



## **Urgent Statement** \_\_\_\_\_

**Beirut Municipality's personnel kill a refugee,  
Lebanese authorities should take  
immediate action**

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Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR)

Beirut, Lebanon

February 27

Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR) condemns the killing incident that occurred in the UNESCO area in Beirut on Friday February 23, which resulted in the killing of a Syrian refugee and the injury of another by members of the Beirut Municipality's Guard Regiment. What happened constitutes a horrific crime and a flagrant violation of human rights, especially regarding the right to life and physical safety.

ACHR stated today that on February 23, a Syrian man was killed, and another got severely injured due to the assault conducted by a policeman affiliated with the Beirut Municipality's Guard Regiment in the UNESCO area in Beirut. Eyewitnesses and acquaintances of the victims informed ACHR that the municipal police have set up a checkpoint near the UNESCO roundabout. One of the concerned members sneaked and hid among the cars a few meters from the checkpoint. When the two men riding a motorcycle passed by the street, and when they approached the municipal officer hiding among the cars, he surprised them with a kick that caused them to fall and suffer severe injuries. One of them died immediately after being transferred to the hospital, while the other sustained a serious head injury and remains in a critical condition. A recorded video clip from a surveillance camera at the scene captured what was testified by one of the witnesses, showing the policeman hiding between cars as well as the moment he deliberately kicked the two men off the motorcycle. Later that night, it was reported that the Army Intelligence Directorate proceeded to detain the checkpoint personnel and took them to the Ministry of Defense.

According to field activists' testimonies, the Beirut Municipality police, specifically the "Beirut Guard Regiment", has been setting up random checkpoints in order to seize unlicensed motorcycles, while discriminating against Syrian refugees. Syrian refugees' testimonies confirm that they're being subjected to detention, arbitrary detention, violence, and ill-treatment by municipal police officers. Moreover, their motorcycles are being confiscated without legal justification, as they are asked monetary amounts for their release. Discriminatory incidents have been recurring at security forces or other municipal police units' checkpoints, where Lebanese violators are being treated differently from Syrians, who are often facing verbal abuse along with having their vehicles and/or legal documents seized and detention. However, what happened in the UNESCO area is not only considered as ill-treatment but "attempted murder", resulting in the killing of a Syrian man and in the injury of another.

These testimonies reflect that these practices are not new; violations by Beirut Municipality personnel against Syrian refugees have been consistently reported, highlighting a dangerous recurring trend that must be addressed immediately. This highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive investigation into the incident and holding all concerned parties accountable. It remains imminent to halt these repeated violations by Beirut Municipality personnel against Syrian refugees, ensuring respect for their rights and dignity.

Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of ensuring the respect and dignity of Syrian refugees and addressing the discrimination they face seriously and effectively. Syrian refugees are victims of war, and there should be no justified ground for violating their rights or harassing them.

Despite the intervention of the Intelligence Directorate, we demand that the Lebanese authorities take serious actions to ensure the respect and dignity of Syrian refugees, conduct an immediate investigation into this incident, and hold those responsible for this crime accountable.