governorate. However, the victims of these abuses and their family members do not often speak publicly about their experiences, for fear of retribution.

Raed, a 19-year-old man who worked as a locksmith and volunteer for humanitarian groups that distribute aid to the Kurdish community in Aleppo city, was first abducted during the first quarter of 2014. His uncle, Mounir, told Amnesty

International about his nephew's experience. In 2013, Raed was abducted by a non-state armed group and transferred to the custody of the armed group that now calls itself the Islamic State. After being severely beaten, shocked with electricity and hung from his wrists for extended periods of time, he was released and fled to Turkey. Raed returned to Syria several months later, only to be abducted on 23 November 2014 by the leader of an armed group affiliated with Jabhat al-Nusra. According to Mounir, the group targeted his nephew because they believed he had ties to the Syrian government. Mounir was asked to pay a sum of 600,000 Syrian pounds, the equivalent of US\$3,175, to release his nephew. Mounir was unable to provide the money; several weeks later, he was informed that Raed had been killed. Since then, Mounir has sent official complaints to the opposition-run Shari'a Authority asking for his nephew's remains, but he has received no response.

Others who have suffered abductions or hostage-taking by armed opposition groups include two Italian aid workers, Vanessa Marzullo and Greta Ramell. They were abducted by members of an unknown armed Islamist group in late July 2014. In December last year, a video appeared on a social media site showing the two women wearing black abaya cloaks and hijabs and calling on the Italian government to ensure their release. Following their abduction, sources confirmed that the women were "sold" to Jabhat al-Nusra and held hostage until their release on 15 January 2015.

Amnesty International also received reports that two doctors were abducted by non-state armed groups in 2015. On 9 January 2015, Dentist Salem Naser was abducted from his clinic in al-Sha'ar neighbourhood of Aleppo by an unknown non-state armed group. He was released on 25 January after several of his colleagues started a campaign for his release. Paediatrician "Abu Teem" was also abducted in early January 2015; news reports attributed the kidnapping to members of Jabhat al-Nusra. According to a statement released by a union of medical workers in Aleppo, he was tortured and later released.» Quelle: Amnesty International: 'Death everywhere' – war crimes and human rights abuses in Aleppo, Syria [MDE 24/1370/2015], 4. Mai 2015, S. 43-47:

www.ecoi.net/file_upload/4543_1436255689_mde2413702015english.pdf.