

The Most Notable Types of Weapons Used by the Russian-Syrian Alliance on Populated Areas in Northwestern Syria

Cluster Munitions, Barrel Bombs, Incendiary Weapons, Nail Missiles, Chemical Weapons

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 April 26, 2019, the northwestern region of Syria, which includes (the northeastern suburbs of Hama, Idlib governorate, southwestern suburbs of Aleppo, and the northwestern suburbs of Latakia) has been the scene of the testing and use of various types of weapons, including those prohibited for use against civilian targets such as cluster munitions; we estimate that the region needs decades to recover from the use of these weapons alone. The Russian regime also considered this region a real and effective training ground for testing weapons manufactured by Russian companies, using Syria as a laboratory rather than testing the weapons in empty areas within Russia, with the Russian regime unashamed to repeatedly announce its testing of weapons on Syrian territory. According to our observations, most of these weapons have been used against civilian targets, including hospitals, schools, markets and residential buildings, amid unprecedented international silence. Syrian society no longer hears from any state or political officials mere concern or condemnation of the massacres committed in northwestern Syria, or of the barbaric and ferocious deployment of different types of weapons, including barrel bombs, a weapon which any army with conscience, morality, or military honor would be ashamed to use. It should be remembered that use of this indiscriminate weapon dropped from the air violates the rules of international humanitarian law first. Second, a special Security Council resolution, No. 2139, issued on February 22, 2014, prohibited the use of barrel bombs, with the Security Council threatening to take additional measures in the event of their repeated use; the Se-



curity Council failed to follow through on this threat, however, and we no longer hear even the slightest condemnation of the repeated use of barrel bombs tens of thousands of times following this Security Council resolution in a repeated show of contempt by the Syrian regime for the Security Council and the international community.

In this report, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) documents the types and quantities of the most notable types of weapons used by the Russian-Syrian alliance against the northwestern region of Syria between April 26, 2019, and August 19, 2019, such as incendiary weapons, cluster munitions, regular missiles, nails-filled missiles, and barrel bombs, up to the chemical weapons of mass destruction. We are particularly concerned about attacks that took place against densely populated areas targeting civilian targets, with the use of these weapons in this context constituting a flagrant and intentional breach of international humanitarian law. It seems that the Russian-Syrian alliance has attained an unprecedented record in the number of times it has violated the rules of war, or more precisely in its absolute disregard for and lack of any compliance with them, behaving as though there is no international humanitarian law at all.

Through continuous daily monitoring conducted by the SNHR team, we can confirm that such attacks by Russian-Syrian alliance have taken place almost daily and, on some days, we recorded dozens of airstrikes. All of this widespread and repeated use of multiple types of weapons is taking place within a confined geographical area of almost 7,000 square kilometers, with nearly 3.2 million inhabitants either residents or displaced people, more than half of whom are women and children, with all of this causing a wave of fear, terror and repeated displacement.

In recent months, the SNHR has intensively monitored the most notable human rights violations in the fourth de-escalation zone; we have issued many reports, including [reports covering various types of violations](#), a special report documenting [targeting medical facilities](#), another special report on [targeting the Civil Defense Headquarters](#), and another special report on the [most notable massacres](#) committed by the Syrian-Russian alliance forces in the Idlib area three months since the start of the military campaign.

In a statement on July 18, the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation denied that Russian special forces were involved in the fighting in the Idlib area, insisting that there are no Russian ground forces deployed in Syria. However, Russian media accounts published photos showing the presence of Russian fighters on the ground, including ANNA Agency,



which published [photos](#) on May 25 which it said showed elements of Russian military intelligence services engaged in a mission in the southwest of Idlib.

On July 29, Head of the Main Operations Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, held a [briefing](#) in which he claimed: “The Russian Aerospace Forces grouping in Syria conducts operational and combat training activities, is in readiness to perform tasks to counter terrorism. Aviation flights have been reduced to a minimum number as part of combat training and additional reconnaissance.” Only a few hours after this announcement, a fixed-wing warplane, which we believe was Russian, launched a raid on a market in Ma’aret al Numan city in the southern suburbs of Idlib, resulting in the deaths of four civilians and causing severe damage to the market. The local observatories used by citizens in northwest Syria to monitor reports on flights in order to enable them to seek shelter have received continuous reports of Russian warplanes taking off from Khmeimim Military Base and carrying out raids in various areas of the fourth de-escalation zone.

Methodology:

The Syrian Network for Human Rights team monitors and records the types of weapons and the locations where they are used, within the context of documenting incidents where violations occur. In the course of this continuous work which we have carried out constantly for more than eight years, we’ve been able to build an extensive and detailed database listing the various types of weapons that have been used since the beginning of the popular uprising and since it turned into an internal armed conflict; these incidents can be catalogued and sorted according to the type of weapon, and the locations where they were used, further helping to determine the toll of victims and the destruction inflicted by each attack.

This report draws upon the ongoing daily monitoring of news reports and developments by SNHR’s team, and on our extensive network of various credible sources that have been built up over the course of our work since 2011. When we receive information or learn some news about violations via the internet or media outlets, our team works to follow up these reports and attempts to verify information and collect evidence and data. In some cases, researchers are able to visit the incident location promptly, although this is a rarity in light of the incredibly high security risks involved, and given the frequency of daily incidents and the scarcity of human and material resources to carry out this work. Therefore, the opportunities available to access evidence vary between one case and another, and consequently the level of certainty in the classification of each incident varies. SNHR’s customary policy in such cases is to rely on accounts from survivors who experienced the violation firsthand



or those who saw or photographed the violation, in addition to analyzing available materials from open sources such as the Internet and media outlets. We also talk with medical personnel who treated the injured in these incidents, examined the deceased victims' bodies, and identified the cause of death.

In the course of our work on this report, we sometimes had difficulty in documenting incidents because of the heavy bombardment these areas were subjected to.

