

No less than 188 Massacres in the First Half of 2017

Including 35 Massacres in June

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Tuesday, July 4, 2017

The Syrian Network for Human Rights, founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, non-profit independent organization that is a primary source for the United Nations on all death toll-related statistics in Syria



Contents

- I. Introduction and Methodology
- II. Executive Summary
- III. Details of June's Incidents
- IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

I. Introduction and Methodology

The fourth round of negotiations was held in Astana city, Kazakhstan's capital, on 3 and 4 of May 2017. Russian, Turkish, and Iranian representatives attended as the sponsoring states of Ankara Ceasefire Agreement. The three states agreed on establishing four de-escalation zones, wherein the agreement is to commence on May 6, 2017. The agreement outlined four major de-escalation areas – Idlib governorate and the surrounding areas (parts of Aleppo, Hama, and Latakia governorates), northern Homs governorate, Eastern Ghouta, and parts of Daraa and al Quneitra governorates in the southern parts of Syria. It was provided that an expert committee would accurately assign the borders of said zones at a later date. The agreement provided for a cessation of combat operations, passage of humanitarian aids, and for IDPs to go back to their areas. Since the agreement went into effect, these areas saw a relatively noticeable and good decrease in killing rates compared with the previous months since March 2011.

Nonetheless, breaches didn't stop, mainly by the Syrian regime, who is seemingly the party that would be most affected should the ceasefire go on, and in particular extrajudicial killing crimes and, more horrendously, deaths due to torture. This strongly asserts that there is a ceasefire of some sort on the table, but the crimes that the international community -especially the Russian, Turkish, and Iranian sponsors- won't see are still going on as nothing has changed.



We didn't record any drop in the number of massacres by Syrian regime forces across Syria in this month compared to what has been recorded since last February. The massacres were concentrated in Deir Ez-Zour governorate. On the other hand, international coalition forces continue their ruthless campaign, committing massacres in the eastern governorates for the fourth month in a row, and even more aggressively than the past three months. Half of those massacre were in Raqqa city where Syrian Democratic Forces are waging a war to take the city from ISIS.

SNHR incorporates high documentation standards that rely on direct accounts from survivors or victims' families, in addition to analyzing the pictures and videos and some medical records. Certainly, we can't claim that we have documented all cases in light of the ban and pursuit by Syrian regime forces and other armed groups.

