

Nuns of Mar Teqla Monastery and the Humanitarian Situation in Qalamoun

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Press Statement
Syrian Coalition
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The Syrian Coalition and General Staff of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) reiterate their full commitment to the guiding principles of the Syrian Revolution, and their respect for international laws. The Coalition and FSA express their total rejection of the desecration of holy places and the harming of religious figures.

Clashes have erupted in the town of Maaloula between FSA units and members of one of the Assad regime's military bases, which has been used to fire rockets at the town and surrounding areas. During the clashes, Assad's forces, aided by sectarian militias from Iraq and Lebanon, indiscriminately shelled the town of Maaloula.

The Syrian Coalition and the General Staff of the FSA assert that the FSA is not involved in the case of the nuns of Mar Teqla monastery. The investigation on their whereabouts will continue and the FSA will make sure to get them to safety upon their reappearance.

The Assad regime has always claimed to provide protection to minorities. The FSA has intercepted a wireless call between Assad's shabiha and members of the Lebanese militia, Hezbollah. The conversation implicates the Assad regime directly in shelling holy places in Maaloula. The call will be available to media outlets soon.

The Assad regime's gangs, and the sectarian militias fighting alongside them, have desecrated nearly 3000 mosques and dozens of churches in Syria. Holy places were either partially or completely destroyed by the indiscriminate shelling of Assad's forces on different areas across Syria. Thousands of clerics have been detained and tortured by Assad's shabiha.

The Syrian Coalition expresses its concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Qalamoun. Due to the heavy indiscriminate bombardment, nearly 8000 civilians, including 1000 children, left the areas in the past two days to eastern Lebanon. It is not acceptable that the Assad regime is burning the region while the international community is standing by watching silently.

We ask for Mercy for our martyrs, health for our wounded, and freedom for our detainees.

Long live Syria and its people, free and with honor.

