

## Jabhat Al-Nusra (Al-Nusra Front) is the responsible of cutting off the water supplies to Aleppo

### Scope of the Report:

Documenting the cutting off of the water supplies to Aleppo

### Methodology

This report is based on the investigation conducted by SNHR team with activists and eyewitnesses in Aleppo governorate. Additionally, this report includes two accounts of two of the residents who live in Aleppo. Please know that the witnesses' names have been changed upon their request.

### Details

Aleppo gets its water supply through Al-Khafsah and Al-Babeery stations which are in the eastern countryside, controlled by ISIS since the beginning of February 2014. The two stations have stopped before on Sunday and Monday 20-21 April, 2014 when the Public Establishment for Transmission Electricity, which is affiliated to the Syrian government, abstained from providing the necessary electrical power to launch the engines. However it resumed its operations quickly after talks between the government on one side, and the Red Crescent and some of Aleppo people on the other side.

In order to supply water to Aleppo residents the main pumps must work, the pump in Soliman Al-Halabi neighborhood is the biggest and most important. All of these pumps require considerable electrical power to function properly. On Friday 18/4/2014, The Shariah Board, affiliated to the armed opposition, has had the electricity supply cut off to Aleppo city entirely in both the rebel-held areas and the areas that are under the Syrian regime control. Al-Sharia stated that:

***“The Syrian government forces have to stop its daily shelling with barrel bombs and rockets against the rebel-held residential areas. The Sharia Board in return will have the power supply resumed.”***

The engines kept working on the standby generators that are powered by diesel, which caused the water to reach once every three days.

From Sunday 27/4 until Friday 2/5, the electrical engines worked again intermittently, and stopped on Friday because of the barrel bomb shelling on the road between Al-Kindi hospital and Al-Owayja village, the shelling destroyed the main water pipe, and water was everywhere in the streets until it reached Al-Jandool square. The workmen of the water institute and the

Red Crescent organization, with the help of some residents, fixed the destroyed pipe and the water supply resumed on the next day, 3/4/2014.

On the next day, 4/4/2014, General Administration of the Services, affiliated to Jabhat Al-Nusra and Al-Sharia Board of the armed opposition decided to stop the engines of Solaiman Al-Halabi pumps causing the ceasing of the water supply to Aleppo entirely in both the rebel-held areas and the areas under the Syrian government control.

Fadel Abd-Al-Ghany, head of [SNHR](#), says:

*“Cutting off water supply to the residential areas to gain military advantage rises to be a war crime. This unacceptable criminal act puts the lives of about 2 million people at jeopardy. Respecting the basic human rights in the rebel-held areas is fully the responsibility of the rebels.”*

[SNHR](#) contacted with one of the people of Al-Sha’ar neighborhood, a neighborhood under the armed opposition control, he offered the network his testimony:

*“Since the end of April, the water supply situation in Aleppo is worsening. The water supply are being cut-off along with a frequent electricity outages, and with the beginning of May it got worse, as the water has been cut off for more than eight days.*

*“Both the regime forces and the FSA are accusing each other, but in fact we’re living a disastrous situation after our water supplies ran out. Currently our only way of getting water is the wells where we stand in long lines to have a little of it.”*

*Drinking water isn’t available anymore. We’ve bought tanks and containers, the water it contain is probably unhealthy and it is also very costly.”*

Mr. Ibrahim Falah, living in Al-Shahba neighborhood, under the control of the Syrian government forces has talked to [SNHR](#) about the living situation with the water supply cut-off:

*“The crisis has begun after the water supply has been cut off for more than eight days in some neighborhoods and more than 11 in others.”*

The prices of the mineral drinking water have become four times its original price, also the water for daily uses are coming now in 20-lites containers that cost 6500 pound. Some of the containers that were used to transfer hydrocarbons are being used now to transfer water after painting its interior with a special material, I don’t know if that’s really safe. Some of the people depend now on wells where hundreds of people are standing in lines waiting their turns. We’re on the verge of a humanitarian disaster in every sense of the word.”

## **Pictures and attachments:**

[A video footage documents the people in the rebel-held neighborhood with the water being cut](#)

## **Reccomendations**

### **The Syrian Opposition**

The Syrian opposition should take immediate action to press on Al-Nusra front and the Sharia Board to stop this crime, also it should make sure that it won't happen again, and try to reach those who made that decision to expose them and take serious actions against them.

### **The Syrian Government**

To stop immediately its brutal shelling against residential neighborhoods using barrel bombs and indiscriminate missiles which kill and wound ten of people every day.

### **The Security Council**

The Security Council should find the appropriate way as soon as possible to prevent the Syrian government from buying weapons after it was proven that it is using these weapons to perpetrate war crimes and crimes against humanity, the Security Council should also hold those who are providing the Syrian government with weapons like Russia and Hezbollah responsible and consider them partners in these crimes.

In the same sense, the Security Council should impose an arms embargo against the armed groups that have perpetrated documented war crimes.

