

The Most Notable Human Rights Violations in Syria in November 2021

Millions of Forcibly Displaced
Persons in Syria Are in Dire Need
of the Means to Survive the
Freezing Cold of Winter

Saturday 4 December 2021

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, independent group that is considered a primary source for the OHCHR on all death toll-related analyses in Syria.

Content

I. Introduction and Methodology.....	2
II. Summary of the Most Notable Events in November.....	3
III. The Most Notable Human Rights Violations in Syria in November.....	15
IV. Attachments.....	20
V. Conclusions and Recommendations.....	20

I. Introduction and Methodology:

Syria has seen an unprecedented number of violations since the start of the popular uprising for democracy in March 2011. Extrajudicial killings, arrests, torture and enforced disappearances are the violations most frequently perpetrated against Syrian citizens. While the Syrian regime and its affiliated militias were the sole perpetrators of these violations for the first seven months or so of the uprising, other parties subsequently joined in, also violating the rights of Syrian citizens. The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has continued to document every incident that its team members are able to verify, with these violations escalating very dramatically in 2012 and 2013, prompting us to expand our publication of periodic monthly reports recording and highlighting the continued suffering of the Syrian people, which subsequently grew to eight reports on different issues issued at the beginning of each month. In the course of our work, SNHR has compiled a massive database cataloguing hundreds of thousands of incidents, each of which involves a pattern of violations that we have been able to document.

By the end of 2018, with a reduction in the level of violence compared to previous years, we changed our previous strategy and now compile our reports into a single monthly report featuring the most prominent violations in Syria which we have been able to document in the preceding month.

This month's report focuses on the human rights situation in Syria, which SNHR documented in November 2021, and catalogues the death toll of civilian victims whom we documented killed by the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria during this period, as well as the record of cases of arrests and enforced disappearance. The report also highlights attacks on civilian objects, which SNHR's team was able to document during this period. To find out more about our working [methodology](#) in documenting and archiving data, please visit the following link that explains this in detail.

This report only represents the bare minimum of the actual severity and magnitude of the violations that occurred. Also, it doesn't include any analysis of the profound social, economic, and psychological ramifications.

II. Summary of the Most Notable Events in November:

In regard to bombardment and military operations:

November saw the continuation of [military operations launched](#) by [Syrian-Russian](#) alliance forces in Idlib region in northwest Syria since mid-2021, which have been concentrated in the Jabal al Zaweya district and the surrounding area, as well as in towns and villages of the southern suburbs of Idlib; the airstrikes also focused on targeting [gatherings of IDPs](#) in these areas. One of the Russian air attacks on a poultry north of Idlib city resulted in the [massacre](#) of a displaced family living in an annex of the poultry facility on November 11. The intensity of the bombardment escalated on the [cities](#), towns and [villages](#) of the western suburbs of Aleppo; on November 15, Syrian regime ground bombardment of Kafr Noran village in the western suburbs of Aleppo resulted in the death of [a child and a woman](#).

In Daraa, Nawa city in the governorate's western suburbs was subjected to artillery shelling by Syrian regime forces, the first of its kind in the governorate since a settlement agreement was signed there last September. The shelling resulted in [the deaths of two civilians](#), one of them a woman, and injured others, on November 29.

On November 14, the Syrian regime began imposing a settlement process in areas under its control in Deir Ez-Zour governorate, beginning with Deir Ez-Zour city, according to the Syrian regime's [SANA news agency](#). SANA stated that the settlement process will include "all those whose hands have not been stained with blood, including the wanted and the military deserters, and those who evaded the compulsory and reserve military services." Subsequently, on November 17, the Syrian Democratic Forces' Self-Management Authority issued [a decision](#) threatening its employees with dismissal in the event of reconciliation or settlement with Syrian regime forces and regime-affiliated militias. We note that the campaign received a muted response from Syrian citizens.

The Russian Air Force continued its periodic attacks in northwest Syria, mostly targeting Armed Opposition positions on the contact lines between the areas controlled by Syrian regime forces and the opposition factions, on the Kansafra and al Bara battlefronts in Jabal al Zaweya in the southern suburbs of Idlib. We also recorded Russian warplanes carrying out air raids on poultry farm buildings in the suburbs of Idlib which were inhabited by displaced persons, resulting in civilian casualties. On November 22, Russian warplanes bombarded Talita village in the predominantly Kurdish Jabal al Summaq area in the western suburbs of Idlib, for the first time since September 2019, resulting in civilian casualties.

On November 4, the Russian forces' [Zvezda](#) TV said that the Russian Air Force and the Syrian regime's air force conducted joint military maneuvers and exercises in Su-24 warplanes; according to the media agency, most of these exercises were flown from the T4 Military Airbase in the eastern suburbs of Homs.

The northern suburbs of Aleppo also saw artillery shelling by Syrian Democratic Forces and Syrian regime forces particularly targeting Afrin city, north of Aleppo; one such [ground missile attack](#), whose specific source we were unable to identify, on November 19, resulted in the deaths of three civilians.

In terms of bombings, over the course of November, we documented several bombings using explosive devices in Daraa governorate and the suburbs of Aleppo, most notably an explosion in Manbij city in Aleppo, that resulted in the deaths of four civilians ([two children and two women](#)) on November 27. Ras al Ein city in the suburbs of Hasaka also witnessed a number of bombings with explosive devices of unknown sources, which caused material damage to infrastructure.

November also saw [continuing civilian deaths due](#) to [explosions](#) caused by [landmines](#) and munitions remnants in various governorates and regions of Syria, mostly in the suburbs of Homs, Idlib and Hama. One such landmine explosion caused a [massacre](#) in the eastern suburbs of Homs on November 5. SNHR documented the deaths of 16 civilians, including seven children, as a result of landmine explosions in November, bringing the civilian death toll caused by landmines since the beginning of 2021 to 165, including 71 children and 25 women.

November also witnessed assassinations of civilians in the villages and towns of the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour by unidentified gunmen believed to be affiliated with ISIS. We also recorded assassinations by persons whose identities we were unable to identify in Daraa governorate, in addition to the continuation of assassinations in al Hawl Camp¹; [in November](#), we [documented](#) the deaths of [four civilians](#) in [al Hawl Camp](#) by gunmen whose identities we were unable to identify, believed to be affiliated with ISIS cells. Thus, the total death toll of victims who were assassinated in the camp since the beginning of 2021 reached 73 civilians, including 10 children and 22 women.

