



Widespread Violations Committed by the Syrian and Iranian Regimes against Daraa after Taking Control Over It in July 2018 to Crush Any Opposition to the Syrian Regime

Abrogating the Terms of the Agreements after the Passage of Time Is a Policy the Syrian Regime Has Followed in the Various Areas It Has Regained Control Over Through 'Settlements'

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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. Sequence of the Most Notable Events in the Southern Region of Syria since the Collapse of the Previous De-Escalation Agreement until the 2021 Agreements:

The Syrian regime, backed by Iranian forces and the Russian air force, launched and led a military campaign in mid-June 2018 against the Southern region of Syria (comprising parts of the governorates of Daraa, Quneitra and Suwayda), which resulted in the regime resuming total control over the region, forcibly ending the de-escalation agreement, with the previous US-Russian agreement, which entered into force on July 9, 2017, being revoked; Daraa governorate then moved to new agreements between the Syrian regime on the one hand and factions of the Armed Opposition on the other, but under Russian auspices. These agreements were distinguished by their different terms between one area and another, despite containing supposedly comprehensive terms, leading to the establishment of different circumstances of control, with some areas being completely controlled by the Syrian regime and its Iranian ally, while others actually remain under the control of former Armed Opposition factions (fighters from among the people of the region), and still other areas remained under the control of the Fifth Corps, which consists mostly of former members of the Armed Opposition factions backed by Russian forces.

The operations by joint Syrian-Iranian regime forces (Iranian militias fighting alongside Syrian regime forces backed by the Iranian regime) seizing control over large areas in July 2018 led to immediate violations, most notably the forced displacement of thousands of people in the region, with SNHR documenting part of this in a [report](#) we issued in July 2018; the people who decided to stay were subjected to multiple types of violations by the Syrian-Iranian regime forces, mostly with the objective of emptying the region of its leading figures and activists in order to facilitate gradual control over it in the medium and long term. Arbitrary arrests/ enforced disappearances have increased since then, along with torture, killings and assassinations, the conscription of young people in the region into the ranks of Syrian regime forces, and the seizure of land and property, in addition to bombardment using 'Elephant' missiles and improvised munitions targeting civilian areas, causing casualties, including women and children.

At the end of May 2021, the Syrian regime held 'presidential elections' whose illegitimacy was unanimously agreed upon by the majority of the world's democratic countries, with SNHR issuing a [report](#) on the subject of these 'elections' and their wholly illegitimate nature. The people of Daraa governorate clearly expressed their rejection of these farcical 'elections' through demonstrations, banners and stinging criticism, which, we believe, angered the Syrian regime whose response was swift and brutal; nearly a month after the end of the 'presidential elections,' on June 23, the Southern region of Syria began to witness tension as a result of the regime placing additional terms on previous agreements, which the local Negotiations Committee considered unacceptable, resulting in a series of developments in the region that led to a dangerous military escalation at the end of July. In August 2021, we issued a [report](#), in which we

outlined the most notable violations committed by the Syrian regime and its allies in the Southern region of Syria between June 23 and August 9, 2021, with this current report covering the developments that the region witnessed between August 9 and October 2021. It also documents the developments that followed the agreement reached between the Negotiations Committee in Daraa city and a Russian delegation representing the Syrian regime on September 5, 2021, and the subsequent similar agreements witnessed by most villages in the eastern and western suburbs of Daraa. The report also summarizes the record of the most notable violations committed by Syrian regime forces since they took control of the region in July 2018 up till October 2021.

Through our team of field researchers, we have obtained direct testimonies from individuals who have been forcibly displaced which we acquired through speaking directly with witnesses, and with none of the testimonies, including the five provided in this report, being cited from any open sources. We explained the purpose of these interviews beforehand to the eyewitnesses, who gave us permission to use the information they provided in this report without us offering or providing them with any incentives, as well as providing assurances to the interviewees that we will conceal the identity of any witness who prefers to use an alias. All these procedures are carried out under the terms of SNHR's internal protocols, which we have rigorously adhered to since our establishment, and which we strive constantly to develop.

We do not claim, however, that we have documented all cases, given the severe prohibitions, restrictions and persecution by Syrian/Iranian regime forces and some other armed groups against SNHR. Readers are welcome to find out more about SNHR's [methodology](#).

This report doesn't go into the details of the negotiation processes, military clashes and the complex battle for control between Iran and Russia, since SNHR's primary focus remains on those issues which fall within our jurisdiction, and what matters most to us in this context is civilians' safety, ensuring that civilians are not targeted in military operations, that all parties uphold and respect the rules of international humanitarian law during clashes, and respect international human rights law for the people who decided to stay, and that their fundamental rights are not violated.

The information contained in this report only represents the bare minimum of incidents which we have been able to document, and of the severity and magnitude of the violations that occurred. Also, it doesn't include any analysis of the profound social, economic, and psychological ramifications.

II. The Most Notable Developments in the Southern Region of Syria Between August 9 and October 2021:

This period was characterized by constant attempts to reach an agreement between the Negotiation Committee in Daraa city and the Russian side representing the Syrian regime. Every time such an agreement was reached, however, Syrian regime forces would immediately undermine it over the following days by launching artillery and missile attacks (using 'Elephant' and Golan missiles) on residential neighborhoods in Daraa al Balad, Tareeq al Sadd and the Daraa Camp, which we believe were launched with the specific objective of obtaining the greatest possible concessions. During this period, we recorded the conclusion of five agreements, prior to reaching the agreement of Daraa al Balad's neighborhoods on September 5, demonstrating the inability or unwillingness of the Syrian regime's Russian sponsors to force the Syrian regime to comply with the terms of the agreements.

On August 12, Geir O. Pedersen, the UN Special Envoy for Syria, [called for](#) an immediate end to the violence and for all parties to uphold the principle of the protection of civilians and civilian objects, in accordance with international humanitarian law. He also stressed that immediate, safe and unimpeded humanitarian access must be granted to all affected areas and communities, including Daraa al Balad, and that the near siege-like situation must end.

