



Not Less than 27 Medical Centers Shelled by Russian Forces since Its Intervention The Grozny Holocaust in Aleppo

Report Contents

- I. Introduction and Methodology
- II. Executive Summary
- III. Conclusions and Recommendations
- IV. Acknowledgment

I. Introduction and Methodology

Russian officials, represented by either its ambassador at the UNSC or its minister of Foreign Affairs, that its forces did not commit war crimes in Syria since its military intervention started. They believe that all these accusations are mere media propaganda and falsified and spurious information by enemies which what is being restated by the Syrian regime since March 2011.

When SNHR met the Russian mission at the UNSC, we asked them to take the reports that document and discuss the war crimes seriously and to investigate those allegations especially that the aviation force is not owned by either ISIL or the Syrian opposition.

Since the Russian intervention started, SNHR issued 10 different reports that discussed the targeting of civilian targets on regions controlled by the Syrian opposition and ISIL. Those shelling attacks killed, destroyed and displaced Syrians and it amount to war crimes. This specific report discusses the target of medical facilities by the Russian forces.

Fadel Abdul Ghani, head of SNHR says:

“We believe that the Russian regime is trying to send a message to the Syrian community in regions under the control of armed opposition by targeting the medical centers. As if saying that there is no safe haven for you. There is no red line to target; the same method that has been used by the Syrian regime.”





We categorically reject the presence of Russia in the political process since it is committing the ugliest crimes by shelling medical centers and killing civilians. USA and Europe must consider Russian as an accomplice in crime not a political partner, unless shelling hospitals falls under this category.”

Hundreds of thousands of individuals from Aleppo northern suburbs have been displaced amid severe cold weather, which pressures the Turkish government.

SNHR communicated with several activists and residents and conducted several interviews, where two interviews are depicted in this report. We explained the goal of the interviews to the witnesses and were granted their consent to use the information they provide in this report. We verified the photos and videos we had received, and we kept copies of all the video clips and images used in this report.

Through careful examination of the photo and video evidence, we concluded that the airstrikes have targeted a purely civilian marketplace void of any military or weapons depots neither during nor before the attack.

The information contained in this report represents the minimum of massacres and violations committed by the alleged Russian shelling. Also, it does not include the social, economic, and psychological impact of these violations.

II. Executive Summary:

This report depicts the shelling of 27 medical centers by alleged Russian warplanes, including 3 facilities that were shelled several times since the commencement of the Russian airstrikes on 30 September 2015 and up till 15 February 2016. The medical centers are categorized as follows according to Syrian governorates:

A. Regions under the control of armed opposition: the total of 17 facilities were targeted, detailed as follows:

- Aleppo: 8
- Idlib: 4
- Hama: 2
- Latakia: 2
- Damascus suburbs: 1





B. Regions under the control of ISIL: 10 medical facilities were targeted, detailed as follows:

- Raqqa: 6
- Deir Al Zour: 2
- Homs: 2

These airstrikes killed 58 civilians including 3 children and 8 women; 11 victims amongst which were from the medical staffers.

III. Report Details:

A. Medical centers under the control of armed opposition regions:

• Aleppo Governorate:

Al Hader Town: 15 October 2015

On 15 October 2015, allegedly Russian warplanes shelled Al Hader makeshift hospital in southern Aleppo suburbs that is under ISIL's control with a rocket which caused severe damage to the hospital's building and caused it to go out of service.

A [video](#) that depicts the shelling aftermath from the alleged Russian warplanes on a makeshift hospital in Al Hader town on 15 October 2015:

Al Eis Town: was targeted twice:

a. The first shelling incident: 15 October 2015

Alleged Russian warplanes shelled Al Eis town in southern Aleppo suburbs and targeted the makeshift hospital which greatly damaged the hospital and rendered it out of service.



The second shelling incident: 2 November 2015

Alleged Russian warplanes shelled Al Eis town in southern Aleppo suburbs and targeted the makeshift hospital which led to its almost complete destruction.

[Images](#) that depict the destruction on the [hospital](#) in Al Eis town





Al Atareb City: 14 December 2015

On 14 December 2015, alleged Russian warplanes shelled the houses surrounding Al Atareb Makeshift Hospital in the northern neighborhoods in Al Atareb in Aleppo western suburbs that is under the control of armed opposition, which wounded two of the hospital staff one of them is a female nurse, damaged the hospital severely and caused it to go out of service according to Statement issued by Al Atareb Local Council.