Over four days in November, the Israeli forces launched attacks on Syrian territory, according the Syrian regime's SANA news agency, [the first of which](#) was on November 3, when the Israeli forces fired missiles at location in Zakiya town in Damascus Suburbs governorate; on November 8, [the Israeli Air Force launched air raids](#) and bombarded several locations in the coastal and central regions of Syria, injuring two soldiers from Syrian regime forces and caused material losses; on November 17, [the same forces fired a missile](#) at an empty building south of Damascus, where no losses were recorded. These forces then [launched a missile attack](#) on the central region on November 24, resulting in two casualty victims.

¹ A camp located east of Hasaka city, near the Iraqi-Syrian border, which houses nearly 60,000 people

In regard to arrests and enforced disappearances:

Syrian regime forces continued in November to persecute and arrest individuals who had concluded settlements of their security status with the Syrian regime in areas that had previously concluded settlement agreements with the regime; these arrests have been concentrated in Damascus, Damascus Suburbs and Daraa governorates, with most occurring during campaigns of mass raids and arrests and at checkpoints. We recorded arrests targeting civilians, in connection with their criticism of the deteriorating living conditions, concentrated in Aleppo city.

We also monitored targeting civilians from Daraa governorate, while they were visiting the Immigration and Passports building in Daraa city to obtain documents related to travel outside the country. We also recorded arrests targeting a number of returning civilians, all refugees and IDPs, after they returned to their original areas, now back under the control of Syrian regime forces; these were concentrated in Damascus, Latakia and Homs.

In addition, we documented arrests targeting a number of dissidents' and activists' family members, which were concentrated in the governorates of Damascus and Damascus Suburbs.

Meanwhile, Syrian Democratic Forces continued enforcing the group's policies of arbitrary detention and enforced disappearance in November, with the number detained increasing this month as SDF personnel continued carrying out campaigns of mass raids and arrests, targeting civilians on the pretext of fighting ISIS cells, with some of these campaigns backed by US-led coalition helicopters. We also documented arrests targeting civilians from the same families, including women, with these arrests concentrating in Hasaka and Deir Ez-Zour governorates. We also recorded Syrian Democratic Forces again kidnapping children with the aim of taking them to its training and recruitment camps and forcibly conscripting them, preventing their families from communicating with them, and failing to disclose their fate.

November also saw Hay'at Tahrir al Sham detaining civilians, including media activists and politicians, with these arrests concentrated in Idlib governorate; most of these arrests occurred due to the detainees expressing opinions critical of the HTS's management of areas under its control. These detentions were carried out arbitrarily in the form of raids in which HTS members stormed their victims' homes, often breaking down the doors, or by abducting their victims while they were traveling or passing through temporary checkpoints. We also documented arrests carried out by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel against civilians in Kafr Takhareem city in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate, after unknown persons threw a grenade at an HTS headquarters building in the city. We also recorded detentions carried out by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham personnel against workers in the Big Heart Foundation, in connection with the killing of one of the organization's members in gunfire by unknown assailants.

Meanwhile, all Armed Opposition factions/ Syrian National Army also continued carrying out arbitrary detentions and kidnappings in November, including women, most of which were carried out on a mass scale, targeting individuals coming from areas controlled by the Syrian regime. In addition, we documented detentions carried out under an ethnic pretext, with these incidents being concentrated in areas under all Armed Opposition factions/ Syrian National Army's control in Aleppo governorate. Most of these arrests occurred without judicial authorization and without the participation of the police force, which is the legitimate administrative authority responsible for arrests and detentions through the judiciary, with these arrests also carried out without presenting any clear charges against those being detained. In addition to these cases, we also documented raids and arrests carried out by Syrian National Army personnel, targeting civilians on charges of collaborating with Syrian Democratic Forces. These arrests were concentrated in some villages of Afrin city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate.

Regarding living conditions:

In November, all regions of Syria witnessed an unprecedented economic deterioration at all levels. In the areas under the control of the Syrian regime, the prices of basic materials and services have risen again, reaching twice their previous price in some cases. On November 1, the Syrian regime's [Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection](#) increased the retail price of a domestic butane gas cylinder to consumers via the electronic card by more than twice its former price. The price of a 10 kg cylinder, which previously cost 3,800 Syrian pounds, is now 9,700 Syrian pounds, while a 16-kilogram industrial gas cylinder now costs 40,000 Syrian pounds.

Regarding the electricity crisis, the Syrian regime government's Minister of Electricity raised the electric tariff for all sectors, including household, industrial, commercial and agricultural, with household costs increased by up to 100%; the new prices took effect from the beginning of November, according to a report in the pro-Syrian regime [al Watan newspaper](#) published on November 2, which quoted Fawaz al Daher, director of the ministry's Transport and Distribution section, as saying that one of the reasons for the price increases is the scarcity of resources. On November 22, [the same newspaper](#) quoted a source in the Ministry of Electricity as stating that this year's winter season will be the most difficult to date in terms of electricity. The increase in electricity and fuel prices has had a clear impact on the prices of foodstuffs, whose prices continued to increase.

On the health level, drug prices and availability, the pro-Syrian regime [al Watan newspaper](#) quoted Rashid al Faisal, head of the regime's Scientific Council for Pharmaceutical Industries, on November 4, as stating that all antibiotics will be lost from the market because drug factories will not continue to produce due to the high prices of raw materials of pharmaceutical industries.

In northwestern Syria, the sharp deterioration in the exchange rates of the Turkish lira, which is the currency used in the region, has affected all aspects of life. The Salvation Government of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham increased the prices of bread sold in the region, with the price of a 600-gram bundle of bread reaching 3.5 Turkish liras. The prices of fuels (diesel, gasoline and household gas) also continued to raise, with the price of a domestic gas cylinder reaching 157.5 Turkish liras per cylinder. This unprecedented increase in prices led to a further general deterioration in the already dire living conditions due to high unemployment and the lack of purchasing power of civilians in the region.

