



Institute for the Documentation of Human Rights Violations against Religious Minorities in the Levant

WHERE SILENCE ENDS AND JUSTICE BEGINS

July 2, 2026

Intensifying Abductions of Alawite Women in Syria: An Urgent Call for International Intervention, Protection and Accountability

Statement Delivered by Jens Kreinath on behalf of IDHRV-ARMIL

Side Event “Human Rights in the Syrian Arab Republic”

Organizer: The Next Century Foundation

62nd Session of the UN Human Rights Council

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Room 11 | Palais des Nations | Geneva

Dear Excellencies, Distinguished Organizers and Participants,

Thank you for convening this important gathering and for granting me the opportunity to offer a brief intervention. My name is Jens Kreinath, and I have the honor of representing the Institute for the Documentation of Human Rights Violations against Religious Minorities in the Levant (IDHRV-ARMIL).

Our institute is dedicated to survivor-centered, empirically grounded, and rigorously cross-examined documentation that advances legal accountability and strengthens international advocacy against human rights violations. We aim to address a critical gap in global justice efforts: the systematic persecution of religious, ethnic, and other vulnerable minorities in the Levant, communities whose suffering remains under-documented and underserved by existing international human rights mechanisms.

We have documented 131 cases of missing women since January 2025, including 112 Alawite girls and women aged 12–45; 30 of these cases involve minors. Fifty cases constitute abductions, and 22 involve confirmed sectarian-motivated rape, with an additional 12 cases containing verified evidence of direct involvement or tacit complicity by general security forces. 64 cases are corroborated through cross-verification and direct testimonies from victims or their families.

In a growing number of incidents, and at an accelerating rate, the families who report the disappearance of female relatives are met with accusations from general security forces, a group that routinely dismisses the cases as the voluntary runaways of women. In all rigorously verified cases, cooperation of general security with the affected families is rare and investigative requests are often denied, dismissed, or obstructed. In cases where the abducted woman has close relatives with prior military service, authorities have reportedly used the abduction as leverage, obstructing release as a form of collective punishment even when direct security involvement could not be confirmed.

In most abduction cases, victims are transported across provincial lines. It is widely understood that the perpetrators traverse multiple security checkpoints during these transfers, yet they are NOT intercepted nor hindered when passing. In some cases where the Public Security claimed that they had released the abducted girls and returned them to their families, no arrests or accountability were recorded. The families were not informed about which party was responsible for the abduction.

Our investigations show that women are abducted during routine daily activities—commuting, shopping, or visiting relatives—often in broad daylight and in public spaces such as roads, transport hubs, universities, and markets. These operations are carried out by multiple armed individuals using unregistered or tinted vehicles, indicating organized activity entirely outside formal legal or oversight structures. After abduction, victims are taken to undisclosed detention

sites controlled by these groups, where they are denied contact with their families and any external communication.

I wish to spotlight one singular case that has already drawn substantial media attention: the disappearance of Batoul Alloush. Her parents have described her ordeal publicly, across multiple accounts, and continue to plead for her return. Her disappearance began as an ordinary return home from her university dormitory on 29 April 2026 and quickly escalated into a confusing, circular search involving hospital staff, university personnel, Criminal Investigations officers, General Security members, and several local figures referred to as “sheikhs.” The parent’s testimony emphasizes that Batoul maintained consistent communication with her mother and had a predictable routine; her sudden silence after a 1: 17 p.m. message was immediately alarming. The family reports that no evidence ever showed Batoul leaving the university, that early claims about her phone location were suspiciously precise, and that officials repeatedly redirected them without providing clarity or access to formal procedures. Over days of searching, they encountered a network of individuals—most notably a man identified as Sheikh Salah al-Din—whom they came to believe was central to Batoul’s disappearance.

The most serious allegations arise from the family’s account of seeing Batoul inside Criminal Investigations. They describe her as impaired, confused, and possibly coached, with officials interrupting questioning whenever her answers aligned with the family’s timeline. They say they were prevented from approaching her, threatened by personnel, and then placed in a staged filming session designed to portray Batoul as safe and acting voluntarily. After filming, Batoul allegedly made a silent plea for help by tapping her mother’s waist while holding her ID card. Conflicting explanations about where she had been held, combined with the family’s broader context of fear and prior violence in their community, reinforced their belief that Batoul was being detained under coercion. The testimony identifies multiple evidentiary leads—messages, footage, recordings, phone numbers, and witness identities—that, if corroborated, point to possible abduction, coercive detention, intimidation, and manipulation of public narrative by official or quasi-official actors.

A tightly controlled disappearance inside the university, followed by suspicious claims about her location, evasive and unaccountable institutional handling, involvement of security-linked actors without clear authority, a single surveilled and coercive encounter indicating impairment, staged filming to manufacture a narrative of voluntariness, a nonverbal plea for help, and a broader climate of fear among Alawite families that renders any claim of voluntary ideological alignment implausible.

Batoul Alloush’s case, as described in interviews and public testimonials, reflects far more than a disappearance. The testimony outlines a pattern of obstruction, intimidation, narrative

manipulation, and the involvement of security-linked actors whose authority appears unofficial yet decisive. Central unresolved questions remain where Batoul was taken after her last normal contact; who accessed or disseminated her phone-location data; why no footage shows her leaving campus; why Criminal Investigations and associated figures controlled the family's access to her; and whether her impaired condition and silent gesture indicate coercive detention.

Therefore, we urge UN commissioners and special rapporteurs to formally acknowledge the evidence presented and to intervene decisively by pressing the current Syrian authorities to uphold the human rights and human dignity of all citizens. These cases must be treated with the highest degree of seriousness and urgency, and the UN must ensure accountability for perpetrators. Our documentation recommends:

1. Ensure rigorous, independently verifiable documentation of atrocities as the foundation for future accountability.
2. Establish specialized, independent investigative units focused on sexual violence and abduction, with guaranteed survivor protection and confidentiality.
3. Strengthen international accountability mechanisms through universal jurisdiction and referrals when domestic prosecution is not possible.
4. Hold state and non-state actors accountable for violations and trafficking, irrespective of religious or political affiliation.
5. Prioritize protection measures for these most vulnerable members and targets of the religious minority communities in Syria.
6. Provide community-based and psychological support for survivors to prevent re-traumatization and victimization through stigma, coercion, or forced marriage.

Thank you!

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The Institute for the Documentation of Human Rights Violations against Religious Minorities in the Levant (IDHRV-ARMIL) is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, officially incorporated on July 24, 2025, with the Secretary of State of Kansas. Place of Jurisdiction: Wichita U.S. Courthouse for the United States District Court for the District of Kansas, 401 N Market St, Room 204, Wichita, KS 67202, U.S.A. | +1-316-315-4200.