

رابطة معتقلي ومفقودي سجن صيدنايا
Association of Detainees & The Missing in Sednaya Prison



The Administrative Structure and Organizational Ties of Sednaya Prison



October 2022

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The Administrative Structure and Organizational Ties of Sednaya Prison

September 2022

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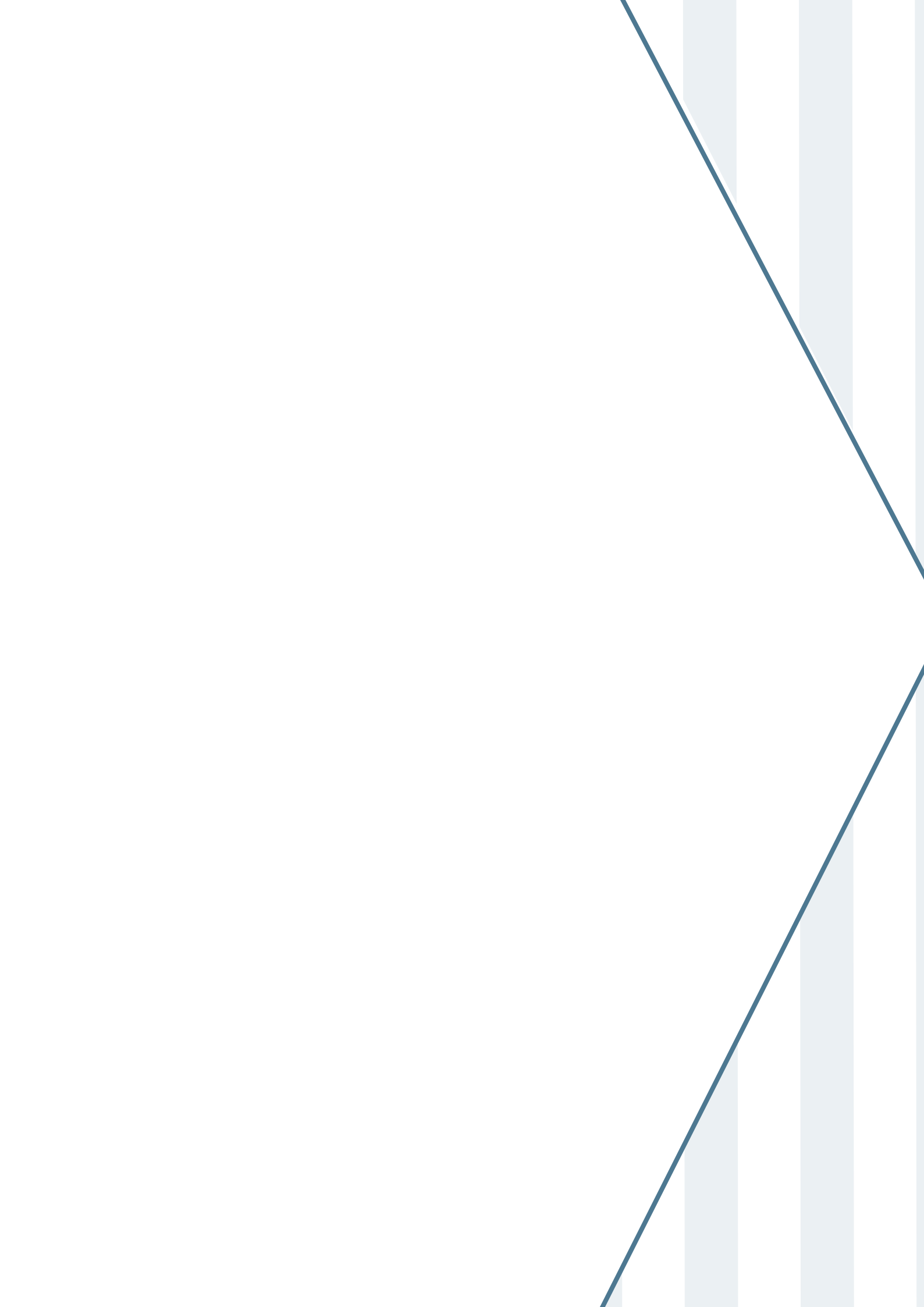


Acknowledgements and Dedication

The Association of Detainees and the Missing in Sednaya Prison (ADMSP) wishes to extend its gratitude to survivors for their bravery and perseverance.

ADMSP would also like to thank the officers and non-commissioned officers who defected from the army and security services and participated in this investigation. Their invaluable contributions enriched the work of the research team by helping it better understand how the mechanisms of the security and military apparatus operate in relation to the structure of the Syrian state. Thanks are also due to those formerly employed at Sednaya who shared invaluable data that proved critical in the development of this investigation. ADMSP is grateful to the staff of the Syria Justice and Accountability Centre for their review of the documents that feature in this study.

Work on this investigation has been proceeding for more than a year and a half. During this time, over 200 hours of interviews and witness testimony from former army and security service personnel and survivors were listened to and analyzed. We also worked to obtain and secure approximately 50 satellite photos and 20 studies and government documents. We dedicate this work to all those forgotten in the hell of Assad's prisons, to the memory of the martyrs who died there, and in honor of the survivors who came out alive



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Association of Detainees & The Missing in Sednaya Prison



The Association of Detainees and the Missing in Sednaya Prison (ADMSP) seeks to reveal the truth about, and bring justice to, those detained on the basis of political opinions or activities. It strives to uncover the fates of missing and forcibly disappeared persons in Syria in general, and those in the infamous Sednaya Prison in particular. The Association addresses the people detained or missing in Sednaya Prison by documenting their numbers, the locations and dates of their disappearance, as well as the entities responsible for their arrest. It also strives to contact the families of the missing, and to provide them with moral support and convey their voices and express their suffering in all possible and available means.

The Association also works to delineate the issue of detainees and missing persons to local and international public opinion, and to cooperate with local and international human rights organizations in conducting investigations on the issues of detainees and missing persons in Sednaya Prison.

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Executive Summary

It is no exaggeration to say that Sednaya Prison is one of the most secretive and well-guarded places on Earth. This facility has witnessed some of the most heinous crimes against humanity, as tens of thousands of detainees have been killed after having been subjected to all types of torture and stripped of their possessions. Meanwhile, detainees' families have been victims of material and emotional extortion. The little information about past and ongoing events at Sednaya that has escaped its walls incriminates the Syrian regime. Perhaps for this reason, few detainees make it out of Sednaya alive. Even those who leave know little about what has happened outside the walls of their cell or the interrogation room. Furthermore, the utmost care is taken to ensure that all who work inside Sednaya come from among the ranks of regime loyalists. All this makes Sednaya Prison a mystery that is difficult to understand: what goes on inside? Why and how do these human rights violations happen? Who is responsible?

The present report focuses on the administrative structure and organizational relations of Sednaya. Understanding these issues is necessary to answer the questions posed above, without which it is impossible to establish responsibility for violations that continue to occur inside the prison. The Association of Detainees and the Missing in Sednaya (ADMSP) has gained access to rich sources of information on the subject. This report is based on 31 interviews with persons who worked inside Sednaya, defected officers who previously guarded the prison and who held important positions there during their tenures, and former detainees who were held at Sednaya across different periods of time. Through a rigorous process of data analysis, the methodology for which is described herein, ADMSP was able to untangle many of the prison's mysteries. In this report, we review the results of this year-long research effort that was launched in March 2021 and concluded in March 2022.

The first section of this report begins by examining the prison's external security. It identifies the officials that are responsible for this area and their precise locations and roles. The section then reviews internal security in a similar manner. Internal security encompasses the inner and outer walls of the prison, the building gates, and the wing units which have daily contact with the detainees. It specifically discusses the relationships among the wing units themselves and with detainees and prison administration. Hence, it is possible to distinguish between three levels of security: a first level devoted to protecting the prison from external threats and possible prison breaks; a second level that is tasked with supporting the first; and a third that involves securing the interior of the prison, monitoring the movement of detainees, and keeping detainees disciplined within the wings and cells. The nature of security varies for each layer according to the military authority responsible for it (e.g., the Army, Military Police, or Military Intelligence Directorate).

The second section reviews the operations of offices inside the prison. It begins with offices that are tasked with meeting basic needs with regard to food, electricity, and water, and then discusses those devoted to medical care and procurement. This section closely examines the position of these offices within the prison administration and the ranks and numbers of their personnel. It also analyzes how the nature of their work has changed during periods when detainees were subjected to harsher punishments. These offices are directly linked to the Office of the Prison Director with which they communicate specifically about administrative matters. Communication about security concerns occurs directly with the Security Officer who represents the central authority in the prison, along with the Prison Director.

The third section of the report looks at the ties between Sednaya and other state institutions and security services. It discusses whether these links flow from official administrative hierarchies or from personal relationships based on nepotism, loyalty, and proximity to the centers of power in the Syrian regime. The prison falls under the authority of two separate judicial bodies. The first is the military judiciary, which deals with felonies or misdemeanors committed by military personnel. The second is the Military Field Court. Despite the fact that the titles of these bodies imply that they only concern the Army, they actually have a wider jurisdiction, extending to civilians. Although many detainees who have been tried before the Counter-Terrorism Court are serving their sentences in Sednaya, this court does not have a direct administrative or hierarchical relationship with the prison. The Tishreen Military Hospital is also featured in this section as a site of execution and burial for detainees sentenced to death.

Since the establishment of Sednaya in 1987, several major events have occurred both in Syria and inside the prison itself, most notably the 2008 prisoner riot. Throughout the years, Sednaya has been managed by ten different directors. The final section of the report therefore focuses on these significant events and the changes that followed. It also provides detailed information about the prison directors.



Introduction

Military Prison 1, or Sednaya Prison, is a name that strikes fear into the hearts of Syrians. They have come to know the prison through the disappearance of loved ones and the great pain and trauma that the missing's absence has left in the collective memory of Syrian society. The prison is located on a small hill on the edge of the Sednaya plateau, in a mountain town 30 kilometers north of Damascus and 1200 meters above sea level. The prison is comprised of two structures: an older primary building (known as the Red Building), and a second newer building (known as the White Building); the latter is administered by the Military Police under the supervision of the Military Intelligence Directorate.

Efforts to establish Sednaya date back to 1978, when the Syrian government confiscated land from some of the local landowners. It assigned this land to the Association for the Implementation of Military Works—affiliated with the Ministry of Defense—for the purposes of building a prison. The Association for the Implementation of Military Works began construction in 1981, and work continued until 1986, with the first detainee arriving at the prison in 1987. The total area of the prison is estimated to be around 1.4 square kilometers^[1], making it eight times larger than the combined area of every international-standard football stadium in Syria.^[2]

Sednaya is distinct from civilian prisons in terms of its administrative status and the legal practices and regulations that are applied within. Central prisons, i.e., the main prisons for each governorate, are affiliated with the Ministry of the Interior and overseen by the Ministry of Justice. Some civilian bodies, such as the Syrian Red Crescent and the associations for the care of prisoners and their families, are allowed to enter such prisons and monitor the affairs of those detained therein. Sednaya, by contrast, is affiliated with the Ministry of Defense, and the Ministry of Justice having no jurisdiction over it. No one is allowed to enter or visit detainees unless they have received permission from the Military Police after obtaining security clearance from the Military Intelligence Directorate. Since Sednaya as a holding and detention facility falls under the legal purview of the First and Second Field Courts, which are attached to the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Justice exercises no authority at the site.^[3] The role of Sednaya expanded significantly after 2011, when it effectively became a death camp.^[4]

[1] Calculation of the surface area was done using Google Maps.

[2] The size of an international football stadium ranges between 6,800 and 7,140 square meters, with 23 such stadiums in Syria. For a list of Syrian football stadia see: <https://bit.ly/3QzQkJX>

[3] Previously the State Security Court was also housed at Sednaya, before it was replaced by the Counter-Terrorism Court. On top of these courts, there are also military tribunals. Detainees whose cases are connected to the Field Court are held in the Red Building, while those connected to the military tribunals are held in the White Building. Detainees wanted by the Anti-Terrorism Court may be held in either of the two buildings. The Second Field Court was established in early 2013 and subsequently moved from the Department of Military Police in Qabun to the Security Quadrant in Kafr Sousa.

[4] For more details on the interior of the prison and the number of chambers, wings, and floors, see: "Inside Sednaya, Syria's Torture Prison (Amnesty International, 2016); see also "Sednaya Prison During the Syrian Revolution: Testimonies," (ADMSP, 2020 <https://bit.ly/3BxOgj2>

The Syrian government classifies detainees at Sednaya as belonging to two groups:

Security detainees, who are civilians and military personnel detained on the pretext of opinions that they expressed; their political activity; membership in so-called “terrorist” organizations; participation in “terrorist” activities; or on spurious, ready-made allegations that the government has fabricated to justify an individual’s detention.

Legal detainees, who are military personnel detained on the grounds that they committed a crime or misdemeanor such as murder, theft, corruption, embezzlement, draft evasion, and so on.

The classification of Sednaya detainees entails different kinds of treatment for each group. Security detainees face systematic torture, the deprivation of food and medical care, and forced disappearance. By contrast, judicial detainees are not subjected to torture systematically and regularly but rather as a form of punishment if they have violated some rule; or to bolster the fear and influence exercised by the prison guards. Legal detainees usually enjoy periodic visits from their families and an acceptable level of food and medical care.^[5]

With the exception of Amnesty International’s report “Human Slaughterhouse: Collective Hanging and Systematic Genocide at Syria’s Sednaya Prison,” and ASDMP’s own publications^[6], all of the information that has managed to escape from the prison comes from media reports that rely on the testimony of former detainees and lack a clear methodology for data collection and analysis of data. Moreover, Sednaya remains extremely opaque from another angle, as we know almost nothing about its administrative and organizational structure, or about its ties to the security apparatus, courts, Ministry of Defense, and other state institutions. It is this aspect for which there is a pressing need to research—not just to understand what has happened and continues to occur inside the walls of the prison—but to provide clearer depictions of the operations and security structures of the dictatorial Syrian government. This report may also assist future efforts—whether domestic or international—to hold accountable the perpetrators of violations that have occurred within the prison and provide restitution to victims. It may also help to preserve the memories of victims and shed light on one of the bloodiest periods of Syrian history, of which this prison is a prominent symbol. Ultimately, however, accountability for and healing from crimes committed in Sednaya cannot begin until the relationship between the security structure and state institutions is understood. It is the goal of this report to take a significant step toward this understanding.

[5] After 2011, the White Building was allocated completely for judicial detainees, while the Red Building was reserved for security detainees with the intention of isolating them completely and making it impossible for them communicate with anyone outside the prison.

[6] To access previous reports from ADMSP, visit the following link: <https://www.admsp.org/reports>.

Methodology

From the outset, ADMSP determined that collecting quantitative data would not be feasible. Even the information that can be obtained from former detainees is of little use for understanding this subject. Prisoners often do not have such quantitative data, and there were few military defectors from within the prison administration who we were able to access and collect data from. This is because Sednaya staff are very carefully chosen from among the ranks of regime loyalists and officers in the security apparatus. Nor was it possible to search the official state records for information about this prison because there has not been a political transition in Syria and the security apparatus that controls Sednaya remains in place. Even so, such records would not contain much useful information about the management of this prison given the nature of internal operations at Sednaya; these operations depend to a large extent on verbal commands and written codes or camouflage so as to shroud Sednaya and obscure the violations and abuses that occur here.

Consequently, we de-prioritized quantitative data and proceeded with qualitative research, namely individual interviews from various sources with ties to Sednaya, such as prison staff who defected and released detainees. These types of interviews yielded rich information, especially when the testimony was from defected personnel. After collecting information from different interviews, this data was cross-referenced to develop a clearer picture about the topic of the report. Cross-referencing required us to carefully scrutinize the information obtained from these sources and compare it to information obtained from various other sources. This process was undergone whether the sources were documentary (pertaining to specific events and dates) or oral (obtained from interviews with former detainees or personnel in the security apparatus to which the prison administration is tied). Additionally, an interview was repeated with an initial source, posing the same questions but in a different way so that new answers could be compared with what was said in the previous interview. The new information was once again analyzed and compared with information gleaned from other interviews and with the opinions of experts on the security apparatus in Syria.