The areas controlled by Syrian Democratic Forces are also witnessing an increase in the prices of basic foodstuffs, medicines and oxygen cylinders, exacerbating the deterioration of the living conditions there. During November, some villages and towns in the suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour witnessed several demonstrations calling for an improvement in the living situation and the release of detainees.

In regard to the COVID-19 pandemic:

November saw a decrease in documented COVID-19 infections across Syria compared to October.

The Syrian regime's [Ministry of Health](#) officially announced 4,766 cases of COVID-19 infection and 183 deaths in November, bringing the official total announced to 48,170 cases of infection with 2,749 deaths, as of November 30.

In northwestern Syria, more infections and deaths due to coronavirus were recorded in November, with [the Early Warning Alert and Response Network \(EWARN\)](#) announcing the documentation of 3,732 infections and 396 deaths related to COVID-19 between November 1 and 29 of the same month; this brought the total number of infections and deaths announced by EWARN in November, to 92,155 cases of infection and 2,243 deaths.

Regarding northeastern Syria, [FRANCE24 TV](#) website reported on November 22, that Nechirvan Suleiman, head of the Health Authority's Statistics Office in the Self-Management Authority of Northern and Eastern Syria, told the Technical Press Agency that the collection of statistics on the coronavirus had stopped due to the lack of materials needed to conduct tests which meant that the laboratory had been forced to suspend its work.

[The Health Authority in the Self-Management Authority](#) announced its latest statistics on November 10, revealing that it had documented a total of 36,960 cases of infection, including 1,478 deaths.

In regard to asylum, displacement and forced displacement:

On November 19, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. Representative to the United Nations, [said](#) in a statement issued during a visit to Zaatari Syrian Refugee Camp in Jordan, that the current situation in Syria is not suitable for the return of refugees, and added that the international community must be vigilant in ensuring that any refugee returns are safe, voluntary, and dignified.

On November 17, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) published [a report](#) that monitors the reality of displacement in northwestern Syria and the areas of Tal Abyad and Ras al Ein in northeastern Syria. The report documented 19,940 new displacements in October, indicating that 3,000 people had left Ihsem town in Idlib, while the cities of Ariha, al Dana, Afrin and surrounding areas had received 1,500 new displaced people.

In November, Syrian Democratic Forces allowed two groups of IDPs to leave al Hawl Camp in the eastern suburbs of Hasaka and return to their villages and towns; [the first group](#), consisting of 48 families or approximately 194 individuals, from Deir Ez-Zour governorate, left on November 7, with this group complementing the nineteenth group which was allowed to leave the camp on October 21; the second group, consisting of 19 families or approximately 65 individuals in total, which was [the twentieth](#) such group since the Syrian Democratic Forces' Self-Management Authority's decision to empty al Hawl Camp was announced in October 2020, left on November 24, heading to Hasaka governorate.

On November 22, the [Ukrainian government](#), via its representative, Mr. Refat Chubarov, repatriated three families related to ISIS (consisting of three women and 11 children) from al Rouj Camp in the northeastern suburbs of Hasaka.

On November 22, the [Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) issued a statement saying that the Norwegian authorities are in the process of repatriating an orphaned child of Norwegian nationality from a camp in northeastern Syria, most of which contain families of former ISIS members. The statement did not specify the date of the child's arrival in Norway, in order to maintain the confidentiality of his identity. [Save the Children](#) welcomed the step taken by Norway, and urged the countries that have nationals in those camps to work to repatriate their nationals before winter comes, in a statement issued on November 25.

In Lebanon, a refugee was killed and three others, including two children, were injured in a camp for Syrian refugees in al Hadidiya, near the Majdaloun junction in Baalbek city, on 3 November, as a result of an explosion whose cause is not yet known, according to al Jadeed TV [website](#).

On the crisis of migrants stranded at the Belarusian-Polish border:

The tragedy of the refugees stranded on the Belarusian-Polish border, most of whom are from Syria and Iraq, worsened in November; on October 31, [the Guardian](#) quoted Crystal van Leeuwen, a medical emergency manager with Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), warning of more deaths among refugees. Crystal added that NGOs must be granted urgent access to the area, and the claims of those stranded there must be respected for international protection.

On November 9, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) issued a [joint statement](#) calling on states to ensure that the safety and human rights of migrants and refugees stranded at the Polish-Belarus border are upheld. The statement called on both sides to uphold their obligations under international law and to guarantee the safety, dignity, and protection of the rights of the people stranded at the border.

On November 12, [Human Rights Watch](#) called on the EU and its member states, emphasizing the need for them to work with Poland to immediately ensure humanitarian access to border areas, and calling on Poland to halt the unlawful pushbacks of migrants to Belarus, where they face inhuman and degrading treatment.

On November 13, [the Polish police](#) announced, in a tweet on their official Twitter account, that the body of a Syrian refugee had been found in a forest near the border with Belarus. The police added that the cause of death had not yet been identified.

On November 18, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) issued [a statement calling](#) for the essential delivery of urgent humanitarian aid to the refugees stranded at the Belarusian-Polish border. The statement stressed that all refugees should have effective access to humanitarian assistance and medical assistance, as well as to protection, whether this is in the form of international protection or voluntary return to their home countries.

On November 24, Human Rights Watch released its report '[Die Here or Go to Poland](#)', which documents serious violations against refugees perpetrated on both sides of the Belarusian-Polish border. The report noted that these refugees, who are mostly from Syria, Iraq and Yemen, had been stuck at the border between the two countries for days or weeks in freezing weather, and they are in dire need of humanitarian assistance that is being blocked from both sides. The report stated that at least 13 people, including a one-year-old Syrian baby, had died as a result of these inhumane conditions.

On the political and human rights level:

On November 3, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) published a [report](#) reviewing an assessment of the damage to infrastructure, services and residential facilities such as schools, markets and hospitals, in Raqqa city, and providing detailed information on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of buildings in 23 neighborhoods there, using high resolution satellite imagery, taken by satellites in different time periods between 2013 and 2021.

