



23,863 Children Killed in Syria since March 2011 The Bleeding Innocence

Report contents

- I. Introduction and Methodology
- II. Toll of Children Victims and Children Detainees
- III. Violations by Government Forces
- IV. Violations by Russian Forces
- V. Violations by the Kurdish Self-management Forces
- VI. Violations by Extremist Islamic Groups
- VII. Violations by Armed Opposition Factions
- VIII. Violations by the International Coalition Forces
- IX. Violations by Unidentified Groups
- X. Children Refugees
- XI. Conclusions and Recommendations
- Acknowledgment

I. Introduction and Methodology

The children of Syria have been the victim of all sorts of violations since March 2011. Children are one of the vulnerable groups which why they should be especially considered. However, we haven't noticed any form of special care and consideration for them as their schools are being systematically targeted by the Syrian regime and its allies who are, evidently, deliberately targeting the future generations of Syria in retaliation of the areas that called for changing the ruling regime and sought to repel against its control. The Syrian regime and its allies (foreign militias and Russian forces) absolutely top all other parties with a percentage of 94% of all violations perpetrated while other parties, such as Self-management forces (Primarily the Democratic Union Party, a branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party), extremist Islamic groups (ISIS and Fateh Al Sham Front), International coalition forces, are responsible for the remaining 6% to varying degrees.

Warplanes that drop barrel bombs or fire missiles don't distinguish on whom they are dropping barrel bombs whether they were children or women, and children were indiscriminately tortured in detention centers, besieged, and starved as these practices are carried out as forms of a collective punishments against whole populations.

In addition to these violations, the children of Syria suffered from cumulative ramifications that resulted from the daily bombing and destruction where approximately 3871





schools and kindergartens were damaged in attacks which made more than 2.5 million Syrian children lose access to an education. Also, the health sector was damaged and the vaccination rates dropped and diseases spread out such as tuberculosis and typhoid, and wide parts of the infrastructure was destroyed which also resulted in the spread of hepatitis as a result of drinking wells water. With the nearly complete destruction of so many neighborhoods, Syrian families had no choice but to seek refuge which emerged a new suffering of a new kind as 60% of the total of children refugees were deprived of an education and they were used as laborers. Additionally, we recorded a number of sexual violence cases against children inside and outside Syria and the rates of early marriages soared alarmingly. No less than 160,000 children refugees were born in refugee camps and many of them didn't get any sort of documentation or papers. Consequently, we are facing huge difficulties in fighting the deprivation of nationality phenomenon.

All of this led to psychological fallouts the ramifications of which are impossible to predict in the foreseeable or distant future. We have talked to a large number of doctors in the neighboring counties since 2012 and they told us how a large portion of the children refugees are suffering from psychological disorders such as severe reactions, depression and in some cases schizophrenia. All of this have its toll on the children's educational progress and integration into the new society. Other symptoms include experiencing nightmares and urinary incontinence. Most of the Syrian children can't even find someone to diagnose them let alone give them treatment.

The methodology of the report draws upon SNHR archive that have been built through ongoing and daily monitoring and documentation since 2011. All the statistics are recorded with names, pictures, place and date of death or detention, and other details. This report represents only the bare minimum of the violations that we were able to document as, surely, the actual numbers are much greater. In this report, we highlighted the most notable incidents that we documented and took place between 20 November 2015 and 20 November 2016 in addition to some incidents that occurred between 2013 and 2015 where these incidents were still under investigation at the time. We included cases before the aforementioned dates in past reports. The death toll, however, and other statistics cover the period of time from the beginning of March 2011 until the time this report was published.