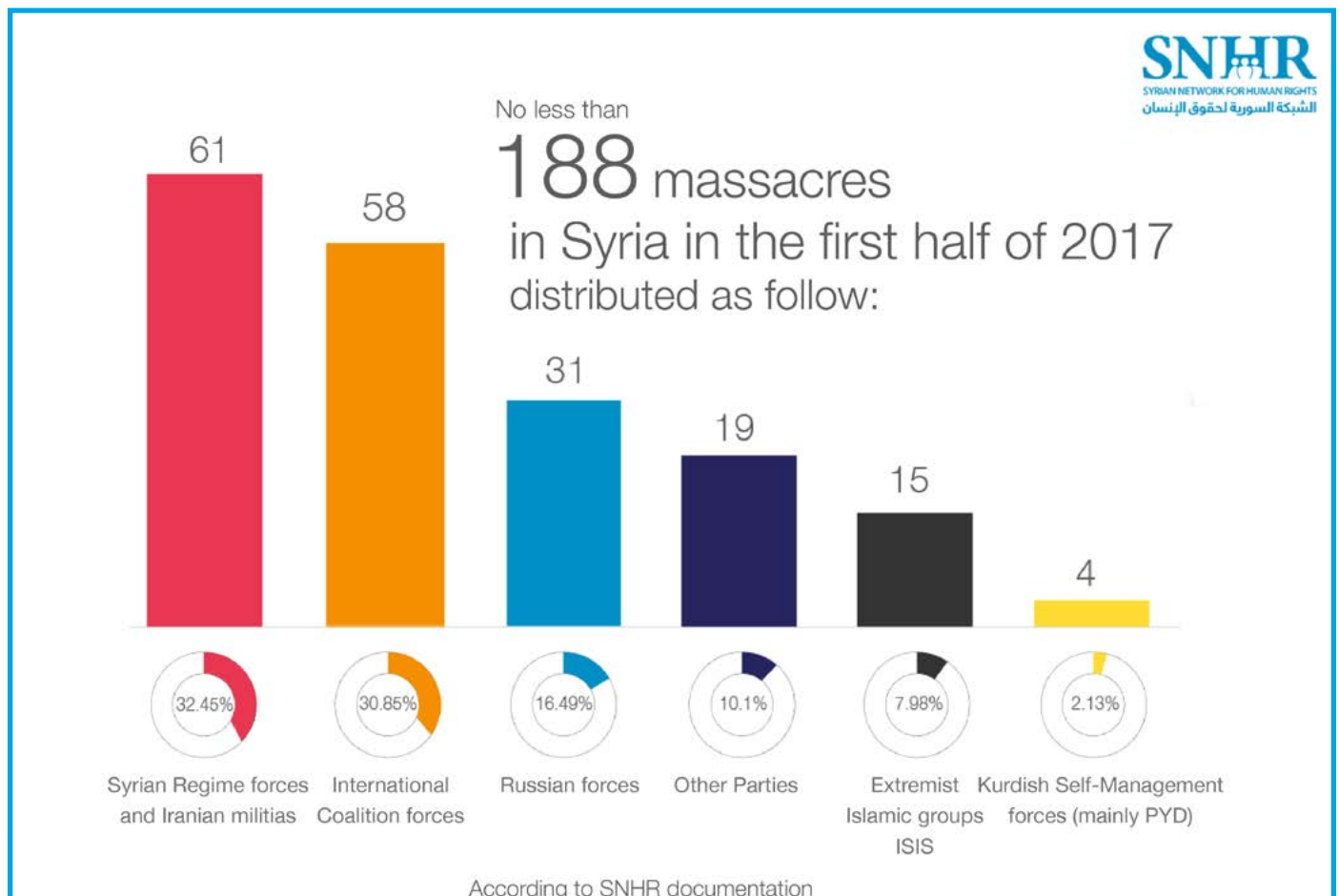
The type and number of evidences vary from one case to another. In light of the challenges we mentioned above, many of the incidents' legal description change based on new evidences or clues that surface after we had released the report. We add these evidences and clues to our data archive. On the other hand, many incidents don't constitute a violation to the international humanitarian law, but it involved collateral damages, so we record and archive these incidents to know what happened historically and to preserve it as a national record. However, we don't describe it as massacres.

SNHR describes an incident as a massacre if it involves the killing of five peaceful individuals at the same time. For more information about our [methodology](#) in documenting victims, please see the Following URL



II. Executive Summary

A. Toll of massacres in the first half of 2017



A. Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias): 61

B. Russian forces: 31

C. Extremist Islamic groups:

- ISIS (Self-proclaimed the Islamic State): 15

D. Self-Management forces (primarily consisting of the Democratic Union Party – branch for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party): 4

E. International coalition forces: 58

F. Other parties: 19

Massacres perpetrated by Syrian regime forces during the first half of 2017 were distributed by areas of control as follows:

- 26 massacres in areas under the control of armed opposition factions

- 10 massacres in areas under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front