On August 15, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) issued a statement [expressing](#) its concern for the lives and wellbeing of some 30,000 Palestinian refugees registered with the agency in south Syria. Prior to the conflict, around one-third of these refugees used to reside in the Daraa camp for Palestinian refugees, which suffered large-scale destruction as a result of the 'hostilities', according to UNRWA; it should be noted that SNHR's documentation shows the bombardment that targeted Daraa camp came from the Syrian/Iranian regime forces.

On August 24, among the terms put forward in talks on one of the agreements, the Syrian regime stipulated the displacement of at least eight individuals from Daraa city, in exchange for the regime withdrawing its military forces and lifting the siege on the city's besieged neighborhoods; the regime did not fulfill its part of this bargain, however, failing to withdraw its forces from the vicinity of the city despite the departure of a convoy carrying the eight individuals towards the north of Syria.

The SNHR spoke with Yaser al Hourani¹, a soldier who defected from Syrian regime forces and was among those displaced from Daraa city to northern Syria in a convoy that left on August 24, 2021. He told us:

"The agreement reached on August 23, 2021, included terms providing for the departure of some fighters to northern Syria in exchange for the lifting of the siege imposed on the neighborhoods of Daraa city, with this condition of displacing us supposed to be accompanied by the withdrawal of regime forces and affiliated militias from the vicinity of Daraa city, but this condition was not

¹ We contacted him via WhatsApp on September 4, 2021

implemented. The next day, August 24, I left my house in Daraa al Balad and went to Tareeq al Sadd neighborhood, and from there to al Saraya Checkpoint that separates the besieged areas from areas under the control of the Syrian regime in Daraa al Mahatta, in preparation for our transfer to northern Syria; there were a lot of people gathered at the checkpoint, some of them say good-bye and others at the other side of the checkpoint waiting for the regime forces to allow them to return to the besieged neighborhoods. I went up to the displacement buses with seven individuals distributed on two buses, which remained parked for some time. From the window of the bus, I saw how regime forces were pushing women and children roughly to disperse the gatherings, prompting young men in the besieged part of the city to intervene to prevent assaults by regime forces against their families. Meanwhile, the regime forces responded by closing al Saraya Checkpoint and telling the bus driver to move from the place. We moved at 7:30 pm, Syria time. After traveling a few dozen meters, I heard gunfire, which I later learned was from regime forces, who had shot at civilians gathering at al Saraya Checkpoint. I also learned that Abdul Karim al Masri, who was among those who intervened to protect the people from the assaults of the regime's forces, was killed as a result of the shooting."

On August 26, an additional number of people from the region were displaced; we recorded the departure of a convoy carrying 70 people, some of whom were accompanied by their families. The Syrian regime's Military Police escorted them, then they were taken to Abu al Baraa bin Malik Mosque in al Bab city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo.

On August 30, the negotiating table witnessed a meeting between the Russian delegation, headed by the Russian General Alexei, and tribal dignitaries in the Daraa governorate at the Panorama Stadium in Daraa city. That meeting was held within the framework of agreeing on a new formula after the failure of the previous agreement on August 24.

On September 1, a local news site that publishes news about Daraa city [published](#) a [series](#) of [recordings](#) which it [said were](#) of the Russian general during his meeting with the dignitaries of Daraa city. The Syrian Network for Human Rights reviewed the content of these recordings, which include conversations in Russian that someone present at the meeting translates into Arabic. The most noteworthy point among the contents of these recordings is the Russian delegation's insistence on the need for Syrian regime forces to enter the whole of Daraa city in order to impose complete control there. The Russian general demanded the full surrender of weapons, the settlement of the status of those wanted by the Syrian regime, the establishment of joint security points between the regime's army and security forces, and a security inspection of people residing in Daraa al Balad. We were unable to independently verify the accuracy of these recordings.

On September 1, Adnan al Msalma, the spokesperson for the Civilian Negotiation Committee in Daraa city, [announced](#) that an agreement had been reached with Russia and the regime's security committee that would put an end to the military escalation in Daraa city. This agreement quickly collapsed two days later, however, according to the spokesperson's statement on his Facebook account, due to new, impossible requests, submitted by the regime's security committee and Russia, most notably their insistence on the surrender of all weapons, the deployment of additional military points and a home inspection campaign, after which the Negotiation Committee demanded the displacement of the people to Jordan or Turkey. On September 4, Syrian regime forces again bombed the besieged neighborhoods of Daraa city.

On September 5, 2021, an agreement was reached that included terms stipulating the surrender of light weapons in the possession of the armed opposition fighters, carrying out joint patrols consisted of Syrian intelligence personnel and Russian police between the two parts of the city (Daraa al Balad and Daraa al Mahatta), and the restructuring of the 'implementation bodies of the authority' to Daraa al Balad, the establishment of checkpoints in the vicinity of Daraa city, and the regulation of civilians passing through these, in addition to terms related to settling the status of individuals wanted by the Syrian regime, settling the status of dissidents from the regime's army, and displacing those who wished to accept displacement to northern Syria in exchange for lifting the siege imposed by Syrian regime forces since June 24, 2021.

