

The Truth and Justice Charter conducts a study visit to Cyprus to learn about the its experience in revealing the fate of the missing persons



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SYNERGY نآر
HEVESTI ههسته

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[The Truth and Justice Charter](#) group went to Cyprus for a study visit between the 25th and the 28th of April, 2023. From a comparative perspective, the visit aimed to learn about the different aspects of the Cypriote experience in clarifying the fate of persons who went missing during the civil war between 1963 and 1974.

The trip was organised in collaboration with [Impunity Watch](#) and [the Committee of missing persons in Cyprus \(CMP\)](#). It included a three-day programme of meetings with the Committee which oversees the work of the search teams, members of the technical search teams and representatives of the families of the victims' associations from the Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot sides.

In 1981, inter-communal talks led to the creation of a collaborative, UN-led Committee on Missing Persons. Subsequently, a joint list of missing persons was drawn up, including victims from both communities. The objectives of the CMP were crystallised around revealing the fate of missing persons by excavating, identifying and returning the remains to families. The list is composed of 2002 persons, 492 Turkish Cypriote and 1510 Greek Cypriote. So far, the process of graves excavation, identifying the remains and returning them to the families, after comparison of the DNA data, is still ongoing.

During the first day, we met multiple teams of archaeologists, anthropologists, archival and data analysis experts and psychiatrists working to keep pace with the phases of revealing the fate, from localizing the burial sites to opening the graves, exhuming the bodies and identifying the remains, returning them to the families. On the second day, the Charter group visited a site where bodies may be buried in order to closely examine the mechanisms and working methods of the team responsible for excavating the graves.

On the last day of the visit, the Truth and Justice Charter met representatives of associations of victims' families from both the Turkish Cypriote and Greek Cypriot sides, as well as a bi-communal association representing families of Greek as well as Turkish Cypriot missing persons in order to hear from them about their stories and suffering of enforced disappearance committed by militias from both sides. The Charter group was able to learn more about their perceptions and views on the work and role of the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus and the circumstances in which the disclosure of the fate of missing persons in Cyprus takes place. Dozens of Cypriot families on both sides are still active and working with different methods and tools to reveal the fate of their relatives, despite the 60 years that have passed since their disappearance for Turkish Cypriots and the 50 years for Greek Cypriots.

This visit takes place in a context where the "Truth and Justice Charter" is trying to learn from the experiences of other countries and societies in enabling families domains to apply the principle of the right to truth and the tools, methods and mechanisms to reveal the fate of missing persons. The visit also coincides with the efforts of the Truth and Justice Charter associations to establish an international institution to disclose the fate of more than 100 000 Syrians who have been forcibly disappeared since 2011.



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Hevdestî - Synergy Association for Victims, is a non-governmental, non-profit organization, aimed at educating and providing a platform and a space for victims to represent themselves and claim their rights. Synergy was founded on March 11, 2021, to seek justice for the victims of conflict in North and East Syria and to contribute to the process of accountability and justice.

We work to document all human rights violations in North and East Syria, and preserve evidence, documents and testimonies in order to contribute to the processes of truth-revealing, accountability and justice. In addition to build the capacities of the victims and advocate for their issues, with the aim of building a society demanding its rights.

We are committed to the highest degrees of accuracy and integrity, including seeking multiple perspectives to develop an in-depth and analytical understanding of events. We are cognizant of our responsibility towards the victims and witnesses who share their experiences with us. We are working closely with a wide range of actors in local and international civil society to achieve the greatest possible impact.



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