

The Syrian Regime Is Most Likely Responsible for the Bombing of an IDP Camp in Idlib and the Killing of 11 Syrian Children

At Least 79 Targeted Attacks on IDP Camps by the Syrian Regime and Its Russian Ally Within Eight Years

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

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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.

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I. Introduction and Methodology

Since May 2017, Idlib governorate and its surroundings (parts of the governorates of Hama, Idlib, Latakia and Aleppo) have been subject to what's known as the de-escalation agreement, which emerged from the Astana talks. However, this agreement, like all the previous agreements with Russia, has turned out to be a meaningless deal created apparently solely to mislead public opinion; in reality, the region has endured and is still enduring successive indiscriminate waves of bombardment due to ongoing military campaigns by the Russian-Syrian alliance forces, on the one hand, even while the region continues to receive more displaced persons from other regions, including areas supposedly defined as de-escalation ones. The Sochi Agreement of September 2018 had no effect in stopping the daily killing machine that has claimed the lives of Syrians, with Russian and Syrian warplanes continuing to fly and bomb with impunity whenever and wherever they want; the two agreements and subsequent agreements lack any real implementation mechanisms that might deter the Syrian regime and its allies from continuing to commit violations against civilians, with terms such as "de-escalation" and "Astana" having turned into phrases of bitter sarcasm and despondent mockery among Syrians.

Since April 26, 2019, northwest Syria, which includes the northeastern suburbs of Hama, Idlib governorate, southwestern suburbs of Aleppo, and northwestern suburbs of Latakia) has seen a military escalation by Syrian-Russian alliance forces, resulting in their taking control of approximately 20 percent of the total area of approximately 7,000 square kilometers, where around 3 million people lived, and also caused the displacement of approximately 680,000 civilians, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, including many who had already been displaced more than once.



The region had witnessed the declaration of two largely meaningless ceasefire agreements on the first and 31st of August 2019 respectively, both announced by the Syrian regime, with Syrian-Russian alliance forces quickly proceeding to violate them; further military escalation resumed from October 30, and the region has also seen a movement of mass displacement towards the Syrian north from villages and towns whose inhabitants had not previously been displaced, such as the towns of Bsaqla, Heesh, Kafr Sajna, Kfarrouma, and Hass, whose numbers are estimated at approximately 35,000 people. Thousands of those stranded have been forced to seek refuge in the Atma camps area located in the northern suburbs of Idlib, which is a grouping of large camps which were first established at the end of 2012 and gradually expanded. There are now nearly half a million people in these camps, half of whom are children and women, who live in the most abject living conditions and are deprived of the bare minimum of basic services such as water, bathing facilities, and medical care services; this suffering is exacerbated by a scarcity of humanitarian aid and irregular access of aid providers to the camps. In parallel with this catastrophic humanitarian situation, civilians in these camps live under the continuous threat of death due to the Syrian-Russian attacks that followed them to the place of their displacement.

The Syrian regime has relentlessly pursued the Syrians whose displacement it caused along with its allies, through the violations they have committed, meaning that the regime and its allies have not only bombed and destroyed their homes and enacted legislation legalizing the theft of their remaining property and lands, but is pursuing, terrorizing and killing these traumatized civilians even in the camps where they are living in conditions of wretched deprivation; this report documents the incident of the Syrian regime's bombing of an IDP camp located in the northern suburbs of Idlib, far from the lines of engagement. There can be no doubt that the international community's lenient response to the regime's and its allies bombing of IDP camps has encouraged the Syrian regime to repeat such atrocities with impunity.

Fadel Abdul Ghany, Chairman of the Syrian Network for Human Rights, says:

“This incident proves once again to all countries of the world that the Syrian regime constitutes a flagrant threat to the IDPs, and is the main reason behind the continued flow of refugees and their fear of return and settlement even in the areas it does not control, through continuous bombardment that hasn't spared even children in the camps. Despite all this savagery and barbarism, we hear calls from institutions and research centers that justify resuming normal relations with the Syrian regime, rather than demanding its accountability to prepare for the political transition and voluntary and sustainable return.”