Photos of the Russian solution map:

رقم	تاريخ	المكان	الوصف					
1	12-15	16-22	23-31	1-5	6-12	13-19	20-28	29-30
<p>خارطة الطريق لتسوية الوضع في درعا البلد</p> <p>الأعمال المخطط تنفيذها</p> <p>الأساس التي ستلحق مع تسليم بين فهم المتساويين</p> <p>تكوين لجنة تنفيذ مهمة سحب السلاح والتخريب إخراج المسلحين إلى منطقة خصص المصير "الطلب" تقديم المفاوضات مع لثة المجموعات المسلحة لإجراء عمل على تسليم الأسلحة الثقيلة والمتوسطة و الغنية وأنظمة مستقلة من المسؤولية و سحب أسلحة من السلاح الألية ، و العودة إلى الحياة الطبيعية</p> <p>إبعاد المسلحين على تسليم السلاح</p> <p>تنفيذ عمليات تفتيش لثقة قوات المسلحين وكذلك مع المتسلحين الغير واضح عن وضعهم الاقتصادي والاجتماعي و المتكون من قبل الأجهزة السورية</p> <p>تنفيذ ما تم الاتفاق عليه للمصالحة</p> <p>تعمل أعمال تسوية الأوضاع المسلحين وذلك بتقديم خدمات اجتماعية بأعطائه حقوقه المدنية حتى إفراة 3 أشهر</p> <p>إبصار مشرفة متحدة من قبل لجنة تجميع القوات الروسية و الجيش العربي السوري</p>								
<p>تنفيذ أعمال تسوية الأوضاع لفترة ما بعد الفزع المرحلة الأولى: تنظيم وتقييم عملية التفاوض بالتسوية السلمية للوضع الراهن المتشكل في محافظة درعا، و دعم وضع أرباب المهنات العسكرية و التحول الموسسات إلى المنطقة المحاصرة</p>								

رقم	تاريخ	المكان	الوصف
<p>الأعمال المخطط تنفيذها</p> <p>المرحلة الثانية: إعادة عمل الأجهزة المنفذة للمصالحة في درعا البلد تشكيل لجان تنفيذ مهمات سحب السلاح والتخريب</p> <p>تنظيم اجتماع اللجنة الخاصة لمكافحة الإرهاب و الذي تشكل بنهاية أصليا مركز مشترك لمراقبة الوضع في درعا البلد و تنفيذ خارطة الطريق مع التوافق مع لثة من وزارة الدفاع الروسية و وزارة الدفاع السورية و القوى الأمنية "المخابرات"</p> <p>إعادة عمل أقسام الشرطة في درعا البلد</p> <p>تنظيم و تنفيذ دوريات مشتركة سورية - روسية بالمحيط الخارجي لدرعا البلد وذلك عن طريق التوافق الشرطة العسكرية الروسية و المخابرات</p> <p>فتح مركز لتسوية أوضاع المسلحين الذين ليس لديهم رغبة بالخروج بإستثناء مسلحي تنظيم داعش و جبهة النصرة</p> <p>تسوية أوضاع الفارين من خدمة العلم و إرسالهم إلى قطعاتهم العسكرية مع تقديم الضمانات بعدم الملاحقة</p> <p>في اليوم الخامس عشر ومن خلال الامكان الخاصة بالاستعداد إلى خدمة العلم ، تسوية أوضاع المتسلحين عن الخدمة الإلزامية وأعطاهم مهلة في حال الضرورة</p> <p>تأمين عودة السلطة القانونية و مؤسسات الإدارة المحلية في القرى و البلدات التي حصلت فيها مشاكل</p>			

رقم	تاريخ	المكان	الوصف
<p>الأعمال المخطط تنفيذها</p> <p>القيام بالبحث عن المطلوبين الذين لم يقوموا بتسوية أوضاعهم و كذلك البحث عن مستودعات الأسلحة و المخازن</p> <p>تنظيم و تنفيذ دوريات مشتركة سورية روسية سورية في الأحياء الداخلية لدرعا البلد و بتجاهلهم وذلك عن طريق الشرطة العسكرية الروسية و المخابرات</p> <p>إعادة المتسلحين إلى قرأهم و بذلتهم</p> <p>القيام بمفاوضات مع أعضاء اللجنة المركزية بحضور ممثلين عن السلطة القانونية في درعا وذلك للنظر في عدة أمور اجتماعية كالتأمين الطبي والكهرباء و الماء و تأمين مواد الإطعام و تنفيذ الأعمال الأولية اللازمة لأهلها</p> <p>الاجراءات الخاصة بتصلب مع الشبان المتسلحين</p> <p>1 حملة إبطاء 2 المشاركة في العمل لتسوية أوضاع المواطنين 3 تأمين عمل نقابة استقبال المواطنين 4 العمل على اقناع المواطنين بعدم العودة إلى الأعمال العسكرية ضد الجيش السوري اجراءات العمل مع الأجهزة المعوسمة</p> <p>1 تأمين الظروف لإعلان علو عن المسلحين السابقين</p>			

رقم	تاريخ	المكان	الوصف
<p>الأعمال المخطط تنفيذها</p> <p>اجراءات العمل مع أجهزة الامرة الحظية</p> <p>تنظيم إعادة تأهيل البدائي الاجتماعية كالمدراس و المواقم و محطات المياه و الكهرباء تأمين فرص عمل للمسلمين السابقين بالترجيح الأولي و لآخرهم</p> <p>تنظيم أعمال و اجراءات تعويضات الحد الأدنى في غضون شهر مرافقة و دعم وضع أرباب الأعمال العسكرية ، و تنظيم الوفقات الداعمة لوجود التواتر المسلحة الروسية كضمان للاتفاق الدولي</p> <p>4 مرافقة و تقديم المساعدة لمعمل لجنة تسوية الأوضاع 5 تقديم الدعم لمعمل المؤسسات البلدية و الطبية و التعليمية</p> <p>اجراءات العمل مع قوة الجيش العربي السوري</p> <p>1 إنشاء نقاط تفتيش بمحيط درعا و تنظيم عبور المدنيين</p> <p>تمت</p> <p>تمت</p> <p>في سنجور</p> <p>درعا</p>			

As for the villages and towns of the western suburbs of Daraa, these witnessed five agreements between September 12 and 26, drawn up between dignitaries from these areas and the Syrian regime's security committee, under Russian auspices, for the towns of al Yadouda, al Mzayreeb, Tal Shehab and the villages of Hawd Yarmouk area (which includes the towns of Saham al Joulan, Tseel, Heet, al Shajara, al Qsair, Abdin, Naf'a, Jmala, Beit Ara, and Kwiya) and Tafas city, with all of these agreements being similar to the agreement on Daraa city, while the difference between them was embodied in the presence of the Syrian regime in Tafas city and its withdrawal from al Yadouda town.