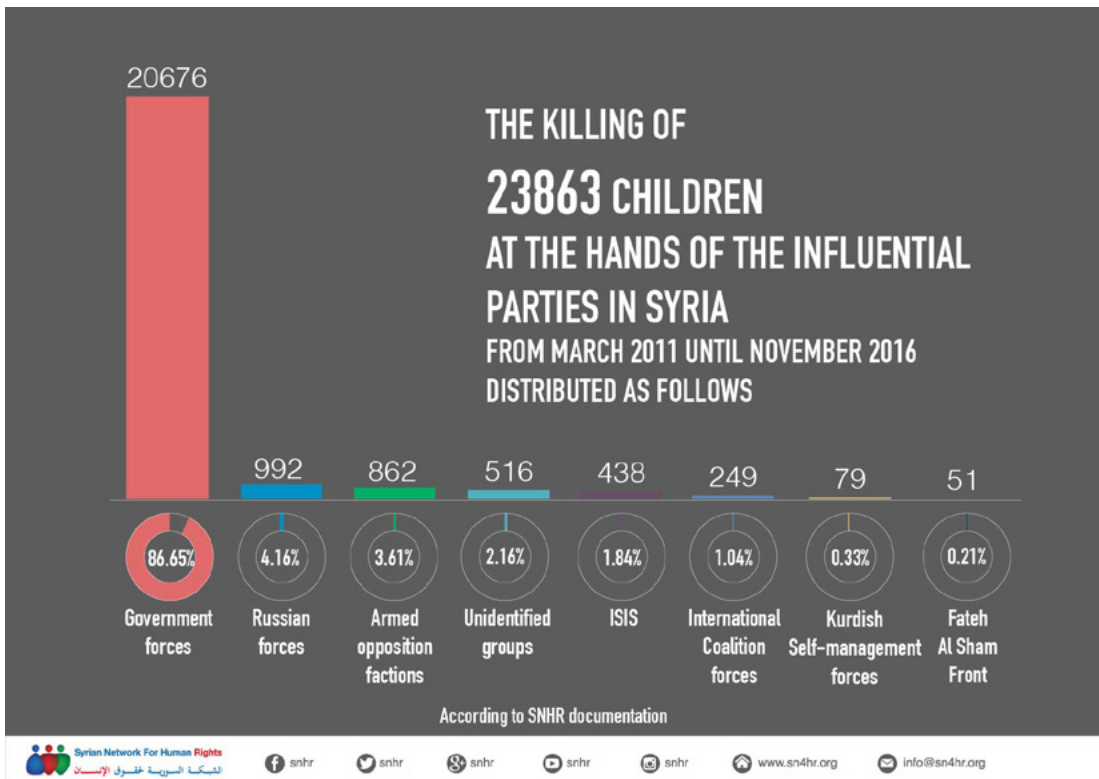


Fadel Abdul Ghani, chairman of SNHR, says:

“When we document a daily, monthly, and yearly cumulation of this huge number of children victims without any real or actual international sympathy, this undoubtedly annihilate the norm of the Responsibility to Protect. Who is responsible for protecting Syria’s children from barrel bombs, chemical weapons, sniping, and starving? This question is for the major states who are claiming to be the leaders of the world.”

II. Toll of Children Victims and Children Detainees

A chart illustrating the death toll of children and their distribution across Syrian governorates by the party that carried out the killing





A chart illustrating toll of children who are still being detained and their distribution by the party that carried out the arrest



II. Violations by Government Forces

A. Extrajudicial killing

As of this writing, government forces have killed since March 2011 no less than 20,676 children, who are recorded by SNHR with names, pictures, videos, place and date of death, by using a wide range of weapons from indiscriminate bombardment using missiles, artillery, cluster bombs, poison gases, and barrel bombs to slaughtering with edged weapons in many massacres that exhibited a sectarian-cleansing nature in Homs, Banyas, Jadeidit Al Fadel in Damascus suburbs, Al Qalamoun in Damascus suburbs, northern Hama suburbs, and Aleppo governorate suburbs.

Among the 20,676 children were 714 children who were killed by snipers. When he took the shot, the sniper was fully aware that he is targeting a child as we said in our report [“Hunting Humans”](#)





Tuesday 12 January 2016, the regime artillery, stationed in Jarjisa village, fired two shells on a civilian's house in Harbnafsa in the southern suburbs of Hama governorate which resulted in the killing of eight individuals from the same family ([Six children and two women](#)).

Thursday 31 March 2016, fixed-wing government forces warplanes carried out no less than 14 airstrikes in approximately four hours on different areas of Der Al Asafir town which resulted in the killing of 31 civilians including 12 children, aged under 18, and nine women. SNHR released a [detailed report](#) on this incident.

Monday 6 June 2016, fixed-wing government forces warplanes fired missiles that targeted Abu Zoura area, located to the east of Al Sekhna city in the eastern suburbs of Homs governorate and is under the control of ISIS. The bombing killed four children from the same family.

Tuesday 14 June 2016, government forces helicopters dropped six barrel bombs on the gold market in Al Bara town, located in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh Al Sham Front. Most of the barrel bombs were dropped in front of a children's play hall which resulted in the killing of six children.

Tuesday 18 October 2016, government forces artillery fired shells in synchronization with fire being shot from machine guns on a civilian bus on the road, located between Khan Al Sheih and Zakiya towns in Western Ghouta in Damascus suburbs and is under the control of armed opposition factions, which resulted in the killing of five civilians at once including two children and their mother.

