



Detailed Account of One Month of Syrian-Russian Attacks on the Neighborhoods of Eastern Aleppo Human Rights Council must hold the Security Council Responsible for the Mounting War Crimes in Syria

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I. Introduction

This is the third report that documents the most notable violations of human rights by the Syrian and Russian regimes in the neighborhoods of Eastern Aleppo after the second Cessation of Hostilities statement ended on Monday 19 September 2016 where government and Russian forces have escalated their indiscriminate attacks and military operations throughout Syria and especially in the neighborhoods of eastern Aleppo which will be the focus of this report. This report documents the most notable violations in eastern Aleppo's neighborhoods which amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes over the course of one month since the second Cessation of Hostilities statement came to an end.

Neighborhoods of eastern Aleppo have been under siege since the beginning of September 2016 where the medical situation is deteriorating in light of the shortage in medical resources and the medical points' and hospitals' limited capacity that is unable to take in the huge numbers of the injured. Some of these hospitals have announced that they can't take in any more wounded while others issued appeals for blood donations. Furthermore, the targeting of civil defense centers has impeded civil defense teams in rescuing and aiding victims and extinguishing the fires that resulted from the ceaseless bombardment on the city. A large part of the service infrastructure was damaged as a result of the concentrated and continued bombardment on eastern Aleppo's neighborhoods. The General Manage-





ment of Services in eastern Aleppo has announced on Tuesday 18 October 2016 that 80% of the drinking-water network in the city is inoperable and the maintenance was halted on account of the lack of necessary materials which means, according to the General Management, that no less than 200,000 will have no access to safe-drinking water which might lead to a human catastrophe.

Additionally, the Syrian regime and its allies prevent anyone from getting in or outside the city, and local relief organizations don't even think of passing the regime's and its militias' checkpoints and, instead, Russian and Syrian forces targeted an U.N. aid convoy on 19 September 2016 as we documented in a previous report: [“Multiple Evidences Indicating that Russian and Syrian Forces Deliberately Targeted the U.N. Aid Convoy in Aleppo”](#)

Fadel Abdul Ghani, chairman of SNHR, says:

“We certainly welcome the U.N. emergency meeting on Friday, and we put all the documented incidents and civilian death toll before them. The Human Rights Council has to issue a strong and clear message to the Security Council as a whole and to the inhumane and immoral Russian veto. The history books will always remember, and the memories of Rwanda and Bosnia are still vividly present in our minds.”

SNHR team monitored these incidents and attacks as part of the daily and ongoing process of documentation and monitoring. We have followed-up on these incidents where we spoke to survivors, victims' families, eyewitnesses and reviewed the pictures and videos we received and verified their authenticity. The pictures showed the huge destruction in eastern Aleppo's neighborhoods and the targeting of mosques, schools, hospitals, and other vital civil facilities. Also, some of the pictures showed remnants of incendiary weapons that were used by forces we believe are Russian. We have copies of all the videos and pictures mentioned in this report.

The investigation mentioned in this report have proven that the targeted areas were civil areas where there is no military centers or weapon warehouses for armed opposition factions or extremist Islamic groups during or before the attack. The considerably great numbers of children and women victims only support this statement. Furthermore, the attacking forces never showed even one evidence that would prove that they bombed legitimate targets. For more information, you can read our [methodology](#).





What included in this report only represents the bare minimum of the actual magnitude and severity of the violations that occurred. Also, this report doesn't cover the social, economic, and psychological ramifications.

II. Executive Summary

The report documents the elevating military operations by government forces and their allies the Russian forces against the eastern neighborhoods of Aleppo city after the Cessation of Hostilities statement ended at 7:00 PM on Monday 19 September 2016 until 7:00 PM on Wednesday 19 October 2016 where government and Russian forces carried out hundreds of airstrikes in which government forces used no less than 214 missiles while we documented that forces we believe are Russian used 982 missiles at least. Most of the airstrikes were indiscriminate in the middle of the neighborhoods rather than targeting frontlines. These airstrikes aimed to force armed opposition factions to surrender by killing as many as possible of their families in order to apply pressure on them.