1. Maree' City: 19 December 2015

Alleged Russian warplanes launched a rocket that was loaded with cluster munitions on the eastern side of the city next to the makeshift hospital in the city.

Cluster munitions remnants due to the alleged Russian shelling on Maree' city in Aleppo on 19 December 2015



Ezzaz City: the OBGYN and children's hospital were shelled twice:

a. The First Shelling Incident: 25 December 2015

On 25 December 2015, alleged Russian warplanes launched missiles on several neighborhoods in Ezzaz city. One of the airstrikes targeted the OBGYN hospital next to al Ra'es roundabout next to the maternity hospital in Ezaz in Aleppo northern suburbs that is under the control of armed opposition, which injured two personnel from the medical staff, damaged the operations room and 7 incubators.



[Images](#) that depict the shelling aftermath on the [hospital](#)

b. The Second Shelling Incident: 15 February 2016

Alleged Russian warplanes launched long range missiles on Ezzaz city in northern Aleppo suburbs which damaged an OBGYN and children's hospital in the middle of the city. One of the guards was injured in addition to some patients. The hospital including the incubator department was damaged.

We could not identify the nature of the weapon that was shelled since Russian forces were using ballistic missiles at the same time.

Local journalist Mojahed Abou Al Joud went to the shelling site and gave SNHR his tes-





timony:

“I went to the shelling side that is 200 meters away from me. The target was the OBGYN and children’s hospital. I saw the hole that resulted from the shelling. It was enormous as if it was due to a ballistic missile. Few minutes later a Russian warplane started to roam around and the nurses started to run away. One of the nurses was injured in his head as well. We could not verify if the shelling was from a missile or a ballistic missile due to the concurrent shelling.”

A [video](#) that depicts the damages in the incubators department

It



Ezzaz City: 25 December 2015

On 25 December 2015, alleged Russian warplanes launched missiles on the National Hospital located on the road to Efreeen in Ezaz city in Aleppo suburbs that is under the control of armed opposition which damaged it severely, and burned several vehicles.

Kafar Naha Town: 10 January 2016

On 10 January 2016 alleged Russian warplanes launched several rockets next to Byouti hospital in Kafarnaha town in Aleppo western suburbs that is under the control of armed opposition which damaged the [hospital](#).

Adnan City: 27 January 2016

On 27 January 2016 alleged Russian warplanes shelled with cluster munitions the charity hospital in Adnan city in Aleppo suburbs which killed one of the employees, [damaged](#) the [hospital](#) and caused to go out of service.





- Idlib Governorate:

1. Sermeen City: 20 October 2015

Alleged Russian warplanes launched two rockets on northern of Sermeen city with the difference of 15 minutes between the first and the second rocket. The attacks targeted the makeshift hospital in Sermeen and two schools which killed 13 civilians including a child, a civil defense member, a psychotherapist, and a police member. The X-ray room was damaged along with its equipment and the laboratory was damage as well. The schools were damaged as well.

Victims' Names



S.M, a local media activist witnessed the shelling and gave SNHR his testimony:

“I saw the plane roaming on a high altitude when it launched the rocket; which is different than what the Syrian regime warplanes do.

The first missile fell on a school and a hospital. The civil defense teams, some paramedics and media activists rushed to the shelling site. The shelling caused material damages and some injuries. However, 15 minutes later, another rocket was shelled in the exact same location. During the second shelling, I noticed a gleam like the camera’s flash and did not hear the plane’s sound. After that I felt that I was picked pushed upwards from the blasts’ power. Everything around me was white and dusty and I smell blood and gun powder. I thought that I had died. The attack resulted in the death of 17 individuals including civil defense members, paramedics and media activists. I was injured with shrapnel in my chest and hands which fractured my right hand. I firmly believe that the rocket did not come from a rocket launcher because the nearest Syrian regime point is nearly 80 Km away from us. I suppose that the rockets were vacuum rockets and the amount of destruction was about 50m2 in radius.”

