

ACHR Calls for Ending the Siege on Sidnaya Inmates



In an exclusive statement to Ikhwanweb, the chief of the Arab Commission for Human Rights (ACHR) Violette Daguerre stated that what happens in Sidnaya and the conflicting accounts come from the absence of transparency and the disregard of the minimum level of the rights groups right to communicate with the retributory authorities to be able to get to the bottom of the issue and casualties in Syria.

Daguerre, who edited and supervised the “Human Rights and Democracy in Syria” book, indicated that the ACHR has stated five years ago that Sidnaya prison is been “a live Molotov bomb”.

Syrian government garnered in this old prison many political and islamist organization detainees from eight different countries at least.

The ACHR has been concerned lest this prison adopts the same policies of Tudmur and Al-Mazzah prisons.

She said that the Syrian regime doesn't even conform to the minimum level of inmates' rights. Prisoners suffer from the absence of the legal rulings and defense; consequently they receive collective punishment even under individual mistakes. Moreover, the regime denies the inmates' periodic visits to conceal the violations and make them surface



lately.

Last April, two prisoners had had their bodies burned due a grave incident; the ACHR called for better living conditions of the detainees. In desperate case, inmates may take hostages or assault the guards; especially when they are maltreated by the guards because there are many prisoners who have nothing more to worry about or lose and others who fear returning to their homelands lest they will be acrimoniously persecuted by their regimes (like Saudi ones.)

Answering a question whether there has been any disobedience as stated by London-based Syrian organization, Daguerre said "it's too early to figure out the real issue; however some deal with the issue politically or with legal insignificance. So we shouldn't speak about any mutinies or riots in order not to be justifying the use of weapons against the inmates. For example, whenever a human rights committee states the prison director is taken a hostage, it explicitly justifies the use of fire shootings and killing the inmates. Word is a responsibility."

Consequently, the ACHR calls upon the Damascus government to end the siege on Sidnaya inmates, allow their lawyers to investigate into their real destiny, allow their families' visits, and call into account all officials responsible for such an incident.

The Syrian government should respect law and transparency and reconsider the principle of punishment during prison period that increases violence and tension.