The first problem was the possibility that prison staff members or defectors would refuse to cooperate for fear of being charged with legal responsibility, especially if they held important positions. Defectors represent potentially rich sources of information by virtue of their previous positions, yet for the same reason, it is difficult to obtain their consent to be interviewed for research such as this. The second problem was concerning that participating individuals may present a distorted image of the facts so as to shield themselves (or people close to them who are still employed at Sednaya) from any responsibility. ^[7]

[7] For more information on the challenges facing this type of research, see <https://bit.ly/3UOqncR>

Additionally, ADMSP was able to access a former member of Sednaya staff who held an important position at the prison and, as such, was familiar with most of the details of the prison's administrative structure and assignment of responsibilities. After long negotiations and a pledge from ADMSP not to disclose his personal data, position, or place of residence to anyone, the individual agreed to participate in a series of interviews on the topic of the study. In order to protect this person's identity, we referred to him with the alias "B-25" in all stages of the research process. We conducted 23 sessions of in-depth and qualitative in-person interviews between March 2021 and January 2022, with the total meeting time estimated at more than 70 hours (3-4 hours per session). We also contacted B-25 remotely through an encrypted program more than 28 times to inquire about certain details.

In addition to B-25, ADMSP was able to gain access to another person who held an administrative position at Sednaya between 2010-2012 and subsequently interviewed two prison guards using encrypted software in April and May 2021. We also interviewed two officers who defected from the Third Division of the Syrian Arab Army (SAA), which is responsible for protecting the prison and one officer who defected from the 21st Brigade, which houses the battalions that are tasked with defending Sednaya from any external attack or internal revolts and escape attempts. In total, this study drew on seven primary sources of information, including seven insider witnesses (four witnesses from inside Sednaya who were affiliated with the Military Police and three outside Sednaya who were affiliated with the SAA Third Division).

The research and data collection team for this report consisted of two people who are fully trained in interviewing techniques and have deep experience in issues related to the military and Sednaya, having defected from the army and been former detainees at the prison. The team adhered to a rigorous methodology for conducting interviews and verifying the accuracy of the information provided by witnesses. The formulation of the questions and the manner in which they were posed were informed by the experience of the research team and their consultation with the principal investigator.

Data analysis proceeded simultaneously with data collection, running from April 2021 to March 2022. The field research team met with the principal investigator after each interview, entering data into the MAXQDA program for qualitative research.^[8] This program allowed the team to encode the data and then analyze it using the Grounded Theory process.^[9] The data that was collected could thus be prioritized and verified inductively, with the primary resulting categories being filled through an application of the continuous comparison approach.

[8] During the analysis, process the principal investigator met with the research team after every interview with B-25. Twelve interviews were conducted in this manner, as the investigator inquired after certain details related to questions that emerged from the analysis of each interview and gave the team directions for the next interview.

[9] The Grounded Theory methodology is based on three different types of coding: the first is open coding, where data is encoded directly; the second is axial coding, which is based on sorting the codes generated by the open coding, combining repeated patterns, and rearranging it and organizing its internal elements; and a third type, called selective coding, which explores the relationship between the resulting categories and generates a "theory of research" accordingly. It is worth noting here that our goal in this research is limited to understanding the structure of Sednaya and the surrounding network of relationships in which it is embedded. We do not seek to develop a theory about detention centers.

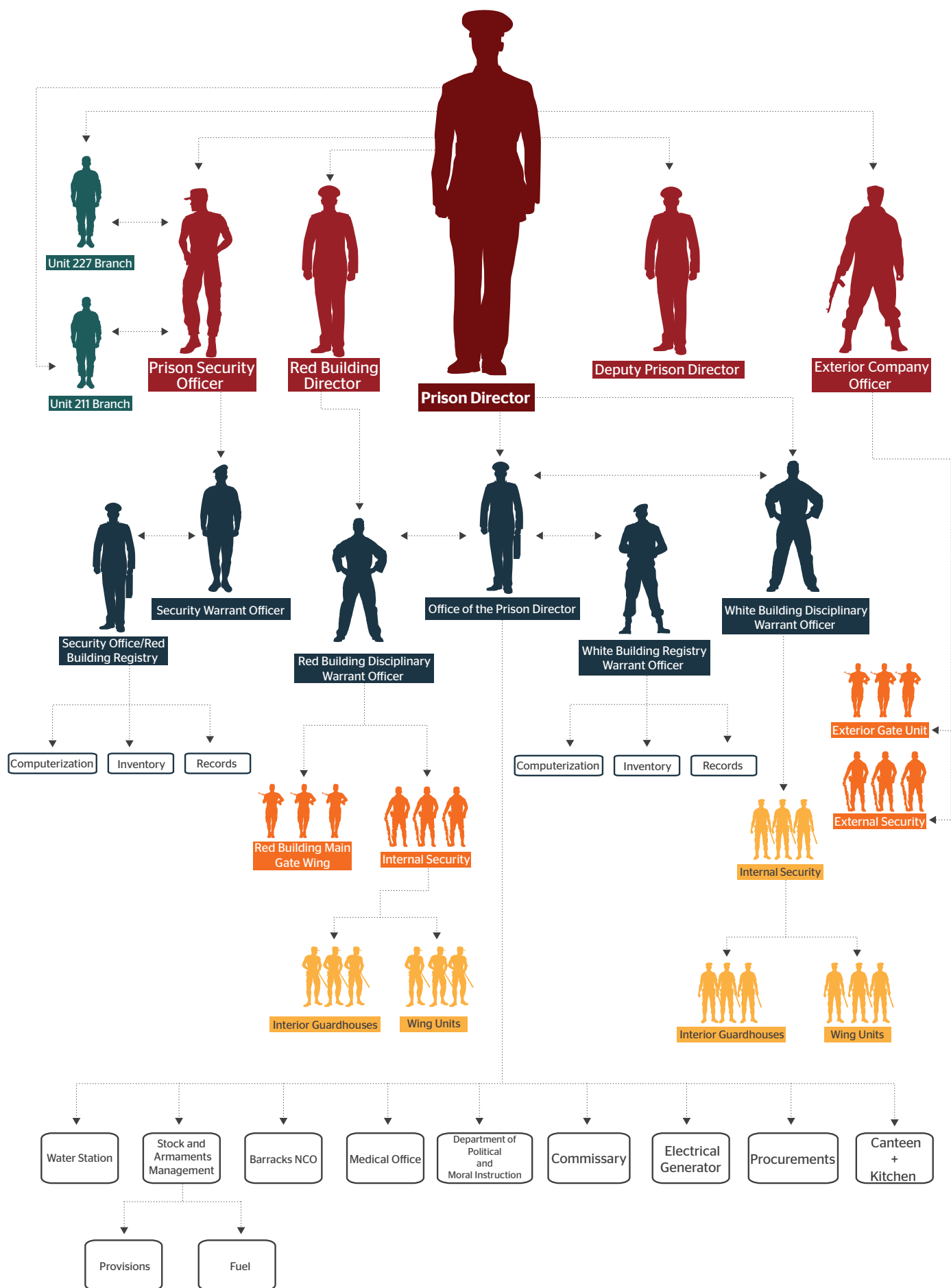
The categories that were generated represent the various offices of the Sednaya Prison administrative and security apparatus.^[10]

Next, a preliminary draft was written and subsequently discussed with experts on security issues in Syria, including researchers and human rights activists (we have withheld their names at their request). The review process led to new questions that could not be answered with the data that had been provided by our primary sources, while the research team also had doubts about some of the information that they had obtained. Additional data collection was therefore necessary. As a result of the application of this methodology, in addition to the seven main participants, ADMSP conducted interviews with 31 new sources, a group that included detainees and defectors from the army and security services. Specifically, we obtained access to ten former detainees at Sednaya, 14 officers, and 7 non-commissioned officers (NCOs) who were chosen to answer specific questions relevant to their experience working the army and security apparatus.^[11]

Figure 1 shows the main categories that were generated from the analysis—i.e., the various offices of the Sednaya Prison administrative and security apparatus—as well as the relationships between them. As the structure of this report mirrors the organization of these categories, this chart is particularly important; it may be necessary to return to it to understand some of the details mentioned.

[10] After the encoding was complete and the categories were generated, possible questions for each category are suggested and so begins to research process to answer them through what is known as a theoretical sample. For example, after the encoding process, there emerged the category of the Security Office. The questions pertinent to this category were numerous, and included: “what is the role of the office? What are its main characteristics? How is it related to the other categories/offices? To answer the questions arising from analysis, the appropriate interviewee is determined, with the researcher deciding, for instance, whether to return to the main witness (B-25), a former detainee, a security studies expert, or some other source. In other words, in the theoretical sample the interviewees are not determined ahead of time, but rather selected based on what is needed to analyze the data and fill the resulting categories—and to answer all related questions. The fixed and continuous comparison approach entails develop categories and addressing the questions that arise through a process of comparing the data that has been collected (whether from a single source or from multiple sources); similar comparisons are made for secondary data that was not originally collected by the research team.

[11] Appendix 3 shows the number of interviews that were conducted for this study, as well as the date they occurred and the rank of the witness.





200

Third Division
Personnel



250

Military Police
Personnel

08

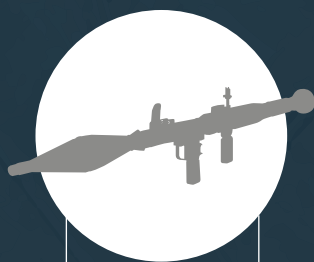


BMB



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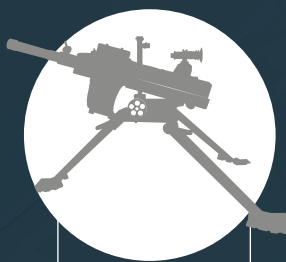
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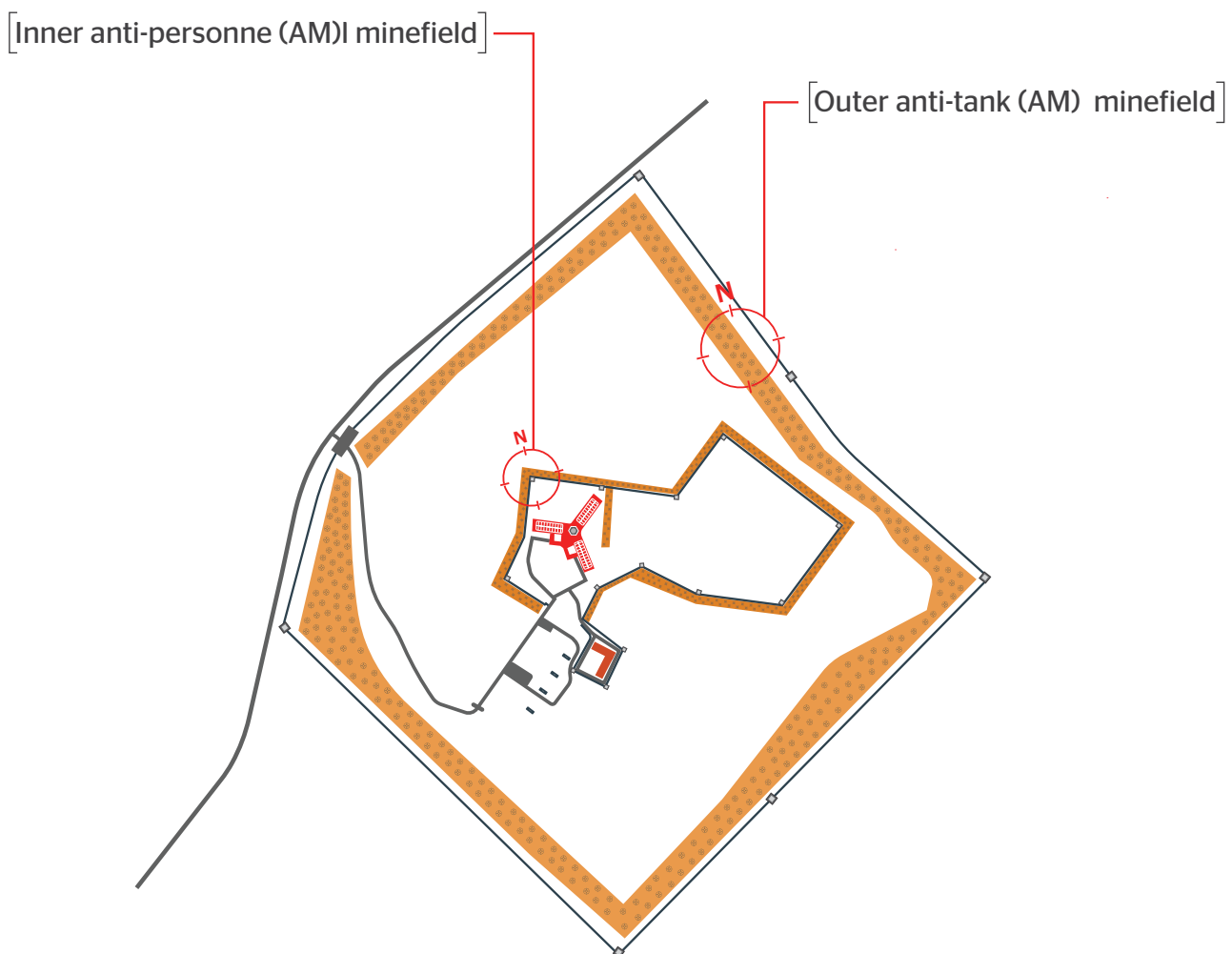
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Section I: Prison Security

There are three levels of security at Sednaya: the first level entails defending the prison from outside threats, as well as internal prisoner revolts and escape attempts; the second level is the prison's main line of defense against any external attacks and is also tasked with assisting the first level; and the third level protects the prison's interior buildings, monitors prisoner movements, and ensures that detainees are present and disciplined in the wings and cells. The nature of security varies at each level according to the particular military authority responsible. The prison is also surrounded by two minefields, one inner field consisting of anti-personnel mines (APM) and another outer field consisting of anti-tank mines (AT).

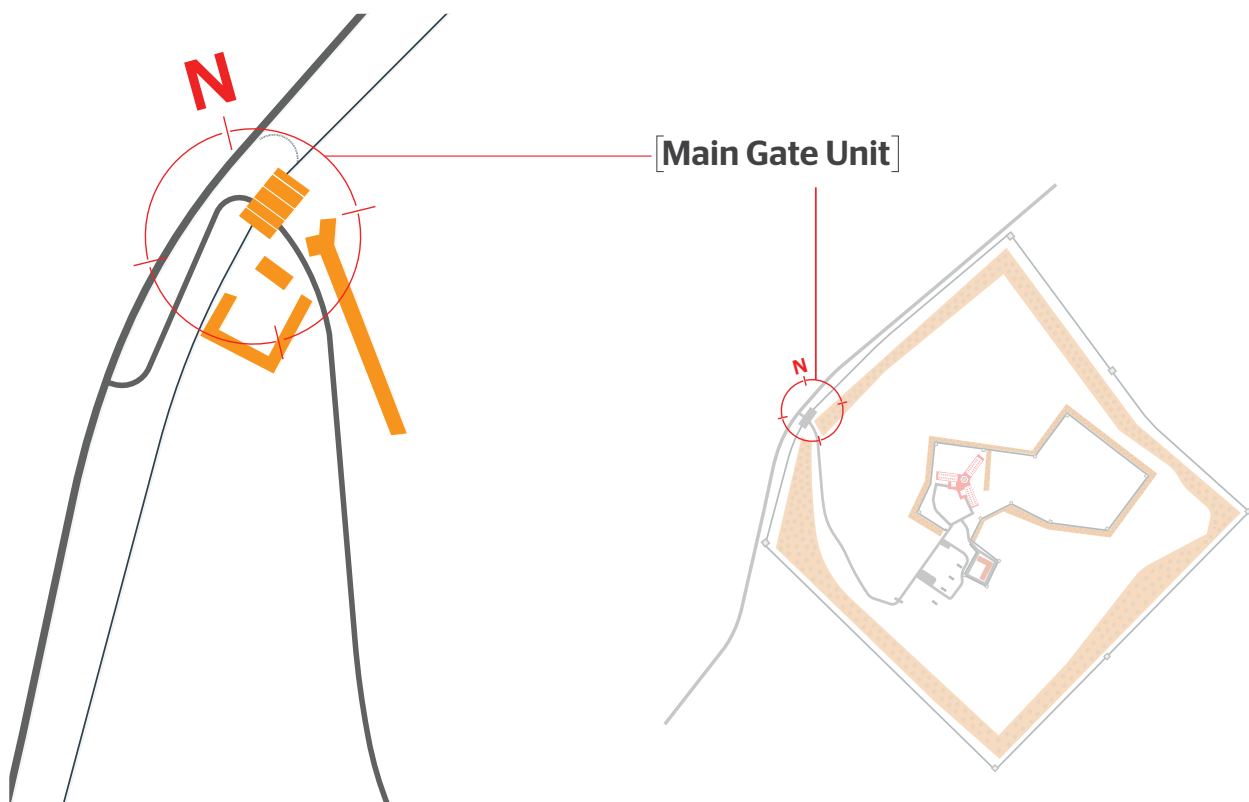


Security Level 1: The Exterior Company

The exterior company is responsible for protecting the outer walls of the prison, monitoring movement in the surrounding area^[12], and halting any attempt to storm or infiltrate the prison from the outside or to escape from the inside. In addition to the exterior company (comprised of Military Police prison staff), there is protection from the SAA Third Division and the 21st Brigade (Security Level 2).