On November 4, the Russian [TASS](#) news agency quoted Kazakh Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mukhtar Tileuberdi, as saying that his country will host the next round of Astana talks on Syria. The Minister of Foreign Affairs said that **"The guarantor countries have asked us to organize the next round of the Astana process. Its dates are still under consideration, it will be around mid-December."** He noted that the meeting would bring together the guarantors of the Astana process (Russia, Turkey and Iran), parties to the Syrian conflict and observers.

On November 9, [Reuters](#) quoted US State Department spokesperson, Ned Price, as saying that the US is concerned by a meeting between the Emirati foreign minister and the Syrian regime's president, Bashar al Assad, in Damascus on November 8. Price added, **"As we've said before, this administration will not express any support for efforts to normalize or to rehabilitate Bashar al-Assad who is a brutal dictator."**

On November 10, [the United Nations General Assembly](#) issued a resolution in which it referred to the recommendation to the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria to establish an independent mechanism with an international mandate to coordinate and consolidate claims regarding missing persons, including persons subjected to enforced disappearance, and requested that the UN Secretary-General conduct a study on how to bolster efforts, including those made through existing measures and mechanisms, to clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing people in the Syrian Arab Republic, identify human remains and provide support to their families, in consultation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and based on the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry. The Syrian Network for Human Rights supports the demands of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and victims of enforced disappearance, that there be a mechanism whose mission is exclusively concerned with the forcibly disappeared in Syria.

On November 10, the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor published its [annual report](#), which showed a 20 percent increase in the number of victims killed globally by these weapons over the total number of victims recorded in 2019 for the past year. Syria accounted for the largest number of victims documented in the report, all of whom died due to the remnants of these weapons.

On November 10, [Physicians for Human Rights](#) issued a report documenting the violations of the Syrian regime against medical personnel in 2011 and 2012. The report noted that the Syrian regime targeted medical personnel who helped the demonstrators more than it targeted medical personnel on a political basis, with the report recording 1,644 arbitrary detentions of this nature. We at the Syrian Network for Human Rights contributed to the report by working jointly with the organization and sharing the data we documented, which the report said was the largest, most complete and best updated information archive compared to other sources.

On November 12, the United Nations' [World Food Program](#) warned that levels of food insecurity in Syria are currently at their worst level, stating, "12.4 million people are now food insecure and do not know where their next meal will come from. This is a 57 percent increase since 2019 and the highest number ever recorded in the history of Syria."

On November 13, an [investigation](#) by The New York Times, revealed that the warplanes of the US-led coalition against ISIS targeted a gathering of civilians in al Baghouz town on March 18, 2019, killing 70 people, according to the initial assessment of the damages of the attack. Following this investigation, the US Department of Defense [announced](#) on its official website on November 29 that the commander of the US Army Command had been assigned to conduct a review of the investigation within a period of 90 days.

On November 22, The Guardian published a [press investigation](#) about the Syrian Democratic Forces' release of imprisoned ISIS fighters in exchange for money under a "reconciliation" scheme which stipulates that they will not join any terrorist organizations and not return to the northeastern region of Syria, according to official documents and interviews conducted by the newspaper with prisoners released from detention centers belonging to the Syrian Democratic Forces. The Syrian Democratic Forces' media office issued two statements on November [22](#) and [24](#) denying what was stated in the investigation.

On November 24, [Reuters](#) reported that the US administration had taken measures that would allow NGOs to deal with institutions in the government of the Syrian regime and give them greater freedom in their activities. According to a statement issued on November 24 by the US Department of the Treasury, the Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control, in consultation with the Department of State, will implement amendments to expand the current general license to authorize NGOs to participate in certain investment activities related to assistance to support certain non-profit activities in Syria. We hope that the amendments are related to the organizations' commitment to human rights principles, foremost of which is the distribution of aid to the neediest.

On November 25, the European Parliament issued [a statement](#) in which it adopted resolutions to assess human rights violations committed by the Russian Wagner militia. The statement indicated that the Russian state bears the responsibility for the funding, training, management and operational command of paramilitary groups with which it is associated, such as the Wagner Group. The statement added that among the countries in which the Wagner groups are significantly active is Syria. The statement also called for imposing sanctions on individuals and entities linked to this group. In previous reports, we had mentioned the involvement of Wagner mercenaries in combat operations in favor of the Syrian regime.

On November 29, Fernando Arias, Director-General of [the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons](#) (OPCW), said in his opening statement to the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Organization's Member States in Geneva, that the Syrian regime is still not in compliance with the Convention on the Disarmament of Chemical Weapons. He added that Damascus has not yet completed any of the relevant procedures, further noting that the Syrian regime continued to refuse to grant entry visas to an OPCW's arms inspector, hindering the work of the organization and its ongoing investigations.

On November 29, an informal session was held for a number of members of the Security Council in order to shed light on the impunity prevailing in Syria over the violations practiced by the Syrian regime, in which a number of members called for referring the Syrian issue to the International Criminal Court; the US mission to the Security Council called for the establishment of a special judicial mechanism similar to the historic 'Nuremberg Trials' to provide redress for the victims of the Syrian regime.

On November 29, the Newlines Institute for Strategy and Policy published an [investigation](#) proving the involvement of the SOS Chrétiens d'Orient (SOSCO, or SOS), an official partner of the French Defense Ministry, in providing material support to pro-Assad militias accused of committing war crimes, violating French laws and regulations regarding anti-terrorism, anti-corruption, and complicity in war crimes.

On November 30, Amnesty International issued a [report](#) in which it said that at least 27,000 children are being held in dire conditions in al Hawl Camp, where they are arbitrarily deprived of their liberty. The organization called on the Self-Management forces that control the camp to establish a clear mechanism to return Syrian children, their mothers and their caregivers to their home areas.

On the course of advocacy and the pursuit of accountability:

On November 1, RSF announced in a statement the start of the sessions of the “People’s Court”, led by Free Press Unlimited (FPU), the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), and Reporters sans frontières (RSF) on November 2. The statement described this trial as providing a form of achieving popular justice to hold the regimes and governments responsible for the killing of journalists accountable; the court relies on investigations and accurate legal analysis, which includes specific cases in three countries, including Syria. The indictment included accusations against the governments of Sri Lanka, Mexico and Syria for their failure to achieve justice for the murders of Lasantha Wickrematunge, Miguel Ángel López Velasco and Nabil al Shurbaji, the last of whom died under torture in the Syrian regime’s Seydnaya Prison in 2015.