Moutee’ Jalal, a media activist from the civil defense in Idlib gave SNHR his testimony:

“Between 12:15 and 12:30 I heard the sound of a powerful explosion. I was in an internet café and I heard the Russian warplanes had launched an airstrike on Sermeen city. Also I saw a cloud of smoke from my location and I expected that the Russians had shelled the makeshift hospital. Directly, I went there and saw that the shelling had targeted the hospital and the two schools next to it. The high school was destroyed completely even though it was considered to be out of service due to previous shelling. The X-ray room in the hospital was destroyed in addition to the OR and the laboratory. I started to videotape the shelling aftermath when civil defense members told me that the war planes





were still hovering around. Less than a minute later, the warplanes shelled the same location and I was injured. The paramedics took me to Ma'art Al No'man Hospital and all the hospitals in the region were closed because they feared that they will be shelled. While I was there in the hospital, the doctor broke the news of the death of the psychotherapist, Hassan Taj Al Deen, Abdul Razzak Aboud, a civil defense member, Khaldoun Al Sawas a police member, and a child from Al Ma'ari family."

A [video](#) that depicts the moment of the second attack on the gathering of the civil defense



An image that depicts the shelling aftermath on Sermeen makeshift hospital:



An image that depicts the shelling aftermath on one of the targeted schools



An image that depicts the injured members from the civil defense after they were targeted by alleged Russian warplanes.



An image that depicts the injured members from the civil defense after they were targeted by alleged Russian warplanes.



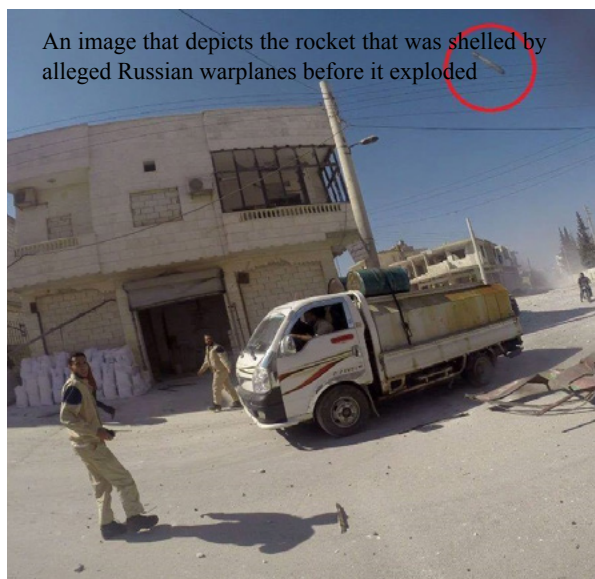
An image that depicts the injured members from the civil defense after they were targeted by alleged Russian warplanes.



An image that depicts the smoke that resulted from the bombardment after the missile was shelled



An image of the civil defense member who was killed due to the alleged Russian shelling



An image that depicts the rocket that was shelled by alleged Russian warplanes before it exploded



members:

Kafr Nabel City: 27 October 2015

Alleged Russian warplanes launched several rockets on Kafr Nabel which targeted the local council, Orient hospital and the Informatics School which injured 4 individuals, damaged the hospital and caused it to go out of service and also damaged other buildings including the council’s building.

Hassan Al Ahmad, manager of Child Care Organization visited to the shelling site and gave SNHR his testimony:

“The observatories announced the presence of Russian warplanes in our sky while I was in a training session inside the organization. Few minutes later the observatories announced that the warplanes had launched a raid on the region. I was 1.5 Km away from the shelling location and went directly to see what happened. I saw a group of young men from the civil defense trying to tell the crowds to leave the shelling site out of fear from being shelled again. The council was shelled previously and the schools suffered from great damages and four young men were injured. Our city is run by local civilian committees and is free of any military presence for any group as all headquarters were evacuated according to the residents’ demands; however, the Russian warplanes launched its airstrikes on civilians.”

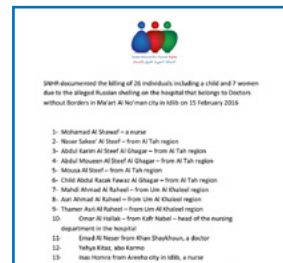
Al Najeya Town: 23 November 2015:

On 23 November 2015, alleged Russian warplanes launched several rockets next to Al Wafaa Infirmary in [Al Najeya town](#) which [damaged](#) it.