The exterior company is posted in two primary locations: the main gate and outer walls, and the middle gate:

1. Main gate unit: comprised of 10-20 conscripted soldiers and volunteer NCOs who, having been appointed by the officer who heads the exterior company stationed nearby, are primarily responsible for guarding the prison from the outside. There are two members of the unit posted in each of the prison's eight exterior watch towers, from which point they monitor any suspicious movement outside the prison and surveil and record all who enter and exit the prison (visitor, patrols, members, supplies, etc.). In addition, the main gate unit searches anyone seeking to enter or exit the prison, and as such it can be considered the first line of defense at Sednaya.



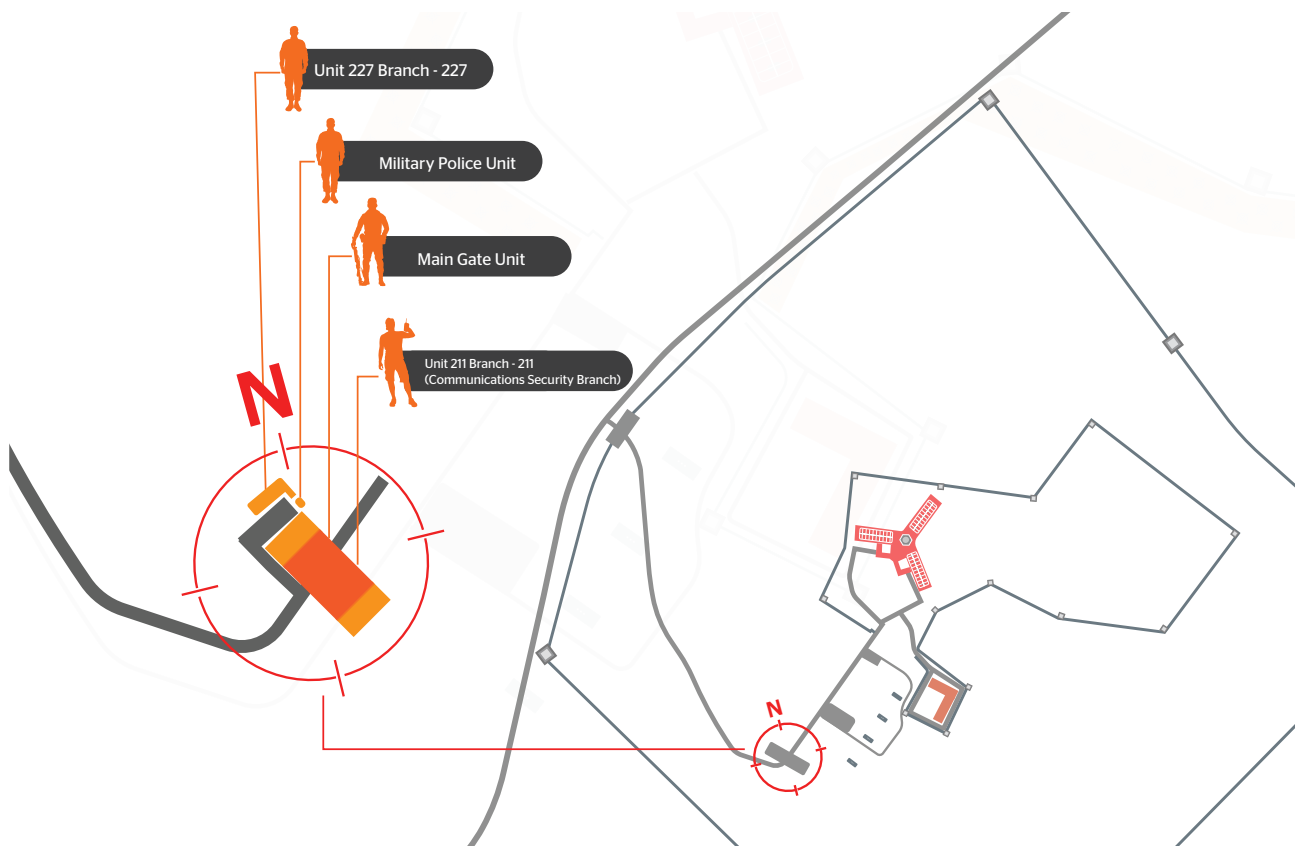
[12] The prison is located in a military zone surrounded by warning signs that forbid vehicles from parking or stopping, civilians from approaching the walls, or taking photographs of the prison.

2. Middle gate: in addition to an NCO and 2-3 members of the exterior company, personnel from additional units are present at the middle gate:

A.) First, there is a unit from the Military Intelligence Directorate, specifically a section of Branch 227 (known as the District Branch), that includes 4-5 branch members and a third or first-class warrant officer. Given that this unit maintains a constant presence at the middle gate, it likely includes about 12-15 personnel working in shifts. The unit is responsible for monitoring the prison for security purposes, in addition to dealing with families of security detainees during visits and arresting any visitor who violates instructions or undermines prison security.

B.) Second, there is a unit from the Military Police, made up of 4-6 personnel and headed by a volunteer warrant officer or sergeant major. The task of this unit is to interface with patrols coming from outside the prison and oversee the inspection of families of security detainees. On days when there are visits, the unit is staffed with 20 Military Intelligence personnel and 10 female intelligence personnel to assist in the inspection of detainees' family members.

C.) Third, there is a unit affiliated with Branch 211 of the General Intelligence Directorate (the Communications Security Branch). A third or first-class warrant officer from the branch is responsible for this unit accompanied by about 4-5 branch personnel. It is tasked with monitoring all incoming and outgoing landline and wireless communications to the prison and surrounding area, in addition to all nearby radio communications. The unit is stationed at Sednaya because of the prison's particular geographical location. Located on a high hill in the mountainous Sednaya plateau 1200 meters above sea level, the prison faces openly to both the north and east. This allows the unit to monitor large swathes of land extending possibly as far as Homs governorate.

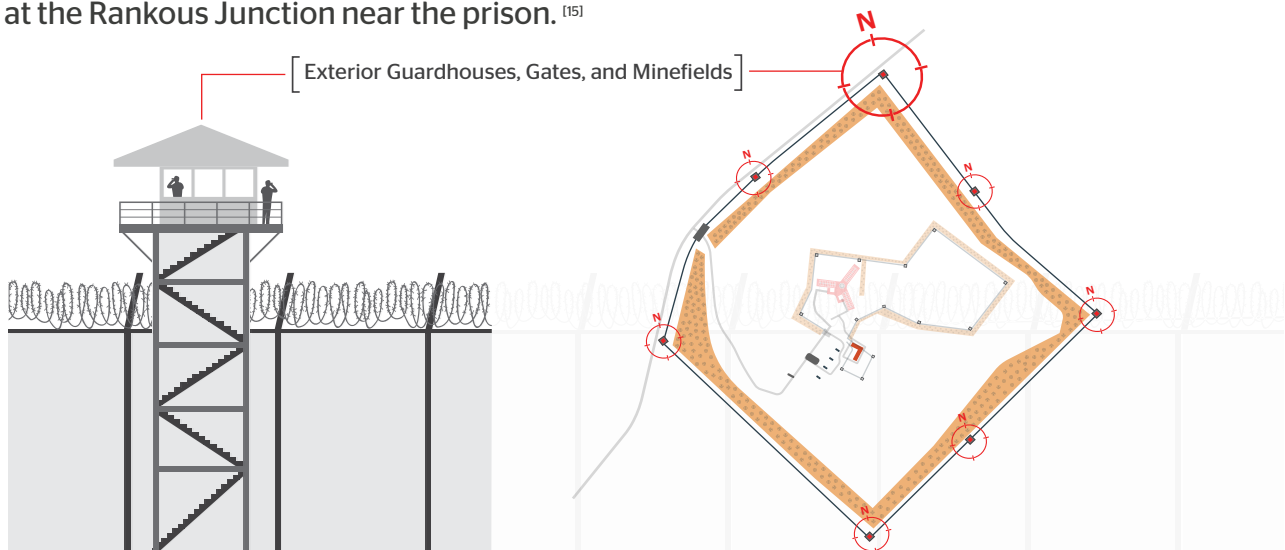


Security Level 2: The 21st Brigade

Responsibility for securing the perimeter of the prison falls to the army, and specifically the Third Division's 21st Brigade. A unit from this brigade is stationed across the entirety of the prison perimeter between the inner and outer walls and is made up of about 40-50 personnel. Assuming that this unit maintains a constant presence by working in shifts, there are approximately 200 personnel from this brigade at Sednaya overall. This layer of security is considered the prison's main line of defense against any hostile military operations, attempted prison breaks using heavy ammunition, or bombing operations. Within the Third Division, the 21st Brigade is known as the "Elite Brigade" because of its high level of combat-readiness, superior equipment, and steadfast loyalty to the Syrian regime. The brigade includes three infantry battalions and one tank battalion, with most battalion and company captains having been selected from members of the Alawite sect.

One company from an infantry battalion in the 21st Brigade is assigned to guard Sednaya, with the assigned company rotating every 6 months. Battalions that have guarded Sednaya in the past include the 246th Battalion, the 161st Battalion, and the 112th Battalion. After the onset of the Syrian revolution, the 65th Brigade dispatched a tank battalion to reinforce the mechanized infantry company that had originally been stationed to protect the prison.^[13] Food provisions for the battalion come from the prison, while the Third Division—which houses the 21st Brigade belongs—supplies weapons and ammunition.

After the Revolution, the Gvozdika Battalion^[14] was assigned to support the prison garrison from the outside amidst fear that armed opposition groups might attack the prison. This battalion is housed in the 81st Brigade—which also belongs to the Third Division—and stationed at the Rankous Junction near the prison.^[15]



[13] In military land forces, mechanized infantry units typically consist of three to five platoons of 60-80 soldiers each led by an officer (usually at the rank of captain). Personnel are transported in 13-ton BMPs, armored transport or combat vehicles that can hold up to 13 individuals and are used to move personnel, tow cannons, and transport equipment and supplies. These vehicles allow for the rapid transportation of infantry units.

[14] The Gvozdika is a Russian self-propelled artillery platform, also known as 2S1, which was first introduced into the SAA in 1981. It is used to strike military fortifications, armored vehicles, artillery bases, and command and control centers. Its ability to circumvent mine obstacles means that it is often used in amphibious landings. It is able to fire conventional artillery shells within a range of 25 km and rocket-propelled grenades within a maximum range of 42 km, firing at a rate of 10 shells per minute. See: Global Security <https://bit.ly/3L3SxvU> See also <https://bit.ly/3RXgXt9>

[15] Rankous is located 8km north of Sednaya.

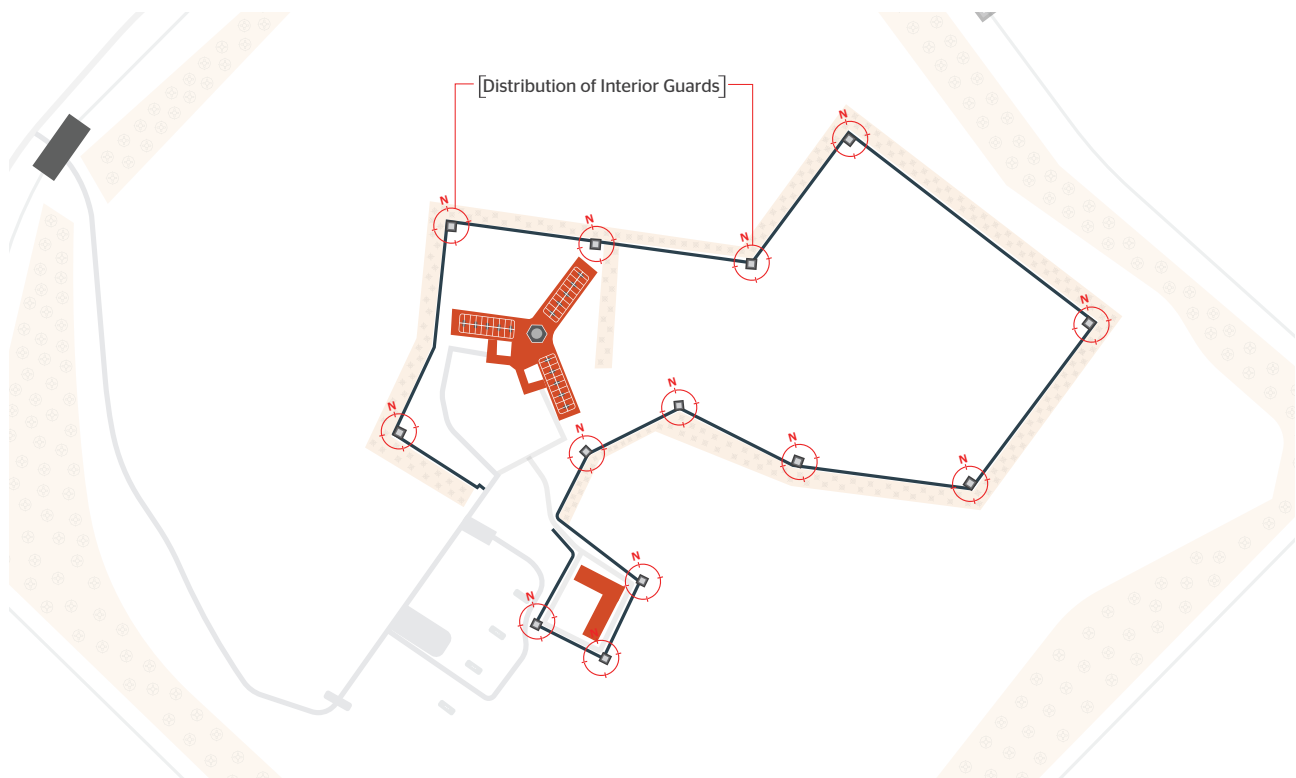
Security Level 3: The Interior Company

The Disciplinary Warrant Officer is directly responsible for this level, who operates under the supervision of the officer in charge of the Red Building and the Prison Director. This level includes two departments: the interior guardhouses and the wing units.

Interior Guardhouses

The guardhouses are tasked with securing the prison's interior walls and gates, and monitoring any suspicious movement or attempts to open holes in the prison walls and windows. As such, their basic mission is to ensure that prisoners remain inside the prison and do not escape. There are approximately 25 personnel staffing the guardhouses, most of whom are conscripts, although some are volunteer NCOs. The guardhouses themselves are posted along the interior walls and roofs of each of the two buildings at Sednaya. The interior gate NCO, who belongs to the Interior Company, oversees the distribution of guards among the guardhouses and surveillance points in both buildings.

The work of the Interior Company personnel includes maintaining control over the watch towers, the guardhouses, and roof observation points, and working inside the prison building with the wing units. The interior guardhouse units are therefore also involved in the punish-



ment and torture of detainees, especially those who have just arrived to Sednaya. The guard-house personnel participate in what is known as the “welcome party,” a term which refers to a round of torture, lasting up to a whole day, in which they and wing unit personnel torture detainees. The purpose of this practice is to terrify detainees and convey the power and authority of the prison as soon as they arrive.

Wing Units

Wing units are primarily responsible for guarding the wings and cells of the prison. Each unit is made up of three personnel and a commanding officer (usually a Warrant Officer or Sergeant) under the supervision of a Disciplinary Warrant Officer. Given that wing units are in daily contact with detainees, they are responsible for most of the assaults on detainees. The units are further responsible for all matters related to the provision of detainee service, including distributing food and medicine, readying detainees for visits to the hospital, and notifying them of trial dates. Additionally, wing units are responsible for ensuring detainees abide by prison rules and regulations, carrying out orders from Sednaya administration, and maintaining discipline among detainees. They conduct regular inspections of the dormitories and detainees to identify and curb infractions of prison rules. Such infractions mostly relate to detainees in possession of nylon bags or the tinfoil from milk cartons (for the purpose of using them as pens). Each floor of the prison has a room assigned to the wing unit, with unit personnel strictly forbidden from bringing their mobile phones with them on their shifts. The work of the wing units is organized into three shifts, but when going on rounds—usually with the intent of torturing detainees—all unit personnel go through the wings together floor by floor. On these “organized attacks,” the wing units carry out sweeping acts of torture and beating and always under the supervision of at least a warrant officer or sergeant. ^[16]

[16] The Red Building is made up of 18 wings, each with a unit assigned to it. The unit consisted of three personnel. With three shifts per day, the total is approximately 160 personnel.

