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Assad Regime's Policy of Collective Punishment

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Press Statement
 Badr Jamous
 Syrian Coalition Secretary General
 Istanbul, Turkey
 February 27, 2014

The Assad regime is enacting a policy of collective punishment against members of the Syrian Coalition by seizing homes and belongings inside the country and subjecting relatives to arrest and torture.

News media has previously reported the torture and killing of Wissam Sara, the son of senior coalition member Fayeza Sara, and the arrest of Mahmoud Sabra, the brother of a member of the delegation that attended peace talks in Geneva. Other members have also had family members rounded up by paramilitary police and homes and businesses seized.

Such violations attract attention because they target public figures. However, millions of Syrians are suffering far more extensive abuse in silence; including torture, indiscriminate bombing, summary executions and 'starve or kneel' sieges.

By resorting to collective punishment the regime is contravening the Geneva Conventions and committing a war crime. The regime has a long history of resorting to mass intimidation. Rights groups have accused it several times of orchestrating violence against civilians as part of its overall strategy.

No community in Syria has escaped the regime's brutality. The coalition is committed to holding the regime accountable for the gross violations it has committed against Syrians of all ethnic, religious and social groups.

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