Between October 2 and 18, we also recorded similar agreements in the cities of Nawa, Jasem, and al Harra in the western suburbs of Daraa, the cities of Namar, Inkhel, and al Sanamayn in the northern suburbs of Daraa, the towns of Nasib and Tayba, Um al Mayathen, Seyda, al N'eima, and the village of Kahil in the eastern suburbs of Daraa; all these agreements were between committees representing the people and the Russian sponsor representing the Syrian regime.

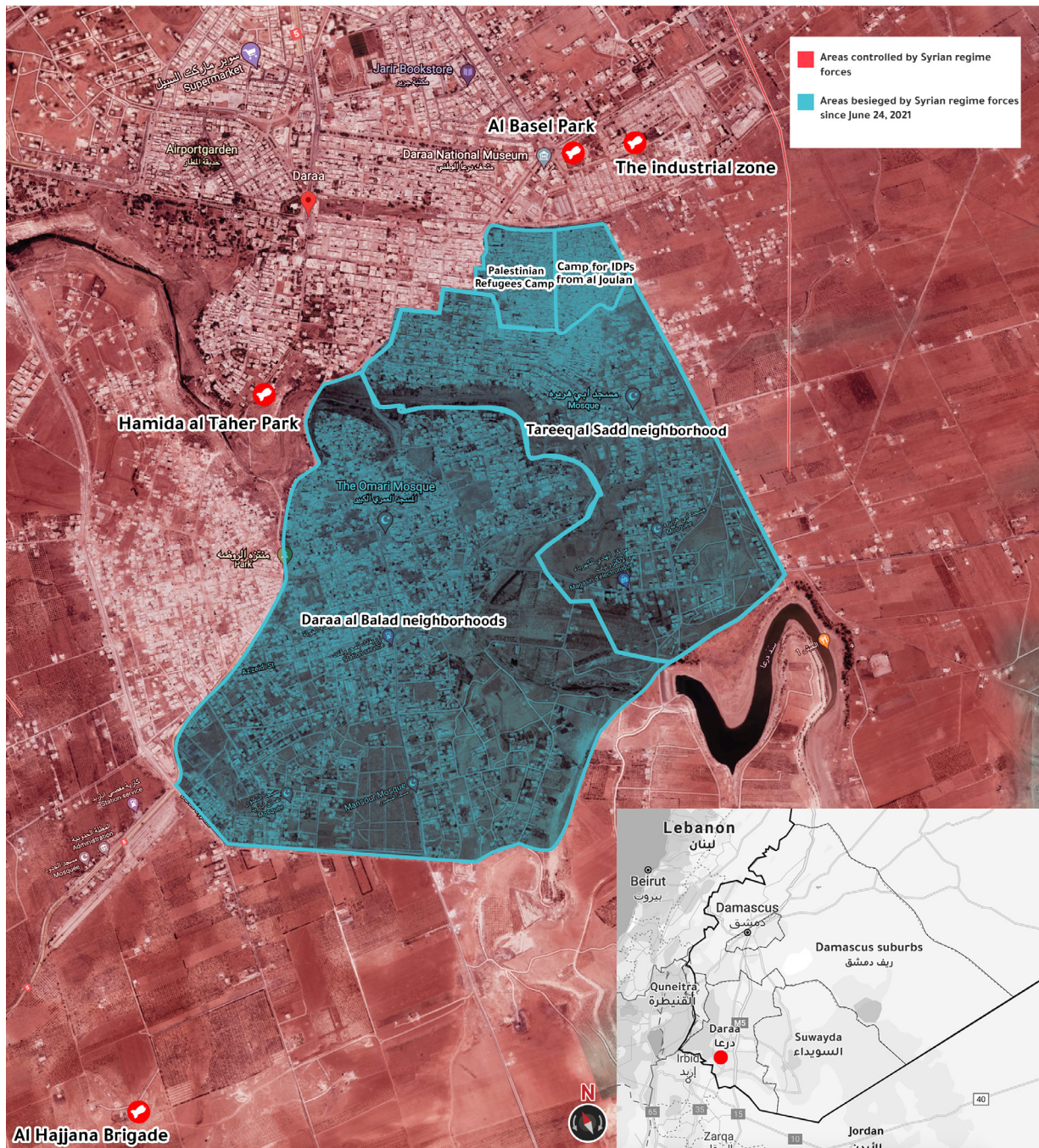
III. The Most Notable Human Rights Violations Committed by the Syrian Regime Between August 9 and October 2021:

Syrian-Iranian regime forces did not stop committing multiple types of violations throughout the period during which the negotiations were taking place, with this abusive policy routinely adopted by the Syrian regime and its allies. Here we provide a record of the most notable violations that we have recorded:

A. Indiscriminate attacks (at least 185 missile attacks against residential neighborhoods):

The Syrian regime used heavy machine guns and mortar shells to bombard residential neighborhoods in Daraa city. On August 23, the Syrian regime escalated the pace of its attacks, and we documented its use of homemade 'Elephant' and Golan-type missiles, which are modified missiles using a large warhead, known for their great destructive capacity and lack of accuracy in hitting the target.

Map shows the most notable sites of missile platforms used by the Syrian regime forces to attack besieged neighborhoods in Daraa city between August 23 and September 5, 2021:



Between August 23 and September 5, we recorded at least 185 attacks using missiles, targeting residential areas in Daraa al Balad neighborhoods in Daraa city, 94 of which took place between August 28 and 30; these attacks expanded to include vital civilian facilities, with SNHR documenting nine attacks targeting vital civilian facilities.