SNHR also analyzes videos and photographs that were posted online, or submitted by local activists via e-mail, Skype, or social media platforms. These videos and photos show, amongst other things, the sites of attacks, the bodies of victims and injured, and the extent of the great destruction inflicted by these attacks.

Furthermore, we retain copies of all the videos and photographs outlined 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 the Syrian Regime forces and some other armed groups. Readers are welcome to find out more about SNHR's [methodology](#).

This report only represents the bare minimum that we were able to document 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.

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

“The indifference of the international community, and in particular the civilized leading countries of the world, to what is happening in northwestern Syria has given carte blanche to Russia to issue terrible announcements of its marketing of new types of weapons tested in Syria, and has enabled the Syrian regime to repeatedly use barrel bombs, cluster munitions and chemical weapons. International Humanitarian Law has never been insulted in this way before. All legal professionals in the world must stand up to the war crimes committed by Syrian Regime forces, Russia and the other parties to the conflict.”



II. The most notable weapons used in the Russian-Syrian military campaign on the fourth de-escalation zone:

A. Statistics according to the SNHR's database of what has been recorded regarding the use of weapons, the resulting victims and displaced people, and destruction of the most notable civilian facilities:

The SNHR has documented since the beginning of the military escalation and attack by the Russian, Iranian and Syrian Regime forces on the fourth de-escalation zone on April 26, 2019, up until August 19, 2019:

- 1. Barrel bombs:** 3,172 barrel bombs
- 2. Cluster munitions:** 22 attacks
- 3. Incendiary weapons:** 20 attacks
- 4. Nail-filled missiles:** Seven attacks
- 5. Chemical weapons:** One attack

The SNHR has documented the deaths of at least 843 civilians, including 223 children and 152 women (adult female), in the fourth de-escalation zone between April 26, 2019, and August 19, 2019, distributed as follows:

- Syrian Regime forces: 670 civilians, including 184 children and 120 women, distributed as follows:

Idlib governorate: 522, including 157 children and 96 women.

Hama governorate: 95, including 14 children and 16 women.

Aleppo governorate: 53, including 13 children and eight women.

- Russian forces: 173 civilians, including 39 children and 32 women, distributed as follows:

Idlib governorate: 125, including 32 children and 19 women.

Hama governorate: 48, including seven children and 13 women.

Attacks by Syrian-Russian alliance forces have also resulted in at least 381 assaults on civilian vital facilities, including 82 on places of worship, 112 on schools, 48 on medical facilities, and 39 on Civil Defense Centers, distributed as follows:

- Syrian Regime forces: 284 attacks on vital civilian facilities, including 74 on places of worship, 89 on schools, 31 on medical facilities, and 18 on Civil Defense Centers, distributed as follows:

Idlib governorate: 255

Aleppo governorate: Six

Hama governorate: 23



- Russian forces: 97 attacks on vital civilian facilities, including eight on places of worship, 23 on schools, 17 on medical facilities, and 21 on Civil Defense Centers, distributed as follows:

Idlib governorate: 65

Hama governorate: 32

B. Details of weapons used:

1. Barrel bombs:

The greatest impact of the Sochi Agreement on civilians in the fourth de-escalation zone was the Syrian regime's cessation of the use of barrel bombs, but on April 30, 2019, four days after the start of the recent military campaign on the area, the regime began renewed use of this weapon intensively.

The SNHR documented the Air Force of Syrian Regime forces, helicopters and fixed-wing warplanes, dropping at least 3,172 barrel bombs between April 26, 2019, and August 19, 2019, on the fourth de-escalation zone, distributed as follows:

- Idlib governorate: 1,392

- Hama governorate: 1,572

- Latakia governorate: 208

These attacks resulted in the deaths of 67 civilians, including 16 children and 20 women (adult female). The toll of victims was distributed across governorates as follows:

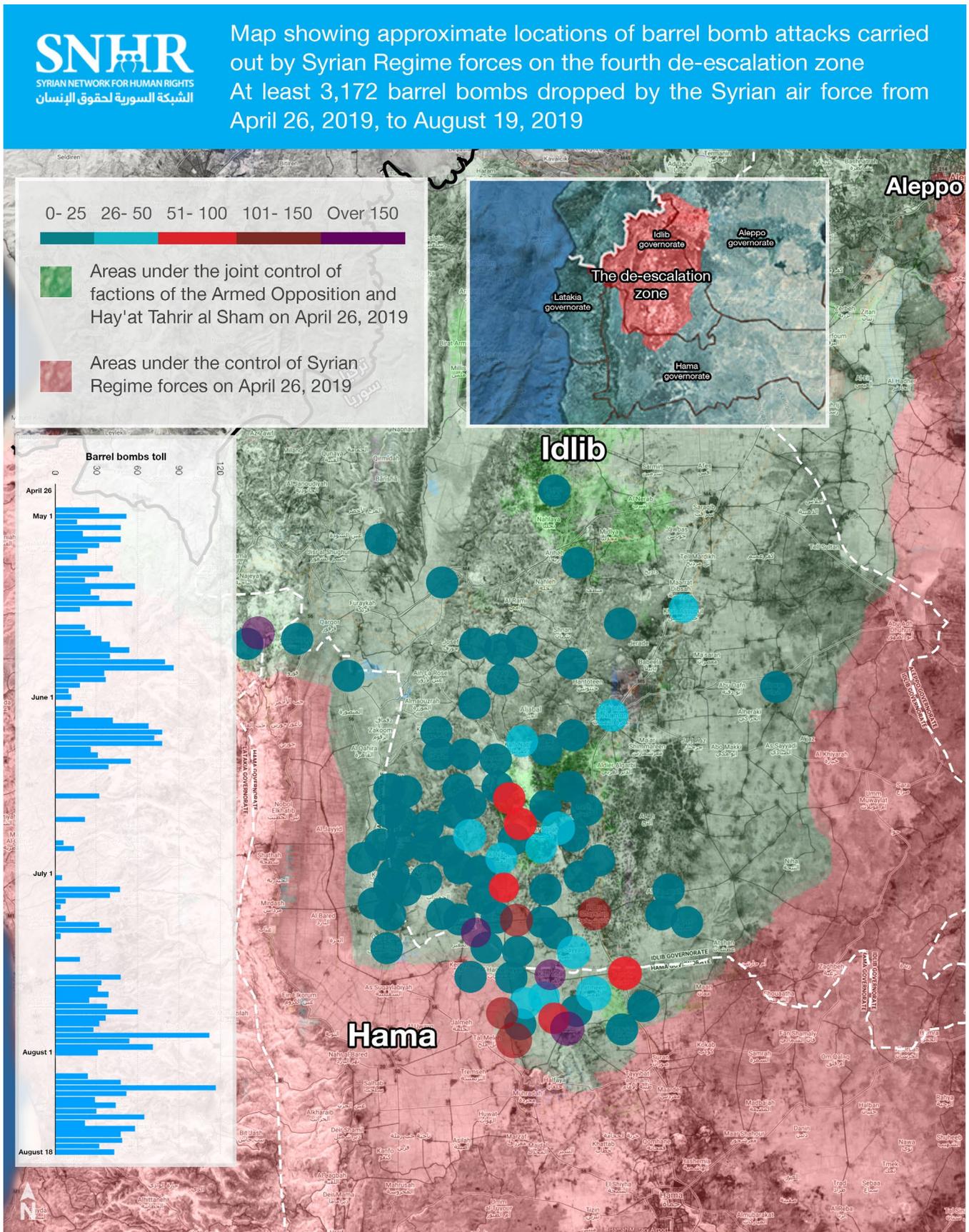
Idlib: 62 civilians, including 15 children and 19 women.

