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# 2.3. Individuals opposing or perceived to be opposing non-state armed actors

### ○ (a) Individuals opposing or perceived to be opposing SDF

Between March 2025 and May 2025, SNHR reported that the SDF carried out mass raids and arrests against civilians under the pretext of combating ISIL cells. As noted by SNHR, civilians were arrested for criticising 'SDF practices' in areas it controls[234] and, in March and April 2025, also for expressing support for the new government.[235] In March 2025, particularly in Hasaka and Raqqa governorates, civilians were reportedly arrested and/or detained for replacing SDF banners and flags with the Syrian uprising flag during public celebrations following the 10 March agreement to integrate the SDF into Syrian state institutions.[236] Similarly, citing a joint statement by activists in northeastern Syria, Syria Direct reported that, in March 2025, the SDF arrested supporters of the interim government and participants in commemorations of the 2011 revolution.[237] As noted by SNHR, the same month, SDF arrested and/or detained civilians and SNA personnel who had returned to their homes in SDF-held areas after prior displacement.[238] Additionally, on 16 March 2025, SDF forces reportedly vandalised a house allegedly belonging to a former opposition fighter during a security operation in Sayid Hammoud village in the countryside of Hasaka.[239]

In May 2025, the SDF arbitrarily detained civilians 'in dozens of villages' in Deir Ez-Zor and Raqqa governorates and in several neighbourhoods of Raqqa city.[240] While SNHR noted that these detentions were linked to expressions of criticism about the SDF, the media outlet New Arab reported that SDF arrests in Raqqa governorate, in which at least 20 people from the neighbourhoods of Al-Mashlab, Al-Sabahia, Al-Khatuniya, Ya'rub, and Al-Mansoura' were detained, were directed at 'suspected Assad regime supporters, figures opposed to the SDF and defectors'.[241] Additionally, in May 2025, the SDF reportedly detained relatives of defectors from its forces to pressure them into surrendering. During some of the SDF-conducted raids, its members reportedly physically assaulted women and confiscated personal items from families of the detained persons, including money, gold jewellery, and mobile phones.[242]

Reporting on statistics of arbitrary arrests and/or detentions of civilians by the SDF, SNHR documented 93 cases of arbitrary arrests and/or detentions, including of seven children in March 2025[243] and 53 arrests and/or detentions, including of nine children and one woman in April 2025.[244] In May 2025, SNHR recorded 64 arrests by the SDF, including of four children and two women.[245] In total, 29 persons were released during these three months, after being detained for a period between a few days and a month.[246] Most of the released persons were originally from the governorates of Deir Ez-Zor, Raqqa[247] and Aleppo governorates.[248]

Sources reported instances of violence against media professionals by the SDF, including but not necessarily limited to the following cases. On 5 January 2025, as reported by local media, an SDF drone targeted a reporter covering the fighting between the SDF and Turkish-backed SNA around Menbij in rural Aleppo, resulting in the journalist being injured. At the end of the same month, SDF forces detained for unspecified reasons a media activist in Shafa in rural Deir Ez-Zor, following a raid on his house. On 22 April 2025, an Al-Arabia news channel reporter was detained in Qamishli in rural Hasaka over a Facebook post about corruption cases and the arrest of SDF security officials on drug trafficking charges in Raqqa.[249]

### ○ (b) Individuals opposing or perceived to be opposing SNA

In March 2025, the UNCOI reported that following the recapture of Manbij (Aleppo governorate) from SDF in December 2024, SNA fighters threatened and robbed civilians and extorted bribes and valuables from them to pass checkpoints.[250] Similarly, STJ noted that SNA actions in the area brought, next to the increase in security instability, significant human rights violations, including summary executions, killings, arbitrary arrests, and torture.[251] The local media outlet Hedvesti reported that 15 people executed were members of SDF, YPG, or the Forces of the Internal Police of DAANES (Asayish).[252]

From January 2025 to April 2025,[253] Tishreen Dam on the Euphrates River near Manbij has become ‘a battleground’ between SDF and Türkiye-backed SNA. In January 2025, protests started at the Tishreen Dam, over disruption to water and electricity access for over 310 000 people in Manbij and Ayn al Arab/Kobani areas, caused by damage to the dam occurred a month earlier.[254] On 18 January 2025, a strike by the Türkiye-SNA coalition targeted SDF forces near the protest site, killing 20 and injuring more than

120 people,255 including four journalists.256 The attack occurred while protesters were performing a traditional Kurdish dance. Another strike hit an ambulance that was transporting one of the injured persons.257 Between December 2024 and February 2025, three journalists were reportedly killed and eight injured during Turkish and SNA attacks on the Tishreen Dam.258 As reported by STJ in May 2025, in the Turkish/SNA attacks on the dam, a total of 24 civilians were killed and more than 200 injured.259

Furthermore, on 16 March 2025, 10 members of a Kurdish family, including 7 children, were killed in an allegedly Türkiye or SNA-drone attack in an SDF-controlled village south of Kobane.260

In a report covering March 2025, SNHR noted that SNA and armed factions carried out arbitrary arrests and/or detentions of people261 arriving from areas under the SDF control, as well as arbitrary arrests/detentions of an 'ethnic character' in SNA-controlled parts of Aleppo governorate. The latter included civilians arbitrarily arrested or detained over alleged cooperation with the SDF, with such incidents primarily concentrated in 'a number of villages' of Afrin city.262 SNHR recorded 13 cases of arbitrary arrest/detention by SNA in March 2025, with four persons released within the same month.263 In total, six arbitrarily arrested or detained persons were released in March 2025,264 after being detained for a period ranging from a few days to one month. Most of the people released were originally from Aleppo governorate.265

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  SNHR defines these arrests/detentions as ‘carried out without any judicial authorization or any involvement of the police, which is the only body officially vested with judicial authorization to carry out arrests and detentions. See, SNHR, Monthly Report on Arrests/Detentions in Syria, 10 April 2025, url, p. 9

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