



Press Statement

Sean McCormack, Spokesman

Washington, DC

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Harassment of Syrian Civil Society Activists

The United States condemns the harsh sentencing of seven young civil society activists, several of them university students, including Omar Abdullah, by the [Syrian](#) government. These individuals were sentenced to prison simply for forming a discussion group and posting their writings on a website. The unjust sentences reflect the Syrian regime's contempt for fundamental human rights, including freedom of expression and association. They also reflect a legal system devoid of legitimate standards.

Leading up to the trials, these young prisoners of conscience were held incommunicado for months and denied access to their lawyers and families. We call upon the Syrian government to immediately and unconditionally release all political prisoners and to observe its obligations under international human rights law. The United States remains committed to supporting Syrian citizens in their efforts to build a less corrupt, more prosperous, and more democratic country.

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