Table 1: Prison Security: Departments, Appointment Procedure, Personnel Size, Supervising Authority, and Duties

Department	Personnel Service Status	Number of Personnel	Appointed by	Supervising Authority	Duties	Comments
Red Building Wing Units	Conscript	3 personnel + Supervising NCO (Sergeant Major or Volunteer Warrant Officer) in each wing	Office of the Prison Director	Disciplinary Warrant Officer	Responsible for all matters related to wing security and detainee discipline, the distribution of food and medicine, readying detainees for visits to the hospital and courts, dormitory inspection, and administering punishments	Appointed after recommendations are approved by the Prison Director; 18 wings in the Red Building, with each wing holding 10 rooms (with exception of one wing that holds just five)
White Building Wing Units	Conscript	3 personnel + Supervising NCO (Sergeant Major or Volunteer Warrant Officer) in each wing	Office of the Prison Director	White Building Disciplinary Warrant Officer	Responsible for all matters related to wing security and detainee discipline, the distribution of food and medicine, readying detainees for visits to the hospital and courts, dormitory inspection, and administering punishments	Appointed after recommendations are approved by the Prison Director; three wings in the White Building, with each wing holding 14 rooms (with exception of one wing that holds just five)
Exterior Company	Conscript + Volunteer	25 Personnel (including sergeants and volunteer warrant officers)	Interior Gate NCO	Disciplinary Warrant Officer	Guarding the interior walls and gates and watch towers (four such towers in the prison)	Appointed after recommendations are approved by the Prison Director, Interior Gate NCO responsible for guard postings in the Red and White Buildings
Main Gate Unit	Conscript + Volunteer	10-20 Personnel + Warrant officer	Exterior Company Warrant Officer	Officer in charge of the Exterior Company	Guarding the main gate; recording and monitoring movement into and out of the prison; inspecting all individuals arriving and departing (personnel, visitors, patrols, etc.)	Appointed after recommendations are approved by the Prison Director
Interior Gate	Conscript + Volunteer		Office of the Prison Director and/or Prison Director	Officer in charge of the Exterior Company		
Middle Gate Unit	Conscript + Volunteer	NCO and 2-3 guard personnel			Responsible for guarding the Middle Gate; monitoring movement into/out of the prison; closely inspecting arrivals and departures (specifically civilian visitors); handling weapons of patrols coming to the prison	On days when there are visitors, 10-20 male and female personnel are sent from the Military Police to assist the Middle Gate Unit with inspecting visitors
Branch 227 Unit	Volunteer	4-5 Intelligence Personnel + Intelligence Warrant Officer	Branch 227 Unit ("District Branch")	Branch 227	Responsible for general surveillance; inspection of those visiting security detainees; arresting any visitor who violates instructions or undermines prison security; and any other security duties that it may identify	The unit works in coordination with the Security Officer and Prison Director
Branch 211 Unit	Volunteer	5 senior intelligence personnel + intelligence warrant officer	Branch 211 (Communications Security Branch)	Branch 211	Monitoring landline and wireless communications to the prison and surrounding area, as well as across Syria generally	The unit works in coordination with the Security Officer and Prison Director

Section II: Prison Administrative and Organizational Structure

Sednaya houses separate offices that are each linked directly to the Office of the Prison Director who is the highest-ranking authority inside the prison. The powers of the Deputy Director, by contrast, are limited and dependent on the strength of the Director's position, which in turn hinges on proximity to the centers of power within the regime. In contrast, the Security Officer exercises supreme authority in all security-related matters. They communicate with the Director about administrative issues directly through the Office of the Prison Director, which is managed by a first-class warrant officer. With regard to security concerns, however, communication takes place directly with the Security Officer who refers some matters to the Prison Director. The Security Officer also issues decisions and instructions to prison staff himself, sometimes without consulting the Director.^[17]

In addition to the above offices, there is a Red Building Director, an officer^[18] and a Disciplinary Warrant Officer in each building. The latter is appointed directly by the Director of Sednaya and administratively subordinate to the Director and the Security Officer. The disciplinary warrant officer's main tasks are to monitor entry and exit procedures at the Red and White Buildings; ensure adherence to security protocols; and determine personnel tasks, postings, working hours, shifts, and needs. Among this official's powers is the authority to issue punishment orders against prisoners and transfer them into or out of solitary cells, but only with the approval of the Security Officer and/or the Director of Sednaya. As a result, the disciplinary warrant officer holds partial responsibility for the treatment of detainees. The prison also houses five officers who occupy the following positions: Prison Director, Deputy Prison Director, Security Officer, Red Building Director, and Exterior Company Director. Voluntary NCOs represent a key link in the prison's administrative structure, and they include sergeants, sergeant majors, and third and first-class warrant officers. There are about 45 such officers, and they are responsible for all parts of the prison apparatus.

sergeants, sergeant majors, and third and first-class warrant officers. There are about 45 such officers, and they are responsible for all parts of the prison apparatus.

[17] Issues that the Security Officer independently of the Prison Director have to do with hearing complaints from prison staff and reorganizing certain personnel tasks and activities inside Sednaya.

[18] This position was created shortly after the outbreak of the revolution for reasons that remain unknown. However, given that no similar position was created for the White Building, it may be that the Director of Sednaya was attempting to avoid holding direct responsibility for events that occur inside the Red Building.

The Judicial Office (White Building)

The Judicial Office is a registry responsible for recording all data on detainees, including biological data, arrest warrants, inquiry requests, legal orders, and forensic summaries. Within the scope of the office's responsibilities are military information, such as licenses, promotions, and others.

The Office is comprised of three departments.

1. Inventory Department: a warrant officer and sergeant who receive all personal property and effects belonging to detainees arriving at Sednaya. Staff in this department are forbidden from taking such items (which could include personal IDs, drivers licenses, military IDs, mobile phones, laptops, money, gold jewelry, leather belts, etc.) as it is assumed that they will be returned to the prisoners upon their release.
- 2.
3. Computerization Department: tasked with automating information under the supervision of a third or first-class warrant officer and a volunteer sergeant or sergeant major. Because these personnel must possess the expertise necessary for processing information, they receive training from voluntary warrant officers sent by the SAA's Automation Department.
- 4.
5. Records Department: responsible for recording daily events in the prison; prison visits, noting the reason for the visit and entry and exit times; data on civilian visitors, patrols, detainees; and hospital or court transfers.

The Security Office (Red Building)

The Security Office operates as a registry for the Red Building and is responsible for all the duties mentioned above insofar as they pertain to security detainees. Moreover, the Security Office is responsible for all correspondence and meetings that require confidentiality (e.g., visits to the prison, which are usually from the director of the Military Police, intelligence officers, or Military Field Court judges). It is made up of the same three departments that comprise the White Building's Judicial Office (Inventory, Computerization, and Records).

This office manages all security and court records and dossiers on security detainees. It is in direct contact with the Director of Sednaya and the Security Officer, and personnel are forbidden from inquiring about any information on security detainees. As such, especially given there is no contact between it and personnel in the White Building, data on security detainees is kept completely secret.

The Water Station and Electrical Generator

There is a water pumping station about 3km from Sednaya. The station's large primary water tank supplies all prison buildings, observation points, wings, and exterior and interior guard-houses. Detainee cells also contain their own water tanks which are each capable of holding up to 1,000 liters. But water is often cut off for as much as a week. Water shortages have taken the lives of many detainees since the outbreak of the revolution, although it is difficult to identify with certainty the reasons behind such shortages. While Witness B-25 said that water cutoffs have been due to pipes freezing and the distance between the prison and the water wells, detainees cast doubt on this explanation and noted that water cut-offs have occurred in summer months as well. Former detainees at Sednaya, who were held there prior to the revolution, suggested that the water shortages were connected to other punitive actions that were taken around the same time.

There is also a generator on the first floor of the prison that comes online when power from the public electrical grid is cut. After 2013, as the public grid underwent increasingly long power cuts, the prison generator functioned almost continuously. The generator primarily supplies power to the guard posts, cells located above the main gates, and administrative and security offices. After 2008, electrical sockets in the dormitories and cells were removed for security reasons, leaving the ceiling lamps and bathroom lights as the only source of electricity in the rooms holding detainees. Prison administrators have also cut electricity to the detainees as a form of punishment.

Office of Stocks and Armaments Management

The Office of Stocks and Armaments Management is responsible for overseeing the prison storehouses as well as supervising the provision of clothing and rations to guards and soldiers. It is also responsible for supplying them with weapons in accordance with the duties assigned to them (automatic rifles, bullets, bombs, batons, etc.). This office is managed by three volunteer warrant officers who are stationed among the warehouses, in addition to 5-6 lower-ranking personnel (including both volunteers and the conscripts).

On the ground floor of the prison there is a large warehouse with a refrigerator for meat and vegetables. The refrigerator is divided into two parts: a section for dry materials, such as flour and grain, and another for soft materials, such as oil, yogurt, and chicken. There is another warehouse for supplies, which includes everything that is not related to food, such as detergents, industrial maintenance tools, gardening. There is also a warehouse for basic essentials, such as military blankets, beds, shoes, clothing, etc.). The Office of Stocks and Armaments Management is responsible for these warehouses.

The ammunition depot, located between the prison's two exterior walls, falls under the responsibility of the Office of Stocks and Armaments Management. It contains enough combat ammunition to enable fighting for up to three months without resupplying (explosive charges, PKC artillery rounds, Russian artillery rounds, RGC launchers, and offensive and defensive grenades). After the revolution, amidst fears that the supply routes would be interrupted due to ongoing military battles or that opposition forces would lay siege to Sednaya, the amount of ammunition at the prison was increased by three times—enough to allow for sustained combat for as long as nine months or a year without supply.

The security rules and protocols in force inside Sednaya do not allow anyone (including officers and other personnel) to carry a loaded weapon. These rules were tightened after the revolution due to fear of a repeat of the 2008 riot when prisoners were able to capture several personnel and seize control of large parts of the prison. Personnel now usually leave their weapons at the second gate when they enter the prison.

As for the fuel station, its main role is to meet the needs of the prison and its staff for heating and to power the cars, personnel transport vehicles, and tanks. None of this fuel is allocated for the heating dormitories and solitary cells, despite them being equipped with a central heating system.

The Commissary

The commissary is where prisoners buy the things that they need. It is run by the Military Police, which profits directly from the sales, and also personally enriches the Prison Director thanks to corruption within the prison. For example, when a family visits their detained loved one and leaves them money, the sum is deposited into an account under their name held by the secretarial department. It is then transferred directly to the commissary, with prisoners charging purchases to the money in their account. Commissary prices are usually many times higher than the real market price, however prisoners have no choice but to accept the inflated prices. Sometimes the products purchased by prisoners are later confiscated and returned to the commissary, only to be sold back to the prisoners later.

Procurements

Sednaya does not have an accounting department and all matters related to staff salaries are managed by the Prisons Branch of the Department of Military Police. Regarding purchases, a voluntary NCO acts as an accountant by organizing invoices for detainees (for medicine or other products or services) and deducts the cost from detainees' balances (usually from the sum that has been left by families after visits). This office also organizes purchase requests for certain materials that are not found at the prison, or which can be supplied by the SAA's Department of Supplies.^[19]

[19] Such items could include plastic utensils for prisoners, cleaning materials, paint, prescription medicine refills, and so on.

The Kitchen, Canteen, and Food Provision

Food provided to prisoners at Sednaya is of poor quality, inconsistent, and not always regularly available. Indeed, it is likely that the type of food and the time when it is available accords with decisions to subject prisoners to torture, given the starvation and physical exhaustion that results from such poor-quality and scarce food. About 25 judicial detainees assist in the preparation and distribution of food in the wings, though they work without any material compensation as part of the “Forced Labor System.” [20]

The Medical Office

Four or five general physicians are permanently posted to Sednaya, in addition to a dentist working at the prison dental clinic. All of the physicians are conscripts who, in an attempt to retain them during the revolution, had been promoted to the rank of lieutenant. These physicians make rounds among the prisoners from time to time. Limited medicine is available at the prison, most of which is allocated for the treatment of staff and officers. Only leftover medicine may be given to the detainees, though they do not receive anything at all. Biweekly visits from specialist doctors from Tishreen Military Hospital have been organized due to the spread of diseases in the prison, the inability of the physicians to adequately monitor cases, and limited medicine. However, detainees often do not disclose their diseases to visiting specialists because doing so may result in their transfer to Tishreen Military Hospital where they will be under the authority of Military Police, subjected to even more severe torture than at Sednaya, and may die.

Departments of the Barracks NCO and Political Instruction

The Barracks NCO is responsible for the garage, fuel, and all maintenance work needed by any of the aforementioned offices at Sednaya. The Department of Political and Moral Instruction was once tasked with political messaging, especially at the morning meetings when it read out political instruction bulletins from the SAA’s Department of Political and Moral Instruction. These bulletins encapsulated the intellectual and ideological orientation of the regime vis-à-vis numerous political and economic issues. They mostly praised the regime’s military leadership, specifically the figure of the president. After the revolution, however, these meetings were canceled, and the role of the Department of Political Instruction was limited.

[20] Under Sednaya’s forced labor system, prisoners who are serving a term for committing crimes, including murder and robbery, during their military service, are used as unpaid labor. These prisoners, who are held in Sednaya’s ‘White Building,’ are forced to provide prison services traditionally offered by paid personnel, such as washing dishes, collecting garbage, and cleaning the sewage system among other tasks.

Table 2. Prison Offices: Personnel Size, Rank, and Supervision

Department	Personnel Service Status	Personnel Size	Appointed by	Supervising Authority	Duties	Comments
Security Office	Volunteer	4-6 personnel + 2 NCOs	Prison Director	Prison Director / Security Officer	Organizing and preserving the files of security detainees, in addition to all detainees' personal belongings	The Security Office Warrant Office is appointed based on the nomination of the prison director and the approval of Branch 291
White Building registry warrant officer	Volunteer	2-3 personnel + 1 NCO	Prison Director	Office of the Prison Director and/or Prison Director	Organizing and preserving the files of judicial detainees, in addition to all detainees' personal belongings	
Water pumping station	Conscript + Volunteer	3-4 personnel + 1 NCO	Office of the Prison Director	Barracks NCO	Operating the water pumping station, supervising its continued use, and supplying water to the prison	
Commissary	Conscript + Volunteer	2-3 personnel + 1 NCO	Office of the Prison Director	Procurements Warrant Officer	Selling food or medical supplies to prison staff and detainees, and organizing sales inventories	Sometimes security detainees are sold some medicine and food at the suggestion of the Office of the Prison Director and the approval of the Director
Medical office	Conscript	4-5 physicians (conscript officers)	Medical Services Administration	Office of the Prison director	Providing medical care to conscripts and detainees	Conscript physicians are deployed to the prison after approval by Branch 293 (Officers Affairs Branch)
Procurements	Conscript + Volunteer	2 personnel + 1 NCO	Office of the Prison Director	Office of the Prison Director	Responsible for organizing all procurement processes for the prison	Purchase of medical materials and purchase of food for the commissary, plastic utensils, vegetables... etc
Electrical Generator	Conscript + Volunteer	2 personnel + 1 NCO	Office of the Prison Director	Barracks NCO	Operating the generator and supervising its continual operation.	
Stock and Armaments Management	Conscript + Volunteer	2 personnel + 1 NCO	Office of the Prison Director	Barracks NCO	Organizing personnel equipment and supervising armaments warehouse	
Provisions	Conscript + Volunteer	6 personnel + 2 NCOs	Office of the Prison Director	Barracks NCO	Overseeing the stock and supply warehouses, and receiving and distribute materials	
Kitchen and Canteen	Volunteer	3 NCOs	Office of the Prison Director	Office of the Prison Director	Overseeing the preparation and serving of meals	
Department of Political and Moral Instruction	Volunteer	3rd/1st-class warrant officer	Office of the Prison Director	Office of the Prison Director	Holding the morning personnel meeting and reading the political instruction bulletin	
Fuel and Garage	Conscript + Volunteer	personnel + 2 NCO	Office of the Prison Director	Office of the Prison Director	Managing prison fuel depots and garages	

Section III: The Organizational Ties of Sednaya

Sednaya Prison is officially the first military prison in Syria currently. Administratively, it reports to the Prisons Branch of the Department of Military Police, which is housed within the Ministry of Defense. All administrative and organizational decisions therefore flow through the Prisons Branch. Decisions about officer appointments, after an initial recommendation from the security services, fall to the Organization and Administration Directorate inside the Ministry of Defense.