B. Arrest, arbitrary detention, and torture

We can confirm that 99% of the arrests made by government forces are being conducted without a legal arrest warrant and without revealing the charges for the children's families or where he is going to be kept. Furthermore, we have recorded many cases where the father and the son were arrested together in order to apply pressure on the father where they torture his son in front of his eyes. Families are prohibited from hiring a lawyer and from visiting. Children are subjected to a brutal torture without any kind of distinguishing between an adult man and a child in the severity of the torture. Arbitrary arrest become enforced-disappearance in many cases.



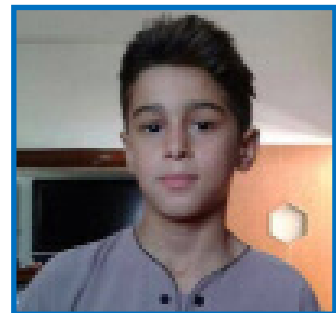


Government forces arrest children for partaking in the popular protests directly or indirectly or even on social media or in the fields of media and relief. Also, many cases were recorded where children were arrested in order to apply pressure on their fathers to surrender themselves.

As of this writing, SNHR has documented since March 2011 no less than 11,044 who experienced arrest. Out of the 11,044, 2819 children at least are still being detained. The Syrian authorities deny that they are detaining any children even though all the families' and survivors' account confirm that government forces are the ones who carried out the raid and the arrest.

The methods of torture used on children are nearly identical to those used on men. SNHR monitored in the comprehensive report: "Torture methods practiced by Syrian authorities" the torture methods used in the detention centers in Syria. This brutal torture resulted in the death of no less than 160 children most of them were killed inside detention centers.

[Child Mo'men AbdulHakim Hasan Al Jasem](#), from Al Jbiela in Deir Ez-Zour city, born on 1 January 2004. On Tuesday 9 September 2014, government forces raided his family house and arbitrarily arrested everyone inside and took them to unknown location. To this moment, his family haven't been able to acquire any new information regarding his fate or where he is being kept. His fate is still unknown to SNHR as well as his family.



[Child Adnan Al Emam](#), aged 14-year-old at the time of the arrest on 1 August 2013 when State Security forces, affiliated with government forces, raided his place of residence in Al Mujtahed neighborhood in Damascus city and arbitrarily arrested him. He was taken to State Security branch 251, known as Al Khatib branch and located in Baghdad Street – Al Khatib area, Damascus city. He was last seen on 5 January 2014 before he was taken to an unknown place. After this date, his family couldn't acquire any new information regarding his fate or where he is being kept. His fate is still unknown to SNHR as well as his family.





Child (M.L) from Al Joura neighborhood in Deir Ez-Zour city, 15-year-old, he was arrested by the National Defense militias, affiliated to government forces on Sunday 22 May 2016 after his place of residence was raided in Al Joura neighborhood in Deir Ez-Zour city. His fate is still unknown to SNHR as well as his family.

Child (S.B) from Al Jalaa neighborhood in Hama city, 12-year-old. On 14 April 2016, he was arrested by the National Defense militias, affiliated to government forces, near his place of residence in Al Jalaa neighborhood. He was released on 22 April 2016 after his family paid a ransom.

SNHR contacted S.B's father via Facebook, and he told us about the circumstances of his son's arrest:

“My son was kidnapped in front of a grocery shop that is located on the main road of our neighborhood by armed men who were wearing civilian clothes and riding a tourist's car that didn't have a number plate. I reported the incident to the police station at the neighborhood and they told me to keep it a secret and negotiate with the kidnappers in case they called. On the morning of next day, they called to negotiate with me over the phone and demanded a large sum of money in exchange for my son and they threatened to kill me in case I didn't pay. They also told me that reporting to the security branches will be pointless. They gave me until the evening to secure the money which I couldn't, so they called again to demand another payment as they reduced the ransom by half and gave me until next day's morning. I couldn't secure half the payment either. The situation remained the same for a few days until they released him for the amount of money I had. This was on 22 April 2016. I received my son at Hama National Hospital after he was found handcuffed on the sideway in Al Nasser neighborhood in Hama city. During his detention, my son was brutally slapped and they denied him food for long hours. Later my son recognized one of the abductors who was with the National Defense militias that are affiliated to government forces. That guy lives in the same neighborhood.”





C. Siege

We talked in a number of past reports about the siege and its impact in various areas across Syria. The last study we released on that subject was on 17 June 2016: “The Responsibility of the United Nations for the siege of civilians in Syria”

The fallouts of the siege, mainly death of starvation and sickness, increased over the last two years. Even if the food and medicine shortages didn't lead to death, the cases of severe malnutrition rose alarmingly which consequently resulted in growth deficiency as a natural result of the lack of vitamins and minerals especially in newly-born kids. The Syrian regime and ISIS are still the two main parties are still responsible for besieging most of the areas mentioned in the aforementioned report as they block any aids or civilian from getting and outside the besieged areas.