Methodology:

This report sheds light on the cluster munitions attack launched by Syrian regime and Iranian militias on the Qahh IDP Camp in northern suburbs of Idlib.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has relied on field researchers working for us, who helped to obtain direct testimonies from survivors, relatives of victims, relief workers and media activists, assisted by the extensive network of contacts we have built up through our eight years of work. This report contains seven first-hand accounts that we've collected through speaking directly with witnesses or survivors, none of which are cited from any open sources. We explained the purpose of these interviews beforehand to the witnesses, who gave us permission to use the information they provided without us offering or giving them any incentives. Also, SNHR endeavors always to spare the witnesses the agony of remembering the violations as much as possible, providing assurances that we will conceal the identity of any witness who prefers to use an alias.

SNHR also analyzed videos and photographs that were posted online, or submitted by local activists via e-mail, Skype, or social media platforms. Videos posted by activists show, amongst other things, the sites of attacks, and the bodies of the deceased victims and the injured, as well as the scale of destruction caused by the attacks, with other photos showing the remnants of the missile used in the attack.

We also retain copies of all the videos and photographs included in this report in a confidential electronic database, as well as keeping hard disk backup copies. We do not claim, however, that we have documented all cases, given the severe prohibitions, restrictions and persecution by Syrian Regime forces and some other armed groups.

Our investigations confirm that all of the attacks included in this report targeted civilian areas where we documented no military presence or armories belonging to factions of the Armed Opposition or to extremist Islamist groups before or during the attacks, and where Syrian Regime forces failed to issue any warnings to civilians prior to any of the attacks as required by international humanitarian law.

This report only represents the bare minimum of incidents that we were able to document of the actual severity and magnitude of the violations that have occurred. Also, it doesn't include any analysis of the profound social, economic, and psychological ramifications of these events.



II. Documentation of the Attack on Qahh Camp and Identifying the Syrian Regime's Responsibility for It

Qahh camp, one of the camps spread across the north of Idlib governorate, was established at the end of 2012 and housed approximately 2,000 people before the attack took place, most of whom are IDPs from the northern suburbs of Hama and the southern suburbs of Idlib.

On Wednesday, November 20, 2019, between 19:45 and 20:20, Syrian Regime forces and pro-Syrian regime Iranian militias, which we believe were stationed in Jabal Azan area in the southern suburbs of Aleppo, used a missile platform to fire a [Tochka 9M79 missile loaded with 9n24 cluster](#) submunitions that fell on Qahh IDP Camp, resulting in [the deaths of 16 civilians, including 11 children](#) and [three women \(adult female\)](#), and [injured](#) at least [50 others](#).
Victims' Names:



The Syrian Network for Human Rights has documented the death of at least 16 civilians, including 11 children (one of them a toddler) and three women, as a result of Syrian Regime forces and pro-Syrian regime militia in an attack using a missile platform to fire a Tochka 9M79 missile loaded with cluster submunitions, fell on Qahh IDP Camp in Idlib governorate.

1. Mrs. Mervat Khatib al-Hadi
2. Mrs. Samir al-Hadi
3. The girl Hana Mervat al-Hadi
4. The girl Hana al-Hadi
5. The girl Hana al-Hadi
6. The girl Hana al-Hadi
7. The girl Hana al-Hadi
8. The girl Hana al-Hadi
9. Mrs. Samir al-Hadi
10. The girl Hana al-Hadi
11. The girl Hana al-Hadi
12. The girl Hana al-Hadi
13. The girl Hana al-Hadi
14. The girl Hana al-Hadi
15. The girl Hana al-Hadi
16. The girl Hana al-Hadi

Most of the submunitions spread in the group of tents area, with the explosions damaging at least 10 of the tents, as well as inflicting damage on the [Maternity Hospital](#), which is supported by the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) and is located 150 meters from Qahh Camp; this hospital is listed among the health facilities included in the [UN humanitarian deconfliction mechanism](#).



Remnants of Tochka 9M79 missile loaded with 9n24 cluster submunitions fired by Syrian Regime forces on Qahh IDPs Camp, Idlib - November 20, 2019

The witnesses we contacted confirmed that there are no potential military targets or military headquarters or facilities in the camp, with our investigations indicating that the nearest military headquarters is located about 2.5 km northeast of the camp and is the headquarters of the Sham Legion - one of the factions of the Armed Opposition.

This means that the targeting of the camp constitutes a war crime, as the Syrian regime has clearly targeted a civilian area using an indiscriminate weapon loaded with cluster munitions; the attack caused significant material damage and human losses among civilians, violating the principles of distinction and proportionality established by international humanitarian law.

