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78 Civilian Deaths, Including Seven Children and Four Women as well as Nine Deaths due to Torture, Documented in Syria in February 2024

At Least **18** Civilians, Including
Two Children, Killed While
Collecting Desert Truffles

Friday 01 March 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 that were recorded by the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) as taking place in Syria at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in February 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 which the SNHR 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 the death toll of victims who died at the hands of 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, February 2024. 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, the date when we were able to document the victim's death, and the date on which we believe the death occurred.

The methodology adopted by SNHR in documenting the victims can be found at this link.¹

1. Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), *Syrian Network for Human Rights Methodology*
http://sn4hr.org/public_html/wp-content/pdf/english/SNHR_Methodology_en.pdf

This report draws upon the constant daily monitoring of news and developments by SNHR's team, and on information supplied by our extensive network of various sources 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 the Victims Documentation Department can follow up on the information provided, verify its accuracy and then include it in the database.

Our investigations confirm that all of 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 our methodology that can be found at this link. We've opted to shed light on some aspects of these challenges in order to keep the report of 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 Incidents of Killing in February

In February, we documented the killing of **78 civilians**, including seven children and four women. Below are a number of observations regarding the events that marked this month:

A. Other parties

Out of the 78 civilians documented killed in February, **59 victims**, including four children and three women, were confirmed to have been killed by other parties, meaning that the victims documented as having been killed by other parties accounted for 76 percent of February's total death toll. In terms of governorates, Raqqa governorate saw the highest death toll, accounting for 32 percent of all victims killed by other parties, followed by the two governorates of Daraa and Homs with 22 percent each. Some noteworthy incidents include:

- In February, we recorded that **18 civilians**, including two children, were killed while collecting desert truffles. Fifteen of these 18 were killed by the explosion of landmines planted by unidentified parties, while the remaining three civilians, one of them a child, were killed by unidentified parties. However, most of the areas people travel to to harvest desert truffles are controlled by Syrian regime forces and pro-Iranian regime militias who impose a monopoly over these crops, which is another cause of tensions between these groups. ISIS cells are also present in those areas.
- On Sunday, February 25, 14 civilians were killed and eight others injured by the explosion of a landmine of unidentified source. The victims were in a truck near Jabal al-Sbe'ie in the badiya 'desert' of al-Rasafa city in southern rural Raqqa governorate, on their way to harvest desert truffles, when the landmine exploded. The area was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.
- In February, we documented the deaths of **24 civilians**, including four children and two women, caused by the explosion of landmines of unidentified source. With February's toll, 27 civilians, including seven children and two women, have been killed by landmines since the beginning of this year.
- On Sunday, February 25, two sisters, identified as the daughters of a man named as Obada Abdullah al-Karmoush from Mrat village in eastern rural Deir Ez-Zour governorate, were killed by the explosion of a landmine of unidentified source in al-Azba town in northern Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The area was under the control of Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) at the time of the incident.
- In February, Israeli forces bombarded multiple areas, killing seven civilians, including one woman. On Wednesday, February 7, **six civilians**, including one woman, were killed, and 13 others were wounded, in an attack by warplanes believed to be affiliated with the Israeli Air Force. The warplanes targeted five sites in Homs city and the surrounding rural areas, with one of the airstrikes targeting and completely razing a two-story residential building in al-Hamra neighborhood in Homs city. The area was under the control of Syrian regime forces and pro-regime Iranian militias at the time of the incident.

- On Wednesday, February 21, Israeli forces [fired](#) a number of rockets from the occupied Golan Heights, targeting [a building](#) near the Iranian International School in Kafrsousa neighborhood in Damascus governorate, killing a 52-year-old man named Talal Ibrahim al-Bayad, who worked as a bus driver for the school. Talal, who originally came from Darayya city in southwestern Rural Damascus 'Rif Dimshaq' governorate and was living in Mu'damiyet al-Sham also in southwestern Rural Damascus governorate, was killed while delivering goods to a school.