Judicial Authority

Judicial authority at Sednaya rests with two entities:

1. The Military Judiciary: Military personnel who have committed crimes or misdemeanors in the eyes of the military judiciary held at Sednaya; and
2. The Military Field Court: Established by Decree No. 109 of 1968 for the purpose of trying soldiers who deserted or joined the ranks of an enemy force. This decree was amended by another order, Decree No. 32 of 1980, which added the phrase “or in the event of internal unrest.” The jurisdiction of the Court expanded with this amendment to include both military personnel and civilians, operational in times of peace as well as war. The Court operates in a completely secret and arbitrary manner that fails to meet even the minimum criteria of due process, with detainees not allowed to appoint a lawyer, contact the outside world, or enjoy any guaranteed right of defense. The rulings of the Court are final and are not subject to appeal or cassation. However, it is possible for the Military Field Court to authorize the transfer of detainees from Sednaya to a civilian prison, a move which for many detainees amounts to a release. Such transfers usually occur after the head of the Court has received large sums of money from detainees’ families.^[21]

Despite the fact that individuals convicted by the Counter-Terrorism Court are executed at Sednaya, this court does not possess the jurisdiction to oversee such executions and, indeed, has no authority over the prison as a whole.

In terms of security, Sednaya is a military site under the control of the Military Intelligence Directorate. Specifically, forces from Branch 227 in Damascus countryside (known as the “District Branch”) exercise security control over Sednaya, as the prison falls within its geographical jurisdiction. The appointment and transfer of officers to and from the prison falls to Branch

[21] For details on this practice, see the first report by ADMSP on detainees at Sednaya: <https://bit.ly/3d2u25K>.

293 (known as the Officers' Affairs Branch, or the Officers' Security Branch) in the Military Intelligence Directorate. These appointments are done in coordination with the Officers' Affairs Division in the Ministry of Defense. Staffing decisions, promotions, and transfers are issued by this Division at the recommendation of Branch 293, with administrative reports going to the Military Police.

1. Three kinds of security reports are produced at Sednaya, and they all go to a particular branch in the Military Intelligence Directorate. The reporting process works as follows:
2. Screenings and security assessments of officers and physicians, which are sent to Branch 293 (the entity responsible for this area). these reports are usually written by the Prison Director or by the Security Officer upon the Director's request and approval.
3. Screenings of NCOs and conscripts, which are sent to Branch 291 (the Administrative Branch) as the entity responsible in this area. These reports are usually written by the Security Officer, before the Prison Director reviews and approves them.
4. Reports about the general state of the prison, which are sent to the District Branch (Branch 227). These are written by the Security Officer or his Deputy, pending the former's approval.

There are cases in which the Security Officer may bypass the Prison Director and send a report without notifying the later. Such instances occur at the discretion of the Security Officer, and how he assesses the extent of his influence and power relative to that of the Prison Director. The closer the Prison Director is to important figures in the regime, the stronger his own position over the Security Officer. This dynamic is exemplified by the cases of Prison Director Talaat Mahfoud, who was close with Assef Shawkat, the brother-in-law of Bashar al-Assad; and Colonel Louay Youssef, who was close with Ghazi Kanaan, head of the Syrian intelligence apparatus in Lebanon and former Minister of Interior.^[22] Given how the same dynamics apply to the strength of Security Officers, it is important to underline here that individuals' proximity to those at the top echelons of the regime matter more than their official position in the administrative hierarchy at Sednaya.

Relying on the three kinds of reports mentioned above, the Military Intelligence Directorate is able to closely monitor all security dimensions of Sednaya Prison. Personal relationships play a key role in a system of surveillance such as this, as is evident in the following examples: Major General Muhammad Kanjo Hasan was able to issue instructions and requests to the Office of the Prison Director. Some of these requests exceeded the authority of this office

[22] The Syrian regime announced that Major General Ghazi Kanaan had committed suicide in his office at the Ministry of Interior on the morning of October 12, 2005. However, many observers believe that Kanaan was assassinated at the hands of the director of his office, Brigadier General Walid Abaza, amid fears that he would implicate the Syrian regime in the assassination of the former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

(such as improving the treatment of a particular detainee), while others were within its powers (such as allowing family visits to one of the detainees). Yet even the latter are usually only done after families have paid large sums of money. ^[23]

To take another example, that of Jamil Hassan, the former head of the Air Force Intelligence Directorate was able to move detainees anywhere he wanted with as little as a phone call. Ali Mamlouk, head of the National Security Bureau, wielded the most influence, albeit not to a degree that overrode the decisions of the Field Court. This is illustrated by an incident described by B-25, the primary witness for this study, and which was corroborated by ADMSP. One night in winter 2013, with Mamlouk overseeing all security matters in Syria following the dissolution of the Crisis Cell in July 2012, Brigadier General Mamlouk called the Director of Sednaya at 8 pm and requested that he release a particular detainee. Mamlouk indicated the specific place where the detainee was to be sent, telling him that “he should have dinner with his family tonight.” Conforming Mamlouk’s influence, the prisoner did indeed return to his family that night.

The foregoing account illustrates the nature of power in Syria, where proximity to or distance from key figures in the regime is the primary factor determining how authority is exercised on the ground. Indeed, it is even more important than the hierarchical relationships that ostensibly shape the relationship between the various offices of a highly institutionalized state. Everything revolves around the president; proximity to him means greater power and authority, irrespective of official laws that are meaningless if the person concerned belongs to the small network of people surrounding the upper echelons of the regime.

Appointment of Senior Officials and Medical Personnel

Prison Director: appointment of the Prison Director, Deputy Prison Director, and Security Officers begins with the head of the Department of Military Police who nominates individuals for these positions. These nominations are submitted to the SAA’s Department of Officers Affairs, which are then forwarded to Branch 293 for a security screening of the candidates. Branch personnel then submit their assessment to the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Armed Forces for approval.

Security Officer: appointment of the Security Officer begins with the head of the Department of Military Police who nominates three officers for this position. These nominations are submitted consecutively to the district branch (Branch 227), which in turn forwards them to Branch 293. Personnel from Branch 293 select one of the three individuals to be appointed Security Officer at Sednaya.

[23] In 2011, Muhammad Kanjo Hasan occupied the position of Military Prosecutor at the Field Court in Damascus, at the rank of Brigadier General. He was then promoted to the rank of Major General and became the director of the Military Judiciary Directorate (housed in the Ministry of Defense). He was known to extort the families of detainees in exchange for various favors including enabling family visits, the holding of new trial for detainees, and order their release or transfer to civilian prisons. See “Disappeared in Syria’s Detention Centers,” “Research about the Details of the Process of Forced Disappearance and the Fate of the Victims,” (The Association of Detainees and the Missing in Sednaya, 2021) <https://bit.ly/3d2u25K>; and also, with Adala, <https://bit.ly/3DcETos>.

Active-duty officers: selection of active-duty officers for work at the prison begins with the Department of Military Police submitting a recommendation to the Department of Officers Affairs, which in turn forwards the recommendation to Branch 293. Personnel from this branch examine the security aspects of the recommendations before sending them to the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Armed Forces for approval. At this point, with the active-duty officers now attached to the prison, the Prison Director assigns duties to each based on their specialization. The Director may select several of these officers, whose military ranks range from captain to lieutenant colonel, to report directly to him and post them to either the red or white buildings (or to any other place he deems appropriate).

Physicians: assignment of physicians to Sednaya goes through Branch 293, which submits nominations to the Department of Medical Services. This department directs the physicians to their posts, all of them being conscripted physicians—although in a few cases a volunteer physician has been sent from Tishreen Military Hospital.

Table 2. Prison Offices: Personnel Size, Rank, and Supervision

Position	Nomination and Approval Procedure	Appointed by	Duties
Prison Director	Nominated by Departments of Military Police and Officers Affairs; security approval to be provided by Branch 293	Departments of Officers Affairs and Military Police	Prison administration
Deputy Prison Director	Nominated by Departments of Military Police and Officers Affairs; security approval to be provided by Branch 293	Departments of Officers Affairs and Military Police	
Security Officer	3 officers nominated by Department of Military Police	Branch 293	Monitoring of prison security conditions
Deputy Security Officer	Prison Director and Department of Military Police	Branch 291	
Disciplinary Warrant Officer	Office of the Prison Director	Prison Director	
Manager of Office of the Prison Director	Prison Director	Prison Director	
Officers	Department of Officers Affairs; security approval to be provided by Branch 293	Initial selection by Department of Officers Affairs and, subsequently, Department of Military Police	
Physicians	Departments of Officers Affairs and Medical Services; security approval to be provided by Branch 293	Selection by Department of Officers Affairs in coordination with Department of Medical Services and, subsequently, Department of Military Police	Medical Office

Section III: Changes in Prisoner Treatment from the Establishment of Sednaya to the Present

Implications of the Organizational and Administrative Structure for Prisoners

Detainees at Sednaya are generally considered foreign agents, traitors, or terrorists. As such, they are regarded as completely disposable and shown no humanitarian concern. With authorities and prison administration indifferent to detainees' health and living conditions, there are ample opportunities for widespread abuses of prisoners at the hands of prison staff, especially the interior guards responsible for the wing dormitories.^[24]

Prisoners are normally classified according to the charges that have been brought against them. New forms of differentiation appeared after the outbreak of the revolution, reflecting the deep divisions that emerged within Syrian society—divisions from which Sednaya was not insulated. When clashes began to break out between Alawite and Sunni prisoners (who make up the majority of detainees at Sednaya), the prison administration decided to separate them so they would not be housed in the same cells.^[25]

At certain points in time, when conditions in the country improved, there was a relative improvement in services at Sednaya. Conditions were dire during the period of the revolution, for example, between 2011 and 2015. But they improved after the regime and its allies were able to decisively defeat the opposition and secure military victory from 2016 onward. The prison population has therefore decreased in the years since, although many detainees have likely been killed or died as a result of neglect and inhumane treatment. Prison officers and lower-ranking staff still continue to receive priority in terms of services, food, medical, and heating supplies. It is only after their needs are met that prisoners receive what is left over. With the commissary functioning as a source of revenue for the Prison Director, as explained earlier, prisoners are subjected to various forms of extortion and material exploitation. Likewise, their families continue to be exploited while navigating a landscape defined by the personal relationships and nepotism of the Prison Director and various intelligence officers. This is especially true when it comes to visits and disclosures about prisoners, which happens through networks of people with direct or indirect links to the Prison Director and intelligence

[24] At Sednaya it is common for prison guards (at the warrant officer rank) to issue orders arbitrarily punishing prisoners at any time and without consulting their superiors; such orders may range from sending detainees to solitary cells to beating and torture.

[25] According to the primary witness for this study, after the outbreak of the revolution there were approximately 60 Alawite detainees (with most of them being military officers).

officers. Such individuals communicate with families who desperately await any news about their detained sons and the chance to visit them or possibly see them released—even if this costs the families all that they have in their possession.^[26]

Despite the gravity of the violations against detainees and their families, they pale in comparison to the disturbingly systematic executions and torture for which Sednaya is notorious. Between 2011 and 2018, an estimated 30,000 - 35,000 detainees at Sednaya were either executed or died from systematic torture, a lack of medical care, or starvation.^[27] Executions occurred regularly, usually two days a week. In early 2012, the number of prisoners whom the Air Force Intelligence Directorate was sending to Sednaya fell as it increasingly carried out field executions in a special wing of Adra Prison under the supervision of the directorate head. Even so, by late 2012, the prisoner population at Sednaya had risen to about 4,000 detainees.

The swelling prisoner population compelled the Prison Director to ask that the prison administration not send any new detainees and, indeed, the frequency with which patrols brought batches of new prisoners decreased precipitously. Here it is worth mentioning that the process by which detainees are transferred is very complicated. The Military and Air Force Intelligence Directorates, as well as the Military Field Court, Military Police, and military prisons, all report to the Ministry of Defense, while the Political Security Division and security prisons are housed in the Ministry of Interior. The transfer process amounts to a protocol in force between the two ministries, pending the approval of the military prosecutor general and the civilian attorney general in the area of jurisdiction. Despite the existence of such protocols and formal procedures, in late 2012, 104 people were executed simultaneously in an act that was so brutal and violent a colonel in attendance, Military Judge Jawdat Ismail, lost consciousness.

Detainees are not notified about execution decisions in advance, but rather transferred in the evening for a sentence to be carried out on the same day or the following. Detainees at civilian prisons are transferred to Sednaya one day before their execution orders are to be carried out. As a result, it is now well-known among detainees that, if they have been notified about their transfer to the civilian prison, they are to be executed.

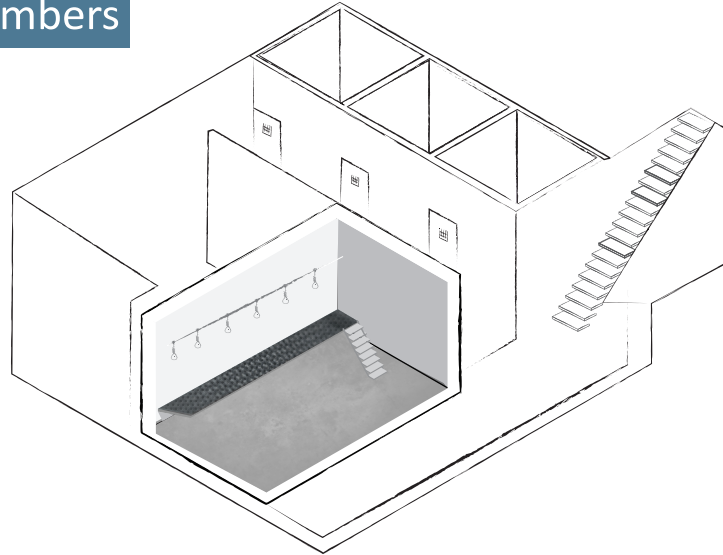
In attendance at the executions are the head of the Judicial Office, the Prison Director, the Military Field Court Prosecutor, the Major General in command of the southern region, the head of Branch 248 in the Military Intelligence Directorate (the “Investigations Branch”), a prison physician, and in some cases a religious official. Sometimes the head of the Military Field Court, which issues the death sentences, attends the executions. The issuance of a death

[26] Major General Muhammad Kanjo would communicate with the Prison Director on an almost weekly basis, giving him the names of 15-20 people who were to be allowed visits from families. According to the primary witnesses for this study—who were previously employed at Sednaya—it is estimated that Kanjo would charge families \$30,000 per visit.

[27] These estimates are based on the testimony of the sources most central to this study—former guards and staff at Sednaya—and a report on the number of detainees and survivors of Sednaya from 2011 onward to which ADMSP contributed.

sentence takes about two months, from the certification of the decision to its implementation by the Military Police. The latter sends a letter in advance to Sednaya specifying the names of the detainees included in the death sentence and the date of execution.^[28] There are two execution chambers at Sednaya, one in the white building near the commissary and another in the red building retrofitted for this purpose in 2011. Executions are carried out by hanging, with the two chambers equipped with several platforms for this purpose.

Execution Chambers



The salt chamber



[28] The Military Field Court is located in Qaboun. No one is permitted entry except the military prosecutor general, the head of the court and his deputy, and the head of the = Military Intelligence Directorate's Investigations Branch.

Disposal of Bodies

After executions have been carried out, staff from the Medical Services Department at the Tishreen Military Hospital transfer the bodies and sometimes bury them at Najha cemetery in the Babila sub-district of southern Damascus countryside (specifically in the State Security School). Known as “Martyrs Cemetery,” Najha was established by Syrian authorities to house the remains of soldiers killed in the 1973 October War with Israel. Bodies may also be buried at Qatana, at the intersection of the Tenth Division with the Republican Guard and the Cadets Training Center, or at Qatif about 1.5 or 2 km west of the firing range of the Third Division, which is responsible for protecting the prison.

Bodies are disposed of in one of the following ways:

1. Bodies of individuals killed in executions are transferred directly to the aforementioned cemeteries in military vehicles, either in pickup trucks or vehicles known as “meat cars,” given this name because they are refrigerated and used mainly to transport meat and vegetables.
2. For detainees who were killed under torture or from a lack of medical care or starvation, within 48 hours of their death ^[29] their bodies are collected in a room at Sednaya that was established after 2011 and is known as the “salt chamber.” In this room, the floors of which are covered with approximately 20-30cm of salt, bodies of detainees are placed with a number written on their foreheads and under a sprinkle of salt. The bodies are then moved in a detainee transport vehicle to Tishreen Military Hospital, where hospital staff examine the body and issue a death certificate that is sent to the Prisons Branch of the Department of Military Police.

