

57 Civilian Deaths,

Including 13 Children and Six Women, as well as Six Deaths due to Torture, Documented in Syria in August 2024

Syrian Regime Forces Commit Two Massacres in Eastern Rural Deir Ez-Zour Governorate, Killing Multiple Children and Women

Sunday 01 September 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.

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I. Background and Methodology

This report documents the civilian deaths and attacks on vital facilities documented by the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) as being perpetrated in Syria by the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in August 2024. The report sheds light particularly on those victims who died due to torture, and victims among medical personnel, as well as focusing on documenting the massacres perpetrated by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria that SNHR's team was able to document during this period; it should be noted that we use the term, 'massacre' to refer to an incident in which no fewer than five peaceful individuals were killed. The report also includes a summary of the most notable incidents that took place during this month. Full details of every incident are archived on the SNHR database.

This report catalogues civilian deaths according to the parties actively engaged in the Syrian conflict. In this context, accurately ascribing responsibility sometimes requires more time and investigation than usual, especially in the case of joint attacks. We also face additional challenges in assigning responsibility for attacks in some incidents of ground-based bombardment, especially those in which the bombardment originates from an area adjacent to the one targeted, which is controlled by a different party to the perpetrator. In such cases, SNHR tries to thoroughly investigate each incident, in order to conclusively identify the party responsible for the bombardment.

Despite these efforts, however, there are cases in which we are unable to definitively assign culpability for a particular killing to one of two possible parties due to the area's proximity to the lines of engagement, the use of similar weapons by different parties, or other reasons. In such cases, the incident is classified under the category 'other parties' until such time as we have gathered sufficient evidence to conclusively assign responsibility for the violation to one of the two parties.

While we at the SNHR are keen to accurately ascribe responsibility for incidents to the relevant parties, we exclude two types of attacks from the process of assigning responsibility, namely anti-personnel landmines, and remote explosions, including suicide or forced suicide attacks. We discussed this issue previously in [detailed reports](#).

As for the anonymous victims whose names we have not yet been able to determine or regarding whom we have so far been unable to find any identifying information or any picture or video footage, these cases are catalogued in a separate archive until any information confirming these victims' identity is received which would enable their cases to be transferred to the victims archive, with their names and other details registered accordingly.

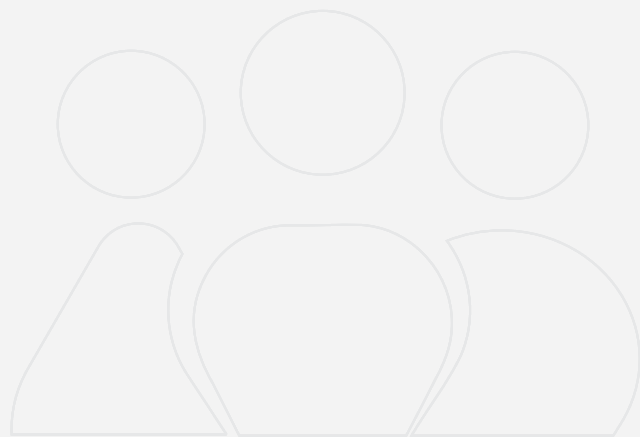
In this report, we record only the death toll of civilians whose deaths we were able to document in the past month. SNHR does not document the deaths of fighters and militants killed during the conflict, while some of the victims documented may have been killed months or even years ago, as in some cases of death due to torture; in these cases, where the deaths have only recently been confirmed, we include two dates, namely the date when we were able to document the victim's death, and the date on which we believe the death occurred. The report also sheds light on attacks on civilian objects that SNHR was able to document during August 2024.

This report draws upon the SNHR team's constant daily monitoring of news and developments in Syria, and on information supplied by our extensive network of various sources across the country, which has been built up over the course of our work since 2011. The SNHR also provides [a special form](#) that can be completed by victims' relatives with victims' names and personal information so that our Victims Documentation Department can follow up on the information provided, verify its accuracy, and then add it to the database.

Our investigations confirm that all the attacks included in this report that were carried out by the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria targeted civilian areas where we documented no military presence or armories before or during the attacks. Also, the perpetrators of these attacks failed to issue any warnings to civilians prior to any of the attacks as required by international humanitarian law.

There are many additional steps and challenges to take into account in the process of documenting civilian deaths, which we've detailed [in this file detailing our methodology](#) that can be found at this link. We've opted to shed light on only some aspects of these challenges in order to ensure the report is kept to a manageable length.

The information included in this report only represents the bare minimum of the actual severity and magnitude of the violations documented. Also, it doesn't include any analysis of the profound social, economic, and psychological ramifications of these events.



II. Brief on the Most Notable Killings and Attacks on Vital Facilities in August

A. Killings

In August 2024, we documented the killing of **57 civilians**, including 13 children and six women. Below are a number of observations regarding the events that marked this month:

1. Syrian regime forces

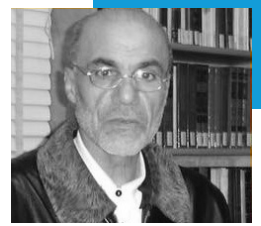
In August, regime forces killed 21 civilians, including six children and five women, as well as six victims who died due to torture, accounting for 37 percent of all civilian deaths in August. These victims were killed across various Syrian governorates: 13 civilians were killed in Deir Ez-Zour governorate, three civilians were killed in each of the two governorates of Rural Damascus and Daraa, and one civilian was killed in each of the two governorates of Idlib and Suwayda.