The SNHR contacted Kamel ¹ - one of the central signal workers in Saraqeb town in the eastern suburbs of Idlib. Kamel works with other central signal workers to track the movements of warplanes that take off from the Syrian or Russian air bases and determine their path, with observatory workers able in many of the attacks to determine the type of warplanes used and the symbols they carry, as well as being capable of monitoring ground attacks, especially since observatories are stationed in relatively elevated areas, enabling the personnel to monitor the movement of missiles and their launch from their respective platforms. Kamel says: **“Our work mechanism includes cooperation between all observatories distributed throughout the north of the country, where a network of communication links between us. At around 19:30, the observatory operating in the southern suburbs of Aleppo told us that he had spotted, with his naked eye, a Tochka missile fired by Syrian Regime forces from the missile platform stationed east of Jabal Azan in the southern suburbs of Aleppo; we and the observatories in other areas started tracking the movement of the missile that landed in the camp 3 minutes after its launch.”**



Hamza al Ibrahim, an infant who died due to wounds sustained in a ground attack with a Tochka 9M79 missile fired by Syrian Regime forces on Qahh IDPs Camp, Idlib - November 20, 2019

¹ Via WhatsApp on November 27, 2019



The observer Kamel informed us that the Iranian militias took control of the Jabal Azan area (Azan mountain) - from which the missile was launched - in February 2016, further noting that the observatories often recorded the Iranian militias bringing modern missile platforms and installing them on and around the mountain perimeter.

The SNHR also spoke with Obaidah Dandoush ², director of response at a local relief organization (the Syria Relief and Development organization 'SRD'); Obaidah was about 1 km from Qahh Camp when the attack occurred, and he described to us what he heard: **“I heard the sound of a huge explosion, which was followed by several successive explosions. There was no noise of [aeroplane] flight before. I heard distress calls about fires in the camp. I reached there about 15 minutes later. Upon my arrival, I saw four dead bodies and many wounded people, and the people in the camp were in a state of fear and panic, with everyone trying to get out of the camp for fear of repeating the shelling.”** Obaidah said he counted the burning of ten tents at the site of the attack, and the deaths of 12 people and the injury of 53 others, after he went to hospitals near the camp. Obaidah added that he saw Civil Defense personnel gathering the remnants of the missile: **“The missile was loaded with cluster munitions, which contributed to the high number of casualties. All submunitions exploded and caused great damage. Many of the residents who left the camp may not return to it again.”**

The SNHR spoke with Mr. Belal Abdul Karim al Ramadan³, from Hass town, who's been living in the Qahh Camp since 2012: **“For two days before the attack, I saw reconnaissance aircrafts belonging to the Syrian regime flying over the camp, and until the day of the attack, and precisely when it happened, these aircrafts remained alternating overhead. On the day after the massacre, I could see another reconnaissance aircraft.”**

Belal mentioned that the attack took place between 20:00 and 20:15 and he said that he heard the whistling sound of a missile and then the explosions began after about five seconds: **“I felt as if it was the Day of Resurrection; there was an explosion in every corner, and I started to hear the screaming of the neighbors around me. I came out of my tent and I saw the fires devour the tent of my neighbor. I entered the tent in an attempt to save her, but the fires were burning her body; she was screaming with pain while she was dying.”** Belal said that he feared for himself and his family from the explosion of more cluster submunitions, so he left the camp until the verification of the disposal of all unexploded ordnance. He also confirmed that the camp is free of any military headquarters and that all its residents are civilians.

² Via WhatsApp on November 21, 2019

³ Via WhatsApp on November 24, 2019



Wasim al Ramadan ⁴, the imam of a mosque in Qahh camp, contacted by the SNHR, Wasim said that he heard a huge explosion around 19:33 followed by the sounds of approximately 15 explosions, with less than one second between each: **“I took my children and my wife out of the tent and rushed out of the camp. Fires were burning in tents and people were trapped inside. One of the munitions fell 15 meters from my tent. We tried to evacuate the children and women out of the camp and I returned with some young men inside to check the damage and help the injured.”** Wasim said that the state of trauma, terror and panic remained among the camp’s residents for three days after the attack due to their fear of repeated bombing, adding, “These camps were not targeted before this day. The region is on the Turkish border and most of its residents are civilians and there is no military presence. The attack resulted in the deaths of 12 people including children and women.”