The SNHR spoke with Ehab², a local media activist who was near al Saraya Checkpoint when Syrian regime forces shot at residents. He told us:

“At al Saraya Checkpoint, hundreds of residents, who had been displaced from the besieged neighborhoods of Daraa towards Daraa al Mahatta neighborhoods, gathered, with some of them wanting to return [to their homes], while some others wanted to board the buses and head to northern Syria. At the checkpoint, a verbal altercation occurred between an officer from Syrian regime forces and a woman from Daraa, which developed into a fistfight, and I was able to document this through videos.” Ehab added: “Around 7:30 pm, we were still at the checkpoint. I saw some people bringing bread into the areas that were still under siege. Suddenly, the regime forces fired at us without any reason. At the moment of the shooting, I and dozens of civilians entered one of the shops next to the checkpoint, where we stayed until the shooting stopped; not all of us survived the bullets, as many civilians were injured, including the young man, Abdul Karim al Masri, who I later learned from the medical point had been shot in the chest and was critically injured, which led to his death. After we got out from the place we hid in, we fled towards Tareeq al Sadd neighborhood, and after we fled, the regime’s army forces targeted the place where we’d been with an RPG; I was able to document a small part of these difficult moments that we went through with [a video](#).”

B. The deterioration of the living conditions of the population as a result of the siege imposed on neighborhoods in Daraa city:

In our previous report, which was issued on August 9, 2021, we documented Syrian regime forces closing the roads leading to the neighborhoods of Daraa al Balad, Tareeq al Sadd neighborhood, and the two camps of Palestinian refugees and displaced people from the Golan on June 24, 2021, and the adverse effects of this on the residents’ living conditions. We also documented the Syrian regime preventing the entry of foodstuffs, medical supplies, and fuel to these neighborhoods.

The severe siege continued for about 20 days, and then became dependent on the progress of the agreements and the extent of the Syrian regime’s satisfaction with the terms agreed upon. Every time implementation of the agreement was hampered, Syrian regime forces responded by closing roads and preventing the entry of food and medicine; the besieged neighborhoods witnessed a total exhaustion of basic goods in local shops, along with a severe shortage of infant formula and some medicines for chronic diseases, with food prices doubling; the residents told us that they had to pay large sums of money that could reach 300,000 Syrian pounds, the equivalent of US \$100, in return for bringing in small quantities of basic foodstuffs (rice- sugar- flour- lentils), and revealed that water and electricity services were completely cut off from the besieged neighborhoods from June 24 until the implementation of the September 5 agreement began, with the residents forced to use the water from a well located in Wadi al Zaidi, which is not suitable for drinking, during this period.

² We contacted him via his Facebook account on September 3, 2021

On August 31, Amnesty International [stated](#) that "The Syrian government must immediately lift a two-month siege of the opposition stronghold Daraa al-Balad and allow unfettered humanitarian access to the area where around 20,000 people are living in dire conditions with scarce supplies of food and barely any medical care."

C. Violations committed by Syrian regime forces against the displaced people from the besieged areas:

As a result of the military operations led by Syrian regime forces and Iranian militias on the neighborhoods of Daraa al Balad, Tareeq al Sadd and the Palestinian refugee camp, we recorded the displacement of at least 36,000 of these neighborhoods' residents towards the neighborhoods of Daraa al Mahatta, which are completely under the control of the Syrian regime and thus relatively calm; thousands of families were forced to flee on foot with little baggage, with the majority of these families forced to live in schools and other public facilities in the neighborhoods of al Matar, al Qosour, al Kashef and al Sahari. The movement of displacement and the strong demand for housing led to a rise in house rents in the neighborhoods of Daraa al Mahatta, with the monthly rent for one apartment reaching between 250,000 and 550,000 Syrian pounds (equivalent to \$100 to \$200), in addition to an increase in the prices of many foodstuffs.

In sheltering civilians, Syrian regime forces did not take into account their health conditions and requirements, with thousands forced to stay in unequipped shelters with limited space, where they were prevented from leaving or moving around.

The SNHR spoke with Amira³, one of the women who stayed in a shelter center in Daraa al Mahatta after she and her children were displaced from a besieged area in Daraa:

"After many days of siege, I no longer had anything to feed my children, and even bread was no longer available, and then I was forced to flee my house in Tareeq al Sadd neighborhood and headed towards al Kashef neighborhood in Daraa al Mahatta, where I stayed in the al Shar'ia School; I came out of my house carrying nothing but my clothes and my three children's, and I could not carry any stuff from my house because the regime forces' al Saraya Checkpoint, through which I passed, was preventing us from taking out furniture or any expensive belongings.

"I spent nearly 49 days in the shelter center. We were over 16 persons in each room, almost every room had four families, and there was no medical care and no coronavirus tests were conducted for us before we were received or during our stay; while the Red Crescent provided us with some assistance, it was barely sufficient, and I only took two mattresses and two blankets from them."

Amira said that the school where she stayed was raided three times by the regime army's 4th Division personnel between August 20 and August 30: **"The 4th Division's personnel insulted us and threatened to arrest the youths, but every time the Red Crescent staff tried to prevent the regime forces from arresting the youths by delaying the entry of regime personnel into the school to allow young people to escape from the back yard of the school; every time they broke into the school I panicked - they were insulting us, with their actions and body movements, showing how they see us as enemies, not as unarmed civilians."**

³ We contacted her via WhatsApp on September 22, 2021

D. Looting and Property Rights violations:

Since July 27, 2021, the Syrian regime's military divisions - the 4th, 5th, 9th and 15th - backed by Iranian militias, seized dozens of civilian homes in areas of Gharz, al Shayyah and al Nakhla in farms to the south and east of Daraa city, along with others in al Dahiya area and the al Manshiya neighborhood of Daraa city. This came after civilian residents fled from these areas which were turned into the front lines for clashes between Syrian regime forces and affiliated militias on one hand, and fighters from the area on the other. The forces stationed in those homes and farms have turned them into military bases and headquarters, using them as centers for launching attacks targeting the besieged area (the Daraa al Balad area, Tareeq al Sadd neighborhood and Daraa camp), and using these bases to form a cordon around the besieged area, surrounding it from the east, west and south.

