



## At Least 15 Attacks on Vital Facilities in March 2014

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### I. Executive Summary:

In March 2014, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) recorded at least 15 attacks on vital facilities, distributed according to the perpetrator party as follows:

A. Government forces: 11

B. ISIS: Two

C. Parties that SNHR were unable to identify the perpetrator: Two

The most notable vital facilities targeted in March:

Seven places of worship, one school, two medical facilities, one ambulance, three markets, and one hotel.

If the Security Council is unable to compel the parties to the conflict to implement its resolution 2139 of February 22, 2014, which provides for putting an end to “the indiscriminate use of weapons in populated areas, including artillery and aerial bombardments, such as the use of barrel bombs”, that the Security Council should exert at least minimal pressure on government forces mainly to stop targeting vital community centers, such as schools, hospitals, markets, bakeries, and religious places.

In this report, the SNHR sheds light on the attacks on vital facilities that the network was able to document. We emphasize that the attacks documented account for the bare minimum of attacks actually carried out due to the many practical obstacles encountered in our documentation process.





As a result of its investigations, SNHR confirms that there were no military headquarters in the facilities included in this report, either before or during the attack. Government forces and other perpetrators must justify their attacks to the United Nations and the Security Council.

## II. Details of incidents:

### **A. Government forces:**

#### **- Mosques:**

On Thursday, March 6, 2014, government warplanes fired missiles at the mosque in al Ameriya village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, causing the partial destruction of the mosque building, as well as inflicting moderate material damage to the furniture. The village was under the joint control of Armed Opposition groups and Jabhat al Nusra at the time of the incident.

On Friday, March 14, 2014, government warplanes fired a missile at al Imam al Shafi'i Mosque, known as the "Shari'a Mosque" in al Jbeila neighborhood of Deir Ez-Zour city, causing significant material damage to the mosque building, putting it out of service. The neighborhood was controlled by Armed Opposition factions at the time of the incident.

On Friday, March 21, 2014, government warplanes fired a missile at al Kabir Mosque in Kafranbel city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, causing significant material damage to the mosque building. The city was under the joint control of Armed Opposition groups and Jabhat al Nusra at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, March 23, 2014, government warplanes fired a missile that landed near al Safa and [al Marwa Mosque](#) in al Mowasalat neighborhood east of Aleppo city, causing significant material damage to the mosque building. The neighborhood was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Saturday, March 29, government warplanes fired a number of missiles that landed near al Mohammadi Mosque in Qedsayya city northwest of Damascus Suburbs governorate, causing minor material damage to the mosque building. The city was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.





- Schools:

On Thursday, March 20, 2014, government artillery fired a number of shells at Yasin al Ferjani School in Karm al Shami neighborhood in the center of Homs city, causing moderate material damage to two classrooms. The neighborhood was under the control of government forces at the time of the incident.

- Medical facilities:

On Friday, March 7, 2014, government warplanes fired [a missile](#) at [al Ehsan Surgical Hospital](#) in [Irbeen city](#) in the Eastern Ghouta east of Damascus Suburbs governorate, causing extensive material damage to the hospital building, putting it out of service. The city was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.



On Saturday, March 29, 2014, government forces fired a surface-to-surface missile that landed near a field hospital in al Wa'er neighborhood west of Homs city, causing extensive material damage to the hospital building, putting it out of service. The neighborhood was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

- Ambulances:

On Sunday, March 2, 2014, government artillery fired a shell at an ambulance belonging to a field hospital in al Yarmouk Camp south of Damascus city; the vehicle, which was almost completely destroyed, was put out of service. The camp was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.





#### - Markets:

On Saturday, March 15, 2014, government warplanes fired a missile at a popular [market](#) in Ma'aret Misreen town in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, causing significant damage to a number of shops. The town was under the joint control of Armed Opposition groups and Jabhat al Nusra at the time of the incident.

On Tuesday, March 18, 2014, government [artillery fired](#) a number of shells at a popular market in Yalda town southeast Damascus Suburbs governorate, causing significant damage to a number of shops, in addition to causing moderate material damage to other shops. The town was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

### **B. Extremist Islamic groups:**

#### - ISIS

#### - Mosques:

On Thursday, March 27, 2014, ISIS bombed the mosque and the tomb of [Owais al Qarni](#) in Raqqa city, using improvised explosive devices, causing extensive destruction to the mosque building, putting it out of service. Raqqa city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

#### - Hotels:

On Tuesday, March 11, 2014, an ISIS suicide bomber blew himself up using a suicide belt he was wearing in [Hadaya Hotel](#) in al Qameshli city in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, causing extensive damage to the building. The city was under the control of Kurdish forces at the time of the incident.

### **C. Parties we were unable to identify:**

#### - Mosques:

On Friday, March 7, 2014, a car bomb exploded near al Gharbi al Kabir Mosque in [Ma'aret Misreen](#) village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, causing extensive material damage to the mosque building and furniture. We were unable to determine the perpetrator party up to the time of preparing this report. The village was under the joint control of Armed Opposition groups and Jabhat al Nusra at the time of the incident.





- Markets:

On Thursday, March 6, 2014, a car bomb exploded near a market in [al Arman neighborhood](#) east of Homs city, causing extensive destruction to a number of shops. We were unable to determine the perpetrator party up to the time of preparing this report. The neighborhood was under the control of government forces at the time of the incident.

### **III. Conclusions and recommendations**

According to international humanitarian law, indiscriminate, deliberate or disproportionate attacks are unlawful, with the government forces' targeting of schools, hospitals, places of worship and furnaces demonstrating a blatant disregard for even the minimum standards of international humanitarian law and UN Security Council resolutions.

Extremist organizations and some other armed groups have also targeted some of these facilities. Indiscriminate bombing constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law and is tantamount to a war crime.

#### **Recommendations:**

##### **UN Security Council:**

- Compel all parties, in particular government forces as the greatest perpetrator of violations, to implement Resolution 2139, and at minimum condemn the targeting of vital centers for which civilians are indispensable.
- A comprehensive arms embargo should be imposed on the Syrian government, in view of its flagrant violations of international law and UN Security Council resolutions.
- The countries that supply weapons to the Syrian regime and groups that have been proved to have committed crimes against civilians should be categorized as accomplices in these crimes, along with all suppliers and distributors involved in supplying and providing access to materials used to perpetrate them.