After death certificates have been issued, bodies are sent to cemeteries in Najha, Qatif or Qatana for early-morning burial. Few bodies were sent to Najha between 2013 and 2016 because, according to some of the participants in this study, the regime feared that the cemetery would fall into the hands of the Syrian opposition amid nearby battles between the regime and opposition forces.^[30]

Tishreen Military Hospital processes those detainees who have been transferred from Sednaya to the hospital only as numbers, omitting names or any other identifying information. Similarly, detainees who die under torture are transferred to Tishreen Military Hospital bearing only numbers. The Prisons Branch of the Department of Military Police is responsible for assigning numbers instead of names to security detainees in Sednaya, while retaining their files and personal belongings upon their death.

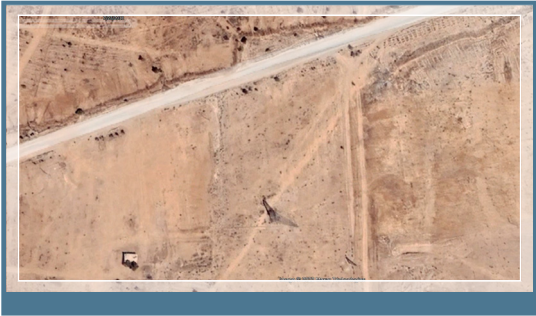
[29] Although sometimes the transfer of bodies to Tishreen Military Hospital was delayed for up to four or five days due to ongoing fighting in the vicinity of the hospital and Harasta.

[30] ADMSP is currently working on a report on mass graves in Syria. Among our key findings is that intensive burial operations at Najha cemetery resumed in late 2016. We have learned that, as of late 2020, the cemetery is almost completely full. We will publish the full details of this research at a later time in an in-depth report that includes the evidence for these findings.

Satellite images of mass graves in Qatif



2011



2012



2014



2016



2017



2018

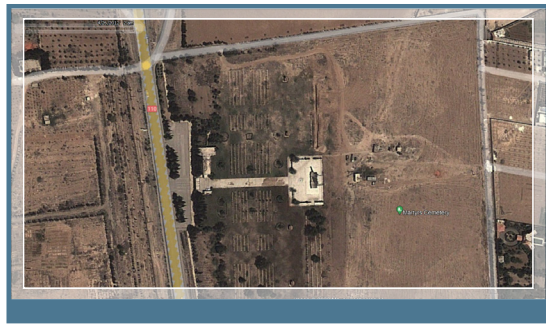


2019



2020

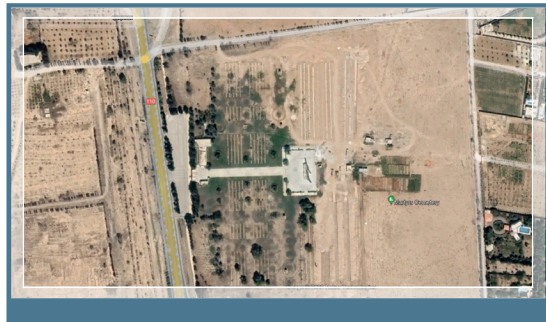
Satellite images of mass graves in Nagha



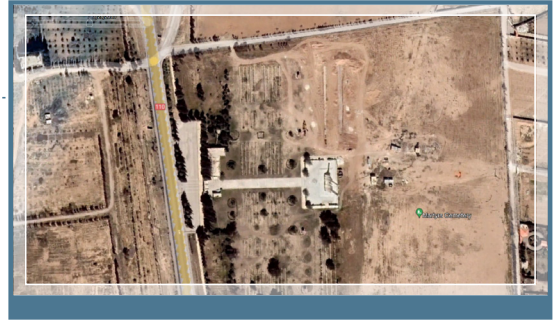
2011



2012



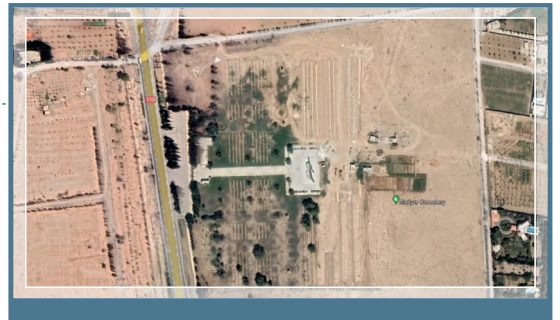
2013



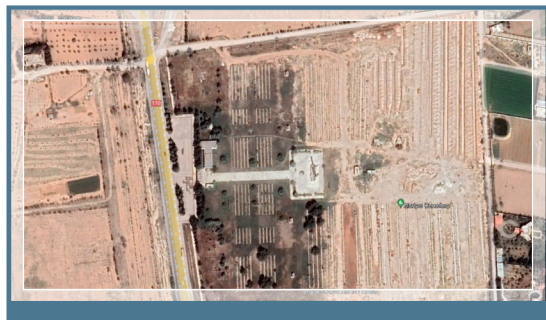
2014



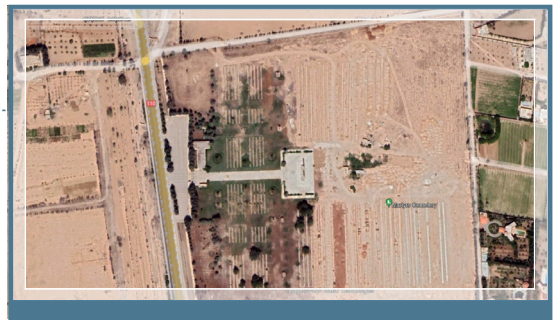
2016



2017

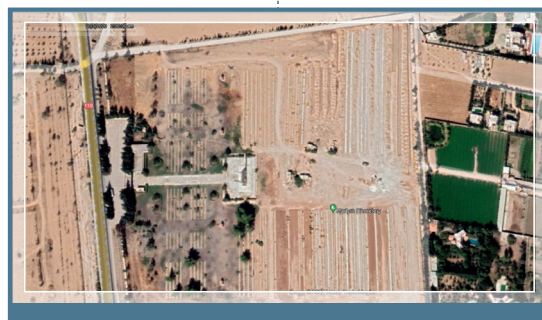


2018



2019

2020



Pivotal Events and their Impact on Sednaya

Since the establishment of Sednaya, there have been important changes at the prison. Perhaps the most prominent of these changes are connected to two pivotal events in the history of both the prison and Syria: the 2008 Sednaya prisoner riot and the 2011 Syrian revolution.

Pre-Riot

Before the riot in 2008, upon entering Sednaya detainees were subject to a specific form of treatment referred to as “isolation” until their prosecution by judicial authorities. Detainees were provided only meager amounts of poor-quality food during isolation, and visits were forbidden. They were subjected to torture, albeit not to the same degree of brutality that prison staff exhibited after the 2011 revolution. Detainees were also deprived of medical care except in the case of persistent or critical health issues. Conditions for detainees improved somewhat after their trials and subsequent transfer to the prison wings. Going from isolation to the wings was like “going from hell to heaven,” as one of the Prison Directors from this period, Louay Youssef, put it. Once in the wings, detainees received adequate amounts of food and were allowed to receive visitors, make purchases from the commissary, and go out into the prison courtyard at specific times.

Post-Riot

Following the riot, Sednaya’s administration imposed stricter measures in their treatment of detainees, depriving them of privileges that had been granted previously. Walks in the courtyard were withheld, for example, while visits entailed more invasive security searches. Food provisions were also reduced.

Syrian Revolution (2011-2016)

With the red building being emptied of detainees—who were transferred to various other destinations—work was undertaken to restore the prison and make it ready to receive those who had been detained during the 2011 revolution. The wing walls were reinforced, and security increased at the prison gates, the outer wing gates, and the dormitory doors. Security procedures became stricter, and the prison administration heightened its level of instruction and direction while claiming that detainees were terrorists responsible for the devastation that had befallen the country. At the same time, increased defections from the army and the need to deploy soldiers to fight in military operations in nearby opposition-held territory led to a severe shortage of guards.

New detainees began to be transferred to Sednaya in late June 2011. Upon their arrival to the red building, immediately after getting out of the transport vehicle, the “welcome party” began. Detainees were then taken to the solitary cells on the prison’s lower floor where a more vicious and open-ended period of systematic torture began. At this point, some individuals died from the torture or lost consciousness (a state that detainees referred to as “disconnect-

ing”). Sometimes, prisoners were held in packed cells for unspecified periods of time, since a 2x3-meter solitary cell can hold between 25 and 30 detainees. It was forbidden to make any sound during this time, and there was barely any food available; just four loaves of bread and 20 olives were provided per 20 detainees. After they did their time in the solitary cells, detainees were moved to wing dormitories that each was a 6x8 meter and housed approximately 35 individuals.^[31]

Torture in the wing dormitories occurred regularly and arbitrarily. Little food was provided, nor were clothes or coverings. At most, each person received two blankets. Families of detainees held in the wing dormitories were allowed to visit their loved ones, but only after paying enormous bribes. Detainees who received visitors were still subjected to intense torture and harsh punishment to discourage future visits. Medicine in the dormitories was extremely scarce, yet detainees feared being sent to the military hospital where most transferees were executed.

Regime’s Military Victory (2016-Present)

Since the Regime’s widespread military victories in 2016 to present, surveillance cameras have been installed in the wings, hexagon, and dormitories per order from the Military Police and intelligence leaders. Some of the survivors who spoke with ADMSP noted a general policy of reducing the harshness with which prisoners were previously treated. Accordingly, torture has become less cruel, resulting in fewer deaths. Now forced disappearance, starvation, and other inhumane forms of treatment are the prevailing crimes linked to Sednaya.

We have not obtained precise information about why the above policy was instituted. One reason might be that the policy is a way of counteracting the image bolstered by human rights organizations—particularly after the publication of Amnesty International’s “Human Slaughterhouse”—that the regime is guilty of egregious crimes. However, the accounts of defected officers and former personnel in the Military Police with whom ADMSP met while doing this study suggest that the new policy had more to do with the regime’s military victory in Aleppo; its recapture, with support from Russia and Iran, of territories that it had lost at the beginning of the Syrian revolution; and the reconciliation process that it initiated in Daraa, Aleppo, Ghouta, and elsewhere. Indeed, the impact of the latter is evident in the rapid execution of detainees by orders from the Field Court while the reconciliations were underway in the background. It may have been that the regime had wanted to quickly get rid of those individuals, fearing that Russia would intervene and require the release of detainees as part of the reconciliation process. Survivor testimony suggests that the regime executed at least 500 detainees between 2018 and early 2021 against the backdrop of the status settlement and reconciliation processes.

[31] Until 2011, there was a bakery in operation at the prison that judicial detainees were allowed to work in under the supervision of warrant officers and sergeants. However, with the outbreak of the Syrian revolution, the oven ceased to operate, and bread was instead brought to the prison twice a week from the village of Tel Mneen; the distribution of this bread is managed by judicial detainees

Although these events have certainly been the most important moments when policies and procedures at Sednaya were determined, procedures are always subject to change based on the Prison Director's discretion. How the Prison Director maneuvers in the narrow space of autonomy allotted to him can have positive implications, for example, if he chooses to order a reduction of abuses, torture, and executions at the prison. Or it could have negative consequences if he sanctions more widespread abuse. Hence, in the following section, we present an overview of the directors of Sednaya and the most important changes that occurred during their tenure.

Prison Directors and Prominent Policies Implemented During their Tenures

Since Sednaya opened in 1987, ten directors have overseen the prison in succession. Ultimately, the Prison Director is the official responsible for carrying out senior leadership directives against detainees, and he has a say in the smallest details of the prison's administration. In this section we present an overview of the directors that have administered Sednaya, highlighting the most important events to have occurred during their tenure.

Barakat al-ʿAsh (1987-1991)

Barakat al-ʿAsh was the first Director of Sednaya. There remains little information about him because he is now over 75-years-old and has been out of army service for nearly three decades. Available information is limited to the accounts of former detainees from the time of his tenure. Al-ʿAsh came from the village of Dam Sarkho in the Latakia countryside, an area which is predominantly Alawite. In 1985, at the rank of lieutenant colonel, he was appointed as deputy to one of the most criminal and brutal directors of Tadmur Prison, Colonel Faisal Ghanem. Two years later, he was promoted to the rank of colonel, and was appointed Director of Sednaya. Al-ʿAsh's tenure witnessed significant abuses against political detainees affiliated with the Iraqi Baʿth Party, while detainees associated with other political currents (including the Communist Action League, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the PLO) were subjected to comparatively fewer violations and less torture. Al-ʿAsh remained in his position until 1991, at which time he was transferred to the Department of Military Police where he remained until his dismissal in 1993.

Muhi al-Din Muhammad (1991-2003)

The second Director of Sednaya, and the person to hold this position the longest, was Mehi al-Din Mohammad. He took over the prison's administration in 1991 when he was a lieutenant colonel, succeeding Barakat al-ʿAsh. He remained there until 2003. Mohammad hails from the village of Darmin, near the city of Jableh. He comes from a family of important Alawite clerics. There were few significant developments during his tenure at the prison given the period of political stagnation in Syria; the 1990s was a time when the regime was at the peak of its strength, enjoying international consensus around its administration of Lebanon following the intervention by Syria and its allies into that country's civil war. Muhammad later became involved in the Arab-Israeli peace process after participating in Operation Desert Storm to defend Kuwait from Iraqi invasion. His tenure is perhaps best known for consolidating Lebanese detained in Syrian prisons and moving them to Sednaya, from which they were gradually released in batches (the last such release occurring in 2000).

Lu'ay Yusuf (2003-2006)

Lu'ay Yusuf was the third Director of Sednaya and the most corrupt. Hailing from the village of Bahmara in Latakia countryside, Yusuf was close to Major General Ghazi Kanaan, who reportedly committed suicide in 2005. He took over the administration of the prison in 2003, succeeding Muhi al-Din Mohammad. His tenure exemplified the official regime policy at the time of "opening and concealing the political detainees file." During Yusuf's time as director, Sednaya was emptied of the those detained by Hafez al-Assad and filled with those detained by Bashar al-Assad.

Upon assuming control of the prison administration, Yusuf began modernizing and restoring prison facilities that were unusable, such as by installing water tanks in the dormitories and providing electricity to the rooms. In 2005, he submitted numerous requests to the Military Intelligence Directorate to allow visits to all security detainees, a large part of whom had been denied visitation since their arrest the 1980s. This era also witnessed a murder among the detainees at the end of 2005 when an Islamist detainee killed a non-Islamist detainee (the incident was known among the Sednaya prisoners as the Bourieh Incident). This incident had a significant impact on all prisoners, as punishment and torture of security detainees resumed, and visits were again prohibited. In fact, these measures were a primary reason for the 2008 prisoner riot. Yusuf was dismissed from his position in August 2006 after the escape of two security detainees who were serving as forced labor in the prison's bakery. These detainees managed to hide inside bags of flour, bypassing all security units while on the flour transport vehicle.

Ali Khayr Bek (2006-2008)

Ali Kheyr Bayk comes from the city of Qardaha—the birthplace of Bashar al-Assad and a stronghold of senior army officers since the period of Assad rule. He stands as the most abusive director of Sednaya. He took over the prison administration in 2006, succeeding Lu'ay Yusuf, and continued his predecessor's approach to punishment and denial of visitation. He also encouraged more political surveillance and informing among detainees, which resulted in some being reinvestigated and their cases reopened. Bek carried out extreme punishments that included cutting off water, electricity, and heating for long periods of time, while giving the wing units full powers to punish detainees themselves. These measures were the main cause of the famous prisoner riot that started on 27 March 2008 and lasted for nine months. Bek was dismissed from his position on the morning of 5 July 2008, following an attempt by the Military Police to break into the prison. This attempt led to all 1200 members Military Police being taken prisoner by the detainees.

Talaat Mahfoud (2008-2013)

Brigadier-General Talaat Muhammad Mahfoud was born in 1958 in the village of Breikhia in the Dreikish district of Tartous governorate. Mahmoud is the fifth director of Sednaya. He designed the process of rearming and strengthening the prison. He is also one of the officials responsible for the massacre at Sednaya in 2008 when authorities attempted to retake control of the prison during the prisoner riot, resulting in at least 125 detainees dead. Mahfoud joined the Military College in Homs in 1977 and graduated in 1980 at the rank of lieutenant, specializing in “technical affairs.” He was assigned to the Department of Military Police in Damascus, then to the Military Police Academy in Qaboun where he worked as a driving instructor.