As of this writing, SNHR has documented, since the beginning of the popular uprising, the death of 276 children due to food and medicine shortages throughout many of the besieged areas.

Friday 15 January 2016, [child Yousef Sa'diya](#), three-month-old, died in Mo'adameyet Al Sham due to a food shortage in light of the siege imposed by government forces on the city.



D. Denial of education and child labour

The indiscriminate or deliberate bombardment targeted no less than 3764 schools and 19 kindergartens half of which were rendered out of commission. Mainly because of this, families abstained from sending their kids to schools in addition to homelessness due to displacement after buildings were destroyed not to mention the overwhelming siege and poverty and the destroying of shops and workplace or arresting and killing the provider of the family which forced a lot of children to go into labour as many of them became their families' providers. Preliminary estimations say that no less than 2.5 million Syrian children stopped going to schools inside and outside Syria.

Sunday 10 January 2016, government forces helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on the houses around Yaqed Al Gharbiya elementary school in Yaqed Al Adas town, affiliated to Anadan city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions, which resulted in the killing of a student





and also wounded two others. In addition, the school cladding materials were moderately damaged and the fence was partially destroyed.

Wednesday 26 October 2016, approximately at 10:52 AM, fixed-wing government forces warplanes (Sukhoi 22) fired missiles that targeted the Martyr Kamal Qal'aji schools complex which contains three schools: an elementary school, Hass intermediate school for boys, and Hass intermediate school for girls in the southern neighborhood of Hass town, located in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh Al Sham Front. The bombardment resulted in a massacre in addition to heavily destroying the buildings of the three schools and greatly damaging the furniture and cladding materials. Also, the complex fence was partially destroyed. We have published a [detailed report](#) on this incident.

Saturday 27 August 2016, fixed-wing government forces warplanes fired missiles that targeted a kindergarten in Al Tabaqa city, located in the western suburbs of Al Raqqa governorate and is under the control of ISIS. The kindergarten building was heavily destroyed and the kindergarten was rendered out of commission.

Sunday 6 October 2016, government forces artillery fired shells on Ajyal Al Mostaqbal kindergarten in Harasta city, located in Damascus suburbs and is under the control of armed opposition factions, which resulted in the killing of nine children. We documented the incident in a [detailed report](#).

E. Recruitment

Government forces adopted a policy of recruiting civilians in its areas as an attempt to compensate for the shortage in manpower in the official army. Government forces recruited age groups starting from 14-year-olds to fight in their army by seducing them using money and mainly exploiting the families' needs in order to recruit children.

In 2016 alone, we recorded no less than 219 cases of conscription that involved children who were used for chore tasks and digging trenches on the battlefronts. Conscription of children were focused in villages and areas controlled by government forces that are located near the battlefronts in the southern suburbs of Aleppo and areas of Eastern Ghouta in Damascus suburbs.





We noticed, through the accounts SNHR acquired from the families of children who were killed fighting for government forces and their militias, a rise in the number of children killed and wounded while fighting for these militias which indicates that government forces are using children at an increasing rate.

Pictures from government forces training camps showing government forces using children



F. Sexual violence

As of this writing, we have recorded no less than 472 cases of sexual violence against children by government forces since March 2011. Forms of sexual violence varied between harassment during raids and inspection, forced marriage, and verbal sexual blackmailing (Accusing children of having coitus. Also, uttering sexual slurs), physically and sexually exploiting children (Forcing the child to undress and touching his body) during arrest and abduction, and the severest forms of sexual violence which is rape.

Despite this, the actual magnitude of sexual violence is still concealed because of the sensitive nature of the subject and the Syrian society's tendency to not talk about it.

III. Violations by Russian Forces

A. Extrajudicial killing

Russian forces started their military campaign on Wednesday 30 September 2015. Russian forces declared that they would be targeting Extremist Islamic groups (ISIS, Al Nusra Front, and Jund Al Aqsa). SNHR, however, recorded the killing of 992 children in attacks we believe were carried out by Russian forces which is a considerably high death toll that indicates that Russian forces target civilians.





Thursday 26 November 2015, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles on Al Raqqa city, under the control of ISIS, targeting the vicinity of Hitteen school which resulted in the killing of eight civilians including five children. In addition, about 10 others were wounded.



Monday 7 December 2015, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missile that targeted Al Mafroushat street in Al Hollok neighborhood in Aleppo. One of the missiles targeted a building used as an education center for children. The bombardment resulted in the killing of five individuals including two female teachers and two female children. In addition, 10 others were wounded.

