

The International Alliance's Airstrikes Killed 24 Civilians and Destroyed a Number of Vital Buildings
In the same period of time, the Syrian regime killed 1447 civilians

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Introduction

The international alliance started a military campaign against ISIS on 23 September, 2014. On that day, a number of airstrikes were carried out on Ar-Raqqa. These airstrikes targeted the governorate building, At-Tala'e military camp, and the State Security branch in addition to targeting At-Tabaqa military airbase, Tal base city, and Brigade 93 in Ain Eissa town. Also, Der Ezzor was targeted where Al-Bokamal city, located near the Iraqi borders in the east, was shelled as well as some sites for An-Nusra front in Aleppo northern countryside.

Shortly after, ISIS evacuated most of its main centers in Ar-Raqqa and Der Ezzor to relocate. The faction moved to new centers that were located in residential areas and established military checkpoints nearby.

Despite the daily focused bombarding by the international alliance forces against ISIS centers, supplier roads, and oil establishments, the campaign haven't achieved any notable results on the short run except, maybe, for the relative success in Ain Al-Arab city. Seemingly, the airstrikes weren't enough although it was accurate and concentrated because it lacked any real coordination with real local efforts on the ground and didn't address the basic needs of the IDPs who fled from ISIS's territories when the airstrikes began. The war on ISIS is progressing only from a military standpoint without achieving any legal or humanitarian results.

What is worse is that the Syrian regime took advantage of the fact that decision-makers and international media were completely focusing on the war against ISIS to recklessly escalate its attacks against the Syrian people since 23 September, 2014. In this period of time, the Syrian regime has used poison gasses three times; twice in Damascus – Joubar neighborhood and once in Damascus countryside – Harasta. Furthermore, SNHR documented the targeting of two schools, two hospitals, two markets, and three mosques by the Syrian regime. Also, the Syrian regime killed, in the same period of time, no less than 1447 civilians including 138 children and 103 women.



Certainly, ISIS lost a number of fighters. Nevertheless, no party can say how many ISIS fighter have been killed as the faction doesn't publish such information on its own pages or even in Jihadist forums. The accuracy of these statistics remains questionable even by the standards of approximate documentation due to the fact that there are no indicators that can be used to issue such statistics. There are no names, pictures, or video footages which are necessities for the documentation process. Therefore, such statistics are usually used as a media propaganda in order to obtain political and material advantages and media publicity.

Targeting only ISIS and letting the Syrian regime and its extremist Shiite militias, whose crimes exceed ISIS's, to continue perpetrating ethical cleansing massacres in Aleppo villages, Damascus countryside, and Homs countryside send the wrong message to some of the Syrian people. This policy have evoked many people in Der Ezzor and Al-Hassaka to join ISIS after some of them were fighting it.

Fadl Abdulghani, head and founder of SNHR, says: ***“ISIS has killed many innocent civilians and has been practicing extremely brutal policies. However, the Syrian regime has killed 150 times more civilians than ISIS. The emergence of ISIS is the natural result of the international community's silence on the crimes against humanity that the Syrian regime has and still perpetrating to this moment.”***

SNHR was among the first organizations that became aware and warned of the danger that ISIS represents where it published an extensive unprecedented study, at that time, of approximately 52 pages about ISIS and its violations. Additionally, SNHR has been recording and documenting the violations perpetrated by ISIS.

Incident where victims were killed

SNHR documented the killing of no less than 24 civilians including six children and six ladies as a result of the international alliance's airstrikes across Syria from the beginning of the military campaign on 23 September, 2014 until 22 October, 2014 as follows:

1- Tuesday 23 September, 2014

An international alliance warplane targeted locations for An-Nusra front in Idlib northern countryside – Kafr Daryan village at approximately 3:30 AM. The airstrike targeted four barns, which were points for An-Nusra front, two of whom were weapons and ammunitions warehouses.

After the shelling, explosions continued for a few minutes because of the ammunition and shells that detonated in the warehouses. Due to the huge pressure caused by the explosions, a two-floor residential home collapsed which was less than 100 m away from the warehouses. 13 victims were killed including five children and five women according to SNHR documentation.