Since Tuesday, August 6, 2024, there has been an escalation in hostilities and reciprocal offensives, which has continued sporadically and at varying rates of intensity up to the time of this writing, between the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and tribal forces, with the latter backed by regime forces and Iranian militias. These clashes were triggered by a wide offensive that was carried out by tribal forces that targeted SDF outposts in the region, with these attacks originating from regime-held areas, after which both sides then engaged in tit-for-tat offensives, which saw the use of heavy artillery, rocket launchers, and heavy machine guns by both tribal forces and the SDF. The ground attacks carried out by regime forces resulted in two massacres, killing 11 civilians, including six children and four women, in total during an attack on the SDF-held al-Dahla town. [SNHR released a special statement](#) on the escalation in eastern rural Deir Ez-Zour

- On Monday, August 12, Syrian regime artillery forces fired a mortar shell at Abu Hamam town in eastern rural Deir Ez-Zour governorate across the Euphrates River from the base at which the regime artillery detachment is stationed. The shell struck a house in the town, killing a local woman, [identified as Rasmia al-Saleh al-Ayed](#). The area targeted was under the control of the SDF at the time of the incident.
- On August 15, a man with special needs, [identified as Majd Ahmad Saleh al-Shalabi](#), was killed, and another man, identified as Ahmad Qasem al-Khatib, was critically injured by gunfire from Syrian regime forces who shot the two men, both from Inkhil city in northern rural Daraa governorate, as they were riding a motorbike along the road connecting Namar town and al-Hara city in northern rural Daraa governorate. The area was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.

Syrian regime forces also killed six individuals due to torture. The Syrian regime has been responsible for about 55 percent of all deaths due to torture recorded in 2024 to date.

[Abdul Akram al-Saqqa](#), a revivalist Islamic thinker born in 1944, who founded the 'Charity Association' and the 'Sharia High School' in Darayya city in western Rural Damascus governorate, was arrested on July 14, 2011, by Syrian regime forces who raided his school in the city. He has been classified as forcibly disappeared ever since with the Syrian regime denying having him and refusing to allow anyone, even a lawyer, to visit him.



Abdul Akram al-Saqqa

Abdul Akram al-Saqqa was known for his reformist work in his local community, where he was the imam and khatib (deliverer of the Friday sermon) at the Anas bin Malik Mosque. In 1988, he founded 'al-Assad Institute for the Memorization of the Holy Quran', which was one of the first such establishments in Syria, serving as its director until the end of 2000. He also founded 'al-Saqqa House' for printing, publishing and distribution, through which he published several scholarly, cultural, social, and intellectual books. With the advent of the popular uprising for democracy in Syria in 2011, he participated in the peaceful anti-regime demonstrations in Darayya city. Given his status as a well-known and widely respected dignitary in the area, he and other popular figures were strategic targets for the Syrian regime which spared no efforts or resources in arresting, prosecuting, imprisoning and forcibly disappearing such individuals, without any legal cause.

On Tuesday, August 20, 2024, Abdul Akram al-Saqqa's family obtained a death certificate from the civil registry office in Darayya city indicating that he had died on November 3, 2014, with no other details, such as cause of death, provided. This suggests that Abdul Akram died about three-and-a-half years after his arrest. SNHR can confirm that he suffered from several conditions prior to his arrest that required medical care and various types of medication, indicating a strong probability that he died due to torture and medical negligence. SNHR can also confirm that Syrian regime forces failed to announce Abdul Akram's death when it happened, as well as failing to return his body to his family. [SNHR released a statement condemning the killing of this Islamist thinker.](#)

2. Other parties

In August 2024, we documented the killing of 31 civilians, including five children, at the hands of other parties, who were responsible for about 54 percent of all civilian deaths documented during the month; Daraa governorate accounted for about 58 percent of all victims killed by other parties this month, followed by Deir Ez-Zour governorate with 19 percent.

In August, we documented two civilian deaths, including one child, due to the explosion of landmines of unidentified source. Adding August's death toll to the rest of the year's total to date, a total of 75 civilians, including 13 children and 15 women, have been killed by landmines since the beginning of 2024.

- On Wednesday, August 21, a boy, [identified as 13-year-old Yazan Hassan Za'al](#) from Kherbt Ghazala town in eastern rural Daraa governorate, was killed by the explosion of a landmine that exploded under a nearby bulldozer while he was working on agricultural land beside his hometown. The area is under the control of Syrian regime forces.

In August 2024, gunfire of unidentified source killed 21 civilians, including two children, accounting for about 68 percent of all the victims killed by other parties this month. Sixteen of the 21 civilians killed were killed in Daraa governorate, while two were killed in Deir Ez-Zour governorate, and one in each of the governorates of Aleppo, Idlib, and Raqqa.

- On Wednesday, August 21, a man, [identified as Salah al-Attous](#) from Raqqa city, was shot dead by unidentified gunmen from a passing car while he was leaving his house in the city's al-Kherba Alley. The area was under the control of the SDF at the time of the incident.
- On Saturday, August 24, two men, [identified as Ahmad Mohammad Ahmad al-Refa'ie and Ayman Adel Sharif al-Refa'ie](#), both aged 21, from al-Ghariya al-Sharqiya town in eastern rural Daraa governorate, were shot dead by unidentified gunmen on the road connecting al-Ghariya al-Sharqiya town and al-Hrak city in eastern Daraa governorate. The area was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.

In August 2024, bombings by unidentified parties killed three civilians, including two children. On Monday, August 19, a war remnant of unidentified source exploded under a water truck near al-Shakousiya village in eastern Hama governorate, killing one man, identified as Khaled Hamdan al-Abed from al-Sheikh Helal village in eastern rural Hama governorate, and injuring his wife and his sister Muzna. The truck was also heavily damaged by the explosion. The area was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.

