



## **More Than 6524 Barrel Bombs Dropped On Syria since the Russian Military Intervention 1286 Barrel Bombs Killed Two Civilians, including a Woman in February 2016**

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### **Introduction**

Unlike the Russian ambassador's announcement in the United Nations, that the Syrian regime stopped using barrel bombs, however SNHR's daily documentation proved the contrary. In this monthly report we present documented cases by time, place, and images of the Syrian regime's use of barrel bombs.

By daily observing and recording violations, after the beginning of the popular protests in March 2011, we found out that first significant use of barrel bombs by government forces (Military forces, security forces, local militias, and foreign Shiite militias) was on Monday 1 October, 2012 in Idlib – Silqean town where a helicopter dropped a barrel bomb on a two-floor residential building which collapsed completely.

It is worth noting that this might not be the first time barrel bombs were used but it was the first time it was used in such a notable manner. The international community was not familiar with that kind of weapon yet. Barrel bombs sometimes weigh quarter of ton and rely on the free fall principle. These barrels are random weapons and locally made, since it is less expensive, causes massive destruction, and causes a great loss of lives. 99% of the casualties are civilians, where the percentage of targeted women and children ranges between 12 and 35%.

The Security Council waited a year and a half before adopting resolution 2139 on 22 February, 2014 which condemned the use of barrel bombs and mentioned it by name: "Demands that all parties immediately cease all attacks against civilians, as well as the indiscriminate employment of weapons in populated areas, including shelling and aerial bombardment, such as the use of barrel





bombs” The Syrians welcomed the resolution because it expressed an intention to take further action in the events of in compliance.

The Syrian government, through its allies at the Security Council first and the other states’ failure to shoulder their legal and moral role, disregarded resolution 2139 the same way it disregarded resolution 2118, adopted on 27 September, 2013, resolution 2042 and 2043, adopted in April 2012 and resolution 2209 that was issued on 6 March 2015.

In this report depict the toll of barrel bombs used, the shelling outcomes and aftermath, in addition to the most significant facilities that were shelled with barrel bombs keeping in mind all the challenges and obstacles we face.

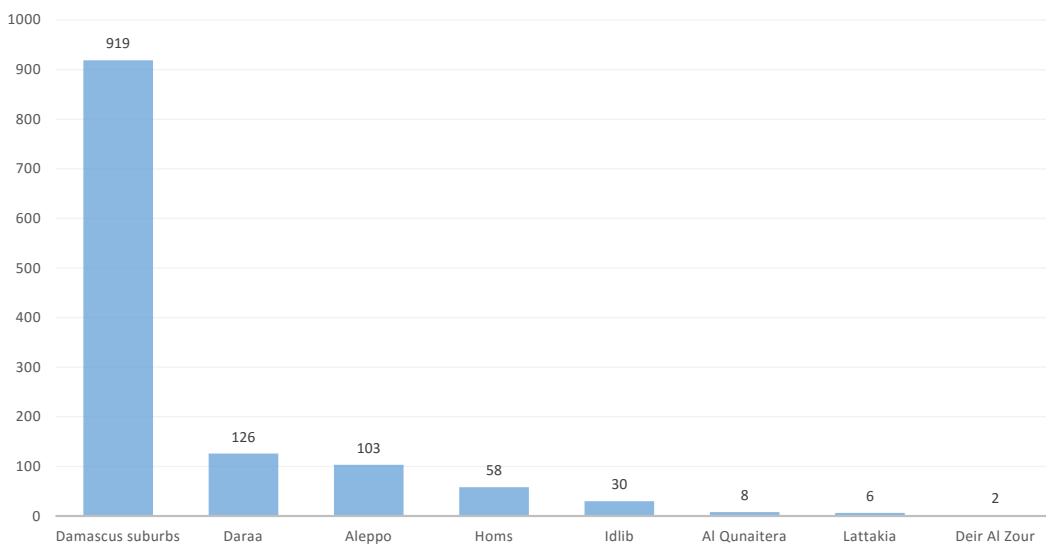
The only conflict party who possesses this kind of weapons is the ruling regime; however its officials deny the use of these barrel bombs as weapons just like they deny all their other crimes. Additionally, the current government prohibits all different kinds of media outlets or independent international organizations. This report depicts the use of barrel bombs by the Syrian government only, regardless of the other conflict parties like armed opposition, extremist Islamic groups and Kurdish Self Management Forces) since they do not possess airpower.

