

SFU Press Releases Collection

These archival copies have been generated from web press releases maintained and originally written by SFU Communications and Marketing. Where possible, an effort has been made to preserve the public comments left on the website as well as any included photos or other images. All textual content should be faithful to the original press releases; contact numbers have been removed but they have not otherwise been altered in any way. However, this collection of documents spans multiple generations of web authoring software and not all formatting will be exact.

Maisoun Almasri, a member of the White Helmets.

MEDIA RELEASE

Syrian Nobel Peace Prize nominees the White Helmets in Vancouver for PeaceTalk

April 05, 2018

[Tweet](#) [Facebook](#) [Pinterest](#) [Email](#) [Print](#)

Contact:

Ian Bryce, University Communications, 604.773.8134, Ian_Bryce@sfu.ca

Michaela Davies, Public Relations, PeaceGeeks, 778.996.1408, pr@peacegeeks.org

[PeaceGeeks](#) and [Simon Fraser University International](#) are hosting a PeaceTalk with the [White Helmets](#) on Thursday, April 5, at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue. The event features an exclusive opportunity for the public to hear from three frontline members of the Nobel Peace Prize nominated group in person through a moderated panel dialogue.

WHAT:

The White Helmets, officially known as Syria Civil Defence, is a volunteer organization that actively conducts urban search and rescue of civilians injured by bombings or trapped under the rubble of destroyed buildings in Syria. Formerly shopkeepers, bakers, teachers and ordinary citizens, these unarmed volunteers have saved over 100,000 lives since the outbreak of the Syrian uprising in 2011, earning them Nobel Peace Prize nominations in 2016 and 2017.

A recent documentary film about the White Helmets also won the Oscar for Best Documentary Short in 2017.

The upcoming PeaceTalk includes a brief video introduction to the White Helmets' work followed by a moderated discussion and audience Q&A with the visiting White Helmets volunteers. The event will also be available for [viewing online](#).

Tickets are free or by donation and available on Eventbrite [here](#). All proceeds will go towards the White Helmets.

WHEN:

- April 5, 2018
- 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

WHERE:

- Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue – Asia Pacific Hall

- 580 West Hastings Street, Vancouver

WHY:

Since the Syrian uprising began:

- According to the **United Nations** around 13.5 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria.
- More than 50 percent of Syria's population is currently displaced.
- One-in-every-two people crossing the Mediterranean this year—half a million people—are Syrians escaping the conflict in their country.
- According to the **Amnesty International**, since 2011, thousands of people have died in custody in Syria's brutal detention centers and tens of thousands more have experienced shocking torture.
- 11 million people have been forced from their homes.
- 17,000 people have been killed in Syria's prisons.
- According to **Syrian Network for Human Rights**, 65,000 people have been arrested by government security forces and are missing in unofficial detention centers.
- The Syrian government has used chemical weapons and targeted schools, hospitals and markets with bombs in addition to starving civilians.

WHO:

Maisoun Almasri

Maisoun worked for the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) for four years as a journalist in the city of Daraa, but since the beginning of the Syrian revolution she then worked independently to document the Assad forces' violations against civilians. Maisoun has also helped with the schooling system to support children. She joined the White Helmets since the founding of the organization in 2015 as a volunteer for Centre 1511 in Daraa, and now acts as the person in charge of women's affairs.

Mustafa Almahamed

Mustafa previously worked in auto parts and car repair. When the revolution started, he responded by helping both in the community and as a paramedic. In 2013 Mustafa founded a youth volunteer team to help fix damages caused to water and electricity networks and other areas. In 2015, he joined the White Helmets. As part of the White Helmets, he was the manager of the Machinery department until the beginning of 2017, and now acts as the manager of the Syria Civil Defence in southern Syria.

Nedal Izdden

Nedal is a Board Member of the Syria Civil Defence, and one of the founders of the Syria Civil Defence in Homs in 2014. He is a dentist and basketball player. Nedal worked as a liaison officer for besieged areas. He now works in the administrative field and educates volunteers on International Humanitarian Law.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS:

Members from the White Helmets will be available for interviews and photo opportunities prior to and following the event. A translator will also be available. Please contact Ian Bryce or Michaela Davies for interview inquiries.

ABOUT PEACETALKS:

PeaceTalks are a speaker series started by Vancouver non-profit PeaceGeeks, with the aim of engaging Canadians on

discussions of critical and timely topics related to peace, human rights and tech. The PeaceTalk with the White Helmets is our 38th PeaceTalk to date, and our first one of 2018. PeaceGeeks is pleased to make this talk possible through partnership with SFU International.

-

ABOUT PEACEGEEKS:

PeaceGeeks is a non-profit organization based in Vancouver that creates technology solutions for peace and humanitarian action. Last year, PeaceGeeks won the Google Impact Challenge for Services Advisor Pathways, an all-encompassing app that fast-tracks newcomers in Canada on a pathway to successful resettlement by connecting them with a personalized directory of settlement services relevant to their particular needs, circumstances and stages of settlement. Services Advisor Pathways is based on PeaceGeeks' prototype web app, Services Advisor, which is used by UNHCR in Jordan and Turkey to provide over 3 million refugees with access to real-time information and location of clean water, shelter and other life-saving services.

ABOUT BRITISH CONSULATE-GENERAL IN VANCOUVER

The British Consulate-General in Vancouver represents the UK government in British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territories. The British High Commission in Canada maintains and develops relations between the UK and Canada.

We work closely with the Canadian government and partners across the country to develop and maintain a wide range of substantive partnerships of real value to both countries. These partnerships cover business, defence, climate change, science and innovation, education, and culture.

Find out more on our [UK and Canada news page](#).

ABOUT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY:

As Canada's engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded more than 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is Canada's leading comprehensive research university and is ranked one of the top universities in the world. With campuses in British Columbia's three largest cities – Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey – SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 35,000 students, and boasts more than 150,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

- [For the Media](#)
- [For Faculty and Staff](#)
- [About SFU](#)
- [SFU News](#)

[Admission](#)
[Programs](#)
[Learning](#)
[Research](#)
[Community](#)
[About](#)

[Maps + directions](#)
[Library](#)
[Academic Calendar](#)
[Road Report](#)
[Give to SFU](#)
[Emergency Information](#)

CONNECT WITH US

[Facebook](#)
[Instagram](#)
[Twitter](#)
[YouTube](#)

CONTACT US

Simon Fraser University
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, B.C.
Canada V5A 1S6