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BY CLDH

Between Crisis and Resilience: Human Rights Realities in Lebanon

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A Word from the Team

Lebanon's overlapping crises have pushed basic human rights to the margins of policy priorities. Every violation we document — from arbitrary detention to forced deportation — is a reminder that accountability must not be optional. Protecting the most vulnerable is not just a humanitarian duty; it is a legal and moral obligation that Lebanon and the international community must uphold.

- Nicole Bou Khalil, Programs Manager at CLDH



DEGRADING SECURITY SITUATION: A GROWING HUMANITARIAN CONCERN

• AIRSTRIKES SHAKE BEKAA, FIELD TEAMS FORCED TO REROUTE:

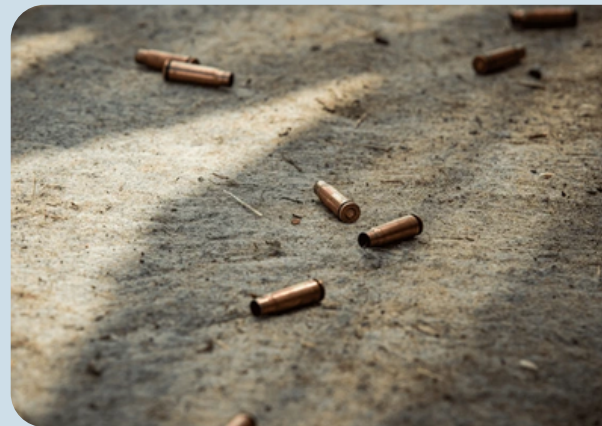
CLDH field teams documented Israeli airstrikes on several areas in the Bekaa, forcing residents to remain confined to their homes. Vulnerable populations, including new Syrian arrivals, faced interruptions in access to essential services, leaving many without support during periods of heightened insecurity. CLDH field teams had to reroute visits and delay some interventions, while certain neighborhoods became temporarily inaccessible. These operational challenges highlight the difficulties in maintaining consistent humanitarian support under volatile conditions, raising concerns under Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which affirms the right to life, liberty, and security.

• LAWLESSNESS AND IMPUNITY IN NORTH LEBANON:

The growing security chaos in North Lebanon has left residents living in fear, as stray bullets continue to endanger innocent lives. Oversight and accountability remain largely absent, allowing violence to persist unchecked. The team reports that even when shooters are detained, they are often released within days, protected by local leaders or their political connections. This cycle of impunity deepens instability and erodes public trust in the rule of law.

• GROWING INSECURITY IN REFUGEE CAMPS:

CLDH's team documented the poor living conditions in several camps which have worsened amid the spread of uncontrolled weapons and repeated security incidents. Families often remain confined to their shelters, unable to move freely or access much-needed assistance. This insecurity disrupts daily life and hinders the delivery of essential support. As a result, planned activities are frequently delayed or altered, deepening residents' hardship.



GROWING FEAR AND CONFUSION: SUPPORTING NEWCOMERS FACING VIOLATIONS TO BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

• MOVEMENT RESTRICTED, FREEDOMS LIMITED:

New arrivals living in areas with different community affiliations face strict travel restrictions and multiple checkpoints, as documented by CLDH field teams. These limitations create constant fear of harassment or assault and severely restrict access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and social support, violating basic rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Families are often forced to delay or forgo critical appointments, increasing their vulnerability and social isolation.

• ERODING PROTECTION: SYRIAN REFUGEES STRUGGLE FOR SAFETY AND DIGNITY:

CLDH colleagues stressed that Syrian families in Beirut continue to live in fear amid arbitrary deportations and constant threats of removal. Many lack shelter or access to essential services such as healthcare and education. The absence of General Security Office decisions for newly arrived Syrians leaves them in legal limbo, deepening their vulnerability. Without legal status, they are increasingly exploited, forced to work in exchange for basic shelter or limited protection. CLDH observed that families face administrative barriers, unstable living conditions, and heightened protection risks. These deportations and legal gaps violate Lebanon's international obligations, particularly the principle of non-refoulement under the Convention against Torture.