- one massacre in an area under the control of Fateh al Sham Front

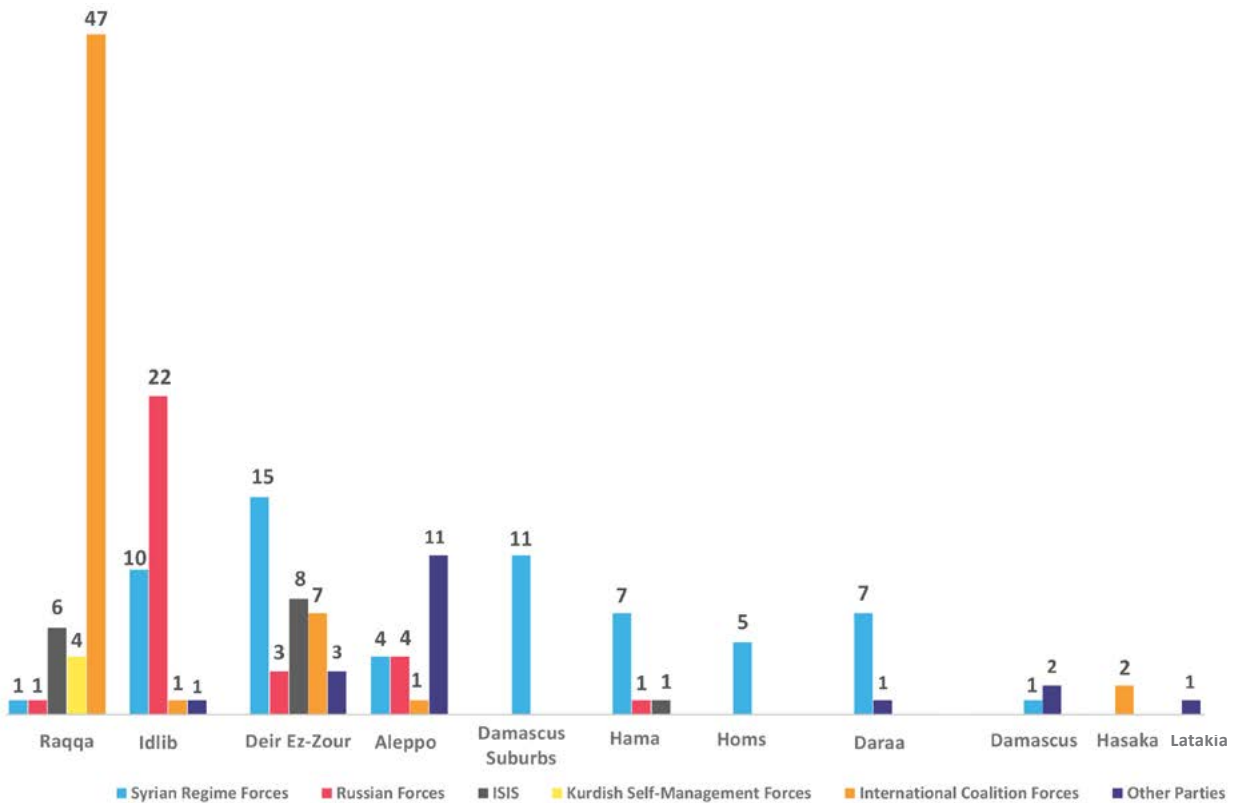
- 24 massacres in areas under the control of ISIS



These massacres are distributed across Syrian governorates as follows:

Raqqa: 59, Deir Ez-Zour: 36, Idlib: 34, Aleppo: 20, Damascus suburbs: 11, Hama: 9, Homs: 5, Daraa: 8, Damascus: 3, Hasaka: 2, Latakia: 1

Distribution of massacres by the parties to the conflict



According to the victim documentation team at SNHR, 2025 individuals were killed in those massacres, including 720 children and 366 women (adult female). This means that 54% of the victims were women and children, which is a considerably high percentage and an indication that civilians were targeted in most of these massacres.

Toll of victims are distributed by the perpetrator party as follows:

Syrian regime forces: 602 individuals, including 233 children and 115 women.

Russian forces: 305 individuals, including 126 children and 70 women.

ISIS: 157 civilians, including 52 children and 22 women.

Self-Management forces: 33 civilians, including 12 children and seven women.

International coalition forces: 600 civilians, including 214 children and 111 women.

Other parties: 328 individuals, including 83 children and 41 women.



