

## Informed Consent Form

Sample use only. Edit with your organization's details before using

This form represents your consent to document information about abuses and violations in the Syrian conflict (your experiences or observations) with the Syria Justice and Accountability Centre (SJAC). Please take the time you need to decide whether to participate. Whether you participate is **your choice**. As a prerequisite for your participation, SJAC wishes to ensure that you are fully informed about the purposes and potential results of your participation. **Note that this interview does not constitute legal advice, or any other form of service or support imparted by SJAC and its staff to interviewees. Interviewees should contact an attorney to obtain advice with respect to any particular legal matter. Only your individual attorney can provide assurances regarding information from the interview that is applicable to your particular situation.** If you have **any remaining questions**, feel free to ask the SJAC Documentation Coordinator.

**PURPOSE:** SJAC is a Syrian-led, multilaterally supported nonprofit that envisions a Syria defined by justice, respect for human rights, and rule of law. SJAC promotes transitional justice and accountability processes in Syria by collecting and preserving documentation, analyzing and cataloging this data, and using it to encourage public discourse within Syria and internationally. The purpose of the documentation SJAC collects is to create a record of the conflict and to push for appropriate justice mechanisms that will respond to the needs and interests of Syrians. These could include criminal trials, reparations, missing persons programs, truth commissions, criteria for who is allowed to hold public office, and the reform of institutions.

**WHAT IS INVOLVED:** If you decide to participate, the SJAC Documentation Coordinator will ask you to provide details on what you saw and experienced, where the events happened, who was involved, and the physical and psychological harm that you or others endured. The questions might be sensitive and could bring back traumatic or difficult memories. Interviews generally last between 30 to 90 minutes. The Documentation Coordinator may also ask if you have pictures, videos, medical records, or other forms of documentation. You are under no obligation to share these materials, but it could help greatly in SJAC's documentation process.

**BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION:** The benefits of participating in an interview with SJAC are that you 1) help build a record that can be used to drive justice and accountability overall for Syria and 2) that you have lodged your personal experience with an organization that has high chances of direct contribution to future justice mechanisms. Although lodging your story with SJAC will not by itself make you eligible for victims programs, it ensures that your story is on the record and increases the chance that a future justice mechanism will actually see and address the violations you experienced or observed. However, SJAC cannot guarantee that you will personally experience direct benefits from participating. The benefits, if any, will most likely be seen in the long term, and you will receive no monetary compensation for your participation in the interview.

**RISKS:** Participating in the interview involves some risks. SJAC takes significant precautions to ensure your safety both during and after the interview, but the ongoing conflict creates a high degree of insecurity. There is a risk that the security precautions SJAC has in place are subverted and your documentation or personal information is obtained by individuals who could cause physical or psychological harm to you or your family. There is also a risk that by recounting the details of your experience or observations, you may re-experience psychological trauma. There may also be other unexpected risks that SJAC cannot predict.

**CONFIDENTIALITY & SECURITY:** We will take the following steps to keep information about you confidential, and to protect it from unauthorized disclosure, tampering, or damage: 1) the interview location is secure and private; 2) the Documentation Coordinator does not speak about the interview to anyone outside of SJAC; and 3) your information is stored on hard drives and in a database that are kept safe and secure. Furthermore, SJAC will not share your interview, or other information about you, with any person or institution unless SJAC receives a formal request for data from an institution with the capacity to use the data for justice and accountability purposes and the institution follows confidentiality and security protocols that are as strict or stricter than SJAC's. **Should you exercise your right to remain anonymous, SJAC will anonymize your interview prior to sharing it with third parties.** \*\*\**By consenting to this interview, you acknowledge that SJAC may possibly share documentation of this interview with institutions that meet these criteria, and that this means there is a chance that persons acting on behalf of these institutions will try to contact you in the future if you do not request anonymity.*\*\*\*

**YOUR RIGHTS:** The interview is voluntary. You have the right not to participate and can end the interview at any time. Refusing to participate will not result in any penalty, and will not harm your relationship with SJAC.

**Name or Index # of Participant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_