

Nine Medical and Civil Defense Personnel Killed

42 Incidents of Attack on Vital
Medical and Civil Defense Facilities
in February 2017



SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Friday, March 3, 2017

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I. Introduction and Methodology

SNHR's high-level methodology for documentation relies on survivors and families' direct accounts in addition to the process of verifying and analyzing pictures, videos, and some medical records. However, we can't claim that we have documented all cases in light of the ban and pursuit by Syrian regime forces and some of the other armed groups.

To read more about SNHR methodology for documenting victims, please see the following [URL](#):

The consistent bombing and targeting of medical facilities and civil defense centers by Syrian regime forces since 2011, and the killing and arrest of medics and civil defense personnel at the hands of different conflict parties, especially Syrian regime forces, indicates a systematic policy that only aims to shed more blood and deepen the suffering of the injured – civilians and armed.

Fadel Abdul Ghany, chairman of SNHR, says:

"The Russian attacks on medical and civil defense centers as well as medical and civil defense personnel are considered a blatant violation of the international humanitarian law and constitute war crimes considering the chaotic, and in many cases, deliberate, targeting of protected objects. All of this have only deepened the suffering of the wounded and injured and is one of the main reasons behind the displacement of the Syrian people as it sends a very clear message: there is no safe area, or a red line, including hospitals, you either flee or perish."



On December 30, 2016, a comprehensive ceasefire was announced in Syria under a Russian-Turkish sponsorship. The parties signing to the statement - the Syrian regime, on one hand, and armed opposition factions, on the other hand, pledged to cease all combat operations including aerial airstrikes, and cease all raids and advancements on the ground. However, military ISIS-held areas (Self-proclaimed the Islamic State) were excluded from the agreement. Since the Ankara Ceasefire Agreement went into effect, there has been a decent and notable drop in the rates of killing throughout Syria in comparison with the previous months from March 2011 until now. The main focus here is the areas under the control of armed opposition factions, as the Syrian regime-held areas aren't subjected to heavy, daily aerial bombardment, which has resulted in the killing of no less than 60% of the victims, and destroyed buildings, displacing the people of Syria.

Nonetheless, breaches haven't stopped, mainly by the Syrian regime, especially crimes of extrajudicial killing, and, more horrendously, deaths due to torture, which strongly proves that there is some sort of ceasefire on the table. The crimes, however, that the international community wasn't able to notice, and particularly the Turkish and Russian sponsors, are still ongoing as nothing has changed in that regard.

SNHR monitored that the rate of the Syrian regime forces' violations against medical and civil defense personnel and their respective facilities in February has returned to its former levels before the ceasefire agreement went into effect. This proves that the Syrian regime is the most affected party by the ceasefire agreement.

This report only represents the bare minimum, which we were able to document, of the actual magnitude and severity of the violations that occurred. Additionally, the report doesn't cover the social, economic, and psychological ramifications.

II. Executive Summary

SNHR documented in the month of February 2017 the following main violations against medical and civil defense personnel and their respective facilities:

A. Acts of killing

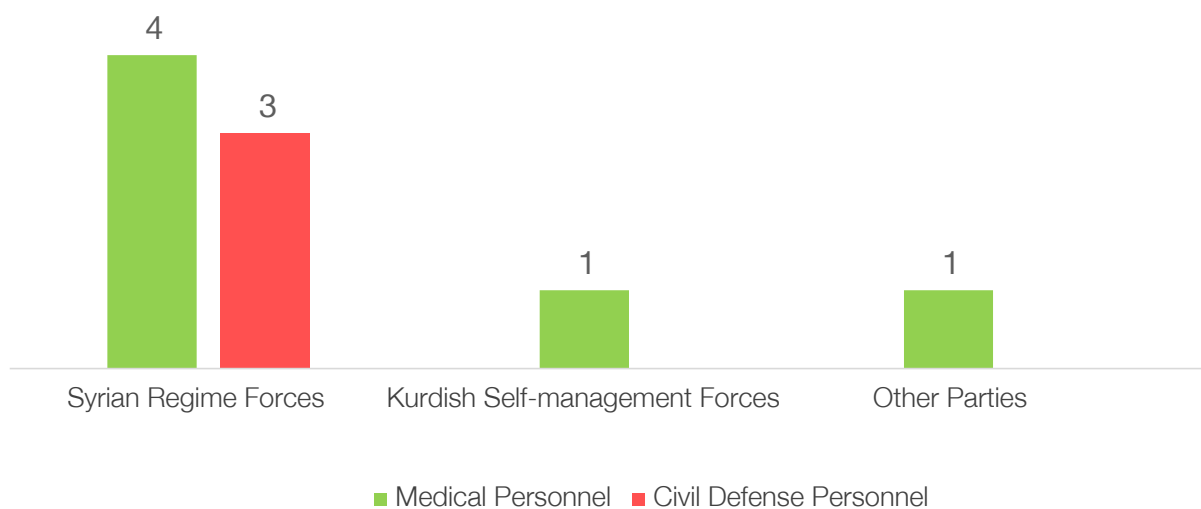
We documented the killing of nine medical and civil defense personnel as follows:

