



## The Killing of 623 Civilians in March 2016 382 amongst which were killed by government forces

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### I. Introduction:

This report encompasses the casualties' death toll of who were killed by major conflict parties in Syria:

- A. Governmental forces (army, security forces, local militias and foreign Shiite militias)**
- B. Russian Forces
- C. Kurdish Self Management Forces
- D. Extremist Islamic Groups
- E. Armed opposition Groups
- F. International Coalition Forces
- G. Unidentified groups

Different Syrian governorates, especially regions under the control of armed opposition, witnessed a significant decline in the shelling and killing percentages since March 2011. However, it is worth noting that regions under the government control or Kurdish Self Management Forces are not subjected to government shelling which is considered responsible for killing more than 60% of the victims in addition to destroying houses and displacing its residents.

We noticed that the residents sent their children back to schools again and great numbers of patients went to hospitals to get treated since the shelling decrease as hospitals and schools were continuously shelled. Additionally, infrastructure rehabilitation was conducted since the shelling has decreased.





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.

The Syrian regime continued to commit massacres against civilians in regions that are under ISIL's control. Government forces committed two massacres in Al Raqqa governorate on 18 and 19 March 2016 since ISIL-controlled regions are not included in the ceasefire agreement.

In SNHR, we aspire that the cessation of hostilities shall transform into an entire ceasefire all over Syria with no exceptions. This action should be followed by a political process that does justice to all victims, holds all perpetrators accountable for their crimes, including the Syrian regime that violated the rights of Syrian people in several ways.

## II. Report Methodology:

The Syrian Network for Human Rights is an independent human rights organization that documents the violations of human rights by the six major conflict parties in Syria.

To a certain extent, we are able to document the civilians who are killed by all major conflict parties in Syria, however, armed victims are divided into two categories:

**a. Armed opposition victims:** It is difficult to document the precise number of armed opposition members since they are killed in battle fields not cities. In addition, some armed opposition groups keep the victims' names confidential due to security reasons. Hence, we cannot obtain their names, images or any other details and therefore, the number of killed armed opposition members is far more than what we were able to record.

**b. Government forces' or ISIL victims:**

It is nearly impossible to obtain information about those kinds of victims due to the absence of any clear methodology, for several reasons. Neither Government forces nor armed opposition groups do not declare their victims' names or record it. Therefore, there is no clear and credible data to rely on while documenting ISIL or government forces' members.





Therefore, we will record the civilians who were killed by all conflict parties and compare between it.

For more information on SNHR [methodology](#), click on the following URL:

### III. Report Details:

In March 2016, SNHR documented the killing of 623 civilians, detailed as follows according to the main conflict parties:

#### A. Government Forces:

SNHR documented the killing of 382 civilians at the hands of government forces, including 48 women and 74 children (at a rate of killing 3 children daily).

Additionally, not less than 42 individuals were killed under torture (with a rate of killing two individuals under torture every day).

The percentage of women and children who were killed in this month reached 32% among the total victims' death toll; which is a strong indicator that government forces deliberately targeted civilians.

Victims' classification according to the Syrian governorates:

Damascus and its suburbs: 94

Aleppo: 69

Homs: 44

Raqqa: 44

Idlib: 41

Deir Al Zour: 36

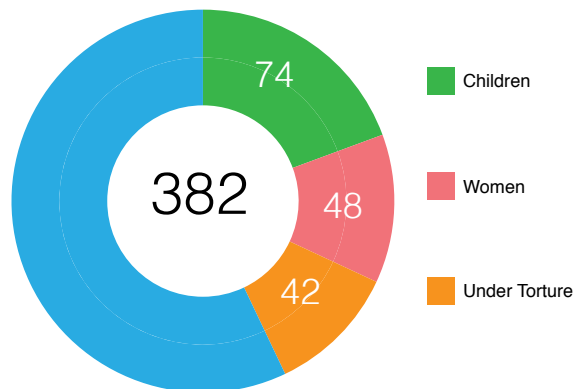
Daraa: 32

Hama: 18

Al Hassaka: 3

Lattakia: 1

382 civilians killed by Government Forces

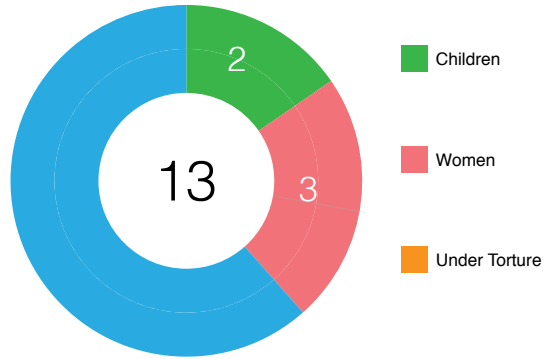




### B. Russian Forces:

We recorded 13 civilians including 2 children and 3 women due to alleged Russian shelling.

