

Syria – Human Rights Commissioner concerned about the fate of missing men

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19.11.2013 - Press release 

Regime forces have kept the Damascus suburb of Mouadamiyeh and further areas of the outskirts of the Syrian capital sealed off from food and medical supplies for over a year. At the end of October 1800 civilians were evacuated from Mouadamiyeh. According to Syrian human rights organisations, many of the men who were evacuated were then arrested, since then more than 200 men are classed as “disappeared”.

Markus Löning, Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy, issued the following statement today (19 November):

I am concerned about the unexplained fate of more than 200 men who were evacuated from the town of Mouadamiyeh at the end of October. It is very alarming to hear reports alleging that they have been arrested and could be in air force intelligence interrogation centres.

I call on those responsible in Damascus to disclose the whereabouts of those who have disappeared and to guarantee protection and care for all prisoners.

The forced disappearances of thousands of people since the beginning of the conflict is a serious violation of human rights and international humanitarian law, which spreads fear and horror amongst the Syrian civilian population. I condemn this form of arbitrary state action in the strongest possible terms.

The number of people in Syria who have “disappeared” has increased dramatically over the course of the conflict. According to United Nations estimates, in addition to this some 355,000 people in Syria are cut off from any form of humanitarian aid.

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