- Syrian regime forces (Army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias): killed seven medical personnel as follows:



- One nurse
- Two paramedics
- One medical personnel
- Three civil defense personnel
- Self-management forces (Consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party – a branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party): killed one pharmacist
- Other parties: killed one doctor

Medical and civil defense personnel killed in the month of February are distributed by the perpetrator party as follows:



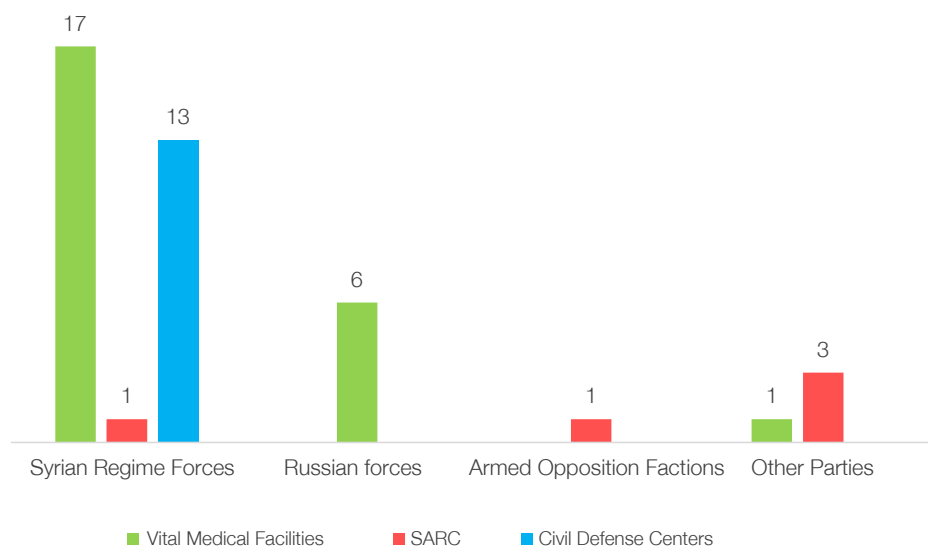
B. Targeting of vital medical and civil defense facilities

SNHR documented 42 incidents of attack on vital medical and civil defense facilities and Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) as follows:

- Syrian regime forces (Army, security, local militias, foreign Shiite militias): we recorded 31 incidents as follows:
 - 11 medical facilities
 - Six ambulances
 - One SARC facility
 - 13 civil defense centers
- Russian forces: six incidents of attack on medical facilities
- Armed opposition factions: One incident of attack on a SARC facility
- Other parties: four incidents as follows:
 - One medical facility
 - Three SARC facilities



Incidents of attack on vital medical and civil defense facilities are distributed by the perpetrator party as follows:



II. Details

A. Acts of killing

1- Syrian regime forces

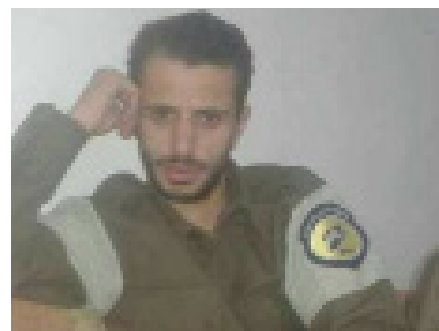
Majed Bashir al Turk, paramedic, from Douma city in Damascus suburbs governorate, works with [Sham Humanitarian Network](#), married and a father of two children. He was [killed](#) on Friday, February 3, 2017, in a shelling by Syrian regime forces artillery that fired a number of shells at Douma city as he was tending to wounded individuals from a previous shelling.