3. SDF

In August 2024, the SDF killed four civilians, including two children and one woman, with three of the victims killed in Deir Ez-Zour, and one in Aleppo governorate. Two of the victims, one of them a child, were shot dead by SDF patrolmen, while the other two, a woman and girl, were killed in SDF attacks on the regime-controlled town of al-Boulayl.

- On Friday, August 9 an SDF artillery detachment stationed in al-Sabha village in eastern Deir Ez-Zour governorate fired multiple shells at al-Boulayl village on the opposite side of the Euphrates River. The bombardment killed one woman, [identified as Feryal Fares al-Ghadban, and one girl, identified as Razan Bassam al-Akla](#), and injured seven other civilians, including five children and one woman, to varying degrees. The area attacked was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.
- On Friday, August 9, a boy, [identified as 10-year-old Mohammad Nour](#) from al-Halwanji village in the rural areas of Jarablos city in eastern Aleppo governorate, was shot dead by an SDF sniper near his family's house in the village. The area was under the control of the Syrian National Army (SNA) at the time of the incident.

B. Attacks on vital civilian facilities

In August 2024, SNHR documented no fewer than seven attacks on vital civilian facilities. Of these seven attacks, one was on an educational facility (a school), and two were on places of worship. Since the start of 2024 up until the end of August, SNHR has documented 72 attacks on vital civilian facilities by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria.

- On Wednesday, August 7, an SNA artillery detachment fired multiple shells at Tal Ajr village, administratively a part of the Shran subdistrict, in Afrin in northwestern rural Aleppo governorate. One of the shells struck the Tal Ajar Elementary School, partially destroying its perimeter fence. The village was under the control of the SDF at the time of the incident.

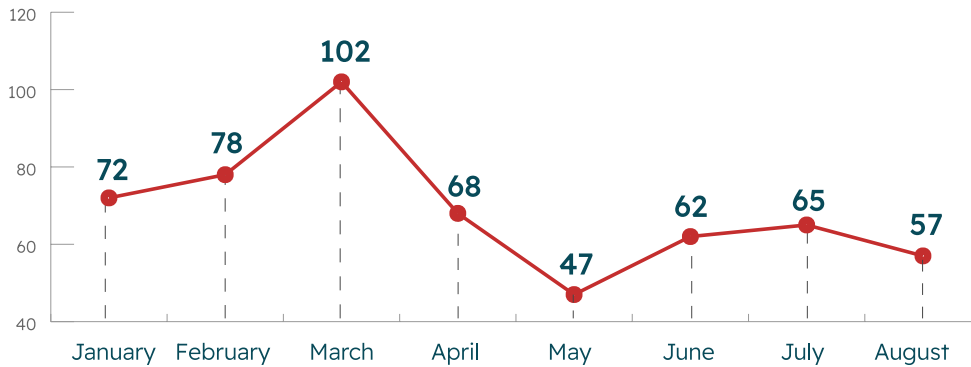


Destruction following a ground attack by the SNA on an elementary school in Tal Ajar village in Aleppo - August 7, 2024

III. Civilian Death Toll in July 2024

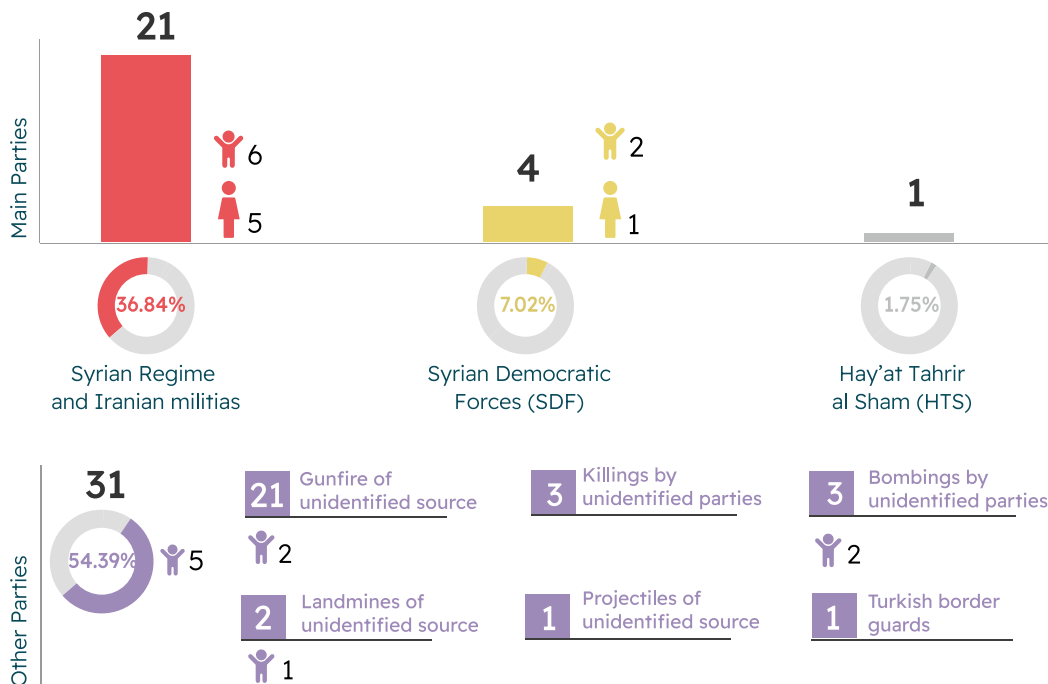
In August 2024, SNHR documented the killing of 57 civilians, including 13 children and six women (adult female) at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria, bringing the total number of civilian deaths since the start of the year, up until the end of August, to 551.