Hama: Five civilians, including one female child and one woman.

These attacks resulted in at least 47 assaults on civilian vital facilities, including 11 on places of worship, 18 on schools, five on medical facilities, and two on Civil Defense Centers.



A map showing the distribution of barrel bomb attacks carried out by Syrian Regime forces on the fourth de-escalation zone from April 26 to August 19:



The map shows the attacks concentrated in the southern suburbs of Idlib and northern suburbs of Hama, and spread across large areas which caused the displacement of the population of these areas towards the north. The number of barrel bombs dropped by the Syrian Air Force varied across different areas, with the towns of al Latamena, Kafr Zita and Kafr Nbouda in the northern suburbs of Hama, and al Kbaina village in the western suburbs of Latakia being among the areas subjected to the most intensive shelling. The escalating frequency of the Syrian regime's use of barrel bombs is coupled with its attempts to make a military advance on the fronts, as illustrated by the timeline.

The most notable barrel bomb attacks:

On Friday, May 3, 2019, Syrian regime helicopters dropped barrel bombs several times throughout the day on [lhsem](#) town in Jabal al Zaweya in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in the [deaths of four civilians](#), including two women. The town was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Tuesday, May 7, 2019, Syrian regime helicopters dropped a number of barrel bombs on al Ghab al Awsat Dispensary in [al Hawija](#) village in Sahl al Ghab in the western suburbs of Hama governorate, partially destroying the center building, and causing considerable material damage to its equipment. We note that the administration of the center had suspended its work a few days before these attacks on May 1, 2019, following the recent military escalation by Syrian-Russian alliance forces on the region. The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Tuesday, May 28, 2019, Syrian regime helicopters dropped a number of barrel bombs on a residential area in [Sfuhun](#) village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in the deaths of three civilians, including two women, in addition to severely damaging [houses](#) and public facilities. The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.





Victim of an aerial attack by the Syrian regime using barrel bombs on Sfuhun village, Idlib - May 28, 2019 - Syrian Civil Defense in Idlib Governorate

On Wednesday, May 29, 2019, Syrian regime helicopters dropped a number of barrel bombs on al Bara village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in the deaths of four civilians ([two children with their father](#), and a woman). The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Friday, July 5, 2019, at round 21:00, two Syrian Regime helicopters dropped a number of barrel bombs on three sites in Mhambel town in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate, [which resulted in the deaths](#) of [13 civilians](#), [including seven](#) children, [an unborn baby](#), and three women, and injured 20 others. The civilian death toll was distributed across the three sites as follows:

The first site: Some barrel bombs fell on [a complex of residential buildings](#) about 200 meters from the [Martyr Mohammad Saleh Abdul Aal Primary School](#) in the western outskirts of the town, perpetrating a massacre of seven civilians from one family, including four children (three males and one female) and two women, who were inside the lobby of a house.

The second site: [Residential buildings](#) located in front of the Martyr Mohammad Saleh Abdul Aal Primary School, resulting in the deaths of three civilians, including two children.

The third site: [Residential buildings](#) located near the Agricultural Extension building in the northern outskirts of the town, resulting in the deaths of three civilians who were IDPs from Damascus Suburbs governorate, namely a pregnant woman, her child and her unborn baby. Mhambel town was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.





Destruction to the Agricultural Extension building in Mhambel town in Idlib caused by a Syrian air attack using barrel bombs – July 5, 2019

On Thursday, July 25, 2019, Syrian Regime helicopters dropped a number of barrel bombs on Kafrooma village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. Some barrel bombs landed near the [Ibn Hayyan School](#) and al Kabir Mosque, partially destroying the building and schoolyard, and causing moderate material damage to the mosque building. The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.



