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المركز الكردي للدراسات
والاستشارات القانونية

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Amjad Othman

The 40 Million Kurds are the largest ethnic group in the world without a state of their own. After the destruction of the Ottoman Empire and the building of new states in the region, the Kurds, who simply were ignored, have been living spread out in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria.

While Kurds in Northern Iraq could establish an autonomic Kurdish region, which nevertheless is threatened by all neighbor countries, Kurds living in the other regions are suffering state-nationalistic repressions. The repressions include daily discrimination as well as torture and murder.

Daily discrimination in Syria began after the Baath Party had taken over power in 1963. The Syrian state has proved in its behavior towards the Kurdish minority, namely 12% of the total population, that it does not respect human rights and violates numerous international contracts.

The following reports will uncover the human rights situation in Syria in July 2009.

Content:

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- Amjad Abdul Rahman Othman disappeared since May
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- Political security forces arrest Kurd from Kamechli

- Three Kurds from Kamechli arrested
- Ahmed Hassan disappeared for 3 months
- Suleiman Jamil Jafar discharged
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- Discharged Kurds banned from returning to their hometowns
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• **The community of Kamechli accepts no other language than Arabic**

The community of Kamechli, part of the province of Hasaka in Northeast Syria, has declared Arabic, under the management of a committee, the only official and colloquial language and the Lingua Franca. Now, the Kurds are forced to either use Arabic names when opening a store or change names of already established shops. In case of ignoring the resolution, Kurds will have to face penalty.

Arabs, Kurds, Assyrians, Armenians and Syrians live in the province of Hasaka each having their own language.

• **Disappeared Kurd from the City of Hasaka returns to his family**

Isa Schechi, who had disappeared returned to his family on July, first 2009. After his disappearance for several weeks, it became clear that he had been arrested by security forces without any reason. The incidence happened when he made a business trip from Hasaka to Kamechli. He carried 500.000 Syrian liras when he was arrested.

• **Amjad Abdul Rahman Othman disappeared since May**

The Kurdish Journalist Amjad Abdul Rahman Othman born in Kamechli in Northeast Syria in 1982 (Mother Hind), has disappeared since May 17th, 2009. His family reported that he was in Hasaka to complete formalities in the migration and passport department of an authority. His family has no information about his whereabouts. Amjad Othman is the sole earner and responsible for his family of 6 members. Amjad has published the Hoger magazine.

• **Soldier with Kurdish background shot during military service**

Mohammad Omar Kheder, born August 20th, 1988 in Hasaka, name of the mother is Hamdiah, was shot during military service in the City of Homs in Syria. He died on July 8th, 2009 at 15:00 O'Clock. Mohammed was shot to death with 6 bullets from his own service weapon.

Background:

24 Kurdish Soldiers have been killed during their military service time in Syria since March 12th, 2004. The parents were unclearly informed about the death of their sons. Nevertheless, parents had to confirm the vague information and unclear statements they had received in order to get the dead bodies.

• **Witness arrested for carrying pictures of Kurdish leaders Barzani and Talabani**

The Kurd Rodi Mahmud Shecho from Kamechli in Northeast Syria had planned to testify for his sister in a court. Shecho's sister, at that time accompanied by some relatives, had a car accident.

Shech's took a taxi to the court. After he had arrived, he and the taxi driver were stopped and

checked. The Police officer found pictures of the Kurdish leaders Jalal Talabani and Massoud Barzani in Shecho's pockets. The police officer immediately reported the incident to the security forces in Kamechli and arrested Shecho.

- **Political security forces arrest Kurd from Kamechli**

Political security forces searched the house of Samir Izzedin in Kamechli, on Thursday, June 9th, 2009 at 15:30 o'clock. Izzedin was deported to an unknown location. His fate is unknown. He is considered being disappeared.

- **Three Kurds from Kamechli arrested**

Security forces of the Syrian Republic have arrested Kurds for unknown reasons. Even the family members were not informed about the reasons for the arrestment. They are isolated and nothing is known about their fates.