Civilian deaths documented since the beginning of 2024 are distributed by month as follows:



August accounted for about 10 percent of all civilian deaths documented to date this year, while March saw the highest number of civilian deaths in one month so far this year, accounting for about 19 percent. Conversely, May saw the lowest documented number of monthly civilian deaths so far this year, accounting for about nine percent of the total, followed by the month of August.

Civilian deaths documented in August 2024 are distributed according to the parties to the conflict and controlling forces as follows:



A. Main parties:

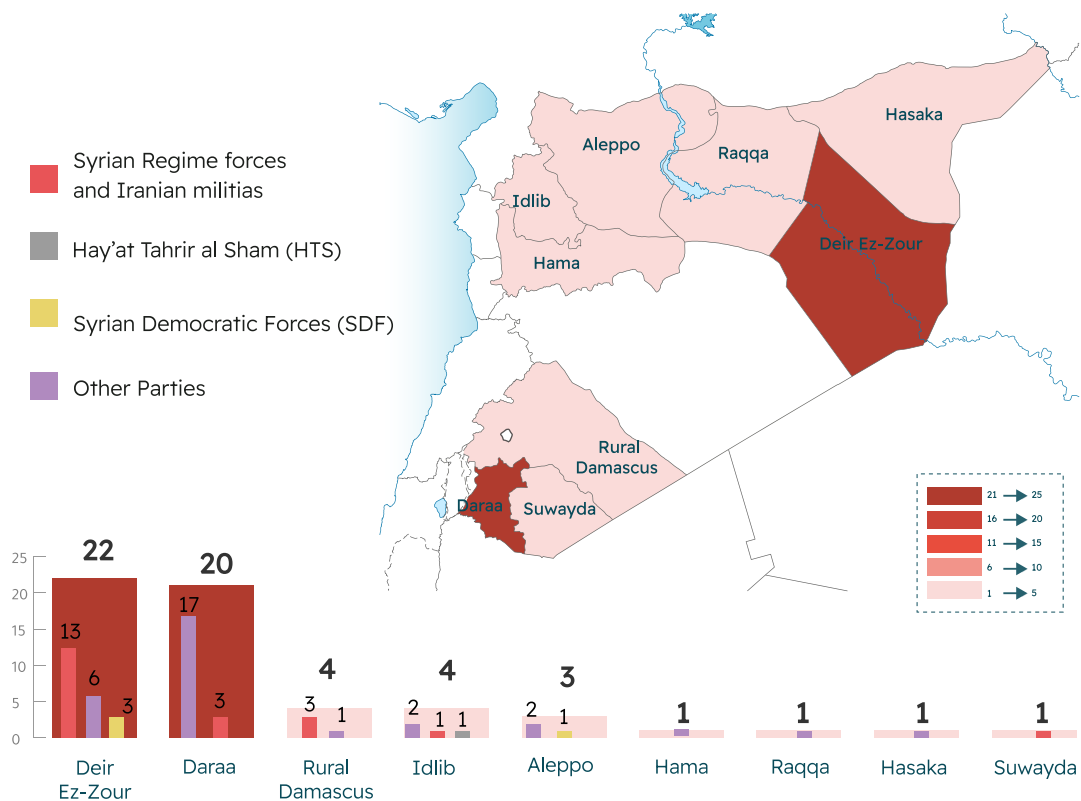
- **Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias):**
We documented the killing of 21 civilians, including six children and five women, by Syrian regime forces.
- **Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS):**
We documented the killing of one civilian by HTS.
- **Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF):**
We documented the killing of four civilians, including two children and one woman, by SDF.

B. Other parties:

We documented the killing of 31 civilians, including five children, by other parties, distributed as follows:

- Landmines of unidentified sources: Two civilians, including one child.
- Projectiles of unidentified source: One civilian.
- Gunfire of unidentified source: 21 civilians, including two children.
- Bombings by unidentified parties: Three civilians, including two children.
- Killings by unidentified parties: Three civilians.
- Turkish border guards: One civilian.

Civilian deaths documented in August 2024 at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria are distributed across Syrian governorates as follows:

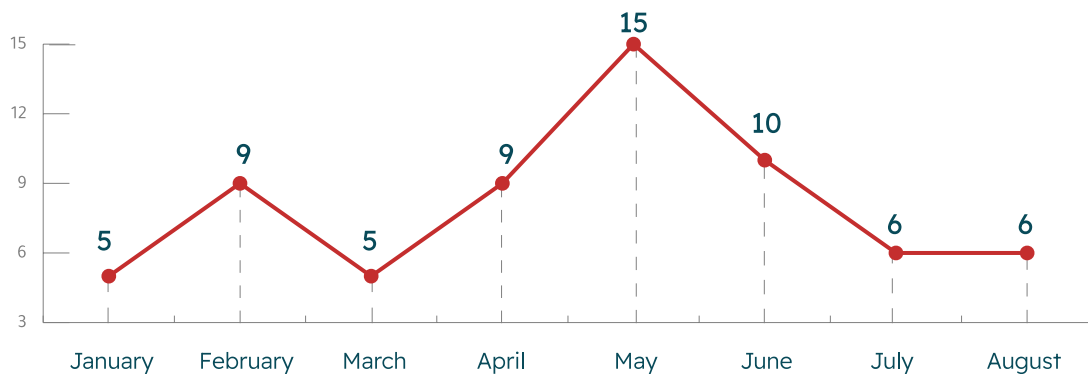


As the graph shows, Deir Ez-Zour governorate saw the highest number of civilian deaths in August, accounting for about 39 percent of the total. Of all the victims killed in Deir Ez-Zour this month, 13 were killed by regime forces. Deir Ez-Zour was followed by Daraa, with about 35 percent of the total, where 17 civilians were killed by other parties.