The following URL contains [the names of the victims](#) of this shelling

The following is a previous investigation by ISIS about [Kafr Daryan massacre](#)

2- Sunday 28 September, 2014

Approximately at 2:50 AM, the international alliance warplanes targeted a small plastic workshop near the Old Bridge in Ar-Raqqa. As a result, the owner of the workshop ([Ismail Al-Abbou](#)) was killed. Investigations didn't prove that there were any ISIS presence before or during the attack

3- Thursday 16 October, 2014

At approximately 10:00 PM, the international alliance warplanes targeted a gathering of oil traders around an oil field area (Ar-Rwyes, Al-Farkh, and Al-Joubi oil wells) in Al-Hassaka – Ash-Shadadi city countryside. The gathering is 60 km away from the city. The wells are under ISIS's control and usually are guarded always while it managed and run by civilians whom ISIS pays them. Those civilians are from Kabiba town and they work on selling oil to the traders, owners of the primitive oil refineries, and power planes.

SNHR documented the killing of five civilians, including a child that was with his father at the site, in addition

to six injured who all were oil traders and tank drivers. Also, the shelling caused fires in many vehicles and cars. Investigations showed that there were ISIS fighters and military vehicles at the time of the attack.

Names of the civilians who were killed in Al-Hassaka countryside – Al-Fadghami village:

Mahidi As-Saleh Mohammad Al-Khalil, Raed Mohammad Al-Ali Al-Abd, Mahmoud Allawie Al-Hams, Saleh Ahmad Musleh Al-Fadel, and the child Laith Khalaf Al-Mashieh.

4- Friday 17 October, 2014

Around 7:00 PM, the international alliance warplanes targeted a gas station and an oil well in Der Ezzor countryside which is located near Khasham town. The oil well is for Koniko gas plant and it is three KM away from it. The shelling caused fires in a number of tanks. The airstrikes killed three civilians who used to work in the oil trading field. Usually, many people come to this well to buy petrol and oil. Also, we documented 11 injured including critical cases in addition to six who are still missing.

Furthermore, some of ISIS military vehicles were damaged.

Names of the victims:

Abdulkarim Hassan Ash-Shaher, Adnan Al-Abd Al-Eid, and Ahmad Ali Al-Afien

On the same day, at 8:00 PM, the international alliance warplanes targeted an oil refinery near Al-Jurathi town in eastern Der Ezzor countryside to kill one civilian (Hamza Hamoud Al-Ghazi from Al-Jurathi town) and injure two others. There were no ISIS presence at the time of the shelling.

Most significant targeted vital buildings

1- Shelling Jarabouls water station

Jarabouls water station is located near the Euphrates River, it supplies water to 15 villages. On Thursday 2 October, 2014 the international alliance targeted the station with three missiles which partially destroyed it. This led to a complete water cut off in the fifteen villages such as: Kaklja, Al-Halwaniya, Bier Tahtani, Ber Qouqani, Triekhem, Yousuf Bek, and Al-Ihiemar.

The residents resorted to use the well to get water which is not safe to drink. This caused many illness cases. Although the city is under ISIS's control, SNHR investigations showed that there were no military point near the station during or before the attack.

The water station (before and after the shelling) was targeted with three missiles on 2 October, 2014:



Jarabouls: the aftermath of the shelling that targeted the water station in Jarabouls and shows the destruction

2- Grain mills in Aleppo countryside – Minbij

Approximately at 7:15 AM the international alliance warplanes carried out three airstrikes targeted the grain mills area which is 2 Km to the east of Minbij city in eastern Aleppo countryside. Minbij is under ISIS's control.

The first airstrike: targeted warehouses that were used to store nylon and canvas bags that are used to load grains. The airstrike destroyed the warehouse and started a fire there which caused a huge smoke cloud. The fire lasted for more than six hours before the local civil defense teams managed to put it out.