On November 7, the Syrian Network for Human Rights issued [a statement](#) reviewing the visits made by its Director, Fadel Abdul Ghany, to the ministries of foreign affairs in three European Union countries, namely France, Germany and Denmark, between October 27 and November 3, all of which dealt in general with an update on the human rights situation in Syria according to the data and reports documented by the Syrian Network for Human Rights, emphasizing that the Syrian regime continues to commit atrocious violations, some of which constitute war crimes.

On November 9, the Syrian Network for Human Rights confirmed [in a statement](#) the necessity of include the charge of enforced disappearance against the defendant A.R. in his ongoing court trial in the Higher Regional Court in Koblenz, Germany. The statement revealed that the Public Prosecutor had requested that the Director of the Syrian Network for Human Rights, Fadel Abdul Ghany, be summoned to speak in court about the SNHR’s data on the forcibly disappeared persons that have been documented.

On November 10, the Higher Regional Court in Frankfurt, Germany, announced in a [statement](#) that of the majority of the charges contained in the indictment against Dr. Alaa M. had been accepted, with most of these falling into the category of crimes against humanity. The charges that were accepted included torturing prisoners of the opposition against the Syrian regime in Homs city in Syria in 2011 and 2012 in the military hospital and in the Military Intelligence prison, in addition to a charge of premeditated murder of one of the detainees.

On November 15, the official website of the European Union Council published a [statement](#) on the Council’s decision to add four recently appointed ministers in the Syrian regime’s government to the list of sanctions imposed by the Council on 287 individuals and 70 entities in relation to the violations committed by the Syrian regime in Syria. [The sanctions, which target](#) Boutros al Hallaq, the Minister of Information, Amr Salem, the Minister of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection, Muhammad Seif al Din, the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor, and Diala Barakat, the Minister of State, include asset freezes and a travel ban.

On November 20, to commemorate World Children's Day, the Syrian Network for Human Rights released its [tenth annual report on violations against children in Syria](#), which outlined the most notable violations against children documented since March 2011.

On November 24, the Syrian Network for Human Rights, [represented](#) by its Director, Mr. Fadel Abdul Ghany, participated in an event organized by the Syrian Association for Citizens' Dignity (SACD) entitled: 'Syria is not safe', with the participation of Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. The event dealt with the latest reports issued by human rights organizations which confirm that Syria is not safe for any return, the practical steps to prevent early return, and the gradual tendency within the international community towards normalization with the Syrian regime.

On November 25, which marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Syrian Network for Human Rights issued its tenth annual [report](#) on violations against females in Syria, which summarized the most notable violations against females documented by SNHR.

On November 27, the [DW](#) website reported that the court of the German city of Dusseldorf had sentenced a German citizen, who was working as a guard in an ISIS prison in Manbej city in the Aleppo suburbs, to ten years in prison for premeditated murder for his participation in torturing a prisoner, leading to his death.

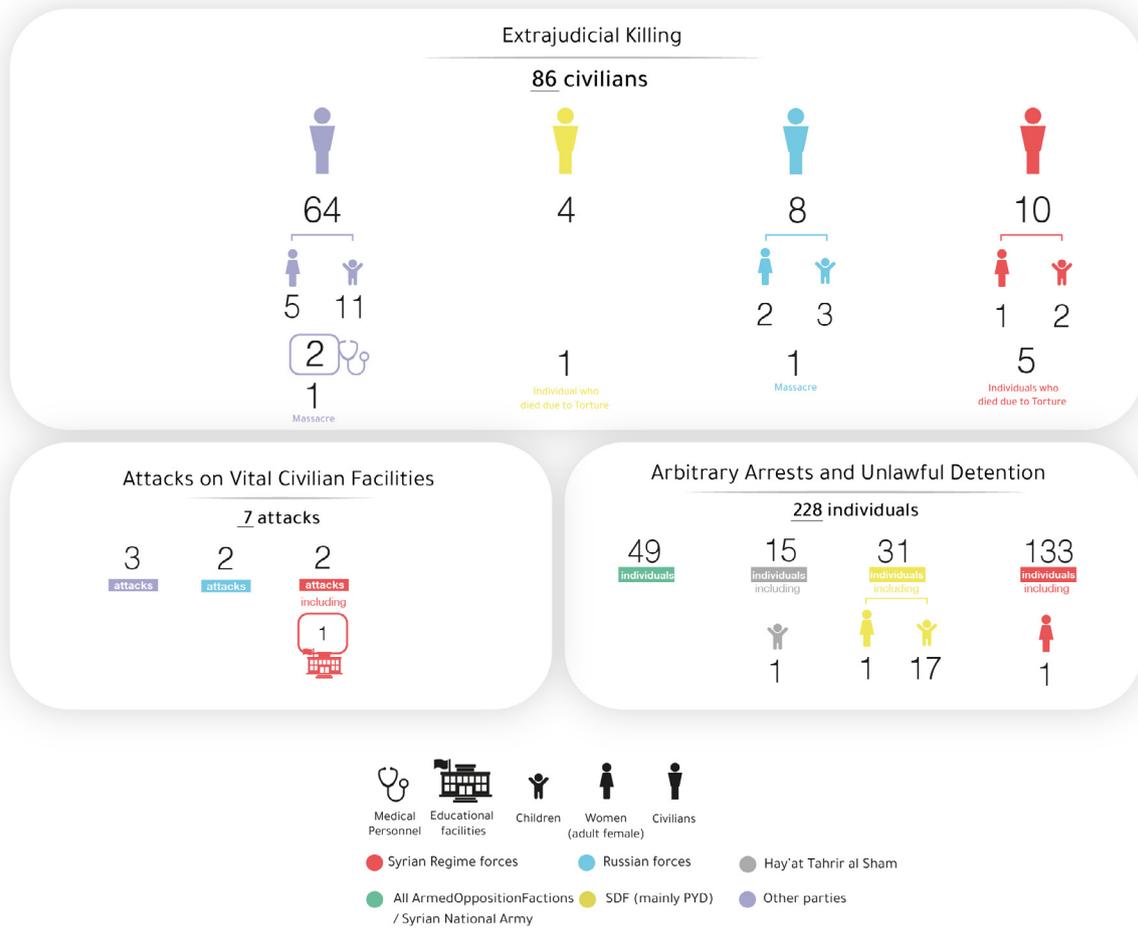
On November 28, the Director of the Syrian Network for Human Rights, Mr. Fadel Abdul Ghany, provided a training session for human rights activists in Yemen on "The Efforts of Civil Society Organizations in the Middle East on Accountability and the Prevention of Atrocious Crimes". This training is aimed at enhancing activists' knowledge of legal frameworks on accountability and the prevention of atrocious crimes in the Middle East and North Africa region. We issued a [statement](#) regarding the event.