IV. Deaths due to Torture

In August 2024, SNHR documented six deaths due to torture at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria. This brings the total number of victims documented as dying due to torture since the beginning of 2024, up until the end of August, to 65.

Deaths due to torture by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria that were documented in 2024 so far are distributed by month as follows:



Syrian regime forces have been responsible for about 55 percent of all deaths due to torture recorded to date in 2024. In other words, more than half of all victims who died due to torture in 2024 have died at the hands of regime forces. The month of May has seen the highest documented monthly number of deaths due to torture to date in 2024, accounting for about 23 percent of the total so far this year.

Deaths due to torture by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria that we documented in July 2024 are distributed as follows:

A. Main parties

- Syrian regime forces: Six individuals.

Below are the most notable cases:

Abdullah Hussein al-Akhras, a defector from the Syrian regime army, originally from Ghabagheb town in northern rural Daraa governorate, was arrested in September 2023 by regime forces at a checkpoint in Aleppo while trying to return to his hometown in Daraa governorate.

According to intelligence received by SNHR from people close to the victim, Abdullah, who was born in 1991, had been living as a refugee in Türkiye until he was forcibly deported to northwestern Syria in mid-2023. Soon afterwards, as he tried to make his way back to his hometown, regime forces arrested him at the aforementioned checkpoint in Aleppo. His family later learned that he was being held in the regime's infamous Sednaya Military Prison in Rural Damascus governorate. He has been classified as forcibly disappeared ever since.

On Monday, August 5, Abdullah's family received notification from a regime military official that he had died. His body was returned to his family at the Harasta Military Hospital in Harasta city in eastern Rural Damascus governorate on the same day. SNHR can confirm that Abdullah was in good health at the time of his arrest, indicating a strong probability that he died due to torture and medical negligence in Sednaya Military Prison.



Abdullah Hussein al-Akhras

V. Massacres

In August 2024, SNHR documented two massacres at the hands of Syrian regime forces, bringing the total number of massacres perpetrated since the start of the year to 11.

The massacre carried out in August 2024 is attributed to the relevant parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria as follows:

A. Main parties:

- Syrian regime forces: Two massacres

In the massacres documented in August, 11 civilians, including six children and four women, were killed.

On Friday, August 9, at around 02:00 local time, Syrian regime troops, stationed in al-Boulayl town in eastern Deir Ez-Zour governorate, used rocket launchers and heavy artillery to fire artillery shells targeting the two villages of al-Dahla and Jedid Bakkara. One of the shells struck a house in al-Dahla village, killing five civilians from the same family, including two girls and two women, while another civilian was injured; the family were targeted as they slept on the rooftop of their house.

At around 06:00, regime forces resumed their artillery and rocket attacks at the same village, with another shell striking another house in the village, killing six civilians from two families, who were gathered there. The six victims killed were four children, one of them an infant, and two women, while four others were injured. The two villages of al-Dahla and Jedid Bakkara were under the control of the SDF at the time of the incident.



Massacres from the History of the Popular Uprising for Democracy in Syria

In this month: August

- ▶ At around 15:05 on Wednesday, August 9, 2017, Syrian regime artillery forces fired multiple shells at the busy public square in Kafr Batna town in Eastern Ghouta in eastern Rural Damascus governorate, **killing six people** and wounding, about 10 others. The town was under the control of armed opposition factions at the time of the incident.
- ▶ On Friday, August 16, 2019, at around 19:20, fixed-wing warplanes believed to be Russian, which took off from Hmemim Airbase in rural Latakia governorate, fired multiple missiles at al-Rahma al-Sakniya village, built to house internally displaced people (IDPs), to the east of Has village in southern rural Idlib governorate. The bombardment **killed 14 civilians**, all IDPs from northern rural Hama governorate, including seven children (three boys, three girls, and one unborn fetus) and three women, and injured 20 others, as well as completely destroying their homes in the village. The area was under the control of armed opposition factions and HTS at the time of the incident.
- ▶ On Thursday, August 30, 2020, a car bomb of unidentified source exploded near a checkpoint jointly operated by the SNA and the civilian police near Tal Halaf town, administratively a part of Ras al-Ein city, in northwestern rural Hasaka governorate. **Six civilians**, including three civilian police officers, were killed in the bombing, along with two SNA fighters. Another 10 people were also injured. SNHR is still trying to locate eyewitnesses and survivors to obtain more information about the incident. Tal Halaf town was under the SNA's control at the time of the incident.

Recalling the massacre, media worker Anas Abu Ayman, a member of the Ghouta Media Center team, said:¹

“ Someone was looking for his brother among the martyrs' bodies. He was able to identify him from his head, which was the only part that remained intact, while the rest of his body was turned into scattered body parts. He hugged the head as he was sobbing. It was a painful situation. The most people hope for, in situations like this, is to have the dead bodies of their relatives whole. ”