SNHR spoke to Mr. Abu Al Fatch who is a resident of Al Hollok neighborhood:

“Russian warplanes bombed a building that we turned into a school to teach the neighborhood children. The building is located in Al Mafroushat street behind the clinic. The bombing was at a time when children were leaving classes which resulted in the killing of children and the teaching staff. Near the building, there was a gathering of people where aids were being distributed on the neighborhood residents. The bombing also killed one of the people who were overseeing the distribution of aids.”

“There are no military centers in the place that was targeted. All the victims and wounded were civilians.”

“Al Hollok neighborhood is highly populated by residents and IDPs from other neighborhoods of Aleppo. There are a lot of Syrian-Turks living here which is why I think the Russian forces deliberately targeted the neighborhood to retaliate against Turkey shooting down a Russian





warplane.”

[Video](#) showing the destruction that resulted from a bombing by fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian in Al Hollok neighborhood

Friday 18 December 2015, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted Jesr Al Shoghour city, located in the suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions. 16 individuals were killed from the same family (Eight children, including a fetus, and seven women.)

SNHR spoke to Mr. Duraid Al Bash, via Facebook, who is a media activist for the civil defense organization. Duraid went to the targeted location and told us of what he saw:

“The bombing started with a missile that targeted a house in the northern parts of the city. They were preparing for a wedding when the house was targeted by the Russian warplane that killed even the bride. For two days, civil defense teams were pulling out victims from rubbles. Among the victims we pulled out were an eight-month-old fetus and a little girl whose head was the only part remaining of her. We also pulled out a woman who lost half her body. The scene was just too painful to see. The pressure resulting from the explosion turned the victims into scattered body parts and tossed these body parts over a large area. Seven individuals survived the bombing and three of them died after they were taken to the hospital. The other four, a woman and her three children, only sustained minor wounds.”

“The targeted area is a civil area and there aren’t any forms of military presence. Our city is being annihilated under the pretext that the Free Syrian Army is here even though all of their centers are located outside the city.”





Thursday 3 November 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missile that targeted Al Rastan city, located in the northern suburbs of Homs governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions. Six people were killed including five children.

SNHR spoke to Mr. Khaled Al Ayoub, via WhatsApp, who is a resident of Al Rastan city:

“Approximately at 14:00, the Free Syrian Army observatory announced that Russian warplanes are flying at a high altitude, and then airstrikes commenced. The airstrikes targeted the southern neighborhood of the city which is highly populated by civilians with no military presence of centers for the Syrian Army. A missile fell on a house for Idrees family and everyone inside were killed: a father and his three children, two girls and one boy. The second missile fell on a place that is close to the first missile and also killed two children for a total of five children killed at once in one day.”

[Picture](#) showing the victim of a child who was killed in a bombing by fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian, 3 November 2016

B. Targeting schools and kindergartens

As of this writing, SNHR has documented that 84 schools were damaged by Russian forces since the Russian military campaign begun in Syria on 30 September 2015. Five schools were targeted more than once which asserts that Russian forces are systematically targeting schools.

V. Violations by the Kurdish Self-management Forces

These forces have been active in Syria since July 2012 when the People’s Protection Units “The military wing for the Democratic Union Party” emerged. Subsequently, the party and its forces joined the “Kurdish” Self-management forces which were founded in January 2014 and managed to seize some areas in northern and western Syria. The Democratic Union Party (The Syrian branch for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party) and its forces are the core component of what was came to be called the Self-management.





A. Extrajudicial killing

As of this writing, SNHR has documented the killing of no less than 79 children at the hands of the Kurdish Self-management forces since they were founded.

Sunday 29 November 2016, Self-management forces, with the support of Jaish Al Thouwar faction, raided Meramein town, located in the northern suburbs of Aleppo, and arrested a number of the town residents including children and women over accusation of aligning with Al Nusra Front and ISIS. They killed 13 individuals including five children and one woman by shooting them in Kafr Janna square which is under the control of Self-management forces in northern Aleppo suburbs.

B. Arrest, arbitrary detention, and torture

As of this writing, SNHR has documented no less than 321 children who were arrested by Self-management forces since they were founded. Most of the arbitrary arrest cases are now considered enforced-disappearance cases. Self-management forces frequently arrest people by abducting them from children schools or from streets.

C. Conscription

We recorded that no less than 2057 children were conscripted in different areas in Aleppo suburbs and Al Hasakeh where children take part in direct combat operations and also work at checkpoints. Operations to train children to carry weapons have been intensively carried out since 2012.

Female child [Hadarein Mahmoud Wali](#), from Ras Al Ein city in the suburbs of Al Hasakeh governorate, 16-year-old, she was arrested by Self-management forces in Ras Al Ein city in the suburbs of Al Hasaka governorate. She was then taken by them to their conscription camps on 26 August 2016.

