



## NATIONAL ARAB AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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### PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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#### NAAMA DECRIES KILLING OF PHYSICIANS AND HEALTH WORKERS IN SYRIA

**BIRMINGHAM, MI, February 2, 2012** — As an organization of Arab American physicians and health professionals dedicated to healing and to the preservation of life, the National Arab American Medical Association (NAAMA) strongly condemns the killing of Dr. Abd-al-Razzaq Jbeiro, secretary general of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. Dr. Jbeiro was shot dead on Wednesday, January 25, 2012, as he traveled outside the capital Damascus in a clearly marked vehicle.

Since the outbreak of violence in Syria ten months ago, NAAMA has been alarmed by the increased targeting and mistreatment of volunteer workers and health professionals. We are disturbed by the growing number of reported violations of physicians' and health workers' human rights and safety.

According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), there have been repeated incidents in which Red Crescent ambulances were shot at and volunteers wounded and the installation of checkpoints and harassment that have prevented ambulances and medical workers from evacuating and treating the wounded, some of whom have died as a result.

NAAMA echoes the statement issued by the ICRC calling on all those involved in the violence to spare Red Cross and Red Crescent staff members and other volunteer health professionals. Furthermore, NAAMA calls on all forces in this conflict to immediately halt violence against innocent citizens as well as the medical professionals whose job it is to heal the sick and injured. As physicians and as Americans of Arab descent, we continue to feel deep sympathy and concern for the Syrian people living through senseless violence. We call upon those perpetrating such violence to honor the neutrality of human rights organizations and exercise compassionate restraint and stop the killings and reprisals.

It has become very difficult to get medical supplies and services be delivered to the affected areas by the humanitarian organizations. NAAMA will continue to monitor the situation and to look for practical ways to extend its humanitarian services to the victims.

Founded in 1975, NAAMA is a non-profit professional, educational and humanitarian organization for Arab American physicians, dentists, pharmacists and other licensed healthcare professionals. NAAMA's nearly 1,500 members across the United States in 27 chapters represent multiple medical specialties and Arab ethnicities.

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