We recorded the outcomes of the first week in our first report: "[Aleppo's Eastern Neighborhoods are being Torn Apart by the Shells of the Russian and Syrian Forces, A Detailed Account of the Violations One Week after the Second Cessation of Hostilities Statement](#)", and the first 25 weeks In the second report: "[Detailed Account of the Russian-Syrian Attacks on the Neighborhoods of Eastern Aleppo after 25 Days of the Second Cessation of Hostilities Statement](#)", we are going to include incidents that were being investigated when the second report was released in addition to the new incidents.

SNHR team documented from the end of the Cessation of Hostilities statement on Monday 19 September 2016 to Wednesday 19 October 2016 the following main violations:

First: Massacres and other acts of extrajudicial killing: 414 civilians were killed including 118 children and 63 women. The death toll is distributed by the influential party as follows:

- Russian forces: 338 civilians including 104 children and 54 women.
- Government forces: 76 civilians including 14 children and nine women

Russian forces perpetrated 16 massacres while three massacres were perpetrated by government forces





Second: Targeting of vital civil facilities: We recorded no less than 34 incidents of attack on vital civil facilities that are distributed by the influential party as follows:

- Russian forces: 30
- Government forces: four

Third: Unlawful attacks:

- Russian forces: we recorded six attacks that involved the use of incendiary weapons.
- Government forces: we recorded no less than 151 barrel bombs.

IV. Details

Russian forces

A. Massacres and other acts of extrajudicial killing

SNHR documented the killing of 51 civilians including 22 children and eight women at the hands of forces we believe are Russian. Also, these forces committed no less than three massacres

Friday afternoon 14 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted the vicinity of the slaughtering house in Al Qaterji neighborhood which resulted in the killing of three civilians.

Friday morning 14 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted the residential buildings in the vicinity of the bakery in Al Qaterji neighborhood which resulted in the killing of one civilian.

Sunday noon 16 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted the road leading to Al Sheikh Sa'eid neighborhood from Karm Al Nozha neighborhood (Al Shahhadein area) which resulted in the killing of two civilians.

Sunday afternoon 16 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted the residential buildings in Al Sheikh Fares area located in Al Hollok neighborhood which resulted in [the killing of seven civilians](#), most of whom are from the same family, including two children and one woman.

Sunday afternoon 16 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted a residential building in the vicinity of Al Qaterji Mosque in Al Qaretji neighborhood, located in Aleppo city, which resulted in the killing of





24 civilians, most of whom are from the same family, including [10 children](#) and [six women](#).

Monday dawn 17 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that [targeted southern parts of Al Marjeh neighborhood](#) which resulted in the killing of 14 civilians, most of whom are from the same family, [including nine children and two women](#).

Tuesday dawn 18 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted the residential building in the vicinity of Bader Mosque in Bustan Al Qasr neighborhood which resulted in the killing of four civilians from the same family (three children and their father).

B. Targeting of vital civil facilities

We recorded eight incidents of attacks on vital civil facilities by forces we believe are Russian in the period of time covered by the report.

Friday noon 14 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted [Al Haj Bridge in Al Ferdous neighborhood](#) which [partially destroyed the bridge](#).

Friday evening 14 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted the vicinity of [Al Bayan Surgical Hospital](#) in Al Sha'ar neighborhood. Some of the administrative rooms of the hospital were greatly [damaged](#) and great amounts of medicine were [destroyed](#). Additionally, an ambulance belonging to [the hospital](#) was moderately [damaged](#).





Sunday noon 16 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted the yard of Fatima Al Zahraa School in Aqyouel neighborhood located in old Aleppo area. The school yard and cladding materials were greatly damaged. The school was rendered out of commission.

Sunday noon 16 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted a residential building near Al Qaterji Mosque in Al Qaterji neighborhood causing a massacre. Additionally, the cladding materials and furniture of the mosque were greatly damaged and it was temporarily rendered of commission.