1. Via his personal Facebook account.



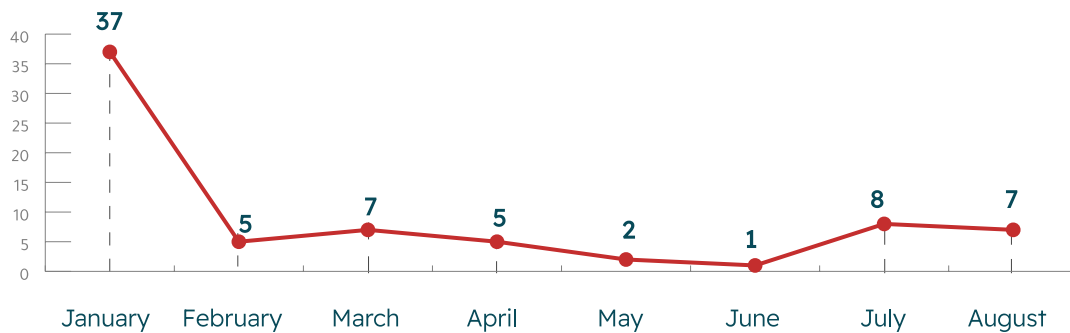
VI. Attacks on Vital Civilian Facilities

In August 2024, SNHR documented no fewer than seven attacks on vital civilian facilities, including five attacks by regime forces, most of which were carried out in Idlib governorate.

Of the seven attacks documented by SNHR, one targeted a school and two targeted places of worship.

- Syrian regime forces: Five attacks.
- All armed opposition factions/Syrian National Army (SNA): Two attacks.

Since the start of 2024 up until the end of August, 72 attacks on vital civilian facilities by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria have been documented. These are distributed by month as follows:



As the chart shows, the attacks on vital civilian facilities that were carried out in August accounted for 10 percent of all attacks documented this year. In August, we documented five attacks on vital civilian facilities by regime forces. In total, Syrian regime forces have carried out 49 attacks on vital civilian facilities so far this year.

Below are the most notable attacks documented in August

On Monday, August 12, 2024, a Syrian regime artillery detachment fired mortar shells at Abu Hamam town in eastern rural Deir Ez-Zour governorate. Two shells struck the Omar bin Abdul Aziz Mosque in the town, partially destroying its ceiling and walls, and slightly damaging its interior furnishings. The area targeted was under the control of the SDF at the time of the incident.



↑ Damage caused by a ground attack by Syrian regime forces on Omar bin Abdul Aziz Mosque in Abu Hamam town - August 12, 2024

On Friday, August 16, a Syrian regime artillery detachment fired three shells at Sarmin city in eastern rural Idlib governorate. One of the shells directly struck the Omar bin Abdul Aziz Mosque in the city's al-Shamali neighborhood, partially destroying the mosque building, and causing moderate damage to its interior furnishings. The area targeted was under the control of armed opposition factions and HTS at the time of the incident.



↑ Damage caused by a ground attack by Syrian regime forces on the Omar bin Abdul Aziz Mosque in Sarmin city in Idlib - August 16, 2024

VII. The Syrian Regime Has Failed to Register Hundreds of Thousands of the Citizens It Killed Since March 2011 in the Civil Registry's Death Records

Although hundreds of thousands of Syrian citizens have been killed, 'disappeared' or gone missing since the early days of the popular uprising in March 2011, they have not been officially registered as dead by the relevant official state authority, namely the Civil Registry Department. The Syrian regime unconscionably controls the issuance of death certificates, which are not made available to victims' families or the families of the missing and forcibly disappeared, whether the victims were killed at the hands of the Syrian regime or by other parties. In fact, the regime only allows death certificates to be issued for those who meet the narrow criteria set by the regime itself and its security services. In many previous reports, we have discussed the phenomenon of the regime's forcing victims' families to sign false statements written by the security authorities beforehand, which state falsely that 'armed terrorist gangs', rather than the regime, killed their loved ones, and which the families must sign if they wish to obtain death certificates. The Syrian regime has not only failed to launch any investigations into the causes of death for hundreds of thousands of Syrians but has also failed to hold to account even one member of its security or military forces for their involvement in these killings.

In order for deceased victims' family members to obtain death certificates, the Syrian regime requires three things:

- Medical reports prepared by regime personnel, citing a false cause of death, such as a heart attack for those forcibly disappeared in its detention centers, or claiming falsely that the victim died as a result of injuries from war munitions.
- Statements from the local neighborhood headman or 'Mukhtar' and any witnesses, who are asked to confirm the death.
- Acknowledgement from the victims' families, who often urgently need to obtain a death certificate; for this reason, family members understandably feel they have no choice but to remain silent about the true cause of their loved ones' deaths and the identity of those responsible for them.

Through our exhaustive monitoring and investigation process, we have been able to document three methods used by the Syrian regime to register the deaths of a limited number of its victims who were killed, or forcibly disappeared then subsequently killed, which we detailed in a report we issued on August 19, 2022, entitled 'The Syrian Regime, Through Its Security Services and State Institutions, Controls the Incidents of Registering the Deaths of Victims Killed/'Disappeared' in the Armed Conflict Since March 2011'.

It should be noted that the vast majority of victims' families are unable to obtain death certificates for their loved ones from the Syrian regime, for fear of linking their names with that of a person who was detained by the regime and killed under torture, which implies that their deceased family member had been a dissident who had opposed the Syrian regime, or had been registered as a 'terrorist' if he or she had been wanted by the security services. Additionally, many victims' families have been forcibly displaced outside the areas controlled by the Syrian regime.

On August 10, 2022, the Syrian regime government's Minister of Justice issued [Circular No. 22](#) specifying the procedures for the conduct of proceedings related to registering deaths at Sharia courts. The circular included new conditions stipulating that five items of evidence must be submitted to and approved by the relevant judges in proceedings related to registering a death. It also requires that all relevant courts involved in death registration cases comply with the circular's content. The circular also gave security clearance to judicial authorities empowering them to register deaths, and thereby increasing the security services' intrusion into this process. We issued [a report](#) in which we analyzed the constitutional and legal violations contained in this circular's text and the consequences thereof.