Al Hamediya Town: 15 February 2016

Alleged Russian warplanes launched 4 rockets on the makeshift hospital that belongs to the doctors without borders on the international road in Al Hamdeyi town next to Ma’art Al No’man which killed 15 individuals including 2 women. Most of the women were medical staffers. The warplanes shelled the hospital again after emergency and civil defense teams arrived which led to several injuries including the head of the civil defense team in the region.

Victims’ Names



SNHR interviewed Mr. Omar Alwan one of the civil defense members who went to the





shelling location:

“I arrived to the hospital that belonged to Doctors without Borders after an announcement from the FSA observatories. They said that the hospital in Al Hamedyi town next to our city was shelled. The three-story hospital was flattened to the ground and under its debris there were dozens of injured people and patients that is why we asked the civil defense teams to come for help. The warplanes started to roam around us and targeted us with a rocket that fell 10 meters away from the southern of the hospital. We tried to evacuate the place out of fear that it would be shelled again. After 2 minutes we were targeted again with another rocket which caused a powerful blast. As a result, head of the civil defense team was injured. We had to leave the location due to the continuous shelling. After thirty minutes we went back to pull out the injured people and victims’ bodies from under the rubble.”

Mr. Omar, a member at the FSA observatory gave us his testimony:

“That day we monitored the departure of Russian warplanes from Hamaymem airport that is considered as a Russian military base. The warplanes shelled a makeshift hospital that belongs to Doctors without Borders southern of Al Ma’ara city.

The Russian shelling did not quell and the raids continued even on civil defense members. We told everyone that Russian warplanes were hovering around.

The warplanes were flying over 7 -8 kilometers high and it was shelling missiles from a long distance. Later we monitored the departure of a MiG 23 that belongs to the Syrian regime from Hama airport and it raided Al Ma’ara National Hospital.”

A statement issued by Doctors without Borders about the incident



A [video](#) the depicts the shelling aftermath

A [video](#) that depicts the shelling by alleged Russian warplanes when the civil defense team was targeted





Images that depict the shelling aftermath on the hospital

Hama Governorate:

Lattamna City: 23 October 2015

Alleged Russian warplanes shelled Al Latamena hospital with two rockets which led to a great destruction to the hospital's building and made it go out of service. We realized that an armed opposition headquarters is located almost 20 meters away from the hospital, in addition to a military vehicles garage and an ambulance. The shelling killed 7 individuals (an anesthesia technician and six armed opposition members).

Amjad who is a doctor in the makeshift hospital gave SNHR his testimony:

“At 9:00 p.m. the observatories informed us about the presence of the Russian warplanes and we went to the hospital to shelter in it. However, the warplanes shelled hospital with two vacuum missiles. The explosion was huge and the destruction was enormous. Most of the hospital's staff and cadres were injured and the anesthesia technician suffered a severe brain injury then died due to his injuries on 28 October 2015. The lab technician was also injured and his leg was amputated as a result, while the rest of the medical staff were mildly injured and sustained bruises. The hospital went out of service; its medical equipment and pharmacy were damaged, in addition to its ambulances. The military vehicles garage that was 10 – 15 meters away from the hospital was damaged as well. It is the second time when Russian warplanes target the hospital even though ISIL are not present in northern Hama suburbs. It is a makeshift hospital that provides medical services to civilians and FSA members in Hama suburbs.”





The shelling aftermath on the hospital's ambulances:



Kafr Zieta City: 26 October 2015:

Alleged Russian warplanes shelled a hospital in Kafr Zeita with two rockets which injured three individuals and caused material damages to the hospital.

