

## Statement

### Lebanese Group Hezbollah Evidently Responsible for the Killing of 12 Children in Majdal Shams Village



Monday 29 July 2024

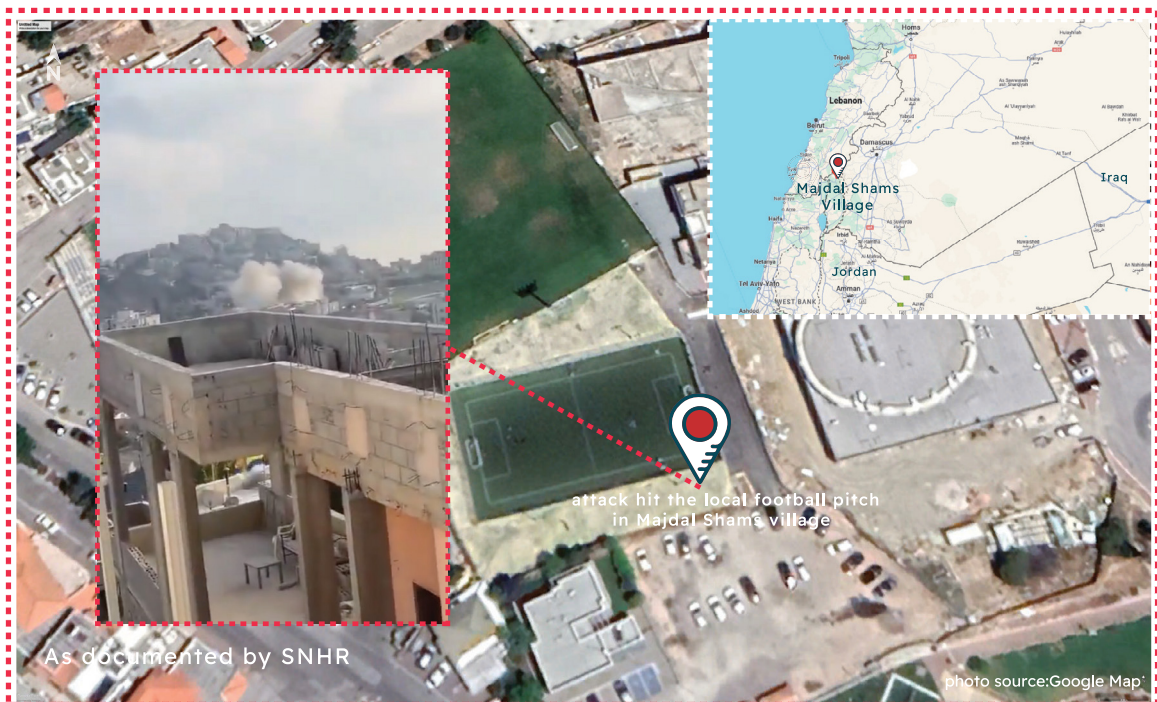
The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, independent group that is considered a primary source for the OHCHR on all death toll-related analyses in Syria.

On Saturday, July 27, 2024, at around 18:20, a ground attack hit the local football pitch in Majdal Shams village in the Israeli-occupied Syrian Golan Heights. The attack resulted in a massacre, in which **12 civilians**, four of them female and eight male, were killed, with all the documented victims, as of this moment, being children. Another **36 people**, mostly children, were also injured in the attack, some critically, while the site and surrounding area were heavily damaged.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) swiftly began gathering intelligence from eyewitnesses in the village, as well as analyzing dozens of photos and videos from open sources. In our initial analysis, we have found the following:

- The accounts we have collected corroborate the likelihood that the attack was a rocket attack. The eyewitnesses told us they heard a strong explosion, and saw a huge fireball.