B. Toll of massacres in June 2017

SNHR documented no less than 35 massacres in June 2017, which were distributed as follows:

A. Syrian regime forces (Army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias): 11

B. Russian Forces: 1

C. Extremist Islamic groups:

- ISIS (self-proclaimed the Islamic State): 4

D. Self-Management Forces (consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party – a branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party): 1

E. International coalition forces: 17

F. Other parties: 1

Massacres perpetrated by Syrian regime forces during the month of June 2017 were distributed by areas of control as follows:

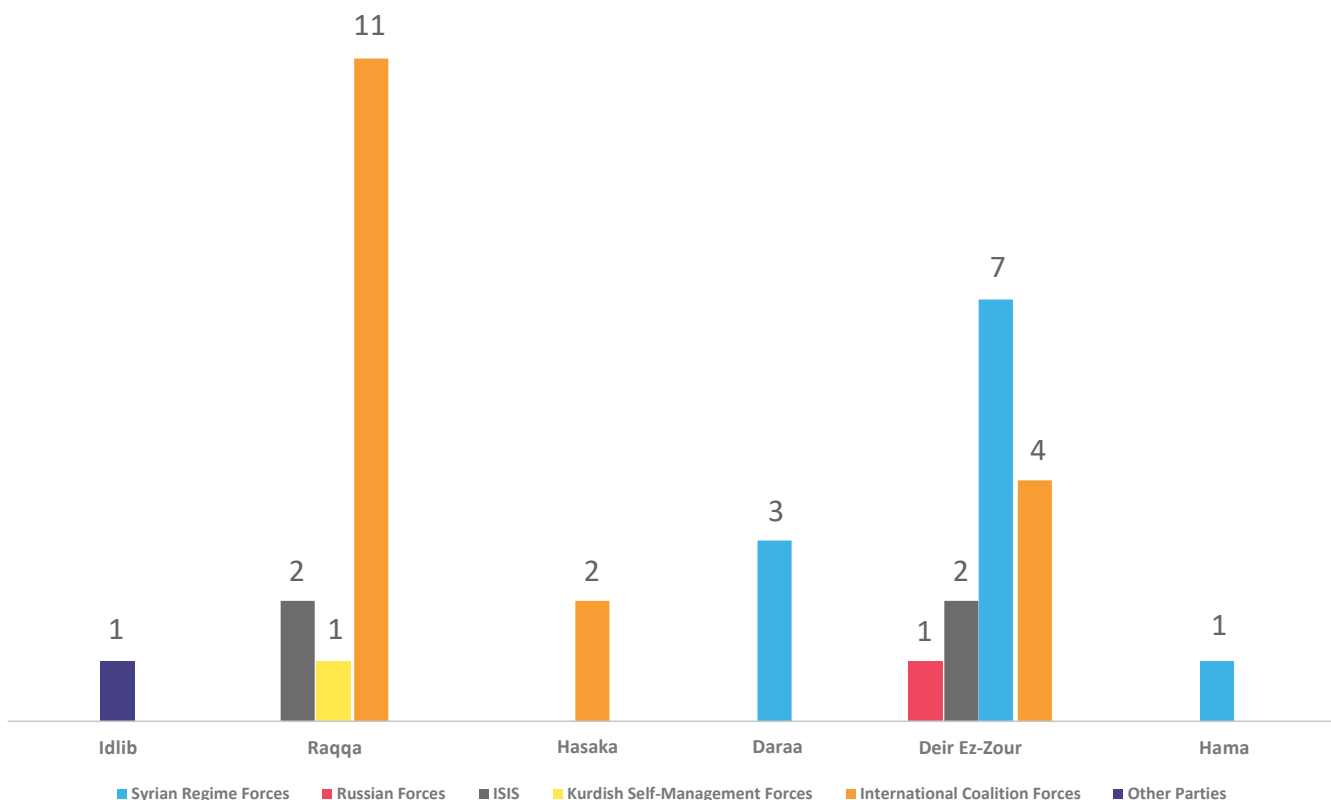
- Three massacres in areas under the control of armed opposition factions.

- Eight massacre in areas under the control of ISIS

Massacres were distributed across Syrian governorates as follows:

Idlib: 1, Raqqa: 14, Hasaka: 2, Daraa: 3, Deir Ez-Zour: 14, Hama: 1

The following table shows the distribution of massacres by the perpetrator party



According to the victim documentation team at SNHR, 274 individuals were killed in these massacres including 106 children and 47 women (adult female) which suggests that 56% of the victims were women and children. This considerably high percentage is an indication that civilians were targeted in most of these massacres.