Child [Shayyar Mamo](#), born in 2003, from Al Hasakeh governorate, he was arrested and conscripted by Self-management forces in April 2016. He was transferred to training camps and then to battlefronts against ISIS in Manbej city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate. On 30 August 2016, he was killed by landmine on the battlefronts.





VI. Violations by Extremist Islamic Groups

1- ISIS (Self-proclaimed the Islamic State)

A. Extrajudicial killing

ISIS continued to carry out attacks on cities and towns in Al Raqqa, Deir Ez-Zour, and All Hasakeh governorates as well as the suburbs of Aleppo governorate. The group managed to take over wide areas and also shelled areas under the control of government forces.

As of this writing, Indiscriminate shelling, clashes, or executions resulted in the killing of no less than 438 children in April 2013 who are recorded by names, picture, place and date of death.

Sunday 21 February 2016, ISIS blew a bomb car [in Al Tin street in Al Sayda Zainab](#) area, located in Damascus suburbs governorate and is under the control of government forces. When civilians gathered, a [suicidal bomber](#) blew himself using an explosive belt. A few minutes later another suicidal bomber blew his explosive belt on the other side of [the vegetables market](#). The bombing resulted in the killing of [88 civilians](#) including 18 children and 32 women. In addition, about 140 individuals were wounded.



Monday 7 March 2016, ISIS artillery fired multiple shells on Al Qosour neighborhood, located in Deir Ez-Zour city and is under the control of government forces, which killed eight civilians most of whom were from the same family including two children and three women. Additionally, about 12 others were wounded.

B. Arrest and enforced-disappearance

Since ISIS emerged in Syria in April 2013, no less than 217 children have been arrested in its areas. Most of these children were from families opposing the group's views. We don't have many information on them or their families. Also, ISIS arrested children who violate the regulations imposed by ISIS in its area of control such as being in markets at the times of prayer or having a haircut that is different from the style enforced by the regime.





Child AbdulKhaleq Hamoud, from Sbeikhan town in the suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, 12-year-old, he was arrested on 6 August 2016 by ISIS from his place of resident in Sbeikhan village. His fate is unknown to SNHR as well as his family.

C. Recruitment

ISIS worked on recruiting children and used some of them in direct military combat operations and indirect military tasks such as guarding, cooking, and cleaning weapons among others. The group aimed to spread the culture of carrying a weapon among children through training campaigns where ISIS started a number of training camps for children that was to train children to carry weapons and other military activities. These camps were called “Mu’skrat Al Ashbal” (The Cups’ Training Camps) as the ones in Al Raqqa governorate in Al Bab city in Aleppo. Many schools were turned into centers and training camps for ISIS.

ISIS exploited the poor living situation to draw hundreds of children for small sums of money which is the main reason children joined the group. Also, ISIS used a number of children in suicidal bombings and executing prisoners.

Child (M.M), from Al Raqqa city, 15-year-old, the son of one of ISIS men in Al Raqqa city, he was killed on 14 February 2016 on the battlefronts of the northern suburbs of Aleppo.

D. Sexual violence

ISIS founded a market for selling women in Al Raqqa city. The group admitted in the journal it releases “Marj Dabeq” that they sold women and girls who are less than 18 years of age. Most of these women were Yazidis who were kidnapped from Iraq after they were forced to become Muslims. They were sold and promoted for members of the same group in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo, Al Raqqa suburbs, and Al Hasakeh suburbs.

Also, we recorded a raping case in one of the children training camps that ISIS started in Al Raqqa city that involved an ISIS leader in Al Raqqa city.





E. Denial of education

The educational state deteriorated in some of the areas after they were taken over by ISIS which was mainly due to the fact that schools were occupied and turned into centers and training camps and secondly to the dire security situations in light of how the area turned into a warzone. ISIS imposed a number of restrictions in the curriculums such as deleting some subjects and adding others and separating boys and girls.

SNHR spoke to Mr. Rami AL Hakim, a member of a humanitarian organization in Deir Ez-Zour who told us about the education in the city under ISIS's rule:

“ISIS shut down schools and started making their own curriculum. Also, they started giving Sharia classes to the teachers and a 10 dollar fine on any family that prevents their kids from going to ISIS schools. The families were forced to send their kids to these schools that brainwash the children and feed them violence, killing, and Takfir (Declaring that someone is an infidel) which led to the children joining ISIS camps.”

“Hundreds of children who are 13-16-year-old are now fighting with ISIS in addition to carrying out tens of suicidal operations. The group exploited the power living situation, social conditions and the rising prices and gave the children sums of money so they join ISIS in the battles and the camps.”