#### 13 civilians killed by Russian Forces



### C. Kurdish Self Management Forces:

Killed 10 civilians including 2 children. Victims' distribution according to Syrian governorates: Deir Al Zour: 4, Aleppo: 3, Al Hassaka: 2, Al Raqqa: 1

### D. Extremist Islamic Groups:

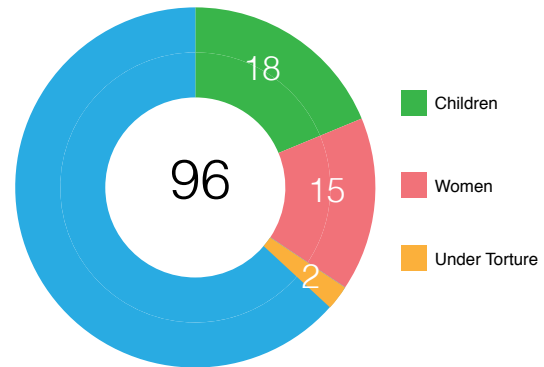
Extremist Islamic groups killed 104 civilians, detailed as follows:

**i. ISIL:** killed 96 civilians including 18 children and 15 women.

Victims' distribution according to Syrian governorates:

Deir Al Zour: 53, Aleppo: 20, Daraa: 13, Al Hassaka: 6, Al Raqqa: 3, Damascus suburbs: 1

#### 96 civilians killed by ISIS

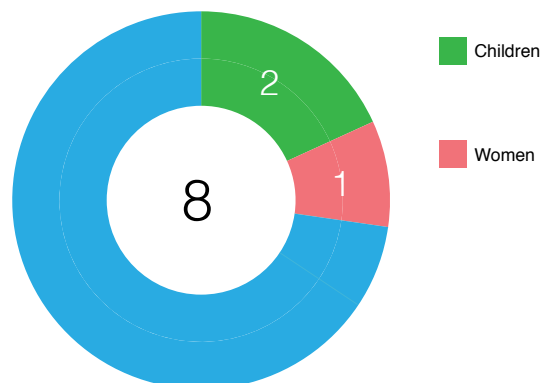


**ii. Al Nusra Front:** killed 8 civilians including 2 children and a woman.

Victims' distribution according to Syrian governorates:

Homs: 4, Daraa: 4

#### 8 civilians killed by Nusra front





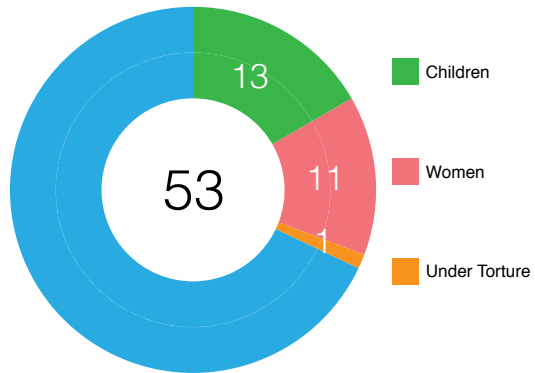
### E. Armed Opposition Groups:

SNHR documented the killing of 53 civilians including 13 children and 11 women. One child died under torture as well.

Victims' distribution according to Syrian governorates:

Daraa: 23, Aleppo: 21, Idlib: 4, Damascus suburbs: 3, Damascus: 1, and Homs: 1.

