

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	1217
Land:	Syrien
Kilde:	UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner
Titel:	Press briefing note on Syria
Udgivet:	7. februar 2020
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	6. maj 2020

Document #2024811

OHCHR – UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Press briefing note on Syria

We are deeply concerned by the sharp increase in hostilities in northwest Syria and the blatant disregard for protection of civilians. Fighting in southern and eastern Idlib and in western and southern Aleppo continues to kill and injure scores of civilians and displace hundreds of thousands of others.

In five days from 1 to 5 February, we verified incidents in which at least 49 civilians, including 14 women and 17 children, were killed. Of these, seven civilians were killed in Government-controlled areas.

Last month, we verified incidents in which at least 186 civilians, including 33 women, 37 boys and 30 girls, were killed. Of these, 14 civilians were killed in Government-controlled areas.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet repeats her demand to all parties, including the Syrian Government, Russia, Turkey and other state or non-state actors, to ensure the protection of civilians and to carry out their military operations in accordance with international law.

It is shocking that civilians continue to bear the brunt of hostilities between all parties to the conflict. It appears foreign powers are battling for territorial and political gains, while blatantly disregarding their obligation to protect civilians.

Civilians are killed even as they try to escape the intensifying hostilities. On 3 February, a reported airstrike by pro-government forces hit a bus travelling on a highway near the town of Orum al-Qubra in western rural Aleppo. Nine civilians - all from the same family - fleeing the latest fighting were killed.

From 1 to 5 February, we also documented ground-based strikes by non-State armed groups that hit residential areas and educational facilities in Aleppo city. Five civilians, including a woman and her two children, were killed in the al-Hamdaniya neighborhood. Strikes also hit the University of Aleppo, wounding at least one student.

ENDS

ecoi.net summary:

North-western Syria: At least 49 civilians killed in armed conflict from 1 to 5 February 2020



Country:

Syrian Arab Republic

Source:

[OHCHR – UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
\(/en/source/11534.html\)](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25531&LangID=E)

Original link:

[https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?
NewsID=25531&LangID=E](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25531&LangID=E)
([https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?
NewsID=25531&LangID=E](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25531&LangID=E))

Document type:

Appeal or News Release

Language:

English

Published:

7 February 2020

Document ID:

2024811

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ecoi.net is run by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) in cooperation with Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration. ecoi.net is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria. ecoi.net is supported by ECRE & UNHCR.