On August 16 and 17, 2021, Syrian regime forces and affiliated militias also [seized](#) a number of civilian homes on the outskirts of al Teira village in the western suburbs of Daraa and turned them into military bases, with military vehicles being brought in to provide support.

Photos showing some of the fortifications made by the regime forces on the outskirts of the camp and Tareeq al Sadd neighborhoods, and other axes in Daraa city.





Photos showing the regime forces seizing civilian homes in Gharz area, east of Daraa city, and turning them into military points





Photos taken on August 9, 2021, showing the regime forces' seizure of civilian homes in farms to the south and east of Daraa city



IV. The Record of the Most Notable Violations Recorded by the Syrian Network for Human Rights Between July 2018 and October 2021, Which Caused the Emptying of Southern Region of Syria after the Settlement Trap:

From the early days of the 'settlement' agreements in July 2018, Syrian-Iranian regime forces began perpetrating multiple types of violations, as we mentioned previously, with the following violations being among the most notable of those documented by SNHR during this period; these violations have left massive numbers of casualties, with hardly a day passing since that time up to the present day without our team recording violations against those citizens who decided to stay.

A. Extrajudicial killing:

The Syrian Network for Human Rights documented the deaths of 361 civilians, including 47 children and 26 women (adult female), as a result of the attacks launched by the Syrian regime on Southern Syria, most of whom were killed in Inkhel city in the northern suburbs of Daraa, Nawa city in the western suburbs of Daraa, and the neighborhoods of Daraa al Balad.

B. Forced displacement:

The military operations launched by Syrian regime forces, backed by Iranian militias, have caused the displacement of at least 40,000 people from the neighborhoods of Daraa al Balad, Tareeq al Sadd, the Palestinian Refugee Camp, the Gharz area and Tal al Sultan, to the neighborhoods of Daraa al Mahatta, in addition to the people displaced and forcibly displaced from al Sanamayn city and Um Batna village.

C. Targeting vital civilian facilities:

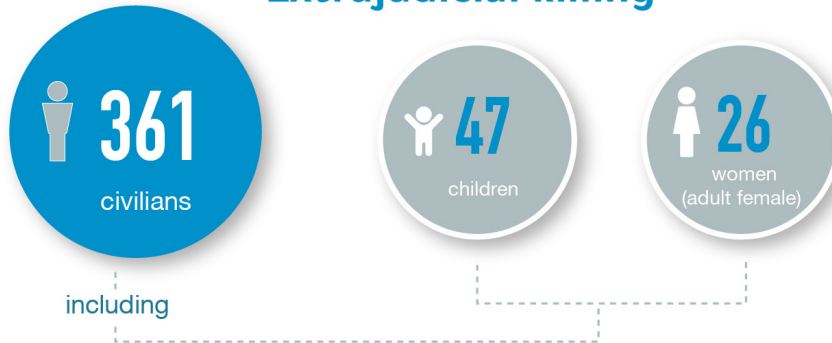
The Syrian Network for Human Rights documented that Syrian regime forces carried out 19 attacks on vital civilian facilities.

D. Arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance:

The Syrian Network for Human Rights documented the arrest of 1,589 individuals by Syrian regime forces, including 13 children and 22 women (adult female). These arrests were concentrated in Nasib town in the eastern suburbs of Daraa and Ataman village in the northern suburbs of Daraa.

Infographic of the record of the most notable human rights violations perpetrated by the Syrian regime forces in south Syria area between July 2018 and October 2021

Extrajudicial killing



Arbitrary arrest



Attacks on vital civilian facilities

19
incidents

- The following are examples of the most notable incidents of killing, looting and displacement that occurred in al Sanamayn city:

Located in the northern suburbs of Daraa city, al Sanamayn city wasn't included in the settlement agreement witnessed in the southern Syrian region in the summer of 2018 because it was under the shared control of factions of the Armed Opposition, that controlled the city's northern and western neighborhoods, and Syrian regime forces that controlled the rest of the city. After the Syrian regime took control of the southern region, the city witnessed a series of assassinations of personnel from the Armed Opposition factions and others from Syrian regime forces, while the regime forces began threatening to storm the city to take full control of it.

On Sunday, March 1, 2020, Syrian regime forces mobilized to storm the neighborhoods of al Sanamayn city, which were controlled by Armed Opposition factions, with SNHR documenting the participation of members of the 7th Division, 4th Division, the Air Intelligence Branch, Military and Criminal Security, Political and State Security branches in these operations, as well as the presence of Iranian militias and National Defense militias, backed by dozens of military and armored vehicles.

Syrian regime forces stationed at military checkpoints and posts surrounding the city, in particular the 9th Division, carried out indiscriminate bombardment using heavy artillery and missile launchers, with regime snipers also deployed atop high buildings in al Fallahat neighborhood to monitor the movements of civilians in al Shamali and al Gharbi neighborhoods of al Sanamin city. The shelling lasted for nearly 7 hours, during which the Syrian Network for Human Rights documented the killing of three civilians by Syrian regime forces, one of whom was shot dead by a sniper while standing near Um Yousef Bakery in al Shamali neighborhood; we also recorded the injury of 15 other civilians, including women and children, and recorded the arrest of at least 20 individuals by Syrian regime forces, who were released nearly 20 days after the date of these offensives.