↑ Talal Ibrahim al-Bayad

- In February, gunfire of unidentified source killed **16 civilians**, or 27 percent of all victims killed by other parties this month. Those victims were killed in the governorates of Daraa, Deir Ez-Zour, Homs, Idlib, and Aleppo.
- On Sunday, February 25, [four civilian security guards were shot dead by unidentified gunmen](#) while on duty in separate incidents in different locations in western and northwestern rural areas of Raqqa governorate. Local residents in each location found the victims' bodies on the ground nearby their workplaces bearing gunshot wounds, with all the bodies being taken to a hospital in Raqqa city. The area was under the control of the SDF at the time of the incident.
- On Monday, February 12, a man, identified as 36-year-old Jouan Izzat al-Aswad, was killed in an artillery attack by Turkish forces stationed in a rural area of Afrin in northwestern Aleppo governorate. The attack targeted civilian areas, as well as military sites for regime forces and the SDF, in Abin/Benah village, which is administratively affiliated with Sherawa Subdistrict in rural Afrin. The area was under the control of the SDF at the time of the incident.

B. Syrian regime forces

Also in February, Syrian regime forces killed eight civilians, including one woman and five individuals due to torture, with these deaths accounting for approximately 10 percent of all victims killed in February. Victims killed by regime forces were spread across various governorates, with the governorates of Hama, Deir Ez-Zour, and Suwayda each seeing two civilian deaths of those ten.

- On Thursday, February 1, a man, identified as [Mohammad al-Nabhan](#), died of injuries sustained almost seven years ago on March 24, 2017, when a Syrian regime warplane dropped a bomb containing a poisonous gas on his hometown of al-Latamena in northwestern Hama governorate. Mohammad was completely paralyzed in the bombing, which also left him deaf and blind, and had remained in this condition until his death. The area was under the control of armed opposition factions at the time of the incident.
- On Tuesday, February 20, [Asma Ahmad Masri](#) was killed, while her sister and mother, identified as 55-year-old Sukaina and 79-year-old Rasmiya Masri respectively, were injured, in an artillery attack by Syrian regime forces who fired multiple shells at Afis village in eastern rural Idlib governorate, one of which hit the family's home. The village was under the control of armed opposition factions and Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS).

C. SDF

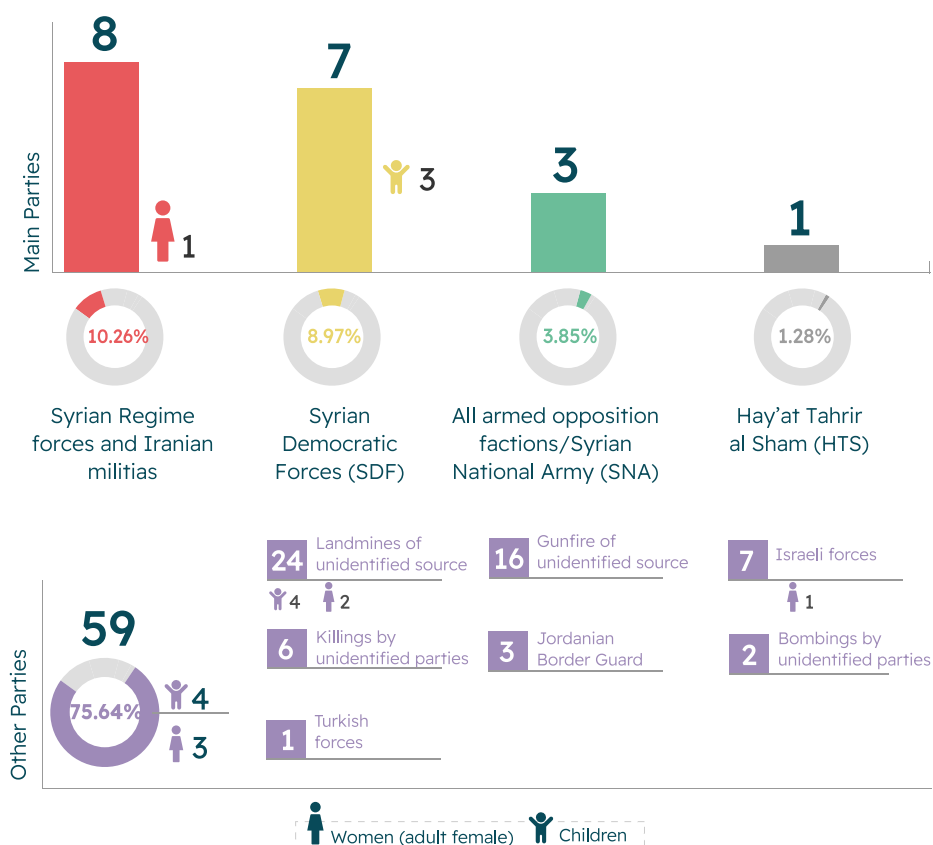
In February, the SDF killed seven civilians, including three children in Deir Ez-Zour governorate. Six of the seven victims, including two children, were shot dead by SDF patrol personnel, while the third child died due to torture.