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No State Party shall expel, return 'refouler' or extradite a person to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture.

**ARTICLE 3 OF THE CONVENTION
AGAINST TORTURE AND OTHER
CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING
TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT(1984).**

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JUSTICE ON HOLD: STRIKES AND CORRUPTION PARALYZE LEBANON'S COURTS

• SYSTEM ON HOLD: HOW STRIKES AND MISCONDUCT UNDERMINE LEBANON'S JUDICIARY

CLDH's team highlighted the fact that strikes by court staff and judicial employees, along with reports of misconduct by some court clerks, continue to disrupt Lebanon's judicial system. Detainees are often not transferred to hearings on time; pretrial detention frequently exceeds six months, and arrest warrants issued in absentia are sometimes executed without proper notification. Files remain piled up in the Public Prosecutor's offices, and judges are frequently unable to rule on release requests or conduct timely hearings.



- **FAIR TRIAL RIGHTS UNDER THREAT:**

CLDH's team stressed that the legal team faced significant obstacles in accessing case files and issuing prosecutorial submissions, while rigid administrative procedures hinder legal follow-up. Detainees are often held in overcrowded cells, with limited access to counsel, and case files are frequently delayed in transfer between courts. These systemic failures undermine the right to a fair and public hearing as guaranteed under Article 14 of the ICCPR and contribute to the erosion of judicial independence and trust in the rule of law.



04

CHEATING THE SYSTEM, VIOLATING RIGHTS: THE REALITY FACED IN LEBANON

- **GUARDIANSHIP OVER AUTONOMY: RESTRICTING WOMEN'S RIGHT TO MARRY FREELY:**

In some Sharia Court, women who wish to officially register their marriage are still required to have their legal guardian present, even when they are adults over the age of 18. This requirement undermines women's autonomy and stands in contradiction to the Lebanese Constitution, which guarantees individual freedom and equality before the law.

- **EXPLOITATION UNDER THE GUISE OF SPONSORSHIP:**

As reported by CLDH frontliners, sponsors abuse the sponsorship system by compelling sponsored individuals to work without pay in return for the renewal of their residency permits. This coercive practice amounts to a form of modern-day slavery, violating fundamental human rights and labor protections.



- **CORRUPTION UNDERMINING JUDICIAL INTEGRITY:**

CLDH's team indicates that some court employees engage in extortion, demanding bribes to process release requests or expedite judicial decisions. Such practices severely compromise judicial integrity and independence, fundamental pillars of the right to a fair trial.



- **INHUMANE DETENTION PRACTICES UNDERMINE
RULE OF LAW:**

Despite Lebanon's commitments under international treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) – which prohibit arbitrary detention and inhumane treatment – detainees across the country continue to face prolonged incarceration in overcrowded and inadequate facilities. According to CLDH legal team, many remain in Internal Security Forces (ISF) or military holding cells for months without timely hearings. Juvenile detainees and foreign nationals are particularly affected, with limited access to legal representation, healthcare, and psychosocial support. These conditions constitute clear violations of the right to liberty, humane treatment, and fair trial guarantees.

“No Exceptional Circumstances whatsoever may be invoked as a justification of Torture.” - Article 2 of the Convention Against Torture

- **SYSTEMIC ADMINISTRATIVE FAILURES ERODE
JUDICIAL CREDIBILITY:**

CLDH's team has documented significant administrative inefficiencies that exacerbate detention challenges. Missing case files, delays in transferring records between courts, and failure to submit bail release requests hinder due process. Release orders are sometimes not recorded in the court's official registry, leaving families unable to track the status of their detained relatives. Overextended court personnel are assigned to multiple courts, creating systemic delays and compromising the efficient administration of justice.

Today, urgent reforms are needed to ensure timely hearings, proper case management, and equitable access to justice for all individuals in detention, in line with international standards.