On the same day, Syrian regime forces were able to advance and control al Shamali and al Gharbi neighborhoods then began carrying out looting and vandalism of civilian property and homes. We also recorded that at least 50 houses were damaged by shelling, including civilian facilities such as al Shar'ia School and Abu Bakr al Siddiq Mosque, which were looted by regime forces after they took control of the area.



Photo shows the vandalism of some of the furnishings in Abu Bakr al Siddiq Mosque after members of the Syrian regime's army entered it while storming the neighborhoods of al Sanamin city - March 1, 2020

Photos posted on pro-Syrian regime media outlets showing soldiers and vehicles on the day of the storming of the city:





On the same day, an agreement was reached between regime forces and Armed Opposition factions' personnel, under Russian mediation, to end the regime's military campaign against the city in exchange for the settlement of the status of willing Armed Opposition fighters in the city, joining the 'Russian-backed' Fifth Corps and displacing those who refused the settlement to northern Syria.

On Monday, March 2, 2020, 21 Armed Opposition fighters left al Sanamin city, north of Daraa, traveling to Aleppo governorate.

- Seven civilians, including three children, were killed in Masaken Jilleen village in the eastern suburbs of Daraa:

Jilleen village, located in the western suburbs of Daraa governorate, is one of the areas that were controlled by factions of the Armed Opposition between September 2013 and July 2018, with personnel from the Armed Opposition factions refusing to sign the agreement with the Syrian regime; this meant that the town remained under their effective control, while the Syrian regime's presence was limited to military checkpoints surrounding it.

On March 18, 2020, Syrian regime forces launched bombardment targeting Jilleen village and Masaken Jilleen, using the heavy artillery capabilities of artillery battalion '285' stationed in an area adjacent to al Panorama stadium in Daraa city, as well as missile launchers originating from the regime forces' 175th regiment in Izra town in the northern suburbs of Daraa. The shelling, which resulted in [the deaths of seven civilians, including three children](#) from the same family, was preceded by clashes between Syrian regime forces and personnel from factions of the Armed Opposition which broke out in response to the Syrian regime forces killing two members of the Central Committee in the village.

The SNHR contacted Ali al Ahmad⁴, a resident of Jellin village who witnessed the shelling of the town:

“The shelling began at around 4:00 pm and continued until 6:00 pm; the shells were raining heavily on us, and I counted about 17 shells, four of which landed between houses, and the others fell on agricultural land north of the village. That day, seven people were killed, including three children. In addition, one shell landed on a cattle-rearing stable, killing three cows.

“The shelling was indiscriminate, not targeting Free Syrian Army (FSA) personnel in the village, but was intended as retaliatory after clashes took place between FSA and regime personnel.”

– Um Batna village is a stark example of the forced displacement practiced by the Syrian-Iranian regime:

Um Batna village, located in the central suburbs of Quneitra governorate, which was inhabited by an estimated 3,000 people before the outbreak of the popular uprising for democracy in March 2011, was controlled by factions of the Armed Opposition from the beginning of September 2014; in July 2018, the village was among the areas subjected to the settlement agreements imposed on southern Syria by the regime, with the agreement providing for surrendering the heavy and medium weapons owned by the Armed Opposition factions controlling the village, the entry of the regime’s civilian institutions as well as its police stations to cities and towns, and the submission of all the region’s residents to a security settlement of their status.

After the Syrian regime took control of the area at the beginning of August 2018, an armed group of 10 fighters from the Armed Opposition factions from the village refused to submit to the settlement agreement and refused to leave the village; since then, the village has remained free of any presence of Syrian regime forces, while the military presence of Syrian regime forces has been limited to the checkpoints scattered around the village and in the surrounding military hills, most notably Tal al Sha’ar and Tal Kroum.

On the evening of Friday, April 30, 2021, an armed group whose affiliation we have so far been unable to identify, attacked a Syrian regime military checkpoint, namely al Omari Checkpoint, located at the entrance to Tal Kroum military hill, north of Um Batna village, and killed the personnel present there; regime forces responded by shelling Um Batna village with several mortar shells fired by the artillery brigade stationed in Tal al Sha’ar. This shelling continued for several hours, as a result of which the village witnessed the displacement of hundreds of civilians who fled to the nearby villages of al Khaldiya, Mamtana Nabea al Sakhr, for fear of Syrian regime forces storming the town.

The residents we contacted told us that Syrian regime forces, through their security committee, met with villagers’ representatives and threatened to storm the village militarily if the displacement of the remaining fighters in the village and their families was not approved.

⁴ We contacted him via WhatsApp on March 5, 2020

Between May 1 and 16, 2021, Syrian regime forces began harassing and restricting the village's residents in order to force them to accept the terms of the settlement. On May 1, we recorded Syrian regime forces stationed at the al Omari Checkpoint obstructing some displaced families and detaining five women with their children for several hours, to pressure the residents to accept displacement.

After five rounds of negotiations that began on April 30, 2021, held between Syrian regime's representative, Brig. Gen. Talal al Ali, Head of the Military Security Branch '220', and representatives of the villagers in the presence of a Russian delegation, it was agreed on May 16, 2021, to evacuate 37 families (150 people), who had rejected the settlement agreement, to northern Syria, in exchange for the Syrian regime's retreat from launching the military operation it threatened to carry out.

The SNHR contacted Khaled⁵, a member of the Armed Opposition factions who were displaced from Um Batna village, who said that ever since the Syrian regime reasserted control over the southern region, regime forces have been provoking fighters who have rejected settlements and targeting them with assassination or arrest: "On March 9, 2021, regime forces arrested two armed opposition personnel, namely Hadi al Saeed and Qusai al Saeed, through an ambush on the outskirts of Um Batna village. The next day, we blocked the entrances and exits of the village and burned a number of tires in the streets as a form of expression to [call for the] release the two detainees.