Unexploded barrel bomb dropped by Syrian regime air force on a house in Kafrooma village, Idlib – July 25, 2019





Iron ball bearings from the remnants of a barrel bomb dropped by Syrian regime air force on Kafruma village, Idlib – July 25, 2019

2. Cluster Munitions

The SNHR's Monitoring and Documentation Team noted that Russian-Syrian alliance forces have relied extensively on the use of cluster munitions since the beginning of their recent military campaign on April 26, with the team able to document at least 22 cluster munition attacks carried out by Syrian-Russian alliance forces between April 26 and August 19, 2019, on the fourth de-escalation zone. Most of these attacks took place in the villages and towns of the southern suburbs of Idlib, and were distributed by the perpetrator party as follows:

- Syrian Regime forces: 19, all in Idlib governorate
- Russian forces: Three (one in Hama governorate and two in Idlib governorate)

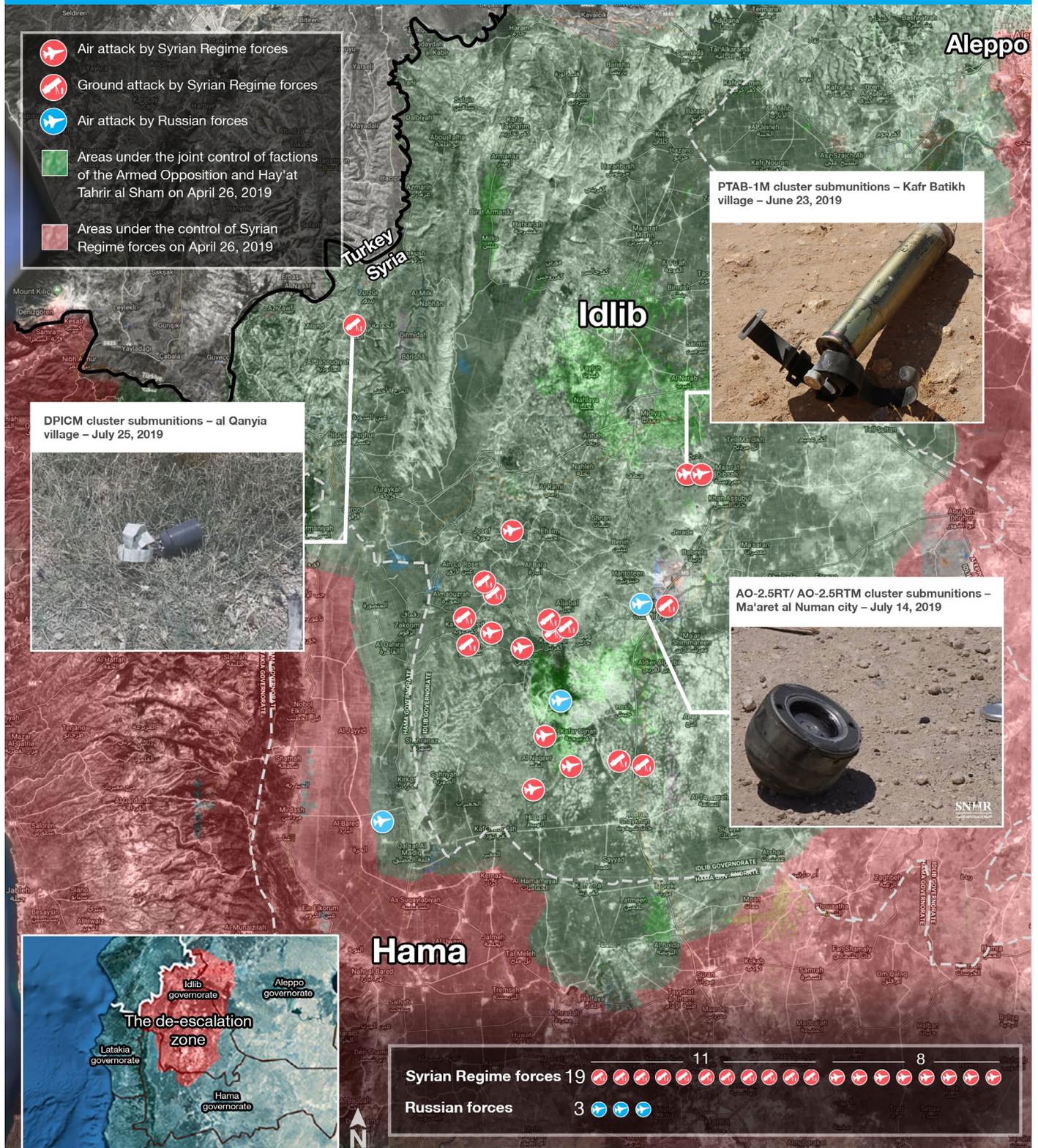
These attacks resulted in the widespread dispersal of hundreds of small bomblets between houses, in fields and roads, resulting in the deaths of nine civilians, including three women, and injuring 16 people, all at the hands of Syrian Regime forces in Idlib governorate.



Map showing approximate locations of cluster munition attacks carried out by Syrian-Russian alliance forces in their recent military campaign on the fourth de-escalation zone:



At least 22 cluster munitions attacks carried out by the Syrian-Russian alliance forces on the fourth de-escalation zone from April 26, 2019, to August 19, 2019



The map shows that most of the attacks carried out by Syrian Regime forces were ground attacks. We documented 11 cluster munition ground attacks out of 19 attacks by Syrian Regime forces, all in Idlib governorate, while Russian forces launched three air strikes, two in Idlib governorate and one in Hama governorate.

The most notable cluster munition attacks:

On Sunday, June 23, 2019, fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes [fired two RBK missiles](#) loaded with [PTAB-1M cluster munitions](#). The remnants spread near the Kafr Batikh Oil Depot Project near Kafr Batikh village in the northeastern suburbs of Idlib. These depots were used during the recent military campaign as places of residence for IDPs who had been forcibly displaced as a result of bombardment elsewhere. The area was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, July 14, 2019, fixed-wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, launched a number of raids on Ma'aret al Numan city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, one of which used [two RBK bombs](#) loaded with AO-2.5RTM / AO-2.5RT [cluster munitions](#). The cluster submunitions fell on the water station of al Zarqaa tank, feeding Ma'aret al Numan city, on the western outskirts of the city, partly destroying the tank's building, and causing moderate material damage to its equipment, in addition to injuring four of the site's guards. The area was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.



