



## Barrel Bombs are being dropped Throughout Syria

Report scope: documenting a barrel bomb attack on Tafas city, Daraa governorate

### Introduction

Tafas city is located in southern Daraa governorate. The city administratively follows al Mzayreeb county, and has a strategically important location.

A URL showing the city location



This report draws upon the investigations conducted by SNHR team with activists and eyewitnesses from Daraa governorate. The report contains two accounts that have been documented and included in the report, in addition to the news, pictures, and videos that we received from cooperating activists. All activists' and eyewitnesses' names were changed as per their request.

For more information on SNHR methodology in documenting victims, please see the following URL





## Details

Syrian government helicopters targeted Tafas city on February 12, 2014, with a barrel bombs, killing 13 individuals, including eight individuals from the same family. Fadel Abdul Ghany, chairman of SNHR, says: “We found out, in the course of preparing researches and reports on use of barrel bombs by government forces, that they don’t serve any particular military purpose, and, rather, are only used to deliberately punish civilians, as they have also widely damaged buildings and the infrastructure as well.”

SNHR spoke to Mr. Abu Asim, an activist from Tafas city, who told SNHR: “Around 9:10 AM, helicopters starting flying in the city sky before dropping a barrel bomb in the middle of the heavily-populated residential neighborhoods which house a large number of IDPs.”

“The martyrs were mostly children and women, and eight of them were from the same family. There weren’t many wounded, as most of them died because of the shrapnel these barrel bombs contain. Most of the remaining wounded had their limbs amputated.”

Abu Hamza, an activist from Tafas city who was contacted by SNHR, told SNHR about the bombing:

“Before the bombing, helicopters were soaring above the city. About 9:00, we heard a huge explosion. I went up to the roof to locate the explosion location. It was a barrel bomb dropped by the helicopter that targeted a residential neighborhood in the middle of the city. This is a heavily populated neighborhood, especially with residents from Ataman and Nawa displacing here after those two cities were liberated.”

“I headed for the site to take pictures. Blood was covering a residential building, and dead bodies were buried under rubbles. People started to pull out the dead bodies. Most of them were children, and two of them were headless. ”

“Most of the martyrs were from one family, al Zou’bi family. We could only find the head skin, which was covered in white hair, of one of the victims, who was a member of the family.”





## Victims' names

SNHR has documented [the killing of 13 individuals](#), including seven children  
A URL containing the victims' names, pictures, and all other details

## Pictures and Attachments

Picture showing the destruction in the aftermath of the barrel bomb attack



Picture showing the search for dead bodies in the rubbles in Tafas, Daraa – February 12, 2014



Picture of [a child victim](#) in Tafas massacre





Videos showing the victims as they are being pulled out from the rubbles



## Conclusions

1. SNHR affirms that the bombardment on the wedding indiscriminate and directed against unarmed civilians. Thus, government forces and Al Shabiha have violated the international human rights law which protects the right to life in addition to being committed in a non-International armed conflict so it mounts to war crime as all elements were fulfilled.
2. SNHR deems what happened in al Qaboun neighborhood, the murder crime, a crime against humanity because it is not the first case but it has been systematically repeated throughout Syrian governorates in a widespread manner.
3. The indiscriminate attacks by government forces are violation of customary international humanitarian law where government forces launched several shells on populated areas rather than targeting specific military objects.
4. Those attacks, particularly the bombardment, caused casualties, injures or damaged civilian objects. Moreover, there are strong indicators that the damaged was great compared with the military benefits.
5. The volume of the massacre in addition to its nature, the amount of power that was used, and the indiscriminate and coordinated nature of bombardment cannot be without high instructions and it's a state policy.

## Recommendations:

### United Nations and Security Council

1. Refer the case in Syria to the International Criminal Court, and stop disrupting the Resolutions that the Council should be adopting with regard to the Syrian government, because this sends the wrong message to all the dictatorships in the world, and enhance the culture of crime.
2. Impose immediate sanctions on all those who are involved in widespread violations of human rights.
3. Bind the Syrian government to give access to relief and human rights organizations, and the Commission of Inquiry, and journalists and stop disrupting their work.





4. Insure the end of weapon imports to the Syrian government, as those are being used in widespread attacks against civilians.
5. The Security Council has to uphold its responsibility in maintaining security and civil peace in Syria, because the Syrian government's violations constitute a blatant threat to the international peace and security.
6. List the militias that are fighting along the Syrian government and who perpetrated wide massacres, such as Hezbollah and other Shiite groups and the National Defense Army and Shabiha, on the international list of terrorist organization, in addition to ISIS that perpetrated several crimes in the areas that are outside the government's control.
7. Uphold the norm of "Responsibility to Protect" which was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, as it is direly needed there.
8. Stop considering the Syrian government as an official party, in light of its crimes against humanity, regarding the relief aspect and stop providing it with the largest portion of material and financial aids, which are not being delivered to the people who are in needed in most cases.

#### **Human Rights Council:**

1. Demand the Security Council and the concerned international institutions to shoulder their responsibilities in regard to what is happening to Syrian people like murder, arrest, rape, and displacement.
2. Apply pressure on the Syrian government to cease murder, torture and release all kidnapped persons.
3. Hold Syrian government's allies and supporters- Russia, Iran, and China- morally and materially responsible for what is happening to the children of Syria.
4. Give the disastrous situation of victims' families in Syria greater interest and seriousness.





### **The Arab League:**

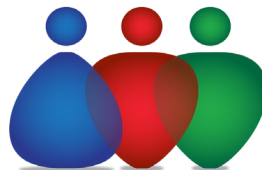
1. Impose comprehensive sanctions on all the officials who are involved in committing crimes in Syria, and encourage the states of the world to do so.
2. Increase the humanitarian aids, especially in education and health sectors, and take care of the Syrian refugees' interest in the Arb states.
3. Call on the Security Council to implement the aforementioned recommendations.
4. Ask the Human Rights Council and the United Nations to give the case of daily murder its right of interest and follow-up.
5. Give the case the serious and great interest and follow-up, and try to provide with the victims' families psychological, material and educational care.
6. Apply political and diplomatic pressure on the main Syrian regime's allies- Russia, Iran and China- to ban them from providing the international and political cover and protection of all committed crimes against the Syrian people and to hold them morally and materially responsible for all Syrian government violations.

### **The Syrian government:**

1. Stop all Human Rights violations immediately.
2. Respect its international commitments that includes the protection of civilians in the time of war, and respect the rules of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.
3. Immediately give the Commission of Inquiry access and facilitate its work and cooperate with the OHCHR and national human rights organizations.

### **International Commission of Inquiry:**

Stop depicting the conflict as it is between two equal parties in crimes, power and central decision-making, and to describe the crime as it is without mitigation for political purposes. It also has to increase its cadres that is concerned with the Syrian case due to the volume of the daily crimes which would insure a more comprehensive and complete documentation.



Syrian Network For Human Rights  
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