The disappeared persons are:

1. Muhammed Said Sabri (35 years old)
2. Fahad Ahmad Abas (28 years old)
3. Amir Faruq Salih (28 years old)

- **Ahmed Hassan disappeared for 3 months**

Fauas Ahmed was arrested for carrying flyers in Kurdish language at the central station in Damascus on May 8th, 2009.

Fauas Ahmed is a citizen of Hasaka. He does not hold the Syrian citizenship due to the special population census in 1962.

Because he could not find a job in Hasaka he was forced to move to Damascus in order to have better future opportunities. He wanted back to Hasaka, when he couldn't find a job.

- **Suleiman Jamil Jafar released from prison**

Suleiman Jamil Jafar, a former candidate of the Syrian Parliament was released from prison after serving a sentence on July 15th, 2009. It is known that Suleiman Jamil Jafar is a member of the Kurdish Yezide minority. He was arrested by political security forces during the Kurdish New Year celebrations on April 15th, 2009. After his arrestment, he was carried to a military court in Aleppo. He was accused to be part of forbidden political activities according to § 288; based on that he was sentenced to 3 months imprisonment.

- **Unregistered Kurdish woman prevented from travelling to Damascus**

Midya Subhi Abdullah, mother of Iqlima born 1978 married was checked by security forces on her journey on July, 19th, 2009. The forces noticed that she was not registered. The reason is the denationalization happened in Syria.

M.S. Abdullah was on her way to Damascus in order to receive medical treatment and to search for jobs together with her family. During the last weeks thousands from Hasaka have been moving to metropolitan areas in order to search for a job due to the harsh drought the region is suffering.

Unregistered Kurds are even more disadvantaged than regular "stateless" Kurds, who were denationalized in 1962. The Kurds are waiting for the promised solution of their situation for 47 years.

Unregistered Kurds are banned from travelling, staying at hotels or working for the civil service. Furthermore they are not allowed to hold passports or buy property. Even graduated students don't receive a certificate. Basic human rights are withheld.

In addition to that, revoking the certificate of their unregistered status is being discussed in Syria currently.

- **Rodi Mahmud Schecho released from prison**

Rosi Mahmud Schecho from Kamechli was released from prison on July 20th, 2009. He was arrested by political security forces for having pictures of Kurdish leaders in his pockets on July 4th, 2009.

- **Kurdish human rights activist was arrested and deported to Damascus by military security forces**

The Kurdish lawyer Masud Kaso from the City of Dirbasiya Northeast Syria was checked for the second time by security forces in the City of Kamechli. He was deported from Dirbasiya to the head quarter of the Syrian security forces. Currently, many Kurdish politicians, authors, lawyers and human rights activists are threatened to force them stop their activities.

- **Kurd sentenced to 10 years imprisonment**

The state court in Damaskus has sentenced the Kurdish Izzet Ibrahim Seydo to 10 years imprisonment. It was claimed that Seydo had carried weapons and wanted to establish a Kurdish-Arab society party.

- **Kurdish student arrested for pictures on his mobile phone**

A Kurdish student from the University Latakia disappeared on July 29th, 2009. After researching for him, his family found out that he had been arrested for having pictures of Kurdish personalities and symbols on his mobile phone. It is reported that many Kurds had been arrested by security forces for similar incidents.

- **Discharged Kurds banned from returning to their hometowns**

Salah Mohammad Hussain und his Sister Süreyya Mohammad Hussain were released from prison on July, 27th. They had served a one year sentence. Khalil Yousef Othman, Jamil Mahmud Hiso and Jalal Izzedin are still in Jail. After their discharge they are banned from returning to their hometowns for one year.

This judgment was enforced by the court in Hasaka in May 28th, 2009. No right exists for appealing on this judgment. The judgment is irrevocable and therefore valid.

Süreyya Mohmmad Hüssain is extremely suffering from this judgment due to her bad health condition, which was not medicated during her stay in jail.

- **Schams Al Din Hamo arrested**

Schams al Din Hamo, member of the political committee of the Kurdish unit in Syria, Yekiti was arrested by political security forces in Aleppo on July 29th, 2009 at 10:00 O'Clock. His fate is unknown.
