

85 Syrian Organizations Welcome the U.S. Treasury's Sanctions against Two Syria-Based Armed Groups and Commanders

The undersigned organizations call on the European Union, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia to impose similar sanctions on individuals and entities involved in human rights violations in Syria

The undersigned Syrian organizations welcome the [decision](#) of the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of 17 August 2023 to designate the two Syrian armed groups, the Suleiman Shah Brigade (known as al-Amshat) and the Hamza Division (known as al-Hamzat). The two groups are connected with serious human rights violations against the Kurdish community in the Afrin region, northern Syria. These violations include abductions, arrests, extortion, rape, torture, and the seizure of land and property.

Additionally, the signatory organizations welcome the U.S. Treasury's sanctions imposed on leading members of the two designated groups. The Treasury sanctioned Mohammad Hussein al-Jasim (Abu Amsha)—commander of the Suleiman Shah Brigade, Walid Hussein al-Jasim—a younger brother of Abu Amsha who is also assigned a leadership role in the Suleiman Shah Brigade, and Sayf Boulad Abu Bakr—commander of the Hamza Division. All three leaders are involved in grave human rights abuses. Moreover, the Treasury designated the Türkiye-based al-Safir Oto car dealership, which Abu Amsha allegedly owns in partnership with the commander of the Syrian armed group Ahrar al-Sharqiya, Ahmad Ihsan Fayyad al-Hayes (Abu Hatem Shaqra). Notably, the Treasury has previously [designated](#) al-Hayes and his armed group for committing numerous crimes against civilians.

Over the past years, several armed groups affiliated with the Syrian National Army (SNA)—operating under the mantle of the [National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces](#)—have perpetrated systematic and widespread human rights violations in areas under their control with impunity. The groups continue to target the populace in those areas, especially the local communities in Afrin, Ras al-Ayn/Serê Kaniyê, and Tell Abyad, which are under Türkiye's direct control. These violations have been documented by several credible Syrian and international organizations and corroborated by the [Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic](#) in its periodic reports.

Considering this, the undersigned organizations call for widening the scope of sanctions to cover other armed groups, their commanders, and their affiliates who have been corroborated as having committed grave violations. Moreover, the organizations demand that concerned entities press Türkiye, as the party in control of these armed groups and as an [occupying power](#), to bear its responsibilities and thus guarantee the safety and well-being of civilians and maintain law and order.

Furthermore, the signatory organizations demand that:

- **The United Nations Security Council** take all necessary measures to protect civilians in Afrin, Ras al-Ayn/Serê Kaniyê, and Tell Abyad, across the northern regions, and throughout Syria. The council shall also act to halt the processes of demographic change and the seizure of property and to ensure the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of residents to their home areas.

- **War crimes units** in countries whose national laws warrant universal jurisdiction and **the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM)** document and collect evidence on human rights violations occurring across northern Syria, especially abuses perpetrated against vulnerable groups and/or on the basis of the victims' national, ethnic, or religious affiliations.
- **The International Commission of Inquiry on Syria** issue a special report on human rights violations across northern Syria, including in the Afrin region—the Olive Branch Strip; A'zaz, Jarabulus, and al-Bab—the Euphrates Shield Strip; and Ras al-Ayn/Serê Kaniyé and Tell Abyad—the Peace Spring Strip.

Furthermore, the signatory organizations call on the European Union, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia to take similar steps, which are prone to advance the course of international litigation, aiming at holding accountable Syrian perpetrators residing in their territories, promoting documentation, accountability, and redress efforts initiated by European and international courts, and contributing to deterring perpetrators and ending impunity.

Organizations and Associations Signing the Statement:

1. Adil Center for Human Rights
2. Afrin Media Center
3. Afrin Platform
4. Afrin Post - News Network
5. Ajyal Organization for Development
6. Al_Khaboor Association
7. ALAHD ORGANIZATION
8. Amal for Development
9. Analysis and Strategic Studies Organization (ASO)
10. ARAS Charity
11. Areej Organization
12. ASHNA for Development Organization
13. Ashti Center
14. Association Culturelle Kurde de Genève
15. Baladna Organization for Civil Society
16. Center for Research and Protection of Women's rights in Syria
17. Community Solidarity organization
18. DAN for Relief and Development
19. DAR Association for Victims of Forced Displacement
20. Deirna for Development
21. Development without Border Organized
22. Enlil Center
23. Enma Aljazera
24. Environment and Water Association (EWAS)
25. Euphrates NGO
26. Ezdina Organization
27. FDO

28. Future Hands Organization
29. Future Makers Team
30. Green Tress
31. Hevy for relief and development
32. Human Rights Organization in Afrin - Syria
33. Jian Charity Association
34. Jiyane. V. for the Elimination of Violence against Women
35. Keskayi
36. Khutwa Association
37. Kobani for Relief and Development (KRD)
38. Kurdish Legal Committee
39. Lamsat Alkhier Association
40. Lelun Association for Victims
41. Lights for development and Construction
42. Mary for Culture
43. Nawras Development Organization
44. North Press Agency - NPA
45. Noun for Development and Support for Women and Children
46. Nujin Society for Development Community
47. Okaz
48. Organization of Zagon
49. Oxygen Shabab
50. PEACE SHE LEADERS NETWORK
51. PÊL- Civil Waves
52. Pioneers of Peace
53. Publish path
54. Qadar Organization
55. Radiance of Hope
56. Reng for Development
57. Rojava Activists Network
58. Rose organization for Support and Empowerment
59. SALAM. Organization
60. Sara Organization to Combat Violence Against Women
61. SCSDd
62. Share for Community Development
63. Shawshaka Association Women
64. Shemal Association for Relief and Development
65. Shilan Association for Relief and Development
66. Silav Organization for Civil Activities
67. SMART Center
68. Society for Threatened Peoples
69. Stability support Centre
70. Synergy Association for Victims
71. Syrians for Truth and Justice - STJ
72. Taa Marbouta

73. Tara Organisation
 74. Team for them
 75. Tel-Abyed Forum for civil society
 76. The Syrian Center for Legal studies and research
 77. The Violations Documentation
 78. Together for Deir Ezzor
 79. TRAHOM
 80. Tree of Life
 81. Urnammu for Justice & Human Rights
 82. Warshin Association of environment
 83. White Human Organization
 84. Zameen for Development and peacebuilding
 85. Zin Center for Development
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