Zaher Sourani, a civil defense member, from Ma'aret al Nu'man city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, born in 1989, married. He died on Monday, February 6, 2017, of injuries caused by shrapnel in the head and chest from missiles fired by fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes (Su-22) at the civil [defense center](#) in Ma'aret al Nu'man city on October 20, 2016.



[Khaled Mohammad Rummana](#), a civil defense member, from Harasta city in eastern Damascus suburbs governorate, 25-year-old. He was killed on Saturday, February 18, 2017 in a shelling by Syrian regime forces rocket launchers that fired a number of rockets at Tishreen neighborhood in northeastern Damascus city.



[Mahran Sultan al Suwyidan](#), assistant [nurse](#), from Daraa al Balad area in the middle of Daraa city, born in 1995, works at Daraa al Balad makeshift hospital, has a license in aiding from the Institute of Medical and Applied Science in Nasib own in the eastern suburbs of Daraa governorate, married. He was killed on Sunday, February 19, 2017 in a shelling by Syrian regime forces artillery that fired a number of mortar shell which fell near a battlefield first-aid point -where he was- in al Manshiya neighborhood in Daraa city.



[Mohammad Thyban al Dbea'](#), nurse, from Al Mgheir village in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate, born in 1989, works with Hama al Hurra (Free Hama) Health Directorate. He was killed on Wednesday, February 22, 2017, in a bombing by fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes that fired missiles in the vicinity of al Jabriya village in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate, as he was tending to the wounded who fell during clashes between Syrian regime forces and armed opposition factions.

[Abu Wael al Homs](#)i (His name wasn't received), [paramedic](#), from Homs governorate, born in 1972, married. Works at the medical point that is affiliated to Lewa' al Eman - an armed opposition faction. He was killed on Wednesday, February 22, 2017 in a bombing by fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes that fired missiles in the vicinity of al Jabriya village in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate, as he was tending to the wounded who fell during clashes between Syrian regime forces and armed opposition factions.



[Mohammad Rajab Ramez Dabdoub](#), a civil defense member, from Homs city, born on July 10, 1994, single. He was killed on Tuesday, February 28, 2017 in a shelling by Syrian regime artillery that fired a number of shells at al Wa'er neighborhood in Homs city.



2. Self-management forces (Consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party – a branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party)

[Mohammad Khair al Khleif](#), [pharmacist](#), from Tal Alou al Baylounia in the northern suburbs of al Hasaka governorate, born in 1980. He was arrested by the Self-management forces (Primarily consisting of the Democratic Union Party – a branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party) from his workplace in al Qameshly city in December 2016. He died due to torture inside one of their detention centers. His dead body was delivered to his family on Sunday, February 19, 2017

3. Other parties

[Ibrahim Adel al Shehabi](#), a dentist, from al Bab city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, has a degree in dentistry from University of Aleppo, married. [He](#) was killed along with his two children on Thursday, February 16, 2017, in an artillery shelling by the Euphrates Shield forces (Turkish forces-backed armed opposition factions) that fired shells at al Bab city.

B. Targeting of vital medical and civil defense facilities

1- Syrian regime forces

Vital medical facilities

- Medical centers

Thursday, February 2, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (Investigations are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party accurately) fired a number of missiles at al Hayat surgical hospital in al Qaboun neighborhood in northeastern Damascus city. The hospital building and its cladding materials were heavily damaged. The neighborhood is under the control of armed opposition factions.



Saturday, February 4, 2017, Syrian regime forces artillery fired a number of shells that fell near the makeshift hospital in Kafr Laha city in the northern suburbs of Homs governorate. One of the shells fell 25 meters away from an ambulance belonging to the hospital. The ambulance structure was heavily damaged, and it was rendered out of commission. No damages were recorded in the [hospital](#). Kafr Laha city is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Monday, February 6, 2017, Syrian regime helicopters dropped a number of barrel bombs near Kafr Zita specialized hospital in Kafr Zita city in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate. The hospital and its equipment were heavily damaged. As a result, it was temporarily rendered out of commission. The city is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Wednesday, February 15, 2017, around 12:00, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes carried out two airstrikes where four missiles were fired near the makeshift hospital in al Yadouda town in the southern suburbs of Daraa governorate. The missiles fell 15 meters away from the hospital, whose building and cladding materials were moderately damaged. The town is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Sunday noon, February 19, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (Investigations are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party precisely) fired a number of missiles near the makeshift hospital in Nasib town in the eastern suburbs of Daraa governorate. The missiles fell on residential buildings near the hospital, which resulted in casualties. Additionally, the hospital building and its equipment were heavily damaged. As a result, the hospital was rendered out of commission. Nasib town is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Tuesday afternoon, February 21, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired two missiles near the Martyr Mohammad Bath hospital in Ma'aret Misreen in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate. One of the missiles fell about 50 meters away from the hospital, whose cladding materials and equipment were moderately damaged. The town is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