2- Fateh Al Sham Front (Formerly Al Nusra Front)

A. Extrajudicial killing

As of this writing, SNHR has documented the killing of 51 children at the hands of Fateh Al Sham Front since the group emerged on January 2012.

Friday 25 March 2016, Children [Mohammad and Zain Zaher Al Dakhllah](#) were killed along with their parents by a shell that fell near their house in Seel town in Daraa governorate. The shell was fired from Tal Al Jomoua which is an area that is under the control of Fateh Al Sham Front (Formerly Al Nusra Front).





B. Arrest, enforced-disappearance, and torture

SNHR estimates the number of children who are being detained by Fateh Al Sham Front in the group's area of control at 24 children.

C. Recruitment

Fateh Al Sham Front widely recruited children and added this to the curriculums in some of the schools in the areas and camps they control. Moreover, they made children wear military uniform inside schools. The father who are members of Al Nusra Front forced their children to join these camps and schools.

VII. Violations by Armed Opposition Factions

A. Extrajudicial killing

As of this writing, SNHR has documented the killing of no less than 862 children at the hands of the various factions that are affiliated to armed opposition. Most of these children were killed in indiscriminate shelling attacks that are carried out by the opposition factions against the areas under the control of government forces and especially mortar shells.

Monday 7 March 2016, locally-made artillery shells fell on Al Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of the Self-management forces. The shell was fired from an artillery that is stationed in Bostan Al Basha neighborhood in Aleppo city, which is controlled by armed opposition factions. The shelling resulted in the killing of six civilians, three children and three women, most of whom were from the same family. In addition, about 10 others were wounded.

Friday afternoon 9 September 2016, a number of rocket shells fell on the 15th street in Salah Al Din neighborhood in Aleppo city, within the parts that are controlled by government forces. The shells were fired from an artillery stationed in Al Mashhad neighborhood, which is controlled by armed opposition factions. The shelling resulted in the killing of nine civilians at once including seven children.

Thursday 27 October 2016, a number of locally-made rocket shells fell near the National School in Al Shahbaa neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of government forces. The shells were fired from an artillery stationed in Bostan Al Qaser neighborhood, under the control of government forces, which killed six children at once.





B. Arrest and arbitrary detention

We recorded that armed opposition factions arrested no less than 289 children most of whom were arrested during attacks carried out by armed opposition factions against government forces' areas of control.

C. Recruitment

The destruction of tens of thousands of shops and factories led to an exceptional poverty in addition to losing the father, their provider and friend, the poor psychological state, the overwhelming frustration, and the lack of any educational future were all main factors that completed hundreds of children to the armed factions.

Some of the leaders of the armed opposition factions told us that they accept children and let them do a number of activities within the faction. They added that they see that this is a better alternative than leaving them for a life of displacement, vices, and being exploited in labor.

Children joining armed opposition factions became something oblivious as there are many armed children at the armed opposition factions' checkpoints in the areas under their control.

Despite the fact that armed opposition factions are a non-international party, and thus, are not bound by the customary protocol that determine that fighters must be 18 years of age at least, these factions must use children who are at least 15-year-old according to the humanitarian international law. However, we can confirm that there are hundreds of children who are younger than 15-year-old with these groups which constitutes a war crime.

VIII. Violations by the International Coalition Forces

A. Extrajudicial killing

International coalition forces commenced a military campaign against ISIS on Tuesday 23 September 2014 and carried out many airstrikes in Al Raqqa, Deir Ez-Zour and Idlib governorates. These attacks, as of this writing, resulted in the killing of 249 children according to what SNHR recorded.





Friday 27 September 2016, fixed-wing warplanes affiliated to the international coalition forces fired a missile that targeted residential houses in the eastern parts of Keljibrean village, located in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, which resulted in the killing 32 civilians including 21 children and 12 women. Additionally, 12 others were wounded.

Keljibrean village was under the control of ISIS at the time. Currently, the village is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Tuesday 19 July 2016, fixed-wing warplanes affiliated to the international coalition forces fired missiles that targeted [residential mud houses](#) and some tens in the northern areas of Al Toukhar village. SNHR was able to documented the killing of 100 civilians including 59 children and 29 women. Al Toukhar village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident. Currently, [the village is under Self-management forces' control](#).



B. Targeting schools and kindergartens

As of this writing, SNHR has documented that four schools in Syria were attacked by international coalition forces since the military campaign begun on 23 September 2014. All of the schools were vital civil facilities with no presence by ISIS or Fateh Al Sham Front.





X. Violations by Unidentified Groups

SNHR's documentation includes many classifications such as drowning, victims of bombing that we couldn't identify the groups behind it, and victims who were killed by armed groups that are unknown to SNHR.