In 1993, Mahfoud was transferred to the military police detachment at Jdeidet Yabous on the Syrian-Lebanese border, at the rank of lieutenant colonel, and in 1995 he was returned to the Military Police Academy in Qaboun. Then, in 1999, he was transferred to the notorious Tadmur Military Prison. Mahfoud remained its director until 2004 when he was transferred to Latakia Governorate as head of the local Military Police branch. He was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in 2005 and remained head of the Latakia branch of the Military Police for another.

In 2008, after having served another term at Tadmur Military Prison, Mahfoud was transferred to Sednaya. He remained in this position until he was killed on 7 May 2013 in an ambush set up by the Free Syrian Army on the Tel Mneen highway in Damascus countryside. At the time, he was riding in a black Kia Cerato back to his home in the al-Assad suburb, Cerato. Mahfoud was married with three children. His wife who worked as a schoolteacher. He enjoyed a close re-

relationship with Major General Assef Shawkat due to being close to Shawkat's home village of Madhala. Mahfoud had two brothers with the rank of colonel: Bassam Mahfoud who served in the Special Forces, and Adnan Mahfoud who served in the Department of Air Defense in Maliha. Mahfoud was known to rely heavily on Sunni volunteer NCOs because, according to those close to him, he had little confidence that Alawite personnel would be held accountable after committing abuses (as most are related to officials in the intelligence apparatus or the army). According to his contemporaries, Mahfoud had a strong and resolute military personality, worked diligently, and maintained close ties with the Department of Military Intelligence, the Republican Palace, and Major General Dhu al-Himma Shalish (the nephew of Hafez al-Assad and personal escort to the president under both Hafez and Bashar al-Assad). Mahfoud was appointed director of Tadmur and Sednaya prisons with the support of Major General Assef Shawkat, and also sat on the Military Field Court in Damascus. He had a solid relationship with Major General Suleiman al-Khatib, who held the position of Senior Military Prosecutor before heading the Military Judiciary Directorate and then the Field Court.

Ibrahim Suleiman (2013)

Ibrahim Suleiman was born in 1964 in the village of Fajlit in the Dreikish district of Tartous governorate. He joined the Military College in 1982 and graduated in 1985 at the rank of lieutenant with a specialization in infantry. In 1988, Suleiman was assigned to the Department of Military Police and appointed platoon commander at the Military Police Academy. He was later promoted to the rank of first lieutenant and remained an instructor at the school until 1991, when he was promoted to the rank of captain and assigned to lead courses for NCOs. In 1995, Suleiman was promoted to major and transferred to the Damascus Branch of the Investigations Division in the Department of Military Police Department (Investigations Company). In 1999, he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and assigned to the 139th Brigade (Military Investigations). Suleiman completed the command staff course at the academy in Qaboun in 2000. He graduated in 2002, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel, and in 2003 was promoted to the rank of colonel, and became commander of the 139th Company (Military Investigations), which was abolished in 2004 and replaced by the Military Investigation Branch. He was assigned to the Military Police Command, which was headed at that time by Major General Bassam Abdelmejid. In 2009, Suleiman was promoted to the rank of colonel and assumed command of the Military Police Branch in Homs. He remained in this position until 2010, when he was transferred to the Department of Military Police to head the Prisons Branch. On 7 May 2013, the day of Brigadier General Mahfoud's killing, Suleiman was transferred to Sednaya to serve as its Director. He remained in this position until 1st of November 2013, when he was returned to the Department of Military Police in Qaboun.

The arrival of Suleiman at Sednaya witnessed a sharp escalation in the systematic torture of detainees. According to the survivors whose testimonies ADMSP documented, this policy was taken in retaliation for the killing of Mahfoud. One survivor whom ADMSP interviewed for this

study said that in winter 2013 a number of detainees died from extreme cold as the guards deliberately flooded the dormitories and cells with cold water and shut off the heating. An NCO that we spoke with said that Suleiman was notorious for the way he dealt with subordinates and colleagues; and, in addition to his high physical fitness, was reportedly a fan of table tennis.

Adib Asmander (2013-2014)

Brigadier General Adib Asmander was the seventh director of Sednaya Prison. He was born in 1962 in the village of Qalaa near the city of Jableh. He completed high school in 1980 and joined the Military College on 25 December 1980. He completed the officers' course at the Chemical Warfare College in the Yahudiya district of Latakia governorate, staying there for three years before graduating in 1983 at the rank of active-service lieutenant. Asmander's cohort (the 36th) was considered one of the most distinguished in the whole Syrian army, as it counted Basil al-Assad among its graduates and earned Hafez al-Assad's personal attention and presence. Asmander was assigned at the rank of lieutenant to the College of Armor Works in the Waer district of Homs governorate. He remained there until he was promoted to the rank of captain in 1994, having met Bashar al-Assad (then undergoing a lead engineer's course after the death of his brother Basil). It was here that Adib Asmander became close with Bashar al-Assad, to the point where he was able to ask the latter for a transfer to the Military Police. After his transfer to Latakia countryside, Asmander completed several courses in the Department of Military Police in Qaboun. He stayed at his post here in the Military Police branch in Latakia until 2003, when he was transferred to the Military Police branch in Idlib and subsequently made its director. In 2006, Asmander was made the head of the Military Police branch in Latakia, where he stayed until 2010 when he was transferred again to the Department of Military Police in Qaboun.

On 16 November 2013, Asmander was appointed Director of Sednaya, succeeding Brigadier General Ibrahim Suleiman. He remained in this position until 13 March 2014, when he was transferred to the Department of Military Police and Colonel Mahmud Ahmed Ma'tuk was named his successor. During Asmander's tenure, the means of torture and abuse varied, with guard free to commit the most egregious violations against prisoners. According to survivors with whom ADMSP spoke, one of Asmander's policies was to order the removal of all razors from the wings. This forced prisoners to shave their beards by plucking them with their hands or a thread from a blanket. While it became almost impossible for prisoners to remove all of their facial hair, anyone seen with facial hair was severely punished (a number of them died while being punished for this infraction). During Asmander's tenure, the prison guards began to "keep score," a reference to the number of detainees whom they had executed in a single day.

Mahmoud Ma'tuq (2014-2018)

Mahmoud Ma'tuq was the eighth and most brutal Director of Sednaya. The son of the poet Ahmed Ma'tuq, he was born in the village of Fidyo in Latakia governorate on 8 July 1970. After graduating from high school in Latakia with a concentration in science in 1989, Ma'tuq enrolled in the Military College in December that same year. Upon graduating in 1992 with a specialization in air defense, Ma'tuq grew to prominence as an instructor for the Air Defense Force College's "Close Order Course." He was transferred to the Military Police Academy in Qaboun after showing distinction in overseeing an Air Defense Force military parade. In 2002, Ma'tuq spent six months in Russia undergoing a training course and, following his return, helped amend the Close Order Course. He then worked as an instructor working with the Honor Guard, the Military Police, and the Ceremonies Battalion of the General Staff leadership, earning the rank of general in 2004. In early March 2007, he enrolled in the Command and General Staff course at the General Staff Academy, graduating a year later. He remained at the Department of Military Police until late 2013, when he was transferred to Sednaya to succeed Brigadier General Asmander.

Ma'tuq proceeded to authorize the most heinous abuse, torture, and murder of detainees in Sednaya's history. He appointed Lieutenant Colonel Haitham Rahal to oversee the Red Building, granting him wide-ranging powers as Security Director. Rahal formed a group known as "The Gang of Villains," mostly composed of Alawites who were previously convicted of theft, kidnapping, and murder. This group systematically entered every dormitory to abuse the prisoners, sometimes killing them by breaking their limbs and necks. Ma'tuq authorized each one of these forms of prisoner treatment. The instructions that Rahal and Ma'tuq issued to the prison guards were criminal and became particularly harsh after Ma'tuq's brother, Major Mohsen Ahmed Ma'tuq, was killed in Deir ez-Zor. Ma'tuq at one point implemented a method to shave the heads and eyebrows of detainees using a thread and needle. Ma'tuq died of a heart attack at Sednaya on 11 January 2018, leaving behind two sons.

Wasim Hasan (2019-2020)

Colonel Wasim Suleiman Hasan was born in 1968 in the village of Btgrammo, near the city of Jableh. He joined the Military College in 1988 and graduated in 1991 at the rank of lieutenant having specialized in infantry. Hasan then served in the Republican Guard as an instructor at the Aghrar Training Center in the Jedyat al-Shaibani district of Damascus countryside. He was then promoted to the rank of first lieutenant in 1994 and, in early 1996, was transferred to the Military Police Academy in Qaboun. Hasan underwent a six-month training course, after which he was assigned to the 230th Battalion of the Military Police Command's Third Unit. He was promoted to captain in 1998 and transferred to the Field Battalion (an independent battalion under the direct supervision of the Military Police Command). Two years later, Hasan was transferred to Lebanon to take command of the Field Battalion's field company.

In 2002, Hasan was promoted to major and transferred to Tadmur Military Prison, where he was assigned to the prison's guard company. He remained there until 2006, when he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and transferred to Sednaya. However, Hasan served just a year there before being transferred again to the Military Police Command in Damascus. In early 2010, he was promoted to colonel and sent back to Sednaya, where he was appointed Deputy to Director Talaat Mahfoud. He remained in this position until the end of 2013, when he was named head of the Military Police Branch in Latakia. Hasan remained in that position until the beginning of 2018, when he was selected as Mahmoud Ma'tuq's successor as Director of Sednaya. Hasan remained Director of Sednaya until 15 March 2020, at which point he was transferred to the Military Police Command in Qaboun—remaining there until July. At this point, Hasan went into retirement and returned to his home village of Btgrammo where he died of a heart attack on 12 July 2021 at the age of 52.

According to survivor testimonies collected by ADMSP, at least 500 detainees were executed during his tenure against the backdrop of the status settlement and reconciliation processes of people from Eastern Ghouta, Daraa, Homs and Aleppo and its suburbs and from other areas that the regime regained control of with the support of Russia after 2017.

Usama al-‘Ali (2020-present)

Brigadier-General Usama Muhammad al-‘Ali was born in 1971 in a village in the area of Safita in Tartous governorate. He graduated from high school in 1991 and enrolled in the Military College on 26 November 1991 as a member of the 46th cohort of students. Al-‘Ali graduated from the college in October 1994 at the rank of lieutenant having specialized in infantry.

Al-‘Ali was stationed in Kaswa with the 91st Brigade, where he remained until 1998. During this time he maintained a good relationship with General Ibrahim al-Safi, who headed the brigade, and it was on this basis that he was able to secure a transfer to the Military Police. Al-‘Ali underwent a six-month training course at the Military Police Academy in Qaboun, and subsequently worked as an instructor at the academy until mid-2001. He was then transferred to the Guards Company at the Department of Military Police, where al-‘Ali remained until 2003. It was at this point that Al-‘Ali was moved to the Military Police unit in Qatana, where he worked at the rank of captain until 2008.

In late 2008, al-‘Ali was moved to the military investigations branch at Darah, and was promoted to lieutenant-colonel and transferred to Sednaya in early 2010. He remained at the prison until July 2014, when he was transferred to the military investigations branch in Damascus and promoted to colonel.

In early 2016, al-‘Ali was transferred to the Qamishli branch, which he headed until his transfer back to Sednaya in 2018.

Al-‘Ali took over the administration of Sednaya Prison on 15 March 2020, and was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general on 1 July of that year. As of the time of this writing, al-‘Ali remains the director of Sednaya.

Al-‘Ali has taken the same approach as his predecessors when it comes to administering the prison. He has maintained the same forms of punishment and torture and continued to undertake executions, especially against detainees who were arrested after 2018 (i.e. the so-called “settlement” detainees). It was in al-‘Ali’s tenure that President Assad issued Decree No. 7 of 2022, which granted a general amnesty for what the regime has referred to as “terrorism crimes” that Syrians committed prior to 30 April 2022.

Table 4: Prison Directors and Notable Events During their Tenures

Prison Director	Tenure	Incidents of Note
Barakat al-‘Ash	1991-1987	Discrimination and systematic torture against political detainees from the Iraqi Ba‘th Party.
Muhi al-Din Muhammad	1991-2003	-Consolidation of those Lebanese detained in Syrian prisons to be transferred to Sednaya (from which they were gradually released in batches, with the last such release occurring in 2000).
Lu‘ay Yusuf	2003-2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replacement of those detained by Hafez al-Assad with those detained by Bashar al-Assad. - Restoration of prison facilities, sanctioning of visits to security detainees. - Resumption of punishments and withholding of visitation privileges post-2005. - Repairs: maintenance of prison facilities, and opening visits to all security detainees. -Return to the system of punishments and denial of visitation after 2005.
Ali Khayr Beyk	2006-2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouragement of more political surveillance and informing among detainees; some detainees subsequently reinvestigated and their cases reopened. - Escalation of punishment: cutting off water, electricity, and heating for long periods of time, while giving wing units wide powers to punish detainees themselves. Such measures helped spark the 2008 prisoner revolt, which in turn was a major reason for Bek’s dismissal.
Talaat Mahfoud	2008-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arming and strengthening of the prison. - 2008 Sednaya prison massacre in which at least 125 detainees were killed in an attempt by prison authorities to regain control of the prison. - Predominant reliance on Sunni NCOs rather than Alawite officers.
Ibrahim Suleiman	2013-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Escalation of torture of detainees following the assassination of the previous Prison Director. -Deaths of many detainees from policy of shutting off the heating in winter and flooding the dormitories and cells with cold water.
Adib Amander	2013-2014	-Harsher forms of punishment and the execution of large numbers of prisoners.
Muhammad Ma‘tuq	2014-2018	- Intensification of beatings and torture of detainees; new policy of relying on judicial detainees (most of whom are Alawite) to attack security detainees.
Wasim Hasan	2018-2020	- Executions resume, including the execution of at 500 individuals who had been detained after the onset of reconciliation processes in areas recaptured by the regime with Russian support
Usama al-‘Ali	2020-Present	- Continued executions of detainees who were arrested after 2018 (i.e., the so-called “settlement” detainees); issuance by President Assad of Decree No. 7 of 2022 (the general amnesty)

Conclusion

The administrative structure of Sednaya rests with the Prison Director on the one hand and the Security Officer on the other. Thus, although the Director's power authorizes him to intervene in security affairs, interventions are predominately made under the discretion of the Security Officer. Hence, all prison staff—including the Director—are subject to constant surveillance by the Security Officer.

Although the relationship between the Director and the Security Officer is officially defined by a separation between administration and security, their respective spheres of authority are not determined by clear and systematic rules. Rather, it is their personal proximity to the center of regime power that is key. This separation of security and administration is reflected in the division of the prison between a building designated for judicial detainees (the White Building) and another for security detainees (the Red Building). This distinction is not merely a geographical separation, but actually requires a different approach in dealing with them—as if we were faced with two prisons subject to two separate administrations. Indeed, this feature may explain why detainees referred to the buildings by their different color: the prisoners in each building are subject to completely different treatment, with security detainees seen either as spies and traitors or terrorists. And, although the security detainees see their rights completely violated by the wing units, this does not mean that the prison guards in these units operate without the prior approval of the Prison Director or the Security Officer. In addition to treatment, the data of security detainees in the Red Building and judicial detainees in the White Building are kept separate, the as the data the former kept absolutely are confidential (closed to everyone except the Prison Director and the Security Officer).

The structure of Sednaya Prison has been formulated to eliminate dissidents of the Syrian regime, all the while maintaining a cloak of legal legitimacy. It does so by operating through official channels --from holding court proceedings in which legally sanctioned executions are rendered, to issuing death certificates, to formalizing the process of preparing mass graves. As such, this report has determined the scope of liability for crimes committed in Sednaya. The authorities responsible for perpetrating such crimes are clearly linked to the Military Field Court, Branch 227 and Branch 293. Several of them have been specifically named herein. By outlining the chain of command, as well as the inhumane policies and procedures which continue to harm detainees today, it is ADMSP's hope that future accountability mechanisms with jurisdiction over crimes committed in Syria will obtain justice for the those who survived, those who died, and those who remain missing.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Witness Interview Protocol

This protocol applies equally to interviews with alleged victims and witnesses of a crime, defectors, and perpetrators. It can also be used to record notes about events and people who are not directly related to the crime or event but may provide information about the link between them.

