



Not Less than 21 Committed Massacres in March 2016 11 amongst which were perpetrated by government forces

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I. Executive Summary

Different Syrian governorates, especially regions under the control of armed opposition, witnessed a significant decline in the shelling and extrajudicial killings, the number of victims who were killed under torture increased comparing to previous months before the causation of hostilities started. However, the Syrian regime continued to breach the ceasefire in several ways as it is one of the most affected parties regarding this agreement and unpublicized violations have been continuous like torturing detainees.

SNHR documented not less than 21 massacres in March, distributed as follows:

- i. Government forces (army, security forces, local militias and foreign Shiite militias): committed 11 massacres.
- ii. Russian forces: committed 1 massacre.
- iii. Extremist Islamic Groups:
 - ISIL: committed 3 massacres
 - i. Armed opposition groups: committed 1 massacre
 - ii. International Coalition Forces: committed 1 massacre
 - iii. Unidentified Groups: committed 1 massacre

SNHR describes an incident as a massacre if it involves: “the killing of five unarmed people at least”, for more information on our methodology, please visit the following URL.





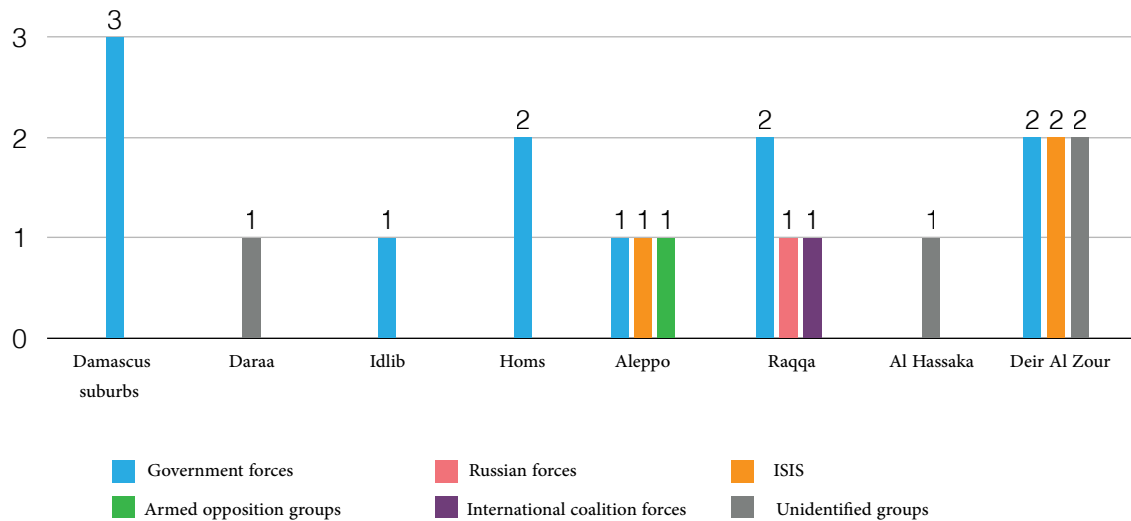
For the first time and as a result of cessation of hostilities agreement, the massacres that were committed by government forces in regions under ISIL's control are more than these which are committed in the regions under armed opposition groups. The 11 massacres that are committed by government forces in March 2016, are distributed as follows:

- 5 - massacres were committed regions under the control of armed opposition
- 6 - massacres were committed in ISIL controlled areas.

Massacres distribution according to the Syrian governorates:

Deir Al Zour: 6 massacres. Al Raqqa: 4massacres. Aleppo: 3 massacres, Damascus suburbs: 3massacres. Idlib: 1 massacre. Homs: 2 massacres. Daraa: 1massacre. Al Hasaka: 1massacre.

Distribution of the massacres according to the main conflict parties:



The massacres caused the death of 204 individuals, including 51 children and 39 women. 42% of victims are children and women, which is a high percentage. This indicates that the massacres targeted the civilians deliberately.

The victims' death toll according to the main perpetrators:

Government forces: killed 123 individuals, including 35 children and 25 women.

Russian forces: killed 5 individuals including a child.