On November 30, the Syrian Network for Human Rights issued a [report](#) on the Day of Remembrance for All Victims of Chemical Warfare. The report stressed that the Syrian regime is by far the most prolific user of chemical weapons this century, resulting in the deaths of at least 1,510 Syrian citizens, including 205 children and 260 women, and injured 12,000 others.

In November, the Syrian Network for Human Rights briefed the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, as well as briefing the UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health on five cases of enforced disappearance.

III. The Most Notable Human Rights Violations in Syria in November:

This report outlines the most notable human rights violations that were documented by the SNHR in November 2021 at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria.



A. Extrajudicial killing:

In November 2021, SNHR documented the deaths of 86 civilians, including 16 children and eight women (adult female), the largest percentage of whom were killed at the hands of other parties; among the victims were two medical personnel. We also documented six individuals who died due to torture. We also recorded at least two massacres. We issued a report on the first of this month detailing the civilian victims documented killed in November at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria.

The death toll of civilian victims was distributed according to the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria as follows:

A. The main parties:

- **Syrian Regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias)²** : 10 civilians, including two children and one woman.
- **Russian forces:** Eight civilians, including three children and two women.
- **Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (the Democratic Union Party):** Four civilians.

B. Other parties:

We documented the deaths of 64 civilians, including 11 children and five women, at the hands of other parties, distributed as follows:

- Landmines of unknown source: 16 civilians, including seven children and three women.
- Gunfire by parties we have been unable to identify: 34 civilians, including one child and one woman.
- Shells from unknown source: Four civilians, including one woman.
- Bombings whose perpetrators we have not been able to identify: Three civilians, including two children.
- Killings by parties we have been unable to identify: Four civilians, including one child.
- Turkish border guards: One civilian.
- Drowning: Two civilians.

B. Arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance:

In November 2021, SNHR documented at least 228 cases of arbitrary arrests, including 18 children and two women (adult female), at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria. The largest number of arbitrary arrests was carried out by Syrian regime forces in the governorates of Damascus Suburbs then Aleppo. We issued a report on the second of this month detailing the record of cases of arrests and enforced disappearances which we documented in November at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria.

The record of cases of arbitrary arrests was distributed according to the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces as follows:

Syrian Regime forces: 133, including one woman.

Hay'at Tahrir al Sham³ : 15, including one child.

All Armed Opposition factions⁴ / Syrian National Army: 49.

Syrian Democratic Forces: 31, including 17 children and one woman.

² We generally use the term 'the Syrian regime' rather than 'the Syrian government', because the nature of the ruling power in Syria is a totalitarian dictatorship based on ruling the nation in an authoritarian fashion through a very limited group of individuals, primarily the President of the Republic and his selected leaders of the security services, while the ministers, including the Prime Minister and the Minister of Interior, play a restricted, largely ceremonial role, which is limited to implementing precisely what the ruling regime orders, without any decision-making power or active role; this means that the government's role is wholly subordinate and limited to serving the regime, with all the main powers being concentrated in the hands of the President of the Republic and the security services. Governance in Syria is wholly decided by the autocratic authority of the ruling family and there is no independent decision-making structure. Rather, the government is an empty façade there for show; the Minister of Interior receives orders from the security branches over which he nominally presides which are in turn under the command of the President, while the Minister of Justice cannot summon a civilian-level security agent other than the head of a security branch; the security branches, along with the president, are the true power and the governing regime in Syria. Although we acknowledge that the United Nations and its agencies use the term 'the Syrian government' in general, we believe that this is a completely inaccurate and misleading term in the Syrian context.

³ The United Nations has designated it as a terrorist organization

⁴ All Armed Opposition factions: Many of the factions that emerged since 2011 in various neighborhoods and areas in Syria no longer exist, and many of these factions were not under any central command structure. At the end of 2017, the Syrian National Army was established, with the Armed opposition factions, which remained at that point gathered under its command.

C. Attacks on vital civilian facilities:

In November 2021, SNHR documented at least seven incidents of attacks on vital civilian facilities, four of which were at the hands of Syrian-Russian alliance forces.

Among these attacks, we documented one on a school.

These attacks were distributed according to the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces as follows:

A. The main parties:

- **Syrian Regime forces:** Two, including one incident which is still under investigation, with the primary parties suspected of responsibility for this attack being either Syrian regime forces or Russian Forces.
- **Russian forces:** Two.