The second airstrike: targeted a gathering of heavy military vehicles that the faction used to put to the north of the grain mills. Most of these military vehicles are out of commission. ISIS managed to take over this vehicles, which were for Ahrar Ash-Sham movement, after it took over the area in last February.

The third airstrike: targeted a small building on Minbij – Raqrouzaq road. ISIS used to use this two-floor building to house its fighters. However, ISIS evacuated the building beforehand right after the airstrikes begun.

These airstrikes didn't result in a severe destruction in the grain mills. However, it was a threat to about 120,000 Tons of grains that are stored in these mills. This the second largest grain stores in Aleppo after Khan Touman mills.

The ovens in Minbij city and its countryside relies on the flour that these mills supply. If this mills were damaged, it would mean that more than 650,000 people will be unable to get bread.

Picture of the fires in the nylon bags in Minbij mills

The mills location on the map

C- Koniko gas plant in Der Ezzor countryside

The plant is located in Der Ezzor eastern countryside (20 Km to the east of Der Ezzor city) Badyat Khasham village. The plant is the largest in Syria with a daily production capacity of 2000 gas tanks, each tank has a price of about 500 Syrian pounds. Furthermore, the gas plant produce 3000 barrels of Kondensat (petroleum alternative) each barrel is 15,000 Syrian pounds. Additionally, the plant supply the power plant in Homs – Jandar which supplies electricity to a number of Syrian governorates and the power plant in Al-Omar oil field which also supplies electricity to large in area in Der Ezzor eastern countryside.

The oil field is completely under ISIS's control. Clashes erupted between ISIS and An-Nusra front at the beginning of the year because of the field in Der Ezzor before ISIS managed to take over on 8 September, 2014. This establishment is the largest of its kind in Syria.

On Monday 29 September, 2014, the international alliance warplanes targeted the main gate of the gas plant which is 700m away from the gas tanks. Investigation showed that there were an ISIS military checkpoint nearby. Also, a prayer, located next to the main gate, was damaged.

Some of the workers told us that productivity has been reduced to 1000 gas tanks per day. This was because many workers are now afraid to come to the establishment after it was shelled

Picutre of Koniko gas plant

It's difficult to estimate the damage that the shelling will cause or the social and economic fallouts of the attack.

D. Oil fields and refineries in Der Ezzor countryside

Der Ezzor governorate is an oil-rich area. Many airplanes targeted the oil refineries widely in Der Ezzor countryside. These oil refineries are the most significant economic source for ISIS.

Some of the residents and workers told us that the international alliance airstrikes destroyed most of the oil refineries.

On Tuesday 23 September, 2014, the international alliance warplanes targeted At-Tabni town in western Der Ezzor countryside. Some of the airstrikes targeted a salt mine and killed a number of victims. SNHR investigation indicated that all the victims were ISIS fighters and not civilians as we noted in a previous report.

In Al-Bokamal Badiya, the international alliance warplanes targeted Al-Hasyan well on 25 September, 2014 which burned it completely and put it out of commission.

On 17 October, 2014, the international alliance warplanes targeted Koundstat well which is one of the largest oil wells in the area. The shelling, which targeted the well in Der Ezzor eastern countryside, put the well out of commission. SNHR documented the killing of three civilians and 11 injuries.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The international alliance forces should respect the international humanitarian law and the customary international law. The states of the international alliance be held responsible for the violations that we documented some of in this report. Furthermore, the states should bear the consequences of these violations and insure that it won't occur again.

The international alliance warplanes against the oil refineries and wells led to a significant price increase of the oil which caused a severe economic crisis. Measures should be adopted to aid the residents of these areas and reduce the economic fallouts. We believe that a safe zone, where camps can be built, would significantly help the IDPs and the refugees that might leave Lebanon and Turkey and the other countries to live in the safe zone. Civilians must be protected from the brutality of the Syrian regime and its extremist militias. A no-fly zone should be imposed in order to put an end to the daily barrel bombs shelling as well as protecting the Syrian civilians from the brutality of ISIS.