Mohamad Al Abdullah, a local media activist from Kafr Zeita gave SNHR his testimony about the shelling incident:

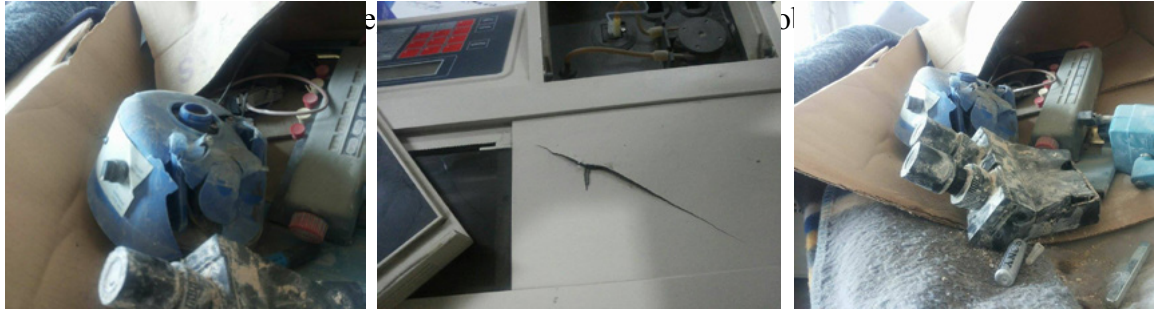
“On 5:35 p.m. the observatories informed us about the presence of the Russian warplanes so we took our precautions. We saw the warplane flying on a high altitude then we heard the sound of the rocket when it was launched. A blast happened and the hospital in the northwest region was shelled. I was 50 meters away from the hospital. The shelling from the blast formed a huge black cloud and the other rocket fell almost 100 meters away from the southeast of the hospital. Three individuals who were in the hospital were injured but the material damages were great. Most of the walls were destroyed in addition to the pharmaceutical warehouse, the generators and the lab.”

The hospital is located in a residential region in the western of the city. The houses surrounding it were greatly destroyed and the region is free of any military presence. Most of the residents left the city two years ago but there are still civilians in the city and the hospital provides them medical care. It is almost the only hospital in the northern suburbs of Hama which offers free medical care to the residents. Our region is under the control of the Free Syrian Army and it is free of any ISIL presence.”





Images that depict the damage that occurred to the lab instruments in Kafr



Damascus suburbs:

Douma City: 29 October 2015

On 29 October 2015, government warplanes shelled the makeshift hospital in Douma city in Damascus suburbs which killed 16 individuals and injured two of the medical cadres. The hospital was damaged greatly and went out of service.

Yousef Al Bustani, a local journalist and the spokesman of the United Coordination of the Syria Revolution, gave SNHR his testimony:

“At almost 11:30 a.m. I was on the city’s periphery when I saw the Russian warplanes roaming above Al Marj region next to Douma city. The rocket was targeted on Douma city even though the warplane was away from the shelling location; a remarkable difference between the Syrian regime’s warplanes and the Russian. I went to the shelling location 3 meters away from the hospital. It was damaged along with a mosque, a school and a nearby neighborhood. The entire region is full of civilians and free of any Al Islam Army, an armed op-

Victims’ Names:





position group which mainly controls Douma.

Damages were not restricted on the hospital's building, but also several members from the medical staff were injured in addition to several children who were in the nearby school."

A [video](#) that depicts pulling out victims' bodies from under the rubble and aiding injured people

An image that depicts the shelling aftermath



Lattakia Governorate:

Bsherfa Western Town: 4 November 2015

Alleged Russian warplanes launched two rockets on the medical region in the western Bsherfa town which destroyed it and its equipment.

An [image](#) that depicts the shelling aftermath on [the medical point](#)

Al Bernas town: 8 December 2015

On 8 December 2015, government warplanes launched a rocket on the [maternity hospital](#) in Bernas town in Lattakia suburbs which [damaged](#) it.

[Images](#) that depict the shelling aftermath





B- Medical Centers that are located in regions under ISIL's control

- Raqqa Governorate:

1. The National Hospital in Al Raqqa city was targeted twice:

a. The first shelling incident: 3 November 2015

On 3 November 2015, alleged Russian warplanes launched several rockets on the national [hospital](#) in Al Raqqa city which destroyed great parts of the [hospital](#) and caused it to go out of [service](#) completely.

b. The second shelling incident: 16 January 2016

On 16 January 2016 alleged Russian warplanes launched two rockets on the National Hospital in the middle of Al Raqqa city. The first rocket fell on the hospital's garden which burned it while the second fell next to the northern building of the hospital which damaged it.

Al Raqqa City: 16 January 2016

On 16 January 2016 alleged Russian warplanes shelled the blood bank in Al Malki Street next to Al Sharaksa neighborhood in Raqqa which damaged it.