Remnants of an RBK-500 cluster incubator found in Ma'aret al Numan city, Idlib, following a Russian air attack on the water station of al Zarqaa tank - July 14, 2019



On Thursday, July 25, 2019, Syrian Regime forces used a missile launcher to fire missiles carrying [DPICM cluster munitions](#). The remnants spread around the outskirts of Qanya vilage in the suburbs of Jisr al Shoghour city in the western suburbs of Idlib. The area was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

3. Incendiary weapons:

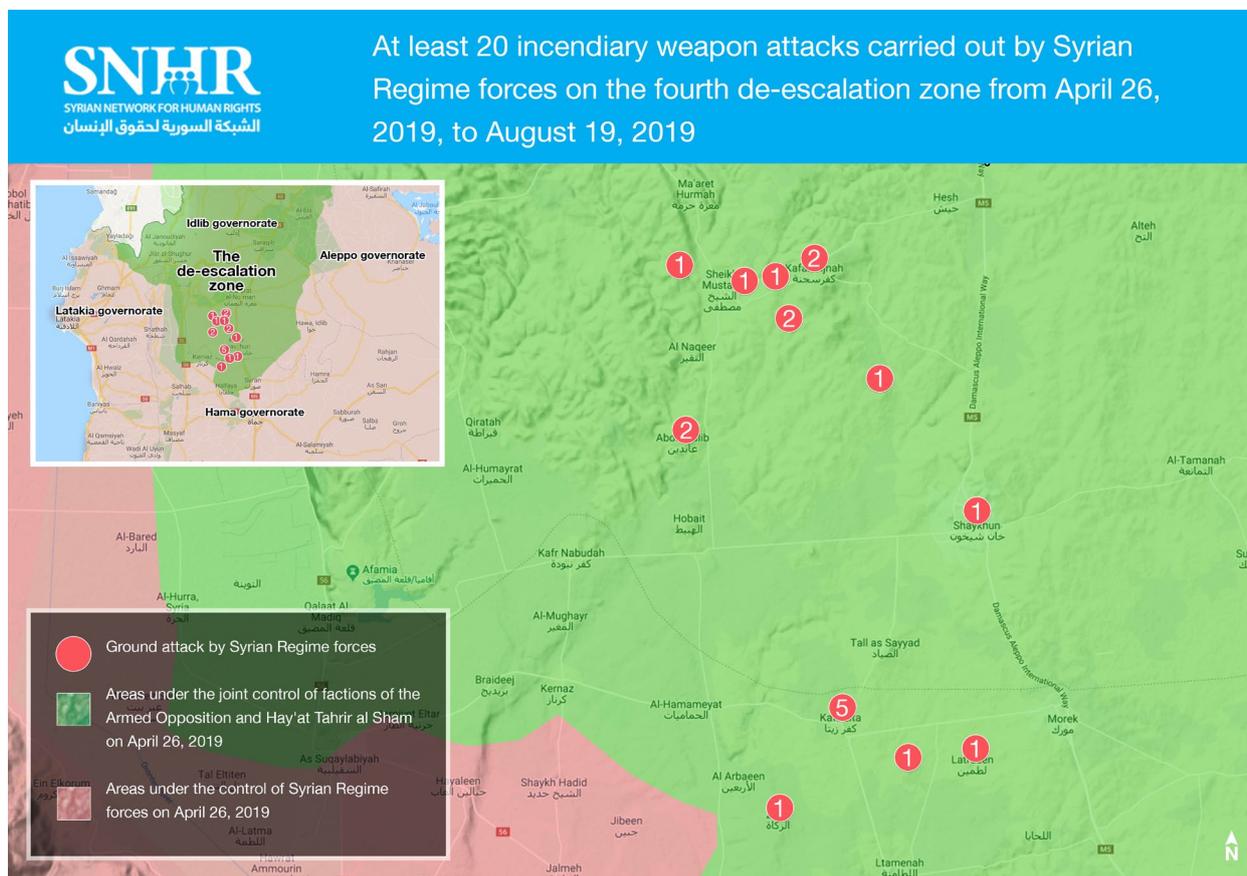
Syrian Regime forces repeatedly used incendiary weapons in targeting civilian areas far from the front lines, in order to spread distress and terror in the minds and hearts of the residents and to force them to flee and surrender. These attacks used mainly the type of munitions fired via ground platforms, which are similar in their terrible and indiscriminate effect to cluster munitions. This caused fires in many locations, which subsequently spread across large areas. The impact of these weapons is not limited to the explosions and fires they cause, but also extends to the severe injuries and burns that the superheated substances can cause to surviving victims.

The SNHR documented at least 20 incendiary weapons attacks in the fourth de-escalation zone between April 26, and August 19, all carried out by Syrian Regime forces using missile launchers, distributed as follows:

Hama governorate: Nine

Idlib governorate: 11

Map showing approximate locations of areas subjected to incendiary weapons attacks during the recent military campaign on the fourth de-escalation zone:



The map shows that Syrian Regime forces were responsible for all the attacks that targeted the fourth de-escalation zone with incendiary munitions in period covered by the report, all of which were ground attacks, with some areas seeing more than one attack of this nature, such as Kafr Zita city in the northern suburbs of Hama where we documented five such attacks.