53 civilians killed by Armed Opposition Groups

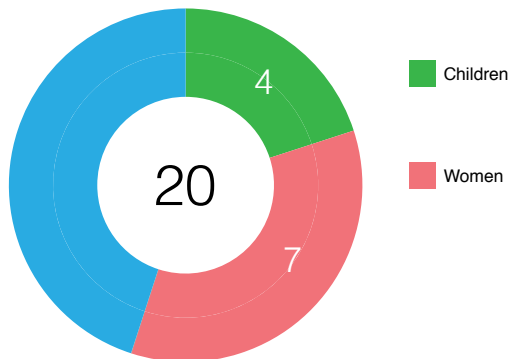


### F. International Coalition Forces:

We recorded the killing of 20 civilians including 4 children and 7 women. Victims' distribution according to Syrian governorates:

Al Raqqa: 16, Aleppo: 2, and Homs: 2

20 civilians killed by International Coalition

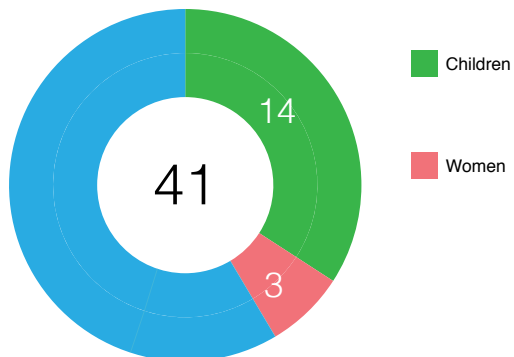


### G. Unidentified Groups:

We recorded the killing of 41 civilians including 14 children and 3 women by unidentified groups. Victims' distribution according to Syrian governorates:

Daraa: 9, Idlib: 7, Damascus suburbs: 5, Al Hassaka: 5, Deir Al Zour: 4, Homs: 2, Aleppo: 2, Al Raqqa: 2, Lattakia: 1, Unidentified: 4

41 civilians killed by Unidentified Groups





It should be noted that we managed to document those victims through our network of activists who are distributed across Syria. Those victims are documented by full name, place, and date of death. There are many other cases that we weren't able to reach and document especially in the cases of massacres and siege where government forces besiege a town or a village and cut off communication. It is very much likely that the actual death toll is larger than what we were able to document mainly because government forces don't allow any human rights organization to operate in its territories.

## **IV- Conclusions and Recommendations:**

SNHR affirms that government forces, its militias (Shabiha) and the Russian forces have violated the principles of the human rights international laws which protect the right to life. All the evidences and eyewitnesses' testimonies prove that more than 90% of the wide and individual attacks targeted civilians and civil points.

This contradicts with the Syrian government forces' claims that it is fighting "Al-Qaeda and terrorists". SNHR implies that those killing actions amount to crimes against humanity which are committed as part of a widespread and systematic attack directed against civilians.

- Russian Forces, Kurdish Self Management forces, extremist Islamic groups, International coalition forces and armed opposition groups committed extrajudicial crimes that amount to war crimes.
- International Coalition forces committed unlawful killings that amount to war crimes.

## **Liability**

Every internationally wrongful act by a State inflicts an international responsibility on that State. Similarly, the customary international law stipulates that the state is responsible for all acts committed by members of the military and security forces. And therefore the state is responsible for the unlawful acts, including crimes against humanity, committed by members of the military and security forces.

As such, the government of Iran, Hezbollah and ISIL are actual participants in the killings, and bear the legal and judicial responsibility, in addition to all funders and supporters of the Syrian regime, which is committing massacres almost daily and systematically without stopping day or night. All of these parties must be held responsible for the consequences and reactions on the Syrian people's part especially by the victims' families and relatives.





## Recommendations

### The Security Council

- The Security Council should take additional measures as a year has passed since the adoption of resolution 2139 and no one committed to put an end to the indiscriminate bombing that is resulting in more blood and destruction every day.
- To press on the states that are supporting government forces such as Russia, Iran, and Lebanon in order to stop the flow of weapons and expertise to government forces after it was proven that these resources are being used in crimes against humanity and war crimes which applies as well on the states and individuals that support extremist groups, PYD forces, and some of the armed opposition factions.
- The Syrian case should be referred to the ICC and all individuals responsible for the crimes that have been perpetrated in Syria must be held accountable.
- To enforce peace and security in Syria and implement the principle of the Responsibility to Protect in order to save the lives of the Syrians and their traditions and arts from being destroyed, stolen, or ruined.

## Acknowledgment

Our heartfelt thanks go out for the victims' families and activists who contributed majorly to this report