⁴ Via WhatsApp on November 24, 2019



The SNHR also spoke with Mr. Alaa al Musa⁵, a local media activist residing in al Karama gathering, which is a camp about 5 km from Qahh Camp. Alaa headed to Qahh Camp after the attack and informed us of his observations: **“At around 20:00, I heard the sound of a very powerful explosion. A few minutes later, I watched a live broadcast from the scene of the attack by one of my friends. I identified the location of the attack and went there directly using my car. I had to provide any possible assistance, and when I arrived, I saw the fire engulfing the tents and saw a number of the injured. I carried one of the children and took him to Atma Hospital, and then I went back to the camp and photographed the damage. Several tents were badly damaged due to the explosion of a gas cylinder inside one of the tents as a result of being hit by cluster bombs’ shrapnel.”** Alaa said that most of the camp’s residents had recently fled from the southern suburbs of Idlib due to bombardment, but death followed them to the camp: **“In one of the tents, I saw children’s toys mixed with the blood of the children who were killed; it was a cruel scene that I will never forget as long as I live.”**

The explosion of cluster submunitions caused damage to the Maternity Hospital building, which is near the camp. The SNHR spoke with Mr. Mohammad Sukkar⁶, the hospital’s Administrative Director, who said: **“I was in the hospital at the moment of the attack. I heard a very powerful explosion in an area close to the hospital, followed by successive explosions for about 30 seconds, and the sound was dreadful. The hospital suffered material damage due to the explosion of cluster submunitions, with the doors and windows destroyed by the pressure of the explosion that resulted in three injuries among the hospital staff, including a laboratory technician, a nurse and a pediatrician, but the situation in the camp was the most difficult. The bombardment caused severe injuries to civilians. I have examined dozens of serious injuries, and recorded the death of at least one civilian.”**

⁵ Via WhatsApp on November 24, 2019

⁶ Via WhatsApp on November 24, 2019





Damage to the Maternity Hospital caused by a ground attack with a Tochka 9M79 missile fired by Syrian Regime forces on Qahh IDPs Camp, Idlib - November 20, 2019

The SNHR also spoke with Rajab Zidan⁷, Director of the Qahh IDPs Camp, who stated: **“At about eight o’clock in the evening, a violent explosion shook the southern parts of the camp. We felt a strong shaking followed by successive explosions for many seconds, and we went out immediately. The tents of the displaced people were burning and the camp was a total mess. Everyone was running, not even thinking where they were going, to escape from the bombing; some of the people forgot their children in the tents due to the severity of the panic. We rushed towards the tents that were burning and started to help the injured. The Civil Defense teams and the paramedics arrived and everyone started working to put out the fire and rescue the victims and the injured and transport them to the hospitals; the majority of victims were children and women.”**

Rajab added: **“The camp includes about 900 tents, and shelters nearly 4,000 civilians, most of whom came from the suburbs of Hama and Idlib. They had fled from the hell of bombing and preferred to live in mangled tents over death under the rubble, but they did not expect death to chase them here; fires devoured more than 15 tents, and caused damage to more than 90 tents; most of the tents were hit by shrapnel that caused them to be torn apart and rendered them uninhabitable in winter.”** Rajab

⁷ Via WhatsApp on November 22, 2019



said he wandered through the camp shortly after the attack and noticed that the head of the missile had landed at the southern end of the camp, adding that he saw submunitions spread all over the camp. He further confirmed that the camp is a place where civilians are gathered and is free of any military presence.

The attack caused the displacement of approximately 80 percent of the camp residents, who were displaced due to their fear of the camp being subjected to further attacks. As of the date of the issuance of this report, we have recorded only a small percentage of these people returning to the camp.

- Munitions used:

A review and analysis of photos of the weapons remnants found at the site, information from witnesses, and the impact of the destruction caused by the attack confirmed the use of Tochka-9M79 tactical ballistic missiles. Russia manufactures these missiles, which are guided by the Inertial Navigation System(INS), providing the missile with a computer that maintains the trajectory of the missile created for it and corrects it to keep it in a steady position until it reaches its target as accurately as possible with an error probability of 150 meters. A distinguishing feature of this missile is its method of hitting the target as it explodes over the target at a height of 15-20 meters, which leads to a large explosion across an area of 500 meters. Various [specialist sources](#) indicate that the Syrian regime possesses a stockpile of [these missiles, especially those with a range of 70 and 120 km](#). In February 2017, the [US Fox News](#) reported that Russia has provided the Syrian regime with a large shipment of “Tochka” missiles estimated at 50 missiles of the type with a range of 120 km.

These missiles can be equipped with different warheads, including cluster, chemical or nuclear warheads. In the Qahh Camp attack, we were able to verify through witness accounts and the analysis of photos and videos that the missile was equipped with a 9N123K warhead loaded with a total of around fifty 9N24 cluster submunitions.