The most notable incendiary weapons attacks:

On Saturday, May 25, 2019, Syrian Regime forces stationed in the Braidij camp in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate used a [missile](#) launcher to fire a number of missiles loaded with [incendiary substances](#) targeting agricultural lands in Abdin village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, causing the outbreak of massive fires in nearby agricultural land and houses. The area was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Monday, July 1, 2019, Syrian Regime forces used a missile launcher to fire at least 10 missiles loaded with incendiary substances targeting agricultural lands and civilians' houses in al Rakaya village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, causing the outbreak of fires in the houses and agricultural farmland. The area was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

4. Nail-filled missiles:

In the absence of denunciation and condemnation of the Syrian regime for the use of barrel bombs and cluster munitions, the regime recently began to use another barbaric and indiscriminate weapon, small-sized missiles whose heads are filled with hundreds of steel nails, which fly in all directions after the missile explodes, provoking panic and terror among residents of the areas targeted. Most of these have been used against populated areas to force residents there to surrender or to flee and be displaced. According to our documentation, these attacks are carried out by L-39 fixed-wing warplanes, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should investigate and condemn the use of such barbaric weapons against civilians.

The SNHR has documented at least seven attacks using nail-filled missiles from April 26 to August 19, all of which carried out by Syrian Regime forces in Idlib governorate.



The most notable attacks with nail-filled missiles:

On Wednesday, July 10, 2019, fixed-wing (L-39) Syrian regime warplanes launched a machinegun air raid using small-sized nail-filled missiles on Ma'aret al Numan Central Hospital, known as the National Hospital, which is considered one of the largest hospitals in the north of Syria. The air raid on the hospital, located in Ma'aret al Numan city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, which is listed in the humanitarian de-confliction mechanism, and is supported by Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), [caused moderate material damage](#) to [the hospital's building](#) and [equipment](#). Ma'aret al Numan city was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

The Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), which support the hospital, issued [a statement](#) condemning the attacks on health facilities and calling on the United Nations to investigate the attacks on them and to take steps to protect them.

On Monday, August 12, 2019, fixed-wing (L-39) Syrian regime warplanes fired nail-filled missiles on Heesh village in the southern suburbs of Idlib, injuring several people. The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Ha'y'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

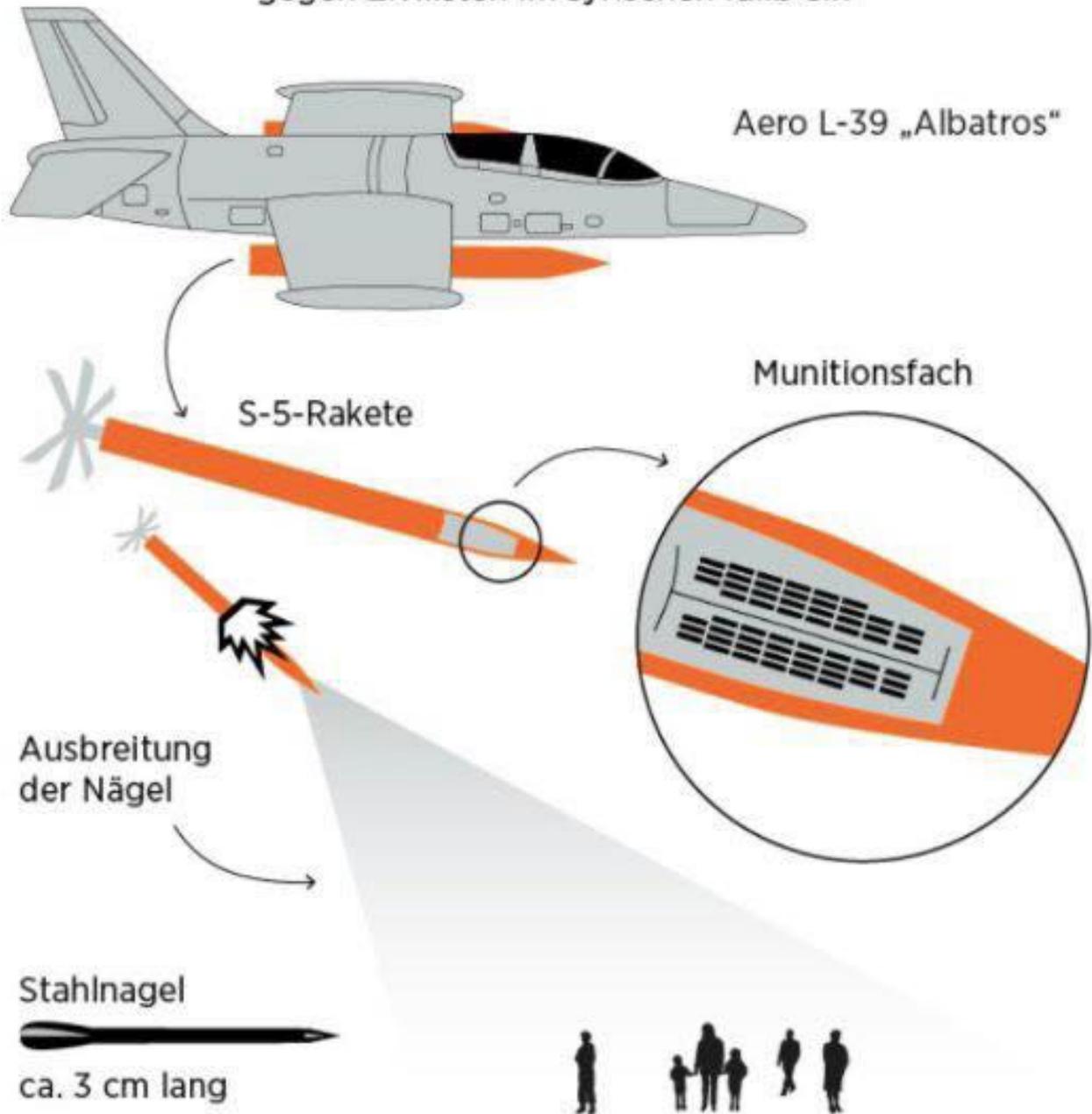
The following photos show the remnants of missiles and the nails they launched, and one of the injuries inflicted by them.



