



Bombing Universities and Schools... When Students Are Killed in Their Classrooms

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Syrian Network for Human Rights' Methodology:

The methodology of this report is based on the investigations conducted by the Syrian Network for Human Rights team in Raqqa governorate in coordination with a number of families and activists, with the report containing the accounts of two eyewitnesses identified in the report, as well as news and pictures received by the network by activists contributing to it from inside the city.

Details of the incident:

On Sunday, 29/9/2013, regime warplanes bombed Ibn Tufayl Commercial School in al Corniche Street next to the Political Security headquarters building without any justifiable reason and with no prior warning.

Abu Bakr, who was present during the shelling and spoke with the Syrian Network for Human Rights, can be communicated with through his Skype account via audio and video at:





UFreesyrian54

“At about 8 am while students were gathering in the schoolyard of Ibn Tufayl Commercial School in al Corniche Street next to the former Political Security building, before heading to the classrooms to start lessons, the warplanes, which I saw myself, like most of the people in the region, flew over the city. Suddenly, these warplanes launched an air strike that directly targeted the students’ location in the schoolyard with two vacuum missiles, resulting in 14 martyrs and more than 30 wounded, all of whom were students who were under 17 years of age, with the martyrs and wounded being immediately transported by the few ambulances the city had, so we had to use some cars of the rebels and civilians to take them to the field hospital (National Hospital) and because of the poor resources of the field hospital in Raqqa, doctors transported five wounded to Turkey due to their very serious injuries and the rest of the cases were treated in the field hospital in Raqqa.

Video shows the account of one of the city ‘s residences about the bombing

The director and founder of the Syrian Network for Human Rights, Fadel Abdul Ghany, says: “The killings that take place in Syria without any kind of accountability despite the thousands of violations that have taken place since the beginning of the events so far have shown great disregard for the lives of civilians and we are wondering, since the principle of Responsibility to Protect adopted by the United Nations General Assembly has not been implemented to date, when this principle will be implemented and where?”

The Syrian Network for Human Rights team in Raqqa governorate was able to document the deaths of 16 citizens, who included 15 children among the school students.

Names of the massacre victims:

- Ali Abu Hussein (45 years) / Raqqa / Secondary School employee
- Ahmad Khader al Faraj / Raqqa
- Abdullah al Nafi’ / Raqqa
- Hasan al Barjas / Raqqa
- Rose al Hasan al Hussein / Raqqa
- Ibtisam al Hassoun al Shawwakh / Raqqa
- Ali al Shbib / Raqqa





- Mohammad Rasoul of al Ibrahim / Raqqa
- Ali Hmaid al Ali al Hussein / Raqqa
- Mohammad Tariq al Batran / Raqqa
- Anwar al Hasan al Taher / Raqqa
- Ammar al Sheikh / Raqqa
- Mahmoud Fadi al Awwad / Raqqa
- Monzer al Sahw / Raqqa
- Abdul Karim al Khalaf al Saed / Raqqa

Four children whose identities have not yet been confirmed / Raqqa

All were killed as a result of regime warplanes' bombardment of Ibn Tufayl Commercial School located at the southern Corniche of the city.

Evidence and attachments:

Video and fixed images showing the massacre martyrs:

Video showing the destruction:

The SNHR thanks the families of the victims, witnesses, and the media workers, whose testimonies, views, and other assistance helped us to issue this report.

Conclusions:

1. The Syrian Network for Human Rights confirms that the bombardment was indiscriminate and was directed against unarmed civilians, showing that the government forces and shabiha violated the provisions of international human rights law which protects the right to life. In addition, this crime was committed in the context of non-international armed conflict, meaning that it amounts to a war crime in which all the relevant criteria are present.
2. The Syrian Network for Human Rights also believes that what happened in the massacre represented by murder is a crime against humanity, because this is not the first such incident, but one of many such atrocities that have become near-daily events targeting various Syrian governorates, and which are systematic and widespread.
3. Indiscriminate attacks carried out by government forces are in violation of customary international humanitarian law; that is, government forces have fired shells into populated areas and have not directed them at a specific military target.
4. Such attacks, in particular the bombings, have incidentally caused losses to civilian lives or injuries or damage to civilian objects. There are very strong indications that the damage was exceptionally excessive compared to the desired military advantage.





5. The scale of the massacre, the nature of such repeated massacres, the excessive level of force used therein, the indiscriminate character of the bombing and the coordinated nature of these attacks means that they can only be carried out under the supreme directives which is to say that they are state policy.

Recommendations:

The Syrian government:

1. Immediately stop all human rights violations.
2. Respect its international obligations to protect civilians in time of war and respect the rules of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Human Rights Council:

1. Demand the Security Council and the relevant international institutions to assume their responsibilities to act against the acts of killing, arrest, rape and displacement committed against the Syrian people.
2. Put pressure on the Syrian government to stop the killings.
3. Hold allies and supporters of the Syrian government - Russia, Iran, and China - materially and ethically responsible for the crimes taking place in Syria.
4. The Human Rights Council must give greater attention and seriousness to the disastrous situation of the victims' families in Syria.

Security Council:

1. Adopt a resolution to refer all those involved in such criminal acts to the International Criminal Court.
2. Warn the Syrian government of the consequences of its violent behavior and systematic killing and send clear messages in this regard.

The Arab League:

1. Request that the Human Rights Council and the United Nations pay particular attention to the issue of stopping the daily killings and follow up on this matter.
2. Pay close and serious attention to this issue and place it in the center of permanent monitoring and follow-up and try to pay attention and provide care for the families of the victims psychologically, financially and educationally.
3. Put political and diplomatic pressure on the Syrian government's key allies - Russia, Iran and China - to prevent them from continuing to provide international and political cover and protection for all the crimes committed against the Syrian people, and hold them ethically and materially responsible for all abuses by the Syrian government.





International Commission of Inquiry:

The International Commission of Inquiry should stop depicting the conflict as if it were between two parties equal in status and in the number, degree and seriousness of crimes and centralized decision, and should describe the crimes as they occurred without mitigating them for political purposes. The committee should also increase the number of its personnel specializing in Syrian affairs due to the scale of crimes committed daily, enabling it to document events more extensively and comprehensively.