According to the SNHR’s database, we have documented at least 12 attacks carried out by Syrian Regime forces, in which they used Tochka-series missiles, but we do not have enough information about the type of warheads they were carrying. According to what we’ve documented, at least three of the missiles used in these attacks were loaded with cluster munitions.



Design outlining the remnants of a Tochka 9M79 series missile, equipped with a 9N123K warhead, and loaded with 9N24 cluster submunitions found in the camp area after the attack.



TOCHKA 9M79 SERIES MISSILE, EQUIPPED WITH A 9N123K WARHEAD, AND LOADED WITH 9N24 CLUSTER SUBMUNITIONS

TOCHKA 9M79 SERIES MISSILE, EQUIPPED WITH A 9N123K WARHEAD, AND LOADED WITH 9N24 CLUSTER SUBMUNITIONS USED BY THE SYRIAN REGIME IN AN ATTACK ON QAHH CAMP ON NOVEMBER 20, 2019



These munitions need to be launched by a 9P129 vehicle. Observatory workers' accounts indicate that the missile was fired from the south, and accordingly, there are four possible locations which are most likely to have been the location of the missile launcher:

Two military bases in Jabal Azan in the southern suburbs of Aleppo, with an estimated 0.5 km meters between them, a military post in the Abtin area in the southern suburbs of Aleppo, and the Defense Factories in the southern suburbs of Aleppo.

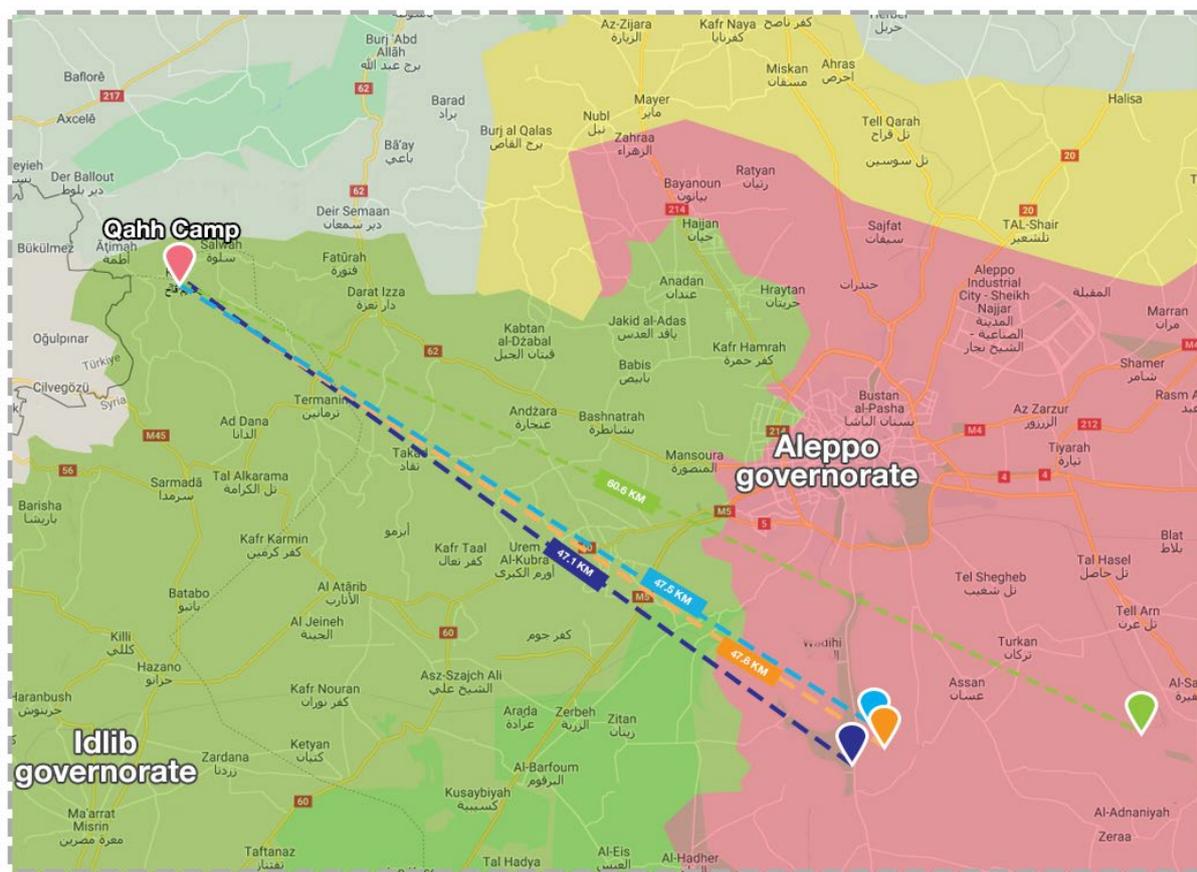
Most of the witness accounts agreed that the most likely source for launching these missiles was launcher platforms located in the Jabal Azan area in the southern suburbs of Aleppo.