Friday, February 24, 2017, Syrian regime forces rocket launchers fired a number of surface-to-surface rockets that fell next to al Hayat surgical [hospital](#) in al [Qaboun](#) neighborhood in northeastern Damascus city. The hospital building and its equipment were heavily



damaged. As a result, the [hospital](#) was rendered out of commission. The neighborhood is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Saturday, February 25, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired two missiles near Sham Aiding Network hospital which is located on Hzarin village in western Kafr Nabbol city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The hospital building was slightly damaged, and a fire broke out in the parking lot that is located across the hospital. The village is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

Sunday, February 26, 2017, around 09:50, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a missile at a warehouse belonging to [Orient Aiding Network -adjacent](#) to the civil defense center- in the northern parts of Ariha city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The warehouse building was partially [destroyed](#), and its cladding materials and contents were moderately damaged. Ariha city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.



Sunday noon, February 26, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired missiles at al Huda surgical [hospital](#) in [Hawwar](#) village in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate. The [hospital](#) building was heavily [destroyed](#). Additionally, the hospital equipment and two ambulances belonging to it were moderately damaged. Hawwar village is under the control of armed opposition factions.



Monday, February 27, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at the medical point in al [Nashabiya](#) town in al Marj area in eastern Damascus suburbs governorate. The point building and its [equipment](#) were moderately damaged. As a result, the medical point was rendered out of commission in addition to two ambulances belonging to the [hospital](#) which were heavily [damaged](#). Al Nashabiya town is under the control of armed opposition factions.



- Ambulances

Friday, February 3, 2017, Syrian regime forces artillery fired a number of shells at an ambulance belonging to Sham Humanitarian Network in Douma city in Eastern Ghouta, located in eastern Damascus suburbs governorate, which resulted in the killing of one paramedic. Additionally, the ambulance was slightly damaged. The city is under the control of armed opposition factions.

International humanitarian insignia

- SARC (Facilities, vehicles)

Saturday, February 25, 2017, around 16:00, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired two missiles near the SARC branch in al Hezb circle in the western parts of Ariha city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The two missiles fell about 100 meters away from the branch, which resulted in casualties. Additionally, the cladding materials on the branch building were moderately damaged. Ariha city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.



- Civil defense centers (Facilities, vehicles)

Friday, February 3, 2017, around 11:30, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a missile near [the civil defense center](#) in Aqrab town in the southern suburbs of Hama governorate. The missile fell about 30 meters away from the center, which resulted in moderate [damages](#) to [the center building](#) and its cladding materials. Additionally, the glass windows of an ambulance belonging to the center were shattered, and its structure was slightly [damaged](#). Aqrab town is under the control of armed opposition factions. SNHR spoke to the media activist Hasan al Umari, the spokesperson for Hama media center, via Facebook, who told us:

“On Friday, February 3, around 11:30, the regime warplanes carried out airstrikes against the town. One of the missiles fell on a house 30 meters away from the civil defense center. I was in an area nearby, so I headed for the site. The damages were limited to shattered glass and some slight damages to the building. Also, the glass windows of the center’s ambulance were shattered, and a tire was punctured. One of the civil defense members’ son was killed. Additionally, 10 individuals were wounded.”



Saturday, February 4, 2017, Syrian regime forces artillery fired a number of shells that fell near an [ambulance](#) belonging to [the civil defense center](#) in Kafr Laha city in the northern suburbs of Homs governorate. The ambulance structure was heavily damaged, and it was rendered out of commission. The city is under the control of armed opposition factions.



Wednesday, February 8, 2017, Syrian regime forces fired a “Pheel” rocket at the civil defense center in al Wa’er neighborhood in western Homs city, which wounded a civil defense member. Additionally, the center building and an [ambulance](#) belonging to it were heavily damaged. As a result, the center and the ambulance were rendered out of commission. Al Wa’er neighborhood was rendered [out of commission](#).