One photo shows the site hit by the rocket, and another shows the smoke cloud rising following its explosion. The photos are stills taken from video footage filmed by a local resident



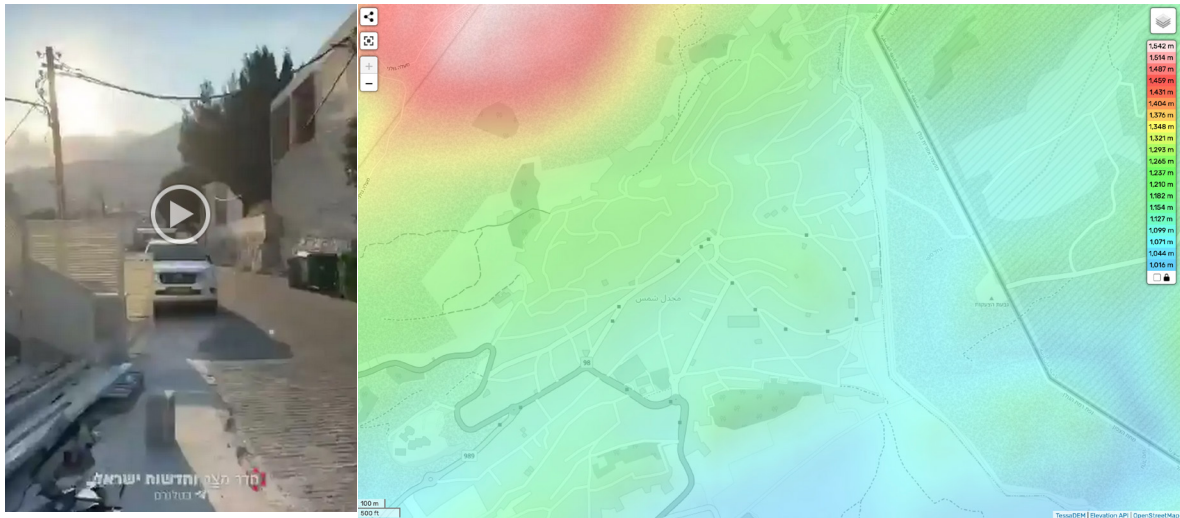
- Our analysis of the football pitch suggests that the rocket hit the surface, and detonated on impact.. We believe that the size and shape of the crater created by the blast are consistent with its being created by a rocket attack, as are its depth and diameter – 2.5 meters and 1.5 meters respectively.

First photo shows the site of the explosion and its north-to-south trajectory. Second photo shows the direction of the explosion and the resulting crater



- The damage inflicted on the site and the surrounding area corresponds with that usually caused by a Falaq-1 rocket, which is a non-guided 240mm surface-to-surface rocket used by Hezbollah, whose warhead weighs an estimated 50 kilograms.
- Eyewitnesses confirmed that alarm sirens were sounded a few seconds before the rocket hit, which makes it more probable that the attack was of foreign origin.
- The eyewitness accounts and video footage of the rocket attack, as well as the resulting explosion, the dimensions of the crater it created, and the rocket remnants, all indicate that the attack originated from the north. Considering the geography of Majdal Shams village, we suspect that the rocket was fired from southern Lebanon by the Lebanese group Hezbollah.

Video recorded by a local man shows that he was looking north at the time of the attack, with the footage showing the general vicinity and the moment of explosion, with the horrified cameraman immediately heading for the attack site. The area's topographical maps confirm the video's authenticity



The attack took place at a time when dozens of children were present at the football pitch. According to intelligence gathered by SNHR, the area attacked contains two football pitches, one of them used for training, along with a children’s amusement park, and a public park. Most of the victims were players in the local junior football team who were gathered at the pitch for football training. The massacre took place only moments after the warning sirens had sounded, which explains the large number of deaths and injuries. It should be noted that nine of the injured are still in a critical condition.

Israel occupies the Druze-majority Majdal Shams village, located to the south of Jabal al-Sheikh, as part of its ongoing occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights since 1967. UN Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) have both called on Israel to immediately withdraw from the Syrian Golan back to the borders established on June 4, 1967. However, Israel violated the resolutions of the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly, and is still occupying the Syrian Golan to this day. Israel has committed dozens of violations in the Golan in the decades since then, including seizing lands, building illegal settlements, changing the urban landscape and the demographic composition, and blocking the region’s people from moving freely between their Syrian homeland and the Syrian Golan.

SNHR condemns this latest senseless and brutal bombardment. We call on the UN’s investigative bodies to launch independent investigations to determine the perpetrator of this attack, with a focus on compensating the victims and holding the perpetrators accountable.

Israel, as an occupying power, is responsible for protecting the residents in areas under its control, compensating the victims, and invoking protective measures, such as establishing shelters and early-warning systems.

We wish to thank the eyewitnesses and victims’ families for their quick response and cooperation. We extend our most heartfelt condolences to the families of all the victims.



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*No justice without accountability*

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