The following map shows the locations of the platforms that could be the source from which the missile was launched towards Qahh Camp:



Locations of military bases, from one of which Syrian Regime forces likely fired a Tochka 9M79 series missile loaded with cluster submunitions towards Qahh Camp in the northern suburbs of Idlib on November 20, 2019



- Military base in Jabal Azan 1
- Military base in Jabal Azan 2
- Military stationing post in Abtin
- Defense Factories
- Qahh Camp
- Areas under the control of Syrian Regime forces
- Areas under the control of Syrian Democratic Forces
- Areas under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham

The military advantage of using cluster munitions is that dropping a single explosive charge causes extensive damage on a very large scale; although these munitions do not cause the same massive destruction as barrel bombs or Scud missiles and vacuum missiles, they are capable of causing severe damage to property, and ensuring that the largest possible number of people in the area are killed and injured.

Although a large number of 9n24 cluster submunitions spread in the camp following the attack, the analysis of the photos we conducted on the [photos of tents that were burned](#) in the attack show a large difference in the scale of the destruction between the two tents (1-2) shown in the photo and the damage inflicted on other tents; one of the photos which we obtained for tents 1 and 2 shows the effects of complete burning and also shows the remains of quantities of wood and firewood collected there, which is the primary method of heating relied on in the camp; it seems that the explosion of one of the cluster submunitions near the wood pile sparked a large conflagration, while an eyewitness's account confirmed that another of the submunitions exploded near a gas cylinder, which led to its explosion and ignited fires in the two tents.

Visual guidance showing six locations in the camp that were subject to varying damages as a result of the attack:



III. The Syrian and Russian Regimes Are Responsible for 79 Attacks on IDP Camps, According to the SNHR's Database

According to the investigations that we conducted, the Syrian regime's reconnaissance aircrafts had been flying over the camp for several days prior to the attack, which indicates that the Syrian regime is fully aware of the civilian nature of its target and the camps' occupants; in addition to this, it chose to use cluster munitions in carrying out this bombing, meaning that the attack constitutes a compound crime.

The international community's indulgent attitude towards the Syrian regime's bombing of IDP camps has encouraged the repetition of such crimes simply, meaning that the regime's deliberate attack on the Qahh Camp, including its killing of children, is unsurprising, as this follows the regime's standard strategy of targeting the IDPs and relief convoys.

According to the SNHR's database, the number of incidents of attacks on IDP camps (by incident of attack, we mean that some of the camps may have been targeted more than once) since March 2011 until this latest attack has reached at least 79, all carried out by Syrian-Russian alliance forces, and distributed as follows:

Syrian regime: 61 attacks on IDP camps.

Russian forces: 18 attacks on IDP camps.

Among these attacks, we have documented 11 attacks on IDP camps during the recent military campaign launched by the Syrian-Russian alliance forces since April 26, 2019.

IV. The Syrian Regime Is the World's Worst Offender in Terms of Cluster Munitions Use

Cluster munitions have been among the most prominent and commonly used types of weapons deployed by the Syrian regime, being used extensively and repeatedly. Since the Russian intervention on September 30, 2015, we have monitored a marked increase in the frequency of use of this type of munitions, and have recorded the use of new munitions that were not used before the Russian intervention.

The SNHR has documented at least 487 cluster munitions attacks since the first documented use of these munitions in July 2012 up to November 20, 2019. These attacks have been documented in the SNHR' database through an accumulated documentation process, in which each incident is recorded with all the information we have been able to obtain on each, including location, date and time of attack, type of munitions used, and the resulting victims and injuries. The record of the attacks is distributed according to the perpetrator party as follows:

- Syrian Regime forces: 243
- Russian forces: 236
- Russian/ Syrian attacks: Eight



The cluster-munition attacks launched by the Syrian-Russian alliance forces between July 2012 and November 20, 2019, have resulted in the deaths of 1,019 civilians, including 375 children and 215 women (adult female).