VIII. What is SNHR Doing About the Extrajudicial Killing Issue?

Since 2011, SNHR has been developing complex programs to archive and categorize the victims' data, which our team collects and verifies, enabling us to catalogue the victims according to their gender, age, the date and place of death, the method of killing and type of weapon used, and the perpetrator party, and to make comparisons between these parties. We can also distribute the death toll according to the governorate in which each death occurred, and the one from which the victim originated, in order to show the extent of the losses suffered by the people of each governorate, enabling us to accurately ascertain the rates of violence documented in relation to each violation. SNHR's Victim Documentation Department team constantly updates the network's comprehensive database, with all the data added to the SNHR's database being retained securely, and several backup copies being stored in different locations.

Since 2011, we have also been exceptionally concerned with the documentation of incidents involving the killing of children and women; there is hardly any statistic recorded on our database that does not include victims in either category and usually in both, due to the vulnerability of these groups in the community, and because they give an indication of the rate of targeting of civilians. We later added other civilian categories which have played a key role in the popular uprising and later in the armed conflict, such as media, medical, and humanitarian aid personnel, and Civil Defense rescue workers.

For nearly 13 years, we have issued [daily death tolls of victims](#), as well as [daily news reports](#) on killing incidents. We also issue a [monthly report](#) detailing the death toll of victims, whose deaths were documented in Syria during the previous month, amongst civilians, as well as of those who died [due to torture](#), in addition to issuing a biannual report and annual report, as well as dozens of other special reports [documenting the total death toll](#) or the death toll at the hands of one of the parties to the conflict in particular, in addition to a [monthly report](#) and special and periodic reports documenting the [massacres](#) committed on Syrian soil.

We have also turned the victims' database into a map and interactive charts accessible on our website, which categorize the victims according to governorate, gender, age group, the party responsible for their deaths, and other criteria. We also provide charts detailing the death toll of victims killed at the hands of all parties to the conflict, as well as others giving information on specific groups, such as specifically detailing the death toll among women and children victims, with all of these being updated regularly.

SNHR also periodically submits special forms to the United Nations [Special Rapporteur](#) on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, as well as to the Special Rapporteur on torture, submitting cases of killings in which we were able to document all of the available data, having obtained the consent of each victim's family members before submitting these.

It should be noted that the United Nations has relied on SNHR for all the statistics it has used in its analysis of victims in the conflict, given SNHR's prominent role as one of the most credible sources on Syria. SNHR has also signed a [Memorandum of Understanding with Humanitarian Outcomes on contributing to its Aid Worker Security Database \(AWSD\)](#) project, which stipulated the establishment of a joint coordination and cooperation mechanism aimed at documenting and archiving violations and violence affecting aid workers. SNHR has also partnered with numerous United Nations bodies, in addition to various states' governments, to provide them with statistics from our databases, in order to serve the justice process, and ultimately to ensure the accountability and prosecution of criminals. SNHR is also used as a trustworthy source by numerous regional and international news agencies and many international human rights organizations.

IX. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- The evidence we have collected regarding incidents involving deaths indicates that the attacks documented in this report were deliberately directed against civilians and civilian objects. Syrian-Russian alliance forces have committed various crimes of extrajudicial killings, including fatal torture. Their attacks and indiscriminate bombardment have resulted in the destruction of facilities and buildings. There are reasonable grounds to believe that the war crime of attacking civilians has been committed in many cases.
- A large proportion of the Syrians killed died as a result of landmine explosions, with none of the perpetrator forces involved in the Syrian conflict issuing maps revealing the locations where landmines have been planted. This indicates a chilling total indifference by all parties to the lives of civilians, particularly children.
- The Syrian regime has not only violated international humanitarian law and customary law but has also breached a number of UN Security Council resolutions, particularly resolutions 2139 and 2042 on the release of detainees, as well as resolution 2254, all without any accountability.
- The indiscriminate and disproportionate bombardment carried out by the SDF is a clear violation of international humanitarian law, with the crimes of indiscriminate killing amounting to war crimes.
- The use of remote bombings to target densely populated areas reflects a criminal mindset intent on deliberately inflicting the greatest possible number of deaths, which is a clear contravention of international human rights law and a flagrant violation of the Geneva IV Convention on Civilians of 1949, Articles 27, 31, and 32.
- We have documented cases of extrajudicial killings committed by various controlling forces against the populations under their control, which constitute serious violation of international human rights law.

- We have documented no warnings being given by Syrian regime forces, Russian forces, or US-led International Coalition forces before carrying out any of their attacks, as required by international humanitarian law. This has been the case since the beginning of the popular uprising in Syria, showing an utter disregard for the lives of civilians in Syria.
- It is clear from the volume of violations, their repeated nature, and the excessive level of force used, as well as the indiscriminate manner of the bombardment and the coordinated nature of the regime's attacks, that they must be the result of orders from the higher echelons of power, carried out in accordance with a state policy.
- All armed opposition factions/Syrian National Army forces have violated Security Council resolution 2139 through attacks that constitute violations of customary international humanitarian law, resulting in collateral civilian deaths and injuries.