ISIL: killed 18 individuals, including 2 children and 3 women.

Armed opposition groups: killed 6 individuals, including 3 children and 3 women.

International coalition forces killed 12 individuals, including 2 children and 5 women.

Unidentified groups killed 31 individuals including, 8 children and 3 women.





II. Report Details:

A. The Government Forces (The army, Security forces, Local and Foreign Shi-ite Militias)

The province of Damascus Suburbs: (You can also say Damascus

On 10 March 2016, government artillery forces shelled heavy rockets on Douma City in Damascus which is controlled by the armed opposition groups; what led to killing six persons including two children and twenty others were injured.

On 31 March 2016, government warplanes [launched two missiles on the medical point](#) in the town of «Deir Al Asafir», province of Damascus, which is under the control of armed opposition groups. The shelling killed 13 individuals, including three children and two women, in addition to more than 20 injured. It is worth mentioning that on that day; the aviation raids [caused the deaths of 31 individuals](#), including 12 children and 9 women.

On 31 March 2016, regime warplanes bombed, with missiles, «Deir Al Asafir», province of Damascus, which is under the control of armed opposition groups. Two rockets hit residential gathering and [killed 10 people](#), including 5 children, 3 women, in addition to more than 13 injured. It is also worth mentioning that the aviation raids that day on the town caused the deaths of 31 people, including 12 children and 9 women.

The Province of Deir Al- Zour:

On March 23 2016, regime warplanes shelled the neighborhood of «Knamat» in «Deir al-Zour», which is under the control of the ISIL and killed five people, including three children and a woman.

On 27 March 2016, government military planes shelled four missiles at «Knamat neighborhood» in the city of Deir Al-Zour, under the control of the ISIL, and killed nine people, including three children and four women, and injuring 10 others.

The Province of Raqqa:

On 18 March, regime warplanes hit «Al- Thakana neighborhood» Raqqa City Center, under the control of the ISIL, and killed 18 people, including five children and three women.





Tel Al-Abyad massacrass

On 19 March 2016, government military warplanes launched three missile on «Tel Al-Abyad», under the control of the ISIL, and [killed 20 people](#), including five children and two women, and [nearly 50 others injured](#).

Homs Province:

On 11 March 2016 government warplanes launched a missile at a bus near «Hali-halh city» that is under the control of ISIL in the countryside of Homs province, and so while traveling from the city of «Raqqqa» to «Damascus», causing burning of the bus, and killed 15 people, including four children and three women, most of the bodies were charred.

On 12 March 2016 government warplanes shelled population centers in «The Thakana City» in the countryside of Homs city, under the control of the ISIL, killing eight people, including three children and a woman.

Aleppo Province:

On 11 March 2016, a government military aircraft bombed several missiles near the [water tank in «Al-Saleheen Neighborhood»](#), under the control of armed opposition groups which led to [the deaths of nine people](#), including two children and three women, and 10 others injured.

Idlib Province:

On 7 March 2016, regime warplanes bombed the town of Abu Al-Zohoor» in the countryside of Idlib province, under the control of armed opposition groups, which led to the deaths of [19 people](#), including three women.





B. Russian Forces:

Raqqa Province:

On 2 March 2016, The warplanes, alleged as Russian, bombed cluster bombs the Water Foundation in the village of «Kasrat Faraj» southern province of Raqqa, under the control of the ISIL, and killed five people, including a child, and about 20 others injured.

C. Islamic militant groups:

ISIL Organization:

Deir al-Zour province:

On 7 March 2016, The artillery of ISIL bombed several «Hawn» shells at «Al-Qosoor Neighborhood» in Deir al-Zour, under the control of governmental forces, killing six civilians, most of them from one family, including two children and three women, and 12 others injured.

On 7 March 2016: ISIL shot six people in the countryside of «Kfarzebian» eastern Deir al-Zour province, under the control of the ISIL, on charges of flouting the organization and its leaders in a video found by regulation.

Aleppo Province

On 18 March 2016, ISIL shot six people deadly in «Manbaj City» in the countryside of Aleppo, under the control of the ISIL, on charges of apostasy and drug trade.