SNHR studies and reports prove that most of the attacks were deliberate and targeted crowded civilian areas. The government’s aerial bombardment, displacement and destruction it causes are apparently aimed at thwarting the establishment of any governance model that may serve as a substitute for the Assad government.

## II- Executive Summary:

### A- Government Barrel Bomb that were dropped in February 2016:

SNHR was able to document not less than 1286 barrel bombs that were dropped by government forces in February 2016, detailed as follows:





These barrel bombs killed two civilians according to SNHR's documentation team detailed as follows: 2 civilians were killed in Daraa including a woman.

Since the military intervention of the Russian government on 30 September 2015 and up till the end of January 2016, not less than 5238 barrel bombs have been used by the Syrian government which killed 189 individuals including 36 children and 26 women.

The Russian permanent mission at the UNSC told SNHR that it repeatedly asked the Syrian regime to stop dropping barrel bombs and that the use of these weapons has stopped. However, our previous reports prove otherwise.

We have noticed that there were some sort of coordination between the Syrian government forces and the Russian forces whereas the Russian forces intensify its airstrikes on Syria's north. However, the Syrian government warplanes concentrate its airstrikes on the southern governorates and Damascus suburbs, in addition to the northern governorates.

### **B- Targeting Vital Facilities:**

We could not document all destructions caused by barrel bombs, since it is enormous therefore we recorded the number of vital facilities targeted by government military aviation, i.e. markets, schools, hospitals and houses of worship.

During February 2016, not less than 4 vital facilities were damaged by government barrel bombs:

#### **Places of worship:**

Mosques: 1

#### **Educational Facilities:**

Schools: 1

#### **Medical Centers:**

Medical Facilities: 2

## **III- Report Details:**

### **A- Death toll due to the use of explosive barrel bombs in February:**

On 8 February 2016, a woman was killed due to her wounds after the government barrel bomb shelling on Al Harak city in Daraa suburbs that is under the control of armed opposition.

On 11 February 2016, government helicopters dropped 3 barrel bombs on Naseeb town in Daraa suburbs that is under the control of armed opposition which killed one civilian.





## B- Targeting Vital Facilities with Barrel Bombs:

### - Places of Worship:

#### - Mosques:

- On 16 February 2016 [government helicopters](#) dropped several [barrel bombs](#) next to [Abu Baker Al Sedeek Mosque](#) in [Kafr Zeita](#) city in northern [Hama suburbs](#) that is under the control of [government forces](#) which caused [damage to the mosque](#) that was previously shelled.

### - Educational Facilities:

#### - Schools:

1- On 26 February 2016 government forces dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on [Kitban Middle School for Boys](#) in [Kitban town](#) in western [Aleppo suburbs](#) that is under the control of armed opposition which damaged the school.



### - Medical Centers:

#### - Medical Facilities (hospitals, infirmaries, medical points, makeshift hospitals):

On 5 February 2016 government [barrel bombs](#) dropped several barrel bombs on the makeshift hospital in [Al Ghareya western town](#) in [Daraa](#) which is under the control of armed opposition. The hospital was greatly damaged and rendered out of service.

- On 18 February 2016 government helicopters dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on the makeshift hospital in [Al Nashabeya town](#) in [Al Marej region](#) in [Damascus suburbs](#) that is under the control of armed opposition which greatly damaged the hospital and caused it to go out of service.

