

Miller & Chevalier and SETF Announce Civil Lawsuit Against Assad Regime for Unlawful Detention, Torture, and Killing of American Psychotherapist

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WASHINGTON, DC, July 22, 2024 – Miller & Chevalier and the Syrian Emergency Task Force (SETF) announce today the filing of a civil lawsuit on behalf of the family of Majd Kamalmaz in the U.S. District Court in Washington, DC. The lawsuit seeks at least \$70 million in punitive and compensatory damages from the Assad regime for the unlawful detention, torture, and killing of Majd Kamalmaz.

Majd Kamalmaz was an American psychotherapist and humanitarian worker who dedicated his life to helping those in need, from survivors of Hurricane Katrina to victims of the tsunami in Indonesia to the Bosnian genocide. At the time of his abduction, Majd was treating refugees from war-torn Syria. Tragically, he was stopped at an Assad regime checkpoint in Damascus. Despite tireless efforts by his family, SETF, and others, Majd remained unjustly detained and endured unimaginable suffering until the family received official confirmation in May 2024 from the U.S. government of his death.

"Today, on behalf of the Kamalmaz family, we have taken just the first step towards holding the Syrian regime accountable for its crimes against Majd Kamalmaz which culminated in his murder. The family filed this suit to bring international attention to Syria's crimes against thousands of victims and is counting on the U.S. government to initiate criminal charges against Syria," said Kirby Behre, Member at Miller & Chevalier and lead counsel on behalf of the Kamalmaz family.

The lawsuit, filed under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act's (FSIA) "state sponsor of terrorism" exception, seeks compensatory damages for wrongful death, assault and battery, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and false imprisonment. The plaintiffs also seek punitive damages, bringing the total claim to at least \$70 million.

Maryam Kamalmaz, daughter of Majd Kamalmaz and SETF team member, stated: **"I know that if my father was with me right now, he would not rest until all men, women, and children are released from the Assad regime's concentration camps. In his honor, we plan to hold the regime fully accountable for its crimes against Americans and Syrians alike, and we call on the U.S. Senate to urgently pass the Assad Anti-Normalization Act for the sake of Americans still held by this criminal regime."**

This development represents a significant step towards justice for the Kamalmaz family, and reinforces Miller & Chevalier's and SETF's unwavering commitment to bringing the Assad regime to account for its ongoing human rights abuses.

About Miller & Chevalier

Founded in 1920, Miller & Chevalier is a Washington, DC law firm with a global perspective and leading practices in Litigation, White Collar Defense and Investigations, International Law, and Business & Human Rights. Miller & Chevalier's litigation team is at the forefront of holding terrorist nations such as Iran and Syria accountable for their atrocities against U.S. citizens. The firm represents victims of torture by state sponsors of terrorism and files suit in U.S. federal court to hold such countries accountable for their crimes. For more information on the firm, visit www.millerchevalier.com.

About the Syrian Emergency Task Force

The Syrian Emergency Task Force is a Syrian-American 501(c)(3) headquartered in Washington, DC. SETF works tirelessly to bring an end to the killing in Syria through humanitarian initiatives, advocacy, and the pursuit of justice and accountability for war crimes. Today, SETF stands as the most notable American organization working on Syria, as evidenced by the impact it has made both on the ground in Syria and the U.S. SETF serves as a resource for education by bringing the voices of the Syrian people to the

international stage. From testimonies at the U.N Security Council to local grassroots community fundraisers, the team brings together like-minded people who are determined to fight for a safe and free Syria away from the vicious dictatorship.