B. Other parties:

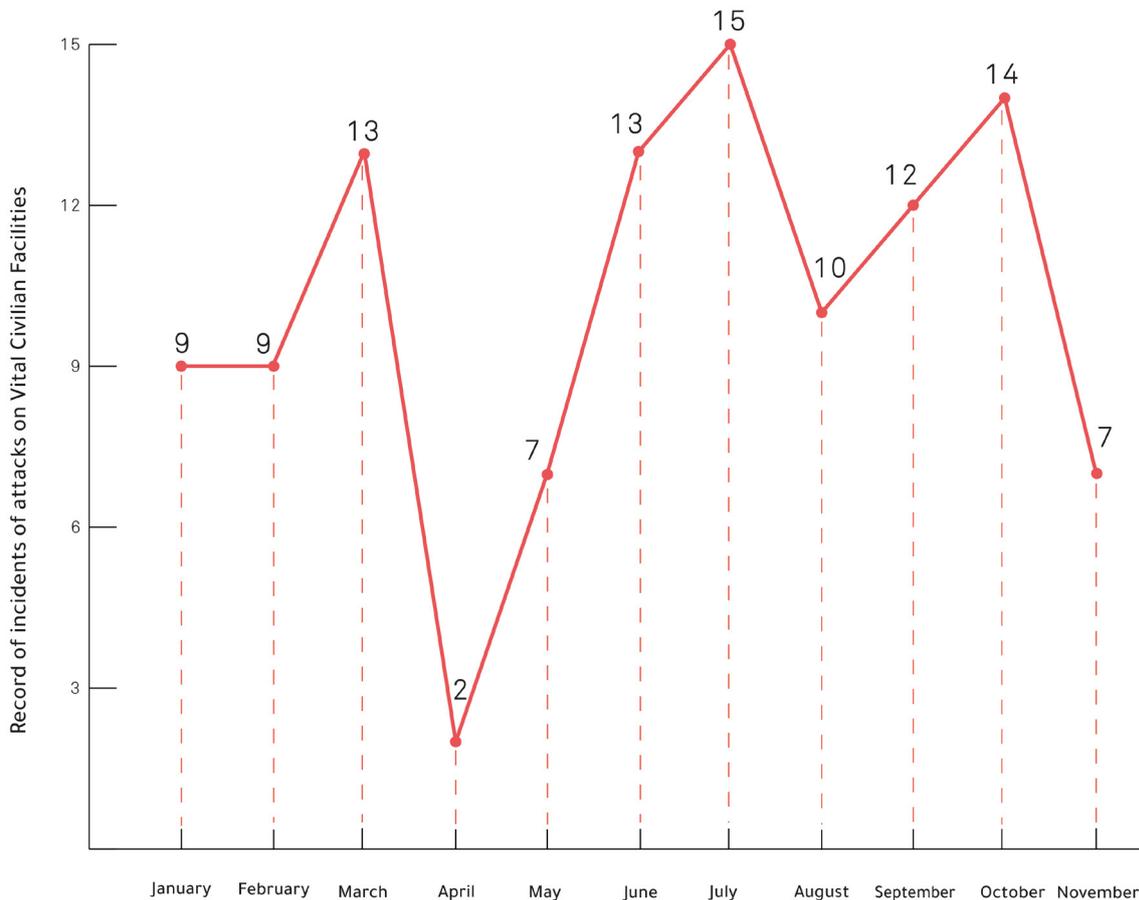
Other parties perpetrated three incidents, distributed as follows:

- Bombings whose perpetrators we have not been able to identify: One.
- Parties we have not been able to identify: One.
- Shells from unknown source: One.

The record of attacks documented in November 2021 on vital civilian facilities was distributed according to the perpetrator parties as follows:

Attacked Facility	Perpetrator Party		Other parties		
	Syrian Regime forces	Russian forces	Bombings whose perpetrators we have not been able to identify	Parties we have not been able to identify	Shells from unknown source
Vital Educational Facilities					
Schools	1				
Infrastructure					
Civil Defense Centers			1		
Official Headquarters	1			1	
Bakeries					1
Livestock farms		2			
Total	2	2	1	1	1

As this shows, the total documented number of attacks on vital civilian facilities since the beginning of 2021 until December of the same year at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria reached 111 in total, distributed by month as follows:



This shows that the total number of attacks on vital civilian facilities documented in November witnessed a decrease compared to the number recorded over the previous five months, with the incidents documented in November accounting for approximately 7% of the total number of attacks on vital facilities in 2021.

The most notable attacks on vital civilian facilities documented in November:

On Wednesday, November 3, 2021, a landmine of unknown source exploded near a crane belonging to the Syrian Civil Defense's Rajo Center, in Koulyan Tahtani village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, while the SCD team was responding to a car accident in the village. The explosion caused [the injury](#) of two SCD personnel and inflicted [moderate material damage](#) on the vehicle. SNHR is still trying to contact witnesses to obtain more details of the incident. The village was under the control of the Syrian National Army forces at the time of the incident.

On Thursday, November 11, 2021, at around 10:05 local time, fixed-wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, fired missiles at a [poultry](#) barn and the housing annexe beside it, north of Idlib city, [resulting](#) in a [massacre](#), [in addition](#) to causing a [significant destruction](#) to the [structure](#) of [the poultry](#) facility and [the housing](#) annex. The area was under the joint control of Armed Opposition factions and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.



On Friday evening, November 19, 2021, Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate was bombarded with six missiles, whose specific source hasn't yet been identified by SNHR as of this writing, with the primary parties suspected of responsibility for the attack being Syrian regime forces and Syrian Democratic Forces, since the shelling emanated from an area controlled by them. The investigation process is still underway to specifically identify the party responsible for the bombing.

The missiles landed in front of the al Tayyib bakery on the Villas Street in city center, resulting in casualties, in addition to partially destroying the bakery building, as well as causing [moderate material](#) damage to [its equipment](#). Afrin city was under the control of the Syrian National Army forces at the time of the incident.

On Wednesday, November 24, 2021, Syrian regime artillery forces fired dozens of shells at Kafr Ta'al village in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, with one of the shells hitting the Kafr Ta'al Primary School, [partially damaging](#) the school building's structure, and causing moderate material damage to its furniture. The village was under the joint control of Armed Opposition factions and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

D. Record of indiscriminate attacks and attacks using outlawed weapons:

The Syrian Network for Human Rights was unable to document any indiscriminate attacks or attacks using outlawed weapons in November.