## IV- Attachments:

A video that depicts the shelling aftermath using [barrel bombs](#) on [Al Latemna city](#) in [Hama](#) on 5 February 2016

A video that depicts [the barrel bomb](#) shelling on southern neighborhoods on [Mo'adameyat Al Sham](#) in [Damascus suburbs](#) on 6 February 2016

[A video](#) that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Daraya city](#) on 14 February 2016

[A video](#) that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Talbisa city](#) northern of [Homs](#) on 14 February 2016

[A video](#) that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Daraya city](#) in eastern [Ghouta](#) in [Damascus suburbs](#) on 17 February 2016





A [video](#) that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on Daraya city in eastern Ghouta in Damascus suburbs on 18 February 2016

A [video](#) that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on Hor Bnafso town in Hama on 18 February 2016

A [video](#) that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on Talbisa city in Homs suburbs on 19 February 2016

A [video](#) that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on Teir Ma'ala town in Homs suburbs on 20 February 2016

A [video](#) that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on Teir Ma'ala town in Homs suburbs on 21 February 2016

A [video](#) that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on Daraya city on 25 February 2016

A [video](#) that depicts the moment of the barrel bomb shelling and its explosion on Daraya city on 26 February 2016

A [video](#) that depicts the barrel bomb shelling aftermath on Mar Eind town in Idlib on 29 February 2016

An image that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on Teir Ma'alaa town in Homs on 16 Feb 2016



An image that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on Teir Ma'alaa town in Homs on 19 Feb 2016

An image that depicts [the barrel bomb](#) shelling on Teir Ma'alaa town in Homs on 24 Feb 2016

An image that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on Teir Ma'alaa town in Homs on 24 Feb 2016





## Conclusions and Recommendations:

### Legal Conclusions

- 1- The Syrian government has, beyond any doubt, violated Security Council resolution 2139 and used barrel bombs in a widespread and systematic manner. Furthermore, the Syrian government perpetrated the crime of murder in a widespread and systematic manner according to Article VII of The International Criminal Court Rome Statute. Additionally, it violated many principles of the international humanitarian law and perpetrated tens of crimes that can be classified openly as war crimes through its indiscriminate and proportionate bombing.
- 2- SNHR notes that the bombing using explosive barrels is an act of indiscriminate bombing that targeted armless civilians, thus the government forces and its militias have violated the articles of the international law for human rights which guarantee the right to live. Furthermore these violations were perpetrated during a non-international armed conflict and hence can be absolutely classified as war crimes.
- 3- The random attacks committed by the government forces are considered violations of the customary international law considering the fact that government forces have attacked residential areas rather than a specific military target.
- 4- These attacks, especially aerial bombing, have caused immeasurable humanitarian and material losses. There are strong indicators that prove that the damage was deeply severe compared to the expected military advantage.
- 5- The magnitude of this wide systematic frequent bombing, the level of its excessive strength, its military nature, and the coordinated approach of these attacks must be based on high orders, and a state policy.
- 6- Government forces, and all of its leaderships and forms, are responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes as well as any parties that support the Syrian government politically, materially, and militarily – such as the Russian government, the Iranian government, and Hezbollah in addition to the weapon manufacturing companies. All of these parties must be prosecuted for the crimes they perpetrated, or contributed to, against the Syrian people.

### Recommendations

#### The Security Council

- 1- The Security Council should take serious steps in order to implement its resolutions which have become ineffective and thus lost all of its credibility and purpose.
- 2- Also, it should impose an arms embargo on the Syrian government and prosecute anyone who supplies the Syrian government with money and weapon considering that those resources are being used to perpetrate crimes and serious human rights violations.
- 3- The Security Council is the party who has the authority to refer the Syrian case to the International Criminal Court. Instead of preserving peace and security, the Security Council is hindering this step. Everyone responsible for war crimes and crimes against must be prosecuted.

### Acknowledgments

Our most profound condolences go out to the victims' families and friends and our thanks to the local activists and families who contributed majorly to this report.