The German newspaper Bild published an explanatory illustration of the nail-filled missile weapon used by Syrian Regime forces:

Nägel als Geschosse

Erstmals setzte die Assad-Luftwaffe am 12. August Fléchette-Munition gegen Zivilisten im syrischen Idlib ein



info.BILD.de



III. The indiscriminate and heavy use of weapons on populated areas is the direct cause of the displacement of at least half a million people:

The Syrian and Russian regime's use of various types of improvised weapons, indiscriminately and sometimes intentionally, against populated areas and vital facilities has caused panic and terror among residents, forcibly displacing them, either as IDPs or refugees, or forcing them to flee towards areas controlled by the Syrian regime or Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, because these areas are safer, especially in the absence of aerial bombardment there daily and suddenly threatening the lives of residents. In addition, these weapons cause massive destruction to properties, houses and shops owned by Syrian citizens who have spent many years and often whole lifetimes on building and maintaining, destroying livelihoods as well as homes, and forcing the displacement of residents, stripping them of their most precious possessions and pushing them to the brink of bankruptcy.

According to OCHA's ninth [report](#) on the human rights situation in Syria released on August 8, 2019, approximately 500,000 civilians are recorded as having been displaced in the fourth de-escalation zone between May 1 and July 30, 2019.

On August 1, the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA), citing a military source, announced [a ceasefire agreement](#) in the de-escalation zone in Idlib from the night of the same day, subject to the implementation of the Sochi Agreement which concerns the area. Following the entry into force of the ceasefire on August 2 to September 5, the SNHR monitored a limited return of displaced people to their villages and towns, with an estimated return of only 30,000.



Destruction caused by a Russian airstrike on Ma'aret al Numan city, Idlib, resulting in a massacre - July 22, 2019



IV. The Responsibility to Protect Civilians in Syria

For eight years, the Syrian regime has committed heinous crimes and violations against Syrian civilians. It has also consistently failed to respond to any of the demands of the International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, or to those of the High Commission for Human Rights, or even to Security Council resolutions. The Security Council, which was supposed to take collective measures and action under Article 41 and 42 of the Charter of the United Nations, also failed because of the immunity granted by Russia to the Syrian regime, with Russia routinely using its veto in the case of the Syrian regime, which not only failed to abide by its responsibility for the protection of civilians, but committed the most egregious violations against them, reaching the level of crimes against humanity, and extermination within detention centers through torture.

In a report issued in December 2001, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty stressed that: “The Security Council should take into account in all its deliberations that, if it fails to discharge its responsibility to protect in conscience-shocking situations crying out for action, concerned states may not rule out other means to meet the gravity and urgency of that situation”

Such conscience-shocking situations are exactly what have continued to happen in Syria, not only in the form of one massacre or one violation but in industrial-scale killings and torture, sexual violence, enforced disappearances, the use of chemical weapons and barrel bombs, and besieging civilians. The list of crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Syrian regime and its allies goes on. The Security Council has signally failed to assume its responsibilities in the Syrian case, despite the Syrian Network for Human Rights, international organizations and UN commissions of inquiry crying out for action by the Security Council many thousands of times. In this context, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty affirmed in the same report: “it would be impossible to find consensus, in the Commission’s view, around any set of proposals for military intervention which acknowledged the validity of any intervention not authorized by the Security Council or General Assembly. But that may still leave circumstances when the Security Council fails to discharge what this Commission would regard as its responsibility to protect, in a conscience-shocking situation crying out for action. It is a real question in these circumstances where lies the most harm: **in the damage to international order if the Security Council is bypassed or in the damage to that order if human beings are slaughtered while the Security Council stands by.”**



V. Conclusions and Recommendations

- The use of outlawed weapons by Syrian Regime forces, as well as by Russian forces, is considered a violation of both principles of distinction and proportionality in international humanitarian law, and constitutes a war crime.
- The Syrian government has unquestionably violated the UN Security Council Resolutions No. 2139 and 2254 and used barrel bombs in a systematic and widespread manner, and also violated Article 7 of the Rome Statute by committing intentional homicide in a systematic and widespread manner, all of which constitute crimes against humanity.
- The evidence included in the incidents detailed in this report indicates that the use of outlawed weapons was carried out by Syrian-Russian alliance forces against civilian targets, not directed at a specific military purpose and therefore constitutes war crimes.
- The SNHR confirms that the bombardment using weapons included in this report is indiscriminate bombing that targeted unarmed civilian individuals, and has inadvertently caused losses of civilian lives, injuries, and severe damage to civilian objects, and there are strong indications that lead us to believe the damage was disproportionately extreme compared to any military objectives for the attacks.
- Syrian Regime forces have violated International Human Rights Law, which protects the right to life. In addition, these crimes were committed in a non-international armed conflict, meaning that these attacks constitute war crimes, as they fulfill all the criteria for this categorization.
- The magnitude of the systematic, widespread and repeated bombing, the disproportionate use of military force, the indiscriminate manner of the bombing, and the coordinated approach of these attacks leads 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.
- Syrian Regime forces in all their forms and their leaders are involved in committing crimes against humanity and war crimes against the Syrian people, and anyone who provides them with material, political and military assistance, such as the Russian and Iranian government, the Lebanese Hezbollah, and other arms suppliers, is considered a partner in these crimes, and is subjected to criminal prosecution.

Recommendations:

Security Council

- The Security Council must ensure the serious implementation of its resolutions, in particular Resolution 2139 on the cessation of the use of barrel bombs by the Syrian regime, whose resolutions have turned into mere, meaningless ink on paper, meaning that the Security Council has absolutely lost any credibility, along with the legitimacy of its existence.