The death toll of these massacres is distributed by the perpetrator as follows:

Syrian regime forces: 88 individuals, including 41 children and 12 women.

Russian forces: 22 civilians, including seven children and five women

ISIS: 20 civilians, including six children and two women.

Self-Management Forces: six civilians, including two children and two women

International coalition forces: 131 civilians, including 49 children and 29 women

Other parties: seven civilians, including one female child

II. Details of June Incidents

A. Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias)

Daraa governorate

Monday, June 5, 2017, the fixed-wing warplanes of the Syrian-Russian alliance (Investigations are still ongoing to accurately determine the perpetrator party) fired a [number of missiles](#) in [Tafas city](#), western suburbs of [Daraa governorate](#), which resulted in the killing of 13 individuals, including three children. The city was under the control of armed opposition factions at the time of the incident.



A dead body of a victim who was killed in the massacre perpetrated by Syrian-Russian alliance in Tafas city, Daraa – June 5, 2017



Wednesday, June 14, 2017, around 13:00, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at an IDPs shelter -formerly the Martyr Kewan School- in Tafas city, western suburbs of Daraa governorate, which resulted in the killing of eight individuals at once -IDPs from Ataman town- including one female child and one woman. The city was under the control of armed opposition factions at the time of the incident.

On the day following the massacre, SNHR contacted Abu Ra'd al Jbabi -a media activist for the civil defense in Daraa city who is present in Tafas city- via Facebook. Abu Ra'd tells us:

“On the afternoon of Wednesday, June 14, around 1:00 PM, Syrian regime forces warplanes carried out the first missile airstrike in the vicinity of the Martyr Kewan School which was turned into an IDPs shelter a while ago from the Ataman town IDPs. A few minutes later, a second airstrike was carried out, targeting the school directly this time. Eight individuals were killed at once, and others were wounded who were mostly IDP women and children. The airstrikes didn't stop, but the missiles from the following two airstrikes landed away from the school. I went along with the civil defense teams and the scene was horrifying. I will never forget that little girl who was covered in blood and screaming: “Where is mom? The warplane hit us, and I don't know where my mom went” while my colleague treated her. She didn't know that most of her family members had died.”

“[The targeted areas](#) are completely empty of any FSA bases or fighters. There is nothing to justify the bombing except the killing of IDP civilians.”

Tuesday evening, June 27, 2017, Syrian regime forces artillery fired a shell at a school in northern al Hara city, northwestern suburbs of Daraa governorate, which resulted in the killing of six civilians from the same family, including four children and woman. The city was under the control of armed opposition factions at the time of the incident.

Hama governorate

Monday, June 5, 2017, the fixed-wing warplanes of the Syrian-Russian alliance (Investigations are still ongoing to accurately determine the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at Abu Hwadid village, which administratively follows Egerbat county, eastern suburbs of Hama governorate, which resulted in the killing of 10 civilians from the same family -IDPs from Talbisa city in northern suburbs of Homs governorate- including five children and one woman. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Thursday, June 15, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at Mrat village, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of seven civilians who were mostly from the same family, including four children and one woman. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Thursday, June 15, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in Hatla village, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians, from the same family, including two children and one woman. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Thursday, June 15, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at al Kanamat neighborhood in eastern Deir Ez-Zour city, which resulted in the killing of five civilians (four children and their mother). The neighborhood was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Tuesday, June 20, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at Khasham town, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of 12 civilians who were mostly from the same family, including five children and three women. The town was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Wednesday, June 21, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in al Sheikh Yassin neighborhood in the middle of Deir Ez-Zour city, which resulted in the killing of six civilians at once, including two children. The neighborhood was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Friday, June 23, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in Mhemida village, western suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of 11 civilians who were mostly from the same family, including seven children and two women. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Sunday, June 25, 2017, around 03:00, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at al Bo Darbas neighborhood, Mohasan city, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians (four children and their mother). Additionally, about four others were wounded. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