C. Armed Opposition Factions:

Aleppo Province:

On 7 March 2016, several local-made artillery shells hit «Sheikh Maksoud neighborhood» in Aleppo, under the control of Kurdish Self Management Forces, originating artillery stationed in the neighborhood of «Bustan Basha» under the control of armed opposition groups, in Aleppo which led to the deaths of six civilians, most of them one family, who are three children and three women, and more than 10 others injured.

D. The International Coalition Forces:

Raqqa Province:

On 26 February 2016 The International Air Alliance hit with rockets «Ain Arous Village», located 3 km south of «Tel Abyad City» in the countryside of northern Al Raqqa and under the control of Syria's Democratic forces, killing 12 people, in-





cluding two children and five women. On 1 March 2016 We were able to verify the incident via the communication with the activists of the region.

E. Unspecified Directions:

Deir al-Zour Province:

On 12 March 2016 A landmine exploded in the village of «el-Geneina Village», under the control of the ISIL in the countryside of western Deir Al Zour province, killing six people, including a child and a woman. We couldn't determine who planted the mine until the moment of preparing the report.

On 20 March 2016, clashes erupted between government troops and ISIL in «Hrabsh neighborhood» of Deir al-Zour, under the control of government forces, following the infiltration of a group of its fighters to the neighborhood, killing five civilians, including two children and a woman. We couldn't determine who caused their deaths until the moment of preparing the report.

Daraa Province:

On 23 March 2016 several artillery shells hit the town, «Masaken Gleen» in the countryside of Daraa province, under the control of the ISIL. As a result of the clash going on between the ISIL and factions of the armed opposition, which led to the deaths of 15 people, most of them from two families, including 5 children and a woman, we couldn't determine any warring sides caused the deaths of the victims until the moment of preparing the report.

Al Hassaka Province:

On 28 February 2016: A landmine exploded near a car carrying a group of people in «Hafayer Village» in the countryside of southern Hasaka, and under the control of Syria's Democratic Kurdish Forces, killing five people, two of them died on Thursday 3 / March / 2016 due to their injuries, we were unable to determine who planted the mine until the moment of preparing the report.

IV- Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions:

Syrian Government and Russian Forces:

1-SNHR affirms that the bombing, whether it was deliberate or indiscriminate, targeted armless civilians, thus, 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 which can be classified as war crimes.

2- SNHR believes that these acts of killing that took place during these massacres can be classified as crimes against humanity.

3- 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. In all of the cases, we didn't find any military targets before or during these attacks.

4- The magnitude of this wide systematic frequent shelling, 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.

Recommendations:

To The United Nations and the Security Council

1. Transferring the Syrian issue to the International Criminal Court and stopping the disrupting of the decisions that must be adopted by the Security Council against the Syrian government. This disruption is a wrong message to all dictatorships around the world and an enhancement to the culture of crime.
2. Posing urgent punishment on those who are involved in the violations of human rights.
3. Binding the Syrian government to allow all relief and human rights organizations to enter Syria, in addition to the International Investigation Committee and allowing them to work freely.
4. Enforce an arms embargo against the Syrian government because it is using weapons in comprehensive attacks against civilians.
5. Security Council must shoulder its responsibility of preserving security and civil peace in Syria because the violations of the Syrian government entail a gross threat to international peace and security.
6. Listing the militias that are fighting with the Syrian government and have committed massacres, like Hezbollah and the other Shiite brigades, National defense Army and Shabiah militia, on the international list of terrorist organizations.
7. Implementing the principle of "protecting civilians" adopted by the General Assembly in 2005, in Syria now, as the situation there is direly requiring the implementation of such a principle.
8. With the crimes against humanity committed by the Syrian government, the international community should stop dealing with this government as an "official side"





concerning the relief issues, and stopping supplying the Syrian government with most of the financial and humanitarian aids that, in most cases, don't reach those who are in need and go instead to the areas that support the Syrian government.

Acknowledgment

Our thanks and appreciations go to the victims' families, eyewitnesses, and local activists whose testimonies contributed majorly to this report. Our most profound consolations go out to the victims' families and friends.