Recommendations

UN Security Council

- The Security Council should take additional steps following the adoption of Resolution 2254, which clearly demands that all parties should, *"...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 issue should be referred to the International Criminal Court and all those involved in perpetrating crimes against humanity and war crimes should be held accountable.
- Members of the UN Security Council must stop using their veto to protect the Syrian regime, which has committed hundreds of thousands of violations over the past ten years, many of which constitute crimes against humanity and war crimes.
- Establish security and peace in Syria by implementing the 'Responsibility to Protect' norm (R2P) in order to protect Syrians' lives, heritage, and cultural artifacts from being destroyed, looted, and ruined.
- Request that all relevant United Nations agencies make greater efforts to provide humanitarian and food aid and medical assistance in areas where the fighting has ceased, and in internally displaced persons' camps, and follow up with those states that have pledged the necessary contributions.
- Seriously work to achieve a political transition under the Geneva Communiqué and Security Council Resolution No. 2254, to ensure the stability and territorial integrity of Syria, and enable the dignified and safe return of refugees and IDPs.
- Allocate a significant amount of money for clearing mines left over by the Syrian conflict from the United Nations Mine Action Service, particularly in areas prepared to carry out this task with transparency and integrity.

International Community

- In light of the split within the UN Security Council and its utter incapability, action should be taken at the national and regional levels to form alliances to support the Syrian people and increase support for relief efforts. Additionally, the principle of universal jurisdiction should be applied in local courts regarding these crimes in order to conduct fair trials for all those involved.
- SNHR has repeatedly called for the implementation of the 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine (R2P) in dozens of studies and reports and as a member of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICR2P) 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 talks 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 continued for 13 years in Syria.
- 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.
- Work to launch projects to create maps revealing the locations of landmines and cluster munitions in all Syrian governorates. This would facilitate the process of clearing them and educating the population about their locations.
- Support the political transition process and impose pressure to compel the parties to implement the political transition within a period of no more than six months so that most of the violations end and millions of displaced people can safely return to their homes without fear.
- Prevent and end any forcible return of Syrian refugees, since the situation in Syria continues to be extremely unsafe, and put pressure on the Syrian regime to achieve a political transition that would ensure the automatic return of millions of refugees.

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

- The OHCHR should submit a report to the Human Rights Council and other organs of the United Nations on the violations mentioned in this report and previous reports and should shed greater light on the issue of the continuing killing in Syria.

Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI)

- Launch extensive investigations into the cases included in this report and previous reports. SNHR is willing to cooperate and provide further evidence and data.
- Focus on the issue of landmines and cluster munitions within its next report.
- Work on identifying the responsibility of individuals within the Syrian regime who are involved in crimes against humanity and war crimes, publish their names to expose them to international public condemnation, and end all dealings with them at every political and economic level.

International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism (IIIM)

- Collect further evidence about the crimes documented in this report, and facilitate an exchange of experience and expertise with Syrian organizations working in the field of documentation, data collection and analysis.

The United Nations Special Envoy for Syria

- Condemn the perpetrators of these crimes and of the massacres, and those who were primarily responsible for dooming the de-escalation agreements.
- Re-sequence the peace process so that it can resume its natural course despite Russia's attempts to divert and distort it, empowering the Constitutional Committee prior to the transitional governing body.
- Call for rapid implementation of democratic political change that restores victims' rights and embodies the principles of transitional justice.
- There is no sense in pursuing any political process in light of the continued bombing of hospitals and theft of UN aid, and the pursuit of a zero-security military solution by the Syrian regime and its allies, and the UN Envoy must acknowledge this.
- Clearly assign responsibility to the parties responsible for the death of the political process, and disclose to the Syrian people the timing of the end of the political transition process.

Syrian regime

- Stop indiscriminate shelling and targeting of residential areas, hospitals, schools and markets.
- End the acts of torture that have caused the deaths of tens of thousands of Syrian citizens in detention centers.
- Ensure compliance with UN Security Council resolutions and customary humanitarian law.
- Provide detailed maps of the locations where the regime planted landmines, especially in civilian areas or near residential communities.

Russian regime

- Completely cease the bombing of hospitals, protected objects, and civilian areas, and respect customary international law.
- Compensate, reconstruct, and rehabilitate the facilities that have been damaged, and compensate the families of those who have been killed and injured, by the current Russian regime.
- As a guarantor party in the Astana talks, the Russian regime must stop thwarting de-escalation agreements, and apply pressure on the Syrian regime in order to end all indiscriminate attacks and allow the unconditional passage of humanitarian aid to besieged areas.
- Provide detailed maps of sites where Russian forces have launched cluster munition attacks, issue these to the United Nations, and inform the Syrian public about them, thus facilitating the disposal of unexploded ordnance.

The Coalition (US-led International Coalition and SDF)

- The states supporting the SDF should suspend all forms of support until the SDF commits itself to complying with the rules of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. This is primarily one of the responsibilities of the supporting states.
- The SDF should form a special committee to investigate incidents of violations committed by SDF forces, disclose the details of their findings and apologize for them, hold those responsible accountable, and compensate the victims and affected.
- Provide detailed maps of the locations where the SDF has planted landmines, especially in civilian sites or near residential communities.

All Armed opposition factions/Syrian National Army

- Ensure the protection of civilians in all areas under their control. These forces should also take care to distinguish between civilians and military targets and cease any indiscriminate attacks.
- Launch investigations into the human rights violations that have taken place, hold those responsible accountable, make the findings of these investigations public for the Syrian people, and take punitive measures against those personnel responsible for violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law.
- Provide detailed maps of the locations where the Armed Opposition factions/Syrian National Army planted landmines, especially civilian sites or near residential communities.

Humanitarian organizations

- Develop urgent operational plans to secure decent shelter for internally displaced persons, particularly widows and orphans.
- Exert efforts towards carrying out landmine clearance operations in parallel with relief operations whenever the opportunity arises.
- Clearly mark protected facilities and equipment, such as medical facilities, schools, and ambulances, with identifiable symbols that can be seen and distinguished from afar.
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No justice without accountability

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