1. Conducting the interview:

- It is useful to record the interview and, regardless, a printed copy of the statement must be written and signed by both the interviewee and interviewer.
- If a translator has been used, this individual must sign a statement attesting that they have read all of the interviewee's statements.
- For security reasons, the signature sheet should be kept separately from the main text of the interview.
- Record the date, time, and location of the interview.
- Include the interviewee's witness number and address if applicable and consider retaining this information separate from other documents in the interview to protect the witness. The names of all persons present (including the translator(s) if any) should also be noted.
- Briefly describe the circumstances of the interview.
- Summarize the information provided by the interviewee in the initial interview. The summary may be limited to one paragraph that describes the topic of the interview, the information provided by the interviewee, the status of the interviewee (e.g., victim, witness, participant), whether the interviewee can provide relevant information (e.g., information about the sequence of orders being issued).
- If you are taking a full statement in detail, try as much as possible to record the events in order. Try also to obtain information about the background of the event, such as what happened before and after it. Avoid switching between topics during the narrative of events, and be sure to distinguish clearly between those events that the interviewee has direct information about from information gained secondhand.
- Ensure that the names of individuals and places are used consistently during the interview.
- Reread the statement or its summary for the interviewee to confirm that you have correctly understood the individual's testimony.
- Note any and all concerns expressed by the interviewee (regarding security or any other matter).
- After the meeting, make note of your own concerns and impressions, and keep these notes separate from those regarding the interviewee's statements.

2. Personal comments regarding the interview:

It is critical that you note down your own thoughts and impressions during the interview, clearly labeling these as notes you took yourself. To help develop your own personal impression of the interview, you may need to answer some or all of the following questions:

- Does the interviewee have information relevant to my investigation?
- Does the interviewee have information that may lead me to another source who may have information relevant to my investigation?
- Can the interviewee provide me with information about the alleged event or crime, or otherwise relevant information that as of yet has not figured in my investigation?

3. Comments regarding the interviewee

Observe how the interviewee acts during the meeting, bearing in mind the following questions with regard to the information being provided:

- Why did this interviewee approach me?
- Is the interviewee trying to mislead me and undermine my investigation?
- Is the interviewee trying to widen the scope of the questions to distract from the main purpose of the investigation?
- Is the interviewee providing excessive amounts of irrelevant information to try to deliberately undermine your investigation?
- How credible is the interviewee?

After completing the interview, the information that has been obtained should be assessed and organized ranked, with the following questions answered:

1. Is this information: firsthand; detailed; internally consistent; confirmed from different sources; identifying a certain pattern; and new? If so, then the interviewee can be considered highly credible.
2. Is this information: firsthand but approximate; internally inconsistent or improbable but overall logical; still unconfirmed from other sources yet; contrary to patterns identified previously; or not entirely new? If so, then the interviewee may be concerned reasonably credible.
3. Is this information secondhand? This term—also known as hearsay because it is orally communicated—refers to instances when an interviewee does not have direct knowledge of the event or the information in question. In cases such as this, you should consider if the interviewee has received the information from a source who directly participated in an event, whether as a victim, witness, or perpetrator. If so, then the interviewee may be concerned reasonably credible (depending on the circumstance).
4. Alternatively, if the information is secondhand, does the source cited by the interviewee also lack firsthand knowledge of the event or information in question? Is the interviewee being unaware of anyone who might have firsthand (perhaps dismissing the issue by saying the information is widely known)? If so, then the credibility of the interviewee is low. At best, the information that has been provided can be considered an initial indication that an event which may merit investigation has occurred; on its own terms, however, the information itself has little value.

Appendix 2: Research Interviews

Number	Name / Code	Rank	Unit	Date of Interview	Interview Setting	Duration
Officers						
1	A020	Lieutenant Colonel	Third Division	9 Sep 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	A020	Lieutenant Colonel	Third Division	15 Aug 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	A020	Lieutenant Colonel	Third Division	13 Jul 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	A020	Lieutenant Colonel	Third Division	15 Jun 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
1	A020	Lieutenant Colonel	Third Division	20 Jun 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
1	A020	Lieutenant Colonel	Third Division	15 May 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
1	A020	Lieutenant Colonel	Third Division	15 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
1	A020	Lieutenant Colonel	Third Division	9 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
2	A019	Major	Third Division - 21st Brigade	19 Sep 2021	In-person	1 hour
2	A019	Major	Third Division - 21st Brigade	1 Aug 2021	In-person	1 hour
2	A019	Major	Third Division - 21st Brigade	23 Jul 2021	In-person	1 hour
2	A019	Major	Third Division - 21st Brigade	4 Jun 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
2	A019	Major	Third Division - 21st Brigade	12 May 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
2	A019	Major	Third Division - 21st Brigade	8 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
3	A011	Brigadier General	Special Forces - 47th Regiment	12 Jul 2021	In-person	1 hour
3	A011	Staff Brigadier	Special Forces - 47th Regiment	21 Jun 2021	In-person	1 hour
3	A011	Staff Brigadier	Special Forces - 47th Regiment	11 May 2021	In-person	1 hour
3	A011	Staff Brigadier	Special Forces - 47th Regiment	27 Apr 2021	In-person	1 hour
4	A022	Paratrooper Colonel	Third Division	30 May 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
4	A022	Paratrooper Colonel	Third Division	23 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour

5	A012	Staff Brigadier	Air Defense Administration	22 Jun 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
5	A012	Staff Brigadier	Air Defense Administration	13 May 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
5	A012	Staff Brigadier	Air Defense Administration	10 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
6	A013	Lieutenant Colonel	Special Forces - 45th Regiment	13 Dec 2021	In-person	2.5 hours
6	A013	Lieutenant Colonel	Special Forces - 45th Regiment	1 Nov 2021	In-person	2.5 hours
6	A013	Lieutenant Colonel	Special Forces - 45th Regiment	1 Oct 2021	In-person	2.5 hours
6	A013	Lieutenant Colonel	Special Forces - 45th Regiment	10 Sep 2021	In-person	2.5 hours
6	A013	Lieutenant Colonel	Special Forces - 45th Regiment	2 Aug 2021	In-person	1 hour
6	A013	Lieutenant Colonel	Special Forces - 45th Regiment	1 Jul 2021	In-person	1 hour
6	A013	Lieutenant Colonel	Special Forces - 45th Regiment	23 Jun 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
6	A013	Lieutenant Colonel	Special Forces - 45th Regiment	14 May 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
6	A013	Lieutenant Colonel	Special Forces - 45th Regiment	11 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
7	A015	Captain	Department of Military Police	2 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	20 minutes
7	A015	Captain	Department of Military Police	2 Oct 2021	Encrypted Program	15 minutes
7	A015	Captain	Department of Military Police	11 Sep 2021	Encrypted Program	17 minutes
7	A015	Captain	Department of Military Police	3 Aug 2021	Encrypted Program	20 minutes
8	A023	Lieutenant Colonel	Republican Guard		Encrypted Program	30 minutes
8	A023	Lieutenant Colonel	Republican Guard		Encrypted Program	30 minutes
8	A023	Lieutenant Colonel	Republican Guard		Encrypted Program	30 minutes
9	A017	Lieutenant Colonel	Tenth Division	14 Dec 2021	Encrypted Program	15 minutes
9	A017	Lieutenant Colonel	Tenth Division	3 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	15 minutes
9	A017	Lieutenant Colonel	Tenth Division	3 Oct 2021	Encrypted Program	15 minutes
9	A017	Lieutenant Colonel	Tenth Division	20 Sep 2021	Encrypted Program	20 minutes
9	A017	Lieutenant Colonel	Tenth Division	5 Aug 2021	Encrypted Program	25 minutes

9	A017	Lieutenant Colonel	Tenth Division	6 Aug 2021	Encrypted Program	20 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	4 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	20 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	4 Oct 2021	Encrypted Program	20 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	21 Sep 2021	Encrypted Program	25 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	7 Aug 2021	Encrypted Program	25 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	8 Aug 2021	Encrypted Program	25 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	3 Jul 2021	Encrypted Program	20 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	4 Jul 2021	Encrypted Program	25 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	24 Jun 2021	Encrypted Program	25 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	15 May 2021	Encrypted Program	25 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	16 May 2021	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	12 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	13 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	1 Mar 2021	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	2 Mar 2021	Encrypted Program	35 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	1 Feb 2021	Encrypted Program	35 minutes
10	A014	Lieutenant Colonel	26th Artillery Brigade	2 Feb 2021	Encrypted Program	35 minutes
11	A021	Lieutenant Colonel	al-Aghrar Republican Guard Training Center	20 Aug 2021	Encrypted Program	10 minutes
11	A021	Lieutenant Colonel	al-Aghrar Republican Guard Training Center	21 Aug 2021	Encrypted Program	15 minutes
11	A021	Lieutenant Colonel	al-Aghrar Republican Guard Training Center	5 Jul 2021	Encrypted Program	12 minutes
12	A016	Staff Colonel	25 25 33 الكتيبة 33rd Infantry Legion	15 Dec 2021	Encrypted Program	10 minutes

12	A016	Staff Colonel	الفرقة 25 الكتيبة 33 25th Legion 33rd Infantry	5 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	10 minutes
13	A018	Lieutenant Colonel	Republican Guard - Dhamir Airport Security Company	16 Dec 2021	Encrypted Program	15 minutes
13	A018	Lieutenant Colonel	Republican Guard - Dhamir Airport Security Company	6 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	15 minutes
13	A018	Lieutenant Colonel	Republican Guard - Dhamir Airport Security Company	5 Oct 2021	Encrypted Program	20 minutes
14	A010	Staff Brigadier	Chief of Staff to General Hayan Hourya	7 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
14	A010	Staff Brigadier	Chief of Staff to General Hayan Hourya	6 Oct 2021	Encrypted Program	2 hours
14	A010	Staff Brigadier	Chief of Staff to General Hayan Hourya	22 Sep 2021	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
14	A010	Staff Brigadier	Chief of Staff to General Hayan Hourya	22 Aug 2021	In-person	3 hours
14	A010	Staff Brigadier	Chief of Staff to General Hayan Hourya	6 Jul 2021	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
14	A010	Staff Brigadier	Chief of Staff to General Hayan Hourya	25 Jun 2021	In-person	2 hours
14	A010	Staff Brigadier	Chief of Staff to General Hayan Hourya	17 May 2021	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
14	A010	Staff Brigadier	Chief of Staff to General Hayan Hourya	14 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	3 hours
14	A010	Staff Brigadier	Chief of Staff to General Hayan Hourya	3 Mar 2021	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
14	A010	Staff Brigadier	Chief of Staff to General Hayan Hourya	3 Feb 2021	In-person	3 hours
NCOs						
1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	17 Dec 2021	In-person	2 hours

1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	8 Nov 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	7 Oct 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	23 Sep 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	23 Aug 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	7 Jul 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	26 Jun 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	18 May 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	15 Apr 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	4 Mar 2021	In-person	2 hours
1	C010	Conscript Sergeant	Department of Military Police - Investigations	4 Feb 2021	In-person	2 hours
2	B015	Volunteer Warrant Office	Department of Military Police - Investigations	8 Jul 2021	In-person	1 hour
2	B015	Volunteer Warrant Office	Department of Military Police - Investigations	27 Jun 2021	In-person	1 hour
2	B015	Volunteer Warrant Office	Department of Military Police - Investigations	19 May 2021	In-person	1 hour

2	B015	Volunteer Warrant Office	Department of Military Police - Investigations	20 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
2	B015	Volunteer Warrant Office	Department of Military Police - Investigations	5 Mar 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
2	B015	Volunteer Warrant Office	Department of Military Police - Investigations	5 Feb 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
3	C011	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison - Exterior Company	13 Jul 2021	In-person	1 hour
3	C011	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison - Exterior Company	1 Jun 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
3	C011	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison - Exterior Company	20 May 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
4	C012	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison - Kitchen	1 Jan 2022	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
4	C012	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison - Kitchen	12 Dec 2021	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
4	C012	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison - Kitchen	9 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
4	C012	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison - Kitchen	8 Oct 2021	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
4	C012	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison - Kitchen	24 Sep 2021	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	15 Mar 2021	In-person	3 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	31 Mar 2021	In-person	4 hours

5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	1 Apr 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	12 Apr 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	27 Apr 2021	In-person	3 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	3 May 2021	In-person	3 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	12 May 2021	In-person	3 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	28 May 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	9 Jun 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	16 Jun 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	29 Jun 2021	In-person	3 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	18 Jul 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	24 Jul 2021	In-person	3 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	12 Aug 2021	In-person	3 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	29 Aug 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	3 Sep 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	24 Sep 2021	In-person	3 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	27 Oct 2021	In-person	3 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	9 Nov 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	19 Nov 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	20 Dec 2021	In-person	4 hours
5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	29 Jan 2022	In-person	3 hours

5	B025		Military Police - Sednaya Prison	30 Jan 2022	In-person	4 hours
6	B020	Warrant Officer First-Class	Military Police - Investigations	2 Feb 2022	In-person	3 hours
6	B020	Warrant Officer First-Class	Military Police - Investigations	3 Feb 2022	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
7	C013	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison -Interior Guard-houses	24 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	1.5 hours
7	C013	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison -Interior Guard-houses	25 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hours
7	C013	Conscript Sergeant	Military Police - Sednaya Prison -Interior Guard-houses	23 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	40 minutes
Survivors						
1	D014		Inside Syria	1 May 2021	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
1	D014		Inside Syria	2 Jun 2021	Encrypted Program	15 minutes
1	D014		Inside Syria	14 Jul 2021	Encrypted Program	15 minutes
1	D014		Inside Syria	24 Aug 2021	Encrypted Program	20 minutes
2	D013		Outside Syria	25 Sep 2021	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
2	D013		Outside Syria	10 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	31 minutes
2	D013		Outside Syria	18 Dec 2021	Encrypted Program	32 minutes
2	D013		Outside Syria	26 Sep 2021	Encrypted Program	33 minutes

2	DO13		Outside Syria	11 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	25 minutes
2	DO13		Outside Syria	19 Dec 2021	Encrypted Program	35 minutes
2	DO13		Outside Syria	27 Sep 2021	Encrypted Program	36 minutes
2	DO13		Outside Syria	12 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	45 minutes
2	DO13		Outside Syria	20 Dec 2021	Encrypted Program	36 minutes
3	DO10		Inside Syria	15 Jul 2021	Encrypted Program	37 minutes
3	DO10		Inside Syria	25 Aug 2021	Encrypted Program	20 minutes
3	DO10		Inside Syria	28 Sep 2021	Encrypted Program	35 minutes
4	DO15		Inside Syria	8 Sep 2020	Encrypted Program	1 hour
4	DO15		Inside Syria	15 Dec 2020	Encrypted Program	1 hour
4	DO15		Inside Syria	11 Jan 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
4	DO15		Inside Syria	6 Feb 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
4	DO15		Inside Syria	6 Mar 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
4	DO15		Inside Syria	21 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
4	DO15		Inside Syria	2 May 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
4	DO15		Inside Syria	3 Jun 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
4	DO15		Inside Syria	9 Oct 2021	Encrypted Program	1 hour
5	DO12		Inside Syria	13 Nov 2021	Encrypted Program	5 minutes
5	DO12		Inside Syria	21 Dec 2021	Encrypted Program	6 minutes
5	DO12		Inside Syria	22 Dec 2021	Encrypted Program	10 minutes

6	D011		Inside Syria	7 Feb 2021	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
6	D011		Inside Syria	7 Mar 2021	Encrypted Program	31 minutes
6	D011		Inside Syria	22 Apr 2021	Encrypted Program	32 minutes
6	D011		Inside Syria	3 May 2021	Encrypted Program	24 minutes
6	D011		Inside Syria	4 Jun 2021	Encrypted Program	15 minutes
6	D011		Inside Syria	16 Jul 2021	Encrypted Program	35 minutes
6	D011		Inside Syria	26 Aug 2021	Encrypted Program	17 minutes
6	D011		Inside Syria	29 Sep 2021	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
7	D016		Inside Syria	1 Feb 2022	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
7	D016		Inside Syria	2 Feb 2022	Encrypted Program	30 minutes
8	D017		Outside Syria	10 Mar 2022		87 minutes
9	D018		Outside Syria	15 April 2022		44 minutes
10	D019		Outside Syria	15 April 2022		56 minutes

The Administrative Structure and Organizational Ties of Sednaya Prison

September 2022

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رابطة معتقلي ومفقودي سجن صيدنايا
Association of Detainees & The Missing in Sednaya Prison



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