We also documented the deaths of at least 375 civilians, including 107 children and 31 women (adult female), as a result of the explosion of unexploded ordnance left by previous cluster munition attacks. Although it is difficult to determine the number of the injuries caused by cluster munition explosions, the Syrian Network for Human Rights estimates that approximately 4,300 civilians have been injured, a large number of whom have subsequently had to undergo amputation of limbs as result, requiring prosthetic limbs and a series of rehabilitation and support operations.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The Syrian-Iranian-Russian alliance forces undoubtedly violated UN Security Council Resolutions 2139 and 2254 which demanded the cessation of indiscriminate attacks, as well as violating a wide range of customary international humanitarian law rules, and also violating articles 7 and 8 of the Rome Statute by committing intentional homicide, all of which crimes constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity.
2. The incidents of bombardment have incidentally caused civilian casualties, including injuries, as well as causing significant damage to civilian objects. There are very strong indications suggesting that the damage was extremely excessive in comparison to the intended military benefit, with the attacks failing to discriminate between civilians and combatants in most cases. Also, it seems that some of the attacks appear to have deliberately targeted vital facilities and civilian areas.
3. The use of cluster munitions by Syrian Regime forces led by the commander of these forces, Lieutenant General President Bashar al Assad, as well as their use by Russian forces, violates both the principles of distinction and proportionality in international humanitarian law and is considered a war crime.
4. The evidence contained in the incidents included in this report indicates that the use of cluster munitions was carried out by Syrian Regime forces, against civilian targets, not directed at serving any specific military purpose, and thus constitute war crimes.
5. The report issued by the delegates to the 2005 Summit states unanimously that each country had a responsibility to protect its population from crimes against humanity and war crimes. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, the prevention of incitement to commit them by all possible means, and when the state clearly fails to protect its population from egregious crimes, or itself is committing such crimes as in the case of the Syrian regime, means that it is the responsibility of the international community to intervene to take protective measures in a collective, decisive and timely manner.



6. The bombardment of the IDP camps and civilian gatherings has spread further terror and fear among already traumatized displaced persons and has grossly exacerbated their disastrous humanitarian situation, which is already suffering from a deterioration in terms of the initial humanitarian response.

Recommendations:

The United Nations special envoy to Syria

- Condemn the perpetrators of crimes and massacres, and those who are primarily responsible for obstructing the political process.
- Re-sequence the peace process so that it can resume its natural course after Russia's attempts to divert and distort it, empowering the Constitutional Committee prior to the establishment of a transitional governing body.
- Request that the Syrian regime, its Russian ally, and opposition factions stop all violations and secure good faith measures by stopping the bombing and at the very least to disclose the fate of the forcibly disappeared persons.

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 including the Russian regime whose involvement in war crimes has been repeatedly proven.
- Ensure peace and security and implement the principle of Responsibility to Protect civilians' lives and to save the Syrian people's heritage and historical artefacts from destruction, looting and vandalism.
- 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 persons camps, and follow up with those States that have pledged voluntary contributions.
- The Security Council must adopt a special resolution banning the use of cluster munitions in Syria, similar to its prohibition on the use of chemical weapons, and include advice on how to remove the unexploded ordnance of such dangerous weapons.
- Russia's permanent membership in the Security Council must not prevent the Council's efforts to hold Russia accountable; if it does so, the body will lose its remaining credibility.
- The use of cluster munitions by the Syrian regime threatens the security and safety of tens of thousands of members of Syrian society and the Security Council must immediately



and urgently intervene to protect the Syrian people from the attacks by the ruling authority, which constitute war crimes.

- Send peace-keeping forces to protect the IDPs and their camps from attacks by Syrian Regime forces.

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.
- The 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 (ICRtoP) 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.

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.
- Train Syrian organizations to undertake clearance of mines and other unexploded ordnance, and raise local awareness of the dangers of such ordnance.
- Establish a platform that brings together a number of Syrian organizations active in documenting violations and humanitarian assistance, in order to facilitate an exchange of skills and experiences within Syrian society.
- Issue a report on this incident and clearly condemn the perpetrators.