Saturday, February 11, 2017, a sniper from the Syrian regime forces and pro-regime militias shot an ambulance belonging to the civil defense -Madaya center- in Baqqeen town in northwestern Damascus suburbs governorate, which resulted in slight damages to the [ambulance](#). The town is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Sunday afternoon, February 12, 2017, Syrian regime forces artillery fired a number of shells near [the civil defense center](#) in Bosra al Sham city in the suburbs of Daraa governorate, which injured a civil defense member. Additionally, the center building and an ambulance belonging to it were slightly damaged. Bosra al Sham city is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Wednesday, February 15, 2017, around 03:30, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces/Russian forces (Investigations are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party precisely) fired a number of missiles near an [ambulance](#) belonging to center 114, affiliated to the civil defense, in al Latamna city in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate. The ambulance was [destroyed](#) completely and was rendered [out of commission](#). Al Latamna city is under the control of armed opposition factions.



Tuesday, February 21, 2017, Syrian regime artillery fired a shell near an ambulance belonging to the civil defense in Baqqeen town in northwestern Damascus suburbs governorate, which wounded a civil defense member. Additionally, the ambulance's glass windows were shattered and its structure was slightly [damaged](#). The town is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Wednesday, February 22, 2017, Syrian regime artillery fired a number of shells that fell near an ambulance belonging to the civil defense center in Madaya town in northwestern Damascus suburbs governorate, which wounded a civil defense member. Additionally, the ambulance was moderately damaged. Madaya town is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Sunday, February 26, 2017, around 09:50, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes (Su-24) fired a missile at the civil defense center, which occupies the external pedestrian bus center (Al Bolaman)- in the northern parts of Ariha city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, which wounded four civil defense members. Additionally, the center building and its [equipment](#) were partially destroyed, and a [fire truck](#) belonging to the center was moderately damaged. Ariha city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.



2- Russian forces

Vital medical facilities

- Medical facilities

Friday, February 3, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired a number of missiles at al Teb al Hadith hospital in Al Bal'oum neighborhood in al Mayadin city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The hospital building was heavily damaged. The city is under the control of ISIS.

Friday, February 3, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired a number of missiles at the makeshift hospital -which occupies a building for an industrial high school- in al Mayadin city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The hospital building and its equipment were slightly damaged. The city is under the control of ISIS.



Tuesday, February 7, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired a missile that fell in a dirt area near the laser lithotripsy center (Formerly the Doctors' Union building) in the southern parts of Idlib city. The center building, its equipment, and cladding materials were moderately damaged. The city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

Monday, February 13, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired two missiles at the makeshift hospital in Daraa al Balad area in the middle of Daraa city. The [hospital building](#) was partially [destroyed](#) and its [equipment](#) were heavily [damaged](#). As a result, the [hospital](#) was rendered out of commission. The hospital is located within the opposition-held parts of Daraa al Balad area.



Sunday, February 26, 2017, around 18:40, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired a missile near the hospital of the Syrian University in western Der al Sharqi village in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The missile fell about 100 meters away from the hospital, whose building was slightly damaged. The village is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.



Monday, February 27, 2017, around 14:30, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired four missiles at the [hospital](#) of the Syrian University on the western outskirts of Der al Sharqi village in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The [hospital](#) roof and walls were partially destroyed, and its cladding materials and equipment were moderately damaged. As a result, the [hospital](#) was rendered [out of commission](#). It should be noted that the hospital was bombed on the day before by the same warplanes. The village is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

3- Armed opposition factions

International humanitarian insignia

- SARC (Facilities, vehicles)

Wednesday noon, February 8, 2017, a number of locally-made rocket shell fell near a relief center affiliated to SARC in al Hamdaniya neighborhood in western Aleppo city. The shells were fired from an artillery stationing in al Rashideen neighborhood, which is under the control of armed opposition factions. The center building was moderately damaged. Al Hamdaniya neighborhood is under the control of Syrian regime forces.

4- Other parties

Vital medical facilities

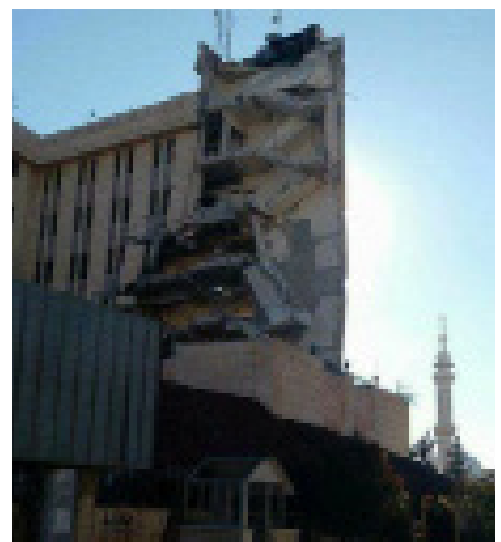
- Medical facilities

Thursday noon, February 16, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes backing Euphrates Shield (Turkish forces-backed armed opposition factions) fired missiles at the makeshift hospital in al Bab city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. The hospital was heavily destroyed and was rendered out of commission. Al Bab city was under the control of ISIS, at the time of the incident, whereas it is currently under the control of Euphrates Shield force as of this writing.

