



INVITATION to PANEL DISCUSSION

Torture in Syria: How can Austria help investigate and prosecute international crimes committed by Syrian Intelligence Services?

Tuesday, 29 May 2018 at 6 pm

Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen (IWM),

Spittelauer Lände, 1090 Vienna

The Syrian government led by president Bashar al-Assad is responsible for systematic and widespread torture targeting political opponents and activists. There are currently no international avenues for prosecuting crimes against international law committed in Syria. However, the principle of universal jurisdiction enables domestic courts to initiate judicial proceedings and to hold perpetrators of all ranks accountable.

Austria should follow Germany, Sweden, and France and open investigations into torture in Syria. To this end, survivors of torture in Syria together with the Syrian Center for Legal Studies and Research ([SCLSR](#)), the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Speech ([SCM](#)), the Center for the Enforcement of Human Rights International ([CEHRI](#)) and the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights ([ECCHR](#)) will file a criminal complaint with the federal prosecutor in Vienna. The criminal complaint focuses on torture as a crime against humanity and war crime committed inside government-run detention facilities in Syria.

Welcome

Wolfgang Petritsch, Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen

Hannes Tretter, Center for the Enforcement of Human Rights International

Milos Vec, legal historian, University Vienna; IWM Permanent Fellow

Introduction

Mazen Darwish, president of the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Speech

Panel

Hanada Al Refai, Syrian activist und torture survivor

Anwar al-Bunni, Syrian Center for Legal Studies and Research

Tatiana Urdaneta Wittek, Center for the Enforcement of Human Rights International

Wolfgang Kaleck, European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights

The event will be held in German and in Arabic. Simultaneous translation will be available.

Please register for the event in advance at www.iwm.at.

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