- The four permanent members should put pressure on the Russian government to end its support for the Syrian regime, which uses chemical weapons and barrel bombs, and should expose its involvement in this regard.
- Impose an arms embargo on the Syrian government, and prosecute all those who provide it with money and weapons, given the risk of these weapons being used in serious human rights crimes and violations.
- In the Syrian case, the Security Council has the authority to refer the case to the International Criminal Court. It has been blocking this for five years rather than providing all facilitations and imposing peace and security. It must now begin to prosecute anyone proved involved in committing war crimes and crimes against humanity.

OHCHR

- Issue a statement condemning the use of indiscriminate and outlawed weapons by the Syrian-Russian alliance in areas of northwestern Syria with such brutality and intensity.
- Request that the UN Security Council act swiftly to protect civilians in northwestern Syria from indiscriminate attacks, forced displacement and other violations that constitute crimes against humanity and war crimes.
- OHCHR should report to the Human Rights Council and other United Nations bodies on the incidents included in this report and other incidents documented in our previous reports and to try to implement the recommendations included in this report.

Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI)

- Consider documenting incidents indicating the use of indiscriminate and outlawed weapons by the Syrian-Russian alliance.
- Prepare a special report on the locations where Syrian-Russian alliance forces used cluster bombs in order to warn the people of these areas and expedite the clearance of unexploded ordnance. Thousands of hectares in Syria have been contaminated with cluster munition remnants, with the Syrian Human Rights Network ready to contribute to any such report.

Countries of the Friends of the Syrian People:

- Condemn the use of indiscriminate and outlawed weapons by Syrian-Russian alliance forces against Syrian society, and put pressure on these parties to stop their repeated and ongoing attacks, which indicate that this an official policy of the Russian state.
- Refuse to consider the Russian government a party to dialogue and political transition in Syria if it insists on committing widespread and systematic violations against the Syrian people, with its use of cluster munitions providing stark evidence of its violations.



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. 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.
- Put pressure on the Syrian government to accede to Protocol III on Conventional Weapons and put pressure on it to comply with the Protocol's restrictions.
- SNHR has repeatedly called for the implementation of the 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine 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.

Russian and Iranian regimes:

- Stop supporting the Syrian regime with weapons and troops after several bodies in the United Nations and international organizations have proven their involvement in committing crimes against humanity and war crimes, with continued support of the Syrian regime considered to be direct involvement in these crimes.
- Stop the indiscriminate bombings and targeting of residential areas and vital facilities such as hospitals and schools.
- Stop treating Syrian territory as a testing ground for the marketing and sale of Russian weapons.



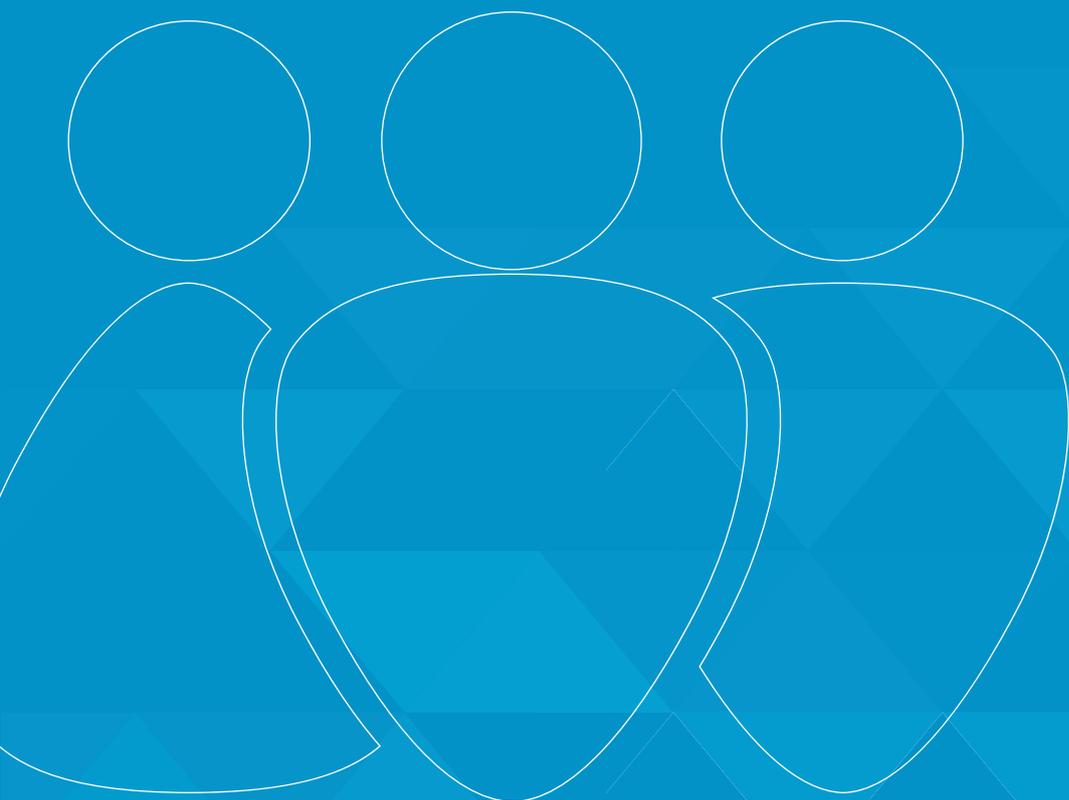
Syrian regime:

- Stop using weapons and military equipment against Syrian people who, through years of paying taxes, have contributed to buying them.
- Stop using state institutions such as the army, transportation, and energy services to serve the survival of family rule in Syria even when this causes the killing and displacement of millions of Syrians and the loss of billions of dollars.

Thanks and condolences

We would like to extend our heartfelt condolences to all the families of the victims and those affected whose names we were able to identify and document, and to offer our sincere thanks to the families, local activists and the families of the victims, without whose cooperation we would not have been able to build such a database and issue this report.





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