Al Raqqa City: 16 January 2016

On 16 January 2016 alleged Russian warplanes launched two rockets on the National Hospital in the middle of Al Raqqa city. The first rocket fell on the hospital's garden which burned it while the second fell next to the northern building of the hospital which damaged it.

Al Raqqa City: 22 January 2016

On 22 January 2016 alleged Russian warplanes shelled Al Salam Hospital in the 23 February Street in Raqqa which damaged it.

Al Raqqa City: 22 January 2016

On 22 January 2016 alleged Russian warplanes shelled the children's hospital in Adnan Al Malki Street in Raqqa city which greatly damaged the hospital. It is worth noting that ISIL closed the hospital around a year ago.





Al Raqqa City: 23 January 2016

On 23 January 2016 alleged Russian warplanes shelled the clinics' building in the main street in the middle of Raqqa city which greatly damaged it and caused it to go out of service.

- Deir Al Zour Governorate:

1. Al Kesra Town: 20 January 2016

- On 20 January 2016 alleged Russian warplanes launched two rockets on the makeshift hospital in Al Kisra town in western Deir Al Zour suburbs that is under ISIL's control which greatly damaged the hospital.

Al Khareeta Town: 21 January 2016

- On 21 January 2016 alleged Russian warplanes shelled the makeshift hospital in Al Khareeta town in western Deir Al Zour suburbs which damaged it.

Homs Governorate:

Palmyra City: 5 November 2015

On 5 November 2015, alleged Russian warplanes launched several rockets on the vicinity of the Blood Bank that belongs to Palmyra National Hospital in Homs which caused some damages to it.

Palmyra City: 7 November 2015

On 7 November 2015, alleged Russian warplanes launched two rockets on the National Hospital in Palmyra city in Homs suburbs. One of the rockets hit the first aid building while the other fell next to the blood bank which led to great damages in the buildings.

III- Legal Conclusions and Recommendations:

- Conclusions:

1. Russian forces violated UN Security Council resolution 2139 through its indiscriminate and deliberate shelling.
2. Russian forces should abide by the International Humanitarian Law, and therefore responsible for these violations since the beginning of the attacks, which were mentioned through this report. Russia must bear the consequences of all these violations, and avoid its recurrence.
3. Indiscriminate bombardment is considered a clear violation of the International Humanitarian Law, and these indiscriminate killings amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.
4. It is necessary to protect civilians from the brutality of the Syrian regime and extremist militias allied with them. A no-fly zone must be established in parallel with the protecting





civilians in Syria from the brutality of ISIL.

Recommendations:

To the UN Security Council:

- The UN Security Council must take further action as a year has passed since the adoption of resolution No. 2139 without the Assad regime showing the least commitment to halting indiscriminate shelling, which has caused destruction and daily killings.
- It must put pressure on the Assad regime and its allies to stop supplying it with arms and military experts after its proven involvement in crimes against humanity and war crimes. It also must pass a resolution to condemn the sides that supply it with weapons.
- The Syrian file must be referred to the International Criminal Court and all those involved in war crimes and violations must be held accountable.
- The UN Security Council must establish peace and security and protect Syrian civilians and their heritage from looting, destruction and vandalism.
- It must expand the sanctions to include all pillars of the Assad and the Iranian regimes as they are directly involved war crimes and crimes against humanity.

To the High Commissioner for Human Rights:

We call upon the High Commissioner for Human Rights to submit a report to the Human Rights Council Rights and other United Nations bodies about this massacre in particular and the massacres that followed.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights must demand the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report.

To the International Community:

- Given the divisions at the UN Security Council, measures must be made at the national and regional level to build coalitions to aid the Syrian people through protecting it from the daily killings, lifting the siege, and stepping up the relief aid.
- SNHR demands that the United Nations and the Security Council to implement the principle of “protecting civilians” (ICRtoP) / (R2P), adopted by the General Assembly in 2005. Syrian people should be protected from all perpetrators.
- Pressure must be put on the UN Security Council to refer the Syria file to the International Criminal Court.
- It must seek to achieve justice and accountability in Syria through the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council and the use of the principle of universal jurisdiction.

Acknowledgment

Our heartfelt 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.