Tuesday morning 18 October 2016, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles that targeted the building of Charity Aid Network in in Masakin Hana-no neighborhood which resulted in the injury of three paramedics affiliated to the Network. Additionally, the building was moderately damaged and two ambulances belonging to The Network were heavily destroyed and they were rendered out of commission.





C. Unlawful attacks

We did not record any unlawful attacks by Russian forces against neighborhoods of eastern Aleppo in the period of time covered by the report

B. Government forces

A. Massacres and other acts of extrajudicial killing

SNHR documented the killing of two civilians at the hands of government forces. We did not record any massacre in the period of time covered by the report.

Sunday noon 16 October 2016, government artillery fired shells at the road leading to Al Ansari neighborhood from Al Mash-had neighborhood which resulted in the killing of two civilians.

B. Targeting of vital civil facilities

We did not record any incident of attack against vital civil facilities by government forces in the period of time covered by the report.

C. Unlawful attacks

We did not record any unlawful attacks by government forces against neighborhoods of eastern Aleppo in the period of time covered by the report.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Legal conclusions

1- The Russian and Syrian regimes have, beyond any doubt, violated Security Council Resolutions 2139 and 2254 which both state that indiscriminate attacks must be halted. Also, they violated Article 8 of Rome Statute through the act of willful killing which constitutes war crimes.

2- We can confirm that the bombardment mentioned in this report has targeted armless civilians. Therefore, the Russian and Syrian forces have violated the rules of the international human rights law which guarantee the right to life. Additionally, these violations were perpetrated in a non-international armed conflict which amount to a war crime where all elements were fulfilled.

3- The attacks mentioned in this report, which have been perpetrated by the Russian and Syrian regimes, are considered a violation of the customary international law as the shells were fired at a populated area rather than a specific military object.

4- Aerial bombardment has caused collateral damages that involved loss of lives, injuries, and significant damages to civil facilities. There are strong indicators suggesting that the damage was too excessive compared to the anticipated military





benefit.

Recommendations

The Russian regime

- To investigate the incidents included in this report, inform the Syrian people about the findings and hold the perpetrators accountable.
- To compensate all the affected centers and facilities, and rebuild and re-equip them. It also has to redress for the victims and the injured who were killed by the present Russian regime.
- To completely cease the bombardment of hospitals, protected objects and civil areas and to respect humanitarian customary law.

The Security Council

- The Security Council has to take additional steps as it has been a year since Resolution 2254 was adopted which states explicitly “that all parties immediately cease any attacks against civilians and civilian objects as such, including attacks against medical facilities and personnel, and any indiscriminate use of weapons, including through shelling and aerial bombardment.”
- The Syrian case must be referred to the International Criminal Court and all those who are responsible must be held accountable including the Russian regime whose involvement in war crimes has been proven.
- To instill security and peace in Syria and implement the norm of the Responsibility to Protect in order to protect the lives, culture, and history of the Syrian people from being thieved and ruined.
- To expand the sanctions to include the Russian and Iranian regimes who are directly involved in committing crimes against humanity and war crimes against the Syrian people.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Office must submit a report to the Human Rights Council and other organs of the United Nations on this massacre specifically considering that it was perpetrated by forces which we believe that they are Russian in coordination with government forces.





The International Community

- In light of the split of the Security Council and its utter inability, Steps must be taken on the national and regional levels to form alliances to support the Syrian people that would protect them from the daily killings and siege and enhance the support for the relief efforts. Additionally, the principle of universal jurisdiction must be activated 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 tens 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 were drought out. Therefore, steps under Article 7 of the Rome Stature must be taken and the norm of the Responsibility to Protect, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly, must be implemented. The Security Council is still hindering the protection of civilians in Syria.
- To renew the pressure on the Security Council to refer the case in Syria to the International Criminal Court.
- To work on fulfilling justice and achieving accountability in Syria through the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights council and work on activating the principle of the universal jurisdiction.

Acknowledgment

Our thanks and condolences for the families and local activists who enriched this report majorly.