IV. Attachments:

(1) [Extrajudicial Killing Claims the Lives of 86 Civilians, Including 16 Children, Eight Women, and Six Victims Due to Torture, in Syria in November 2021](#)

(2) [228 Arbitrary Arrests/ Detentions Documented in Syria in November 2021, Including 18 Children and Two Women](#)

V. Conclusions and Recommendations:**Conclusions:**

- The evidence we have gathered indicates that attacks continue to be directed against civilians and civilian objects. Syrian-Russian alliance forces have committed various crimes, including extrajudicial killings, arrests, torture, and enforced disappearances. In addition, the indiscriminate bombardment and other attacks carried out caused the destruction of facilities and buildings. There are reasonable grounds to believe that the war crime of attacking civilians has been committed in many cases.
- The Syrian government has not only violated international humanitarian law and customary law, but has also breached a number of UN Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 2139, resolution 2042 on the release of detainees, and resolution 2254, all without any accountability.
- We could find no record of any warnings being issued by the Syrian Regime or Russian forces prior to any attack under the requirements of international humanitarian law. This has been the case since the beginning of the popular uprising for freedom, providing another blatant demonstration of these forces' total disregard for the lives of civilians in Syria.
- The magnitude and frequency of the violations, the disproportionate use of military force, the indiscriminate manner of the bombing, and the coordinated approach of these attacks lead to the inescapable conclusion that these acts are wholly deliberate and based on high-level orders, and as such constitute a part of state policy.
- The indiscriminate and disproportionate bombardment carried out by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces is considered to be a clear violation of international humanitarian law, with indiscriminate killings amounting to war crimes.
- Hay'at Tahrir al Sham has violated international humanitarian law, causing the death of many civilians, as well as damage to vital civilian facilities.

- All Armed Opposition factions/ Syrian National Army violated UN Security Council Resolution 2139 through carrying out attacks that are considered to violate customary international humanitarian law, causing civilian casualties or accidental injuries.
- All the attacks documented in this report, particularly bombings, caused massive collateral damage that involved loss of lives, injuries, or significant damage to civilian objects. There are strong indicators suggesting that this damage was excessive compared to the anticipated military benefit.
- The use of explosive arms to target densely populated areas reflects a criminal and wholly deliberate mindset, with the perpetrators clearly intending to inflict the greatest possible number of deaths, which is a clear contravention of international human rights law and a flagrant violation of the Geneva Convention (arts. 27, 31, 32).

Recommendations:

UN Security Council

- The Security Council must take additional steps following its adoption of Resolution 2254, which clearly insists that “ all parties immediately cease any attacks against civilians and civilian objects as such.”
- The Syrian issue should be referred to the International Criminal Court and all those who are responsible for violations should be held accountable, while Russia must stop using the veto, as it is a party to the Syrian conflict, and the UNSC states’ veto power should be withheld when crimes against humanity and war crimes are committed.
- Ensure peace and security and implement the principle of responsibility to protect civilians’ lives and to save the Syrian people’s heritage and historical artifacts from destruction, looting and vandalism.
- The Security Council should adopt a resolution banning the use of cluster munitions and landmines in Syria, similar to the existing prohibition on the use of chemical weapons, and include advice on how to safely remove the remnants of such dangerous weapons.
- The four other permanent member states should put pressure on the Russian government to end its support for the Syrian regime, which uses chemical weapons, and to expose its involvement in this regard.
- Request that all relevant United Nations agencies make greater efforts to provide food, medical and humanitarian assistance in areas where fighting has ceased, and in internally displaced person camps, and to follow-up with those States that have pledged voluntary contributions.

International Community

- In light of the split within the Security Council and its utter inability to take any effective action, action should be taken on the national and regional levels to form alliances to support the Syrian people by protecting them from daily killing and by lifting sieges, as well as by increasing support for relief efforts. Additionally, the principle of universal jurisdiction should be enacted 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 dozens of studies and reports and as a member of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICR2P) after all political channels through the Arab League's plan and then Mr. Kofi Annan's plan have proved fruitless, along with the Cessation of Hostilities statements and Astana agreements that followed. Therefore, steps should be taken under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, while the norm of the 'Responsibility to Protect', which was established by the United Nations General Assembly, should be implemented. The Security Council is still hindering the protection of civilians in Syria.
- Renew 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 to activate the principle of universal jurisdiction.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

- The OHCHR should submit a report to the Human Rights Council and other organs of the United Nations on the incidents mentioned in this report and previous reports since these attacks were perpetrated by the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces.

Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI)

- Launch investigations into the cases included in this report and previous reports. SNHR is willing to cooperate and provide further evidence and data.
- Focus on the issue of landmines and cluster munitions within the next report.

International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism (IIIM)

- Collect further evidence about the crimes documented in this report.

The United Nations Special Envoy to Syria

- Condemn the perpetrators of crimes and massacres, and those who were primarily responsible for dooming the de-escalation agreements.
- Re-sequence the peace process so that it can resume its natural course despite Russia's attempts to divert and distort it, empowering the Constitutional Committee prior to the establishment of a transitional governing body.

The Syrian regime

- Stop indiscriminate shelling and targeting of residential areas, hospitals, schools and markets, and end the use of outlawed weapons and barrel bombs.
- Ensure compliance with UN Security Council resolutions and customary humanitarian law.

The Russian regime

- Launch investigations into the incidents included in this report, make the findings of these investigations public for the Syrian people, and hold those responsible accountable.
- Compensate all the damaged centers and facilities, rebuild and rehabilitate them, and compensate all the families of victims who were killed by the current Russian regime, as well as all the wounded.
- Completely cease the bombing of hospitals, protected objects, and civilian areas, and respect customary international law.
- As a guarantor party in Astana talks, the Russian regime must stop thwarting de-escalation agreements, and apply pressure on the Syrian regime in order to end all indiscriminate attacks and to allow unconditional passage of humanitarian aid to besieged areas.

The Coalition (US-led coalition and Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces)

- The states supporting the SDF should apply pressure on these forces in order to compel them to cease all of their violations in all the areas and towns under their control.
- Syrian Democratic Forces must immediately stop conscripting children, hold the officers involved in such violations accountable, and pledge to return all children who have been arrested for conscription immediately.

All Armed Opposition factions/ Syrian National Army

- The Armed Opposition/ the Syrian National Army must ensure the protection of civilians in all areas under their control. These forces should also take care to distinguish between civilians and military targets and cease any indiscriminate attacks.
- Take punitive action against those who commit violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

Humanitarian Organizations

- Develop urgent operational plans to secure decent shelter for internally displaced persons.
- Provide protected facilities and vehicles, such as medical facilities, schools, and ambulances, with distinctive signs that can be distinguished from long distances.

Acknowledgments

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to all family members, relatives and friends of the victims, as well as eyewitnesses and local activists whose contributions have enriched this report.



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