



**H R A S**  
جمعية حقوق الإنسان في سورية

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE *DAY OF SYRIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS*, TOGETHER WE SEEK THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AND AN END TO POLITICAL DETENTION**

A group of Syrian civil associations, including the Human Rights Association in Syria (HRAS), and opposition parties have called for a demonstration in the centre of Damascus on the Day of Syrian Political Prisoners, 21 June 2004. This date marks the initial imprisonment of the oldest prisoner held in detention in Syria, 'Imad Shiha, who remains in prison after 29 years.

On the Day of Syrian Political Prisoners, we consider that:

1. A large number of prisoners in Syria spend between 20-25 years in prison, some closer to a thirty year period of imprisonment.
2. The fate of thousands of prisoners remains unknown after they were forcibly 'disappeared'.
3. Many prisoners suffer from terminal and acute illnesses and, as such, should be released immediately and unconditionally.
4. In general, prisoners either stand trial before an exceptional court which fails to meet international standards of independent and fair trial, or are never even granted a trial.
5. Most political prisoners have been subject to torture and ill treatment, especially during periods of investigation and interrogation.
6. Hundreds of both male and female prisoners in the various security branches suffer from torture and abuse.
7. Minors are similarly detained and may be subject to torture and trial before exceptional courts, without due consideration of their status as minors before the law.
8. Large numbers of prisoners continue to be denied visitation rights. While some are refused visits entirely, those prisoners allowed to receive visits are restricted to meeting with family and friends on either a six monthly, or once-yearly basis only.

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HRAS asks that the responsible authorities:

1. Immediately release political prisoners, or prisoners of conscience – with particular reference to those prisoners suffering from serious ill health.
2. Make known the fate and/or the current whereabouts of those citizens who have been subject to forced disappearance.
3. To make effective immediately appropriate legislation banning the use of any form of torture or abuse, including physical, psychological and emotional.
4. Provide both acknowledgment and monetary compensation for those prisoners and the families of prisoners who have been subject to arbitrary detention or enforced disappearance.
5. Investigate violations against women and children in detention, who have been victims of torture and ill treatment and who have faced trial before exceptional courts.

HRAS has also attached an updated list of a number of the names of prisoners currently detained in Syrian detention centres, which currently amounts to approximately 700; an updated list detailing the names of citizens who have been subject to forced disappearance, amounting to a total of almost 100; and a new list of some prisoners whose health status is very poor. HRAS is currently aware of almost 100 prisoners who come under this category.

\* Please note these lists are presented in Arabic language.  
Contact the Office of HRAS if you require more information.

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