B. Russian forces

Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Wednesday, June 28, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired a number of missiles loaded with cluster submunitions in Dablan village, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of 22 civilians, including seven children and five women. Additionally, about 50 others were wounded. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

C. Extremist Islamic groups

- ISIS (self-proclaimed the Islamic State)

Raqqa governorate

Tuesday, May 23, 2017, a landmine planted by ISIS detonated in Mazra'at Hitteen village, northern suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of six civilians (four children and their parents). On Wednesday, June 7, 2017, we were able to contact activists from the area who confirmed the incident. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Sunday, June 18, 2017, a landmine planted by ISIS detonated in Hneida village, western suburbs of Raqqa governorate, before the group withdrew from the village. The landmine killed eight civilians who were mostly from the same family -IDPs from Egerbat county in eastern suburbs of Hama governorate- including six children and one woman. The village was under the control of Syrian Democratic Forces at the time of the incident.

Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Thursday, June 8, 2017, a landmine planted by ISIS detonated in al Bougha village, which administratively follows Ain Eissa city, northern suburbs of Raqqa governorate, before the group withdrew from the village. The landmine killed five children who were mostly from the same family. The village was under the control of Syrian Democratic Forces at the time of the incident.

Sunday, June 18, 2017, ISIS released a video under the name "[Faseakfekahoumo Allah 3](#)" (God will Deter them) that shows seven civilians being killed (six were shot to death, while the seventh was slaughtered using a sharp blade) in al Bokamal city, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, over accusations of working with armed opposition factions and international coalition forces. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



D. International coalition forces (primarily consisting of the Democratic Union Party – a branch for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party)

Raqqa governorate

Saturday, June 10, 2017, the Kurdish-majority Syrian Democratic Forces artillery fired a number of shells at al Dar’iya neighborhood in western Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of six civilians from the same family, including two twin female children and two women. The neighborhood was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

E. international coalition forces

Raqqa governorate

Sunday, June 4, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at a car used by civilians on the road between al Raqqa city and Mazra’at Hitteen village in northern suburbs of Raqqa governorate as they were fleeing the city. The bombing killed six civilians who were mostly from the same family, including two children and two women. The area was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Monday, June 5, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles a gathering of civilians near the New Bridge in southern Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of 10 civilians, including one child. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Tuesday, June 6, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in the middle of Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of five civilians (three children and their parents). The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Saturday, June 10, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles al Mukhtalata area in the al Sena’a neighborhood, east of Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of eight civilians who were mostly from the same family, including four children and two women. The area was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Saturday, June 10, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles a residential building in al Nour Street, al Dar’iya neighborhood, west of Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of 15 civilians, including six children and four women. Additionally, about 10 others were wounded. The neighborhood was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



Tuesday, June 13, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in Kasrat al Sheikh Joum'a village, southwestern suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians, including three children and their parents. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Thursday, June 15, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in Kasrat al Sheikh Joum'a, southwestern suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians – four children and their mother. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Monday, June 19, 2017, international coalition forces carried out an airstrike using machine guns at a house near the New Bridge in northern Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of five civilians from the same family, including two children and one woman. The area was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Wednesday, June 21, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles near al Rayyan bakery in Amn al Dawla neighborhood, west of Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of 10 civilians from the same family, including one child and one woman. The neighborhood was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Thursday, June 22, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in the 16th street in al Rmeila neighborhood, northeast of Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of seven civilians who were mostly from the same family, including four children and one woman. The neighborhood was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Saturday, June 24, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in the middle of Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of six civilians from the same family, including one child and three women. The massacre took place within the parts of Raqqa city that are under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Wednesday, June 7, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at a passenger bus in al Sadda area, al Qouriya city, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate as they were coming back following a condolences ceremony (Azaa') in al Tayyana village, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of eight civilians at once. Additionally, about three others were wounded. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Saturday, June 17, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at Jabbar al Ebied School in al Mayadin city, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians who were mostly from the same family, including two children and one woman. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Sunday, June 25, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at a house in al Bazoul neighborhood, al Qouriya city, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of 13 civilians who were mostly from the same family, including seven children and three women. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Friday, June 30, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at Hsein village, northern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of six civilians from the same family -IDPs from Deir Ez-Zour city- including four children and their mother. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Hasaka governorate