Under this classification, SNHR recorded the killing of no less than 516 children. Also, SNHR documented that 876 children at least were abducted or forcibly disappeared between March 2011 and October 2016.

Tuesday 11 October 2016, at approximately 11:50 AM, a mortar shell fell on That Al Netaqin school in Al Sahari neighborhood in Daraa Al Mahata area, located in Daraa city and is under the control of government forces, which resulted in the killing of six civilians at once including five children. Additionally, about 15 others were wounded. We couldn't identify the group behind the shelling as of this writing.



XI. Children Refugees

The number of children refugees has amounted to 3.8 million children approximately. We have met many children in different refugee countries, inside and outside camps. The most notable issues from which the Syrian children who are refugees suffer are:

- 1- Many children refugees live without their fathers who were either killed or decided to make their children and wives leave the country out of fear for their lives.
- 2- If children living in camps in Jordan and Turkey can leave his tent every day, the situation is at its worst for refugees in Lebanon where an entire month can pass and





the child would not be able to leave his house even for once. In most cases, more than one family live in one house.

3- Most of the children lost access to an education. The percentage vary from one country to another. Averagely, 60% of the children refugees are out of school.

4- The Syrian child can't get a nationality as no less than 160,000 children refugees because according to the Syrian law the child can only have his father's nationality, even if the father wasn't present, he must have a marriage certificate. We must take into consideration that many fathers were lost or forcibly-disappeared and many of them don't have any documentation.

5- Severe psychological disorders as a result of disintegration of breakdown of the family, the lack of a sense of security in a stranger country, the overwhelming images of destruction and blood over about five years, losing friends, a feeling of hopelessness, and social pressure due to the fact that many children were forced to work.

6- Exploiting children in labor and prostitution. We highlighted this issue in a [joint study](#) with the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor on the child labor among Syrian children in Jordan

7- There are many children refugees who are wounded or injured.

XIII. Conclusions and Recommendations

Government forces

Government forces and pro-government militias committed acts that constitute crimes against humanity against the children of Syria through the widespread systematic killing, and through torture and sexual violence. Government forces, and pro-government militias, have blatantly violated article 7 of Rome Statue. Furthermore, government forces, and pro-government militias, perpetrated acts that amount to war crimes through conscription, starvation, and besieging whole population including children and women which is a blatant violation of the international humanitarian law and the relevant Security Council Resolutions.

Russian forces

Most of the bombardments carried out by Russian forces were concentrated in populated areas and centers which resulted in the killing of tens of Syrian children. All of these indiscriminate attacks constitute war crimes.

Self-management forces (Primarily consisting of the Democratic Union Party, a branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party)





These forces practiced acts that constitute war crimes through indiscriminate shelling which killed many children and also through conscription.

Extremist Islamic groups

These groups recruited hundreds of children who are younger than 15 years of age. Also, these groups carried out practices of torture against children detainees inside their detention centers. Additionally, they killed many children in indiscriminate shelling, which constitutes war crimes.

Armed opposition factions

Various factions recruited tens of children. Furthermore, the indiscriminate shelling by some of the opposition resulted in the killing of a number of children. All of this constitutes war crimes.

International coalition forces

Some of the indiscriminate attacks by international coalition forces have resulted in the killing of a number of Syrian children. The indiscriminate random bombardment constitutes a war crime.

Recommendations

The International Community and the Security Council

- To seek all possible paths in order to end the conflict in Syria and bring about an end to the bloodbath against the Syrian people. This is a moral and historical responsibility.
- Aids must be delivered to children living under siege, and the Syrian regime mainly must be forced to end the siege instead of resorting to dropping aids from the sky.
- Help the neighboring countries and provide all possible support to improve the education and health levels in these states where the vast majority of the children refugees live.
- Find mechanisms to stop the bombardment of schools which must be protected in addition to working on creating a safe educational environment which is the least form of protecting civilians.
- The issue of the children of Syria is an international issue. All states must make all possible effort to alleviate the fallouts by supporting schools, and the educational and medical process in Syria and for the children refugees.





The Neighboring countries

Insure that refugees coming from Syria can seek asylum and respect their rights including banning refoulment. The states of the European Union and other states must work on easing the load on the neighboring countries and take in more Syrian refugees. Additionally, donor counties must increase their support for the Union Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and community organizations in the asylum countries.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

- Create a safe and staple environment for the Syrian children refugees and work more on reintegrating them within the society through providing long-term psychological support.
- Enhance the investment in education and health sectors.

Acknowledgment

Our most profound thanks and appreciation go out to the victims' families, relatives and friends and for the local and media activists who majorly contributed to this report.