"After the arrest, the reconciliation committee, formed from the dignitaries of Um Batna village, communicated with the regime to release the two young men; the regime made promises to release them, but all were false. Nearly two months after the arrest of the two young men, the situation began to get more tense between the town's youths and regime forces and elements of the Lebanese Hezbollah, then on April 30, 2021, unknown individuals attacked the Tal Kroum military hill and the adjacent checkpoint - a military position where regime forces and Lebanese Hezbollah militias are stationed. After the attack, regime forces stationed in al Saqriya battalion of the 90th Brigade and in Tal al Sha'ar military hill north of Um Batna shelled the town with heavy artillery and mortars.

"After the shelling, dozens of families were displaced from the village to nearby villages, while the regime harassed civilians, detaining a number of women and children at a military checkpoint at the entrance to Jabha village, north of Um Batna village, but we were able to release them after the reconciliation committee communicated with the regime.

"On April 30, 2021, the Syrian regime and the reconciliation committee reached out to discuss what happened in the town. The regime accused us directly of carrying out the attack on Tal Kroum military hill and the checkpoint adjacent to it, and directly set the term of our displacement to northern Syria with our families in exchange for not carrying out a military operation in the town. Negotiations continued for several days in the presence of the Russian forces. At first, we rejected the conditions of the regime, especially the displacement term, and we were coordinating with the central committees in Daraa governorate to support our position, but unfortunately, their support

⁵ We contacted him via WhatsApp on June 3, 2021

for us was not enough to cancel the displacement condition, which forced us in mid-May 2021 to agree to the regime's terms to protect our families and women from the regime's brutality and bombing of the area, because if we hadn't accepted it, a military operation would have been carried out, so this was what forced the revolutionaries to submit to the conditions of the regime and the Russians; on May 16, 2021, it was agreed between us and the regime that we'd be displaced to northern Syria in exchange for [the regime] stopping the military operation on the town and releasing the two young men who were arrested nearly four months ago.

"I spent three days convincing my family and children to accept displacement because I know exactly what the regime would have done to them if I left by myself and they stayed in the area - the regime would take revenge on me by arresting or killing them or doing anything to break me. It was very difficult until they agreed to leave with me to northern Syria.

"On the morning of Thursday, May 20, 2021, me, my family and children went out on the displacement buses from my town carrying some luggage and important papers and left behind our house and everything we had, with the Russian military police accompanying the displacement convoy.

"The Russians brought one of the detainees in the morning and he was inside one of their cars, because the agreement ordered that they hand us over one of the detainees at the Sa'sa' Branch checkpoint in the southwestern suburbs of Damascus; when we reached the checkpoint, the Russians fled in the car which the detainee was in towards Damascus. Then the fighters stopped the buses and detained two of the Russian military police's cars, and there was almost an armed clash between us and the regime forces. After our reaction, the Russians were forced to return to the place where the buses were and handed us the detainee. Then we headed to northern Syria, where we spent three days in the area between the regime's army checkpoint and the Syrian National Army's, until they allowed us to enter the Euphrates Shield areas in the northern suburbs of Aleppo, from where we went to Deir Hassan village in the northern suburbs of Idlib, where I now live."

Photos show a gathering of residents preparing to be deported from Um Batna village in the suburbs of Quneitra to northern Syria - May 20, 2021





Photos show Russian military police escorting buses carrying displaced persons from Um Batna village in the suburbs of Quneitra to northern Syria - May 20, 2021



V. Conclusions and Recommendations:

Conclusions:

- The Syrian regime has perpetrated various types of violations with the aim of pushing the people towards forced displacement and emptying the area of all the regime's opponents.
- The Syrian regime has carried out indiscriminate shelling that did not distinguish between civilians and combatants, resulting in the death of a number of Syrian citizens.
- The Syrian regime has carried out hundreds of arbitrary arrests, with most of those detained being subsequently forcibly disappeared.
- It is impossible to trust any settlements or reconciliations made by the Syrian-Iranian regime because the regime will pursue any dissidents or opponents and end all forms of protest or demonstrations against it, whatever the cost of such violations, with its ultimate goal being to retain absolute power over Syria.

Recommendations:

The UN Security Council and the United Nations:

- Forced settlement 'agreements' or 'security reconciliations' will not lead to any form of stability and respect for human rights, and there must be an acceleration in the comprehensive political transition process that ensures the start of progress along a path of transitional justice and true national reconciliation based on accountability for the perpetrators of violations and respect for basic human rights and a transition towards democracy.
- The Syrian issue should be referred to the International Criminal Court and all those who are responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes should be held accountable.
- Investigate claims that the Iranian regime is continuing to supply weapons, equipment and militias to the Syrian regime.
- Work to expel the Iranian cross-border militias from all Syrian territory.

International Community:

- 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 were exhausted, with the Cessation of Hostilities statements and Astana agreements that followed proving equally fruitless. Therefore, steps should be taken under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and the norm of the "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly, should be implemented. The UN Security Council is still hindering the protection of civilians in Syria.

- Refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court, or quickly establish a tribunal dedicated to trying crimes against humanity and war crimes to end the cycle of impunity that has now spanned a decade in Syria.
- Put real pressure on Russia and Iran, and categorize them as key accomplices in the violations committed in Syria, both due to their continuing supply of weapons to the Syrian regime and through their direct involvement in thousands of violations against Syrian citizens.
- Provide protection and assistance to forcibly displaced women and children, taking into account their specific needs, primarily for protection.

Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI):

- Monitor and document widespread cases of arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance in Southern Syria.

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

- Condemn the violent practices of the Syrian regime against the people of the Southern region of Syria.

Thanks and consolation

We would like to thank the victims' families and relatives and all the local activists from all fields who contributed effectively to this report. If it were not for their contributions and cooperation with us, we would not be able to complete this report to such an exhaustive level. In addition to this, we extend our most heartfelt condolences to the victims' families.



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