State Friends of the Syrian People:

- Condemn the use of cluster munitions against Syrian society by the Syrian-Russian alliance forces, and pressure them to stop their repeated and ongoing attacks, which indicate that such attacks are part of the official policy of the Russian state.
- Refuse to consider the Russian government as a party to the dialogue and political transition in Syria if it continues to insist on committing widespread and systematic violations against the Syrian people; these could not be any clearer than the repeated use of cluster munitions which provides blatant evidence of its violations.

The Russian Government:

- Immediately end the production of cluster munitions and stop using them in Syria, start destroying stockpiles, and accede to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Cluster Munitions.
- Investigate all violations listed in this report, with the SNHR fully ready to assist and provide all the detailed evidence, and hold all those involved accountable.
- Publish detailed maps of locations where cluster munition attacks have been launched, provide these to the United Nations and inform the Syrian community about them, thus facilitating the disposal of unexploded ordnance.
- Compensate all affected members of Syrian society, in particular the victims and their families for all material and moral damage caused by these attacks.

Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI)

- Launch investigations into the attack included in this report and the cases in previous reports. The SNHR is willing to cooperate and provide further evidence and data.

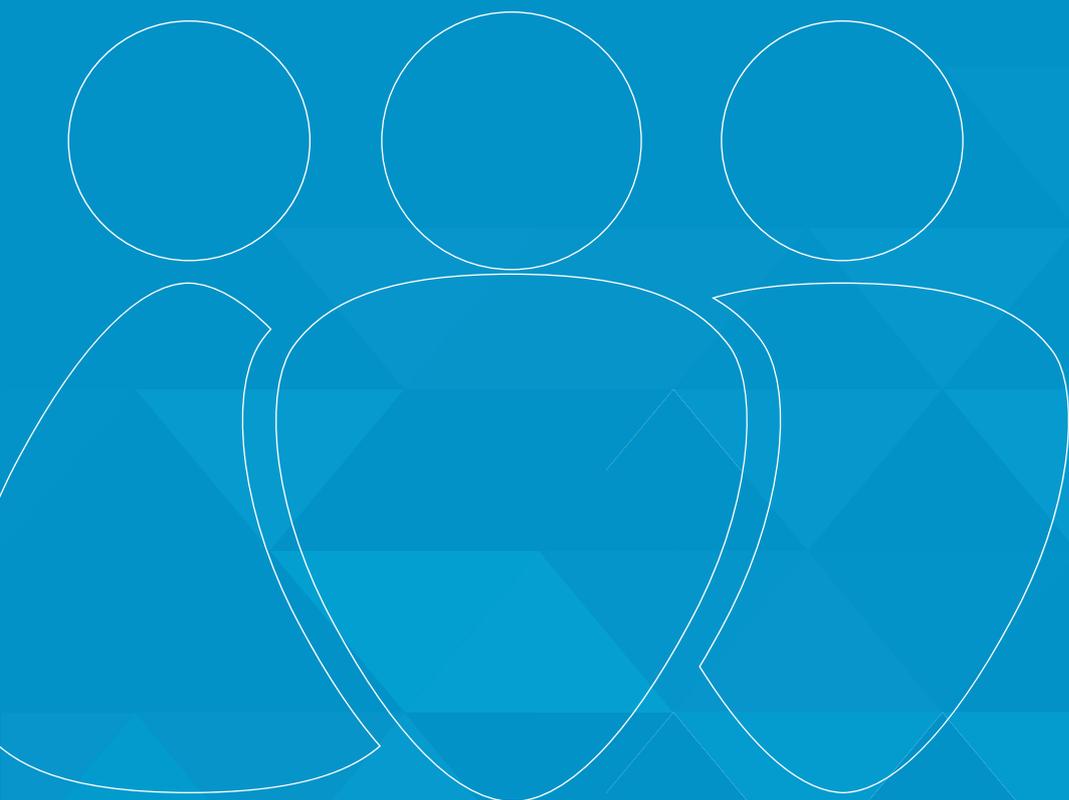
The Syrian regime

- Stop violating the Syrian constitution by killing Syrian citizens, destroying their homes and disappearing and torturing tens of thousands of them.
- Stop indiscriminate shelling and targeting of residential areas, hospitals, schools and markets, and end the use of outlawed weapons and barrel bombs.
- End the acts of torture that have caused the deaths of thousands of Syrian citizens in detention centers.
- Ensure compliance with UN Security Council resolutions, customary humanitarian law and the Syrian constitution and law.

Acknowledgment and Condolences

We offer our sincere condolences and gratitude to all the people of Qahh Camp and local activists, whose contributions have enriched this report.





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