Sunday, June 18, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in al Ulwa village, known as al Jalal village, southern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians from the same family, including two women. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Sunday, June 18, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in Tal al Jayer village, which ISIS renamed Tal al Basha'er village, in southern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, which resulted in the killing of 12 civilians, including five children and two women. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



F. Other parties

Idlib governorate

Saturday, June 24, 2017, a bomb car detonated near Bait al Karam restaurant in al Sharqi neighborhood, [al Dana city](#), northern suburbs of [Idlib governorate](#). Seven individuals, including one female child, were killed immediately in the bombing. Additionally, about 50 others were wounded. As of this writing, we haven't been able to identify the group behind the bombing. The city was under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front at the time of the incident.



A dead body of the victims who were killed in a car bombing of unknown source in al Dana city, Idlib

– June 24, 2017



III. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Syrian regime forces and Russian forces

1. SNHR can confirm the bombing cases, deliberate or indiscriminate, targeted armless civilians, thus, the Syrian-Russian alliance forces have violated the rules of the international human rights law which guarantee the right to life. Furthermore, these violations were perpetrated during a non-international armed conflict which amounts to war crimes as all elements of a war crime have been fulfilled.
2. SNHR believes that the acts of killing that took place during these massacres can be classified as crimes against humanity.
3. These attacks, especially bombardment, have resulted in collateral damages that involved casualties, injuries, and damages to civil facilities. There are strong indicators that compel to believe that the damage was deeply severe compared to the anticipated military benefit. In all of the cases, we couldn't confirm that there were any military targets before or during these attacks.
4. The magnitude of the massacres, its frequent pattern, the exaggerated use of strength, its military nature, the indiscriminate manner of the bombing, and the coordinated approach of these attacks must be based on high orders, and a state policy.

Other forces

According to this report, international coalition forces, ISIS, Self-Management forces and other parties (includes groups that we weren't able to identify in addition to Turkish, Lebanese, and Jordanian forces) have committed massacres that constitute war crimes. However, these crimes are not crimes against humanity as with the case of Syrian regime forces and their pro-regime forces that are committing massacres in a widespread and systematic manner.



Recommendations

The United Nations and the Security Council

1. Refer the case in Syria to the International Criminal Court and stop the disrupting of the decisions that must be adopted by the Security Council against the Syrian government. This disruption is a wrong message to all dictatorships around the world and supports the culture of crime.
2. Impose urgent punishments on those who are involved in widespread violations of human rights in Syria.
3. Bind the Syrian government to allow all relief and human rights organizations to enter Syria as well as the International Intendent Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic and journalists and let them work without any obstructions.
4. Insure that all weapon imports to the Syrian government, who is using weapons in widespread attacks against civilians, are halted.
5. the Security Council must shoulder its responsibility in preserving security and civil peace in Syria considering that the violations of the Syrian government entail a gross threat to the international peace and security.
6. List the militias that are fighting with the Syrian government and have committed widespread massacres, like Iranian militias, the Lebanese group Hezbollah, other Shiite brigades, National defense Army and “Shabiha” militias, on the international list of terrorist organizations.
7. Implement the “Responsibility to Protect” norm, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, in Syria as it is direly needed there.
8. With the crimes against humanity committed by the Syrian government, the international community should stop dealing with this government as an “official side” concerning the relief issues, and stop supplying the Syrian government with most of the financial and humanitarian aids that, in most cases, are not being delivered to those who are in need and go instead to the people and parties that support the Syrian government.

Acknowledgment and Condolences

Our thanks and appreciations go to the victims’ families, eyewitnesses, and local activists whose accounts contributed majorly to this report. Our most profound consolations go out to the victims’ families and friends.





@snhr



Info@sn4hr.org

www.sn4hr.org