International humanitarian insignia

SARC (Facilities, vehicles)

Wednesday, February 1, 2017, around 03:00, fixed-wing international coalition/Russian forces warplanes (Investigations are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party precisely) fired missiles at [the SARC center](#) (previously al Carlton hotel) in the southern neighborhood of Idlib city. [The center building](#) was heavily [destroyed](#) from the west side, as well as its [equipment](#), and a fire broke out in the second floor. As a result, the center was rendered [out of commission](#).



Additionally, two [vehicles](#) belonging to [the center](#) were moderately [damaged](#) after the rubbles of the [building](#) fell on them. Idlib city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendation

Legal conclusions

1- The incidents mentioned in this report are considered, beyond any doubt, violations of Security Council Resolutions 2139 and 2254 which both state that indiscriminate attacks must be halted. Also, these incidents are violations of Article 8 of Rome Statute through the act of willful killing which constitutes war crimes.

2- We can confirm that most of the incidents included in this report have targeted armless civilians. Therefore, Syrian regime forces have violated the rules of the international human rights law which guarantee the right to life. Additionally, these violations were perpetrated in a non-international armed conflict which amount to a war crime where all elements were fulfilled.

Also, Russian forces, Kurdish Self-management forces, armed opposition factions, and other parties (which includes parties that we weren't able to identify as well as Turkish, Lebanese, and Jordanian forces) have committed acts that amount to war crimes through the crime of extrajudicial killing and targeting vital civilian facilities.

3- The attacks mentioned in this report are considered a violation of the customary international law as the shells were fired at populated areas rather than a specific military object.

4- Aerial bombardment has caused collateral damages that involved loss of lives, injuries, and significant damages to civil facilities. There are strong indicators suggesting that the damage was too excessive compared to the anticipated military benefit.

Recommendations

The Security Council

- The Security Council has to take additional steps as it has been more than two years since Resolution 2139 was adopted and no pledges to cease the indiscriminate bombardment operations have been made. All the conflict parties must respect these steps and adhere to the rules of the international humanitarian law.
- The Syrian case must be referred to the International Criminal Court and all those who are responsible must be held accountable including the Russian regime whose involvement in committing war crimes have been proven.
- Instill security and peace in Syria and implement the norm of the Responsibility to Pro-



tect in order to protect the lives, culture, and history of the Syrian people from being destroyed, stolen, and ruined.

- Expand the sanctions to include the Syrian and Iranian regimes and all of their pillars who are directly involved in committing crimes against humanity and war crimes against the Syrian people.

The International Community

- In light of the split of the Security Council and its utter inability, Steps must be taken on the national and regional levels to form alliances to support the Syrian people that would protect them from the daily killings and siege and enhance the support for the relief efforts. Additionally, the principle of universal jurisdiction must be activated in local courts regarding these crimes in order to conduct fair trials for all those who were involved.
- SNHR has repeatedly called for the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect in tens of studies and reports and as a member of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP) after all political channels through the Arab League's plan and then Mr. Kofi Annan's plan were brought out. Therefore, steps under Article 7 of the Rome Statute must be taken and the norm of the Responsibility to Protect, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly, must be implemented. The Security Council is still hindering the protection of civilians in Syria.
- Renew the pressure on the Security Council to refer the case in Syria to the International Criminal Court.
- Work on fulfilling justice and achieving accountability in Syria through the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council and work on utilizing the principle of the universal jurisdiction.

Medical organizations around the world

There is a severe shortage in medical manpower in Syria because of the ceaseless killing of medical personnel. Firstly, Syrian doctors must come back to Syria to compensate for the severe shortage in medical personnel. Also, international organizations can send volunteers to safe areas where wounded are sent for treatment. We have recorded many cases where wounded died due to lack of medical resources.

Acknowledgment

Our most sincere thanks go to the victims' families and friends and to the local activists who contributed majorly to this report.





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