On Wednesday, February 14, a boy, identified as 13-year-old [Nour al-Din Ayesh al-Ali](#), was shot dead by SDF personnel who were stationed at al-Shnan School in his home village of al-Shnan in eastern rural Deir Ez-Zour governorate. Nour al-Din was shot while he was working on a boat which ferries civilians between the village and the regime-held city of al-Qouriya city on the opposite banks of the Euphrates River. The SDF personnel shot him while he was on board the boat as it crossed the river from al-Qouriya city to al-Shnan village. The area is on the dividing line between Syrian regime forces and the SDF.

III. Civilian Death Toll in February 2024

In February 2024, SNHR documented the killing of **78 civilians**, including seven children and four women (adult female) at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria.

The deaths documented in February 2024 are distributed by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces as follows:



A. Main parties:

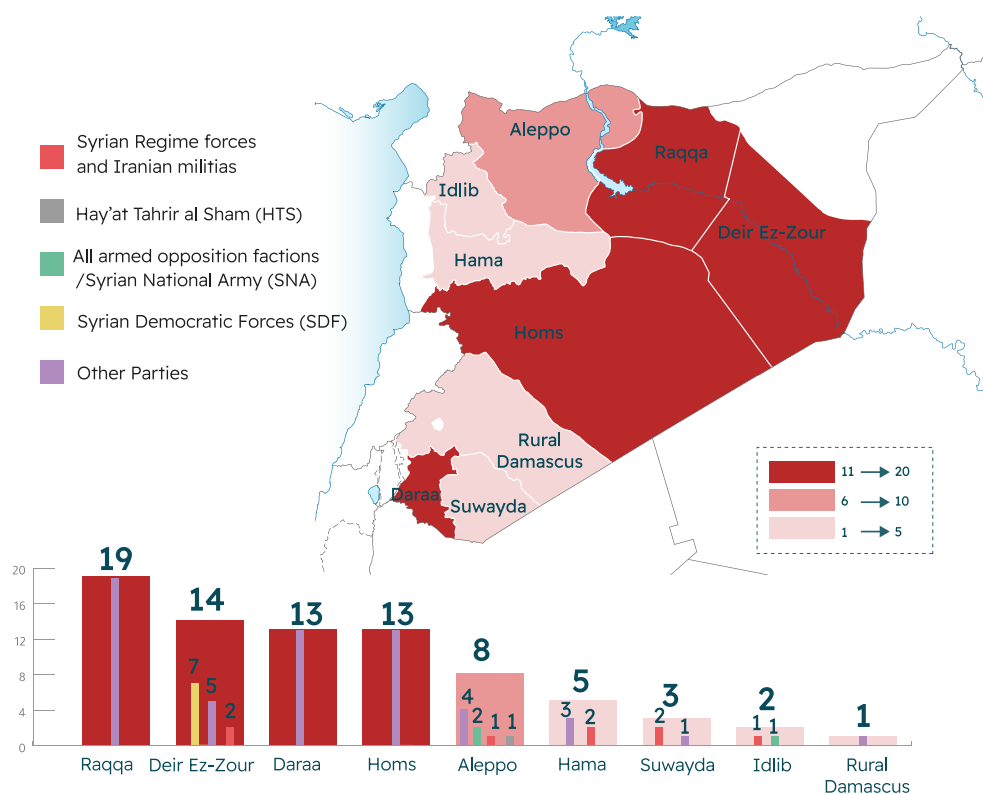
- **Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias):**
We documented the killing of eight civilians, including one woman, by Syrian regime forces.
- **Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS):**
We documented the killing of one civilian by HTS.
- **Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF):**
We documented the killing of three civilians by all armed opposition factions/SNA.
- **Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF):**
We documented the killing of seven civilians, including three children, by the SDF.

B. Other parties:

We documented the killing of 59 civilians, including four children and three women, by other parties, distributed as follows:

- Landmines of unidentified sources: 24 civilians, including four children and two women.
- Gunfire of unidentified source: 16 civilians.
- Bombings by unidentified parties: Two civilians.
- Killings by unidentified parties: Six civilians.
- Israeli forces: Seven civilians, including one child.
- Jordanian Border Guard: Three civilians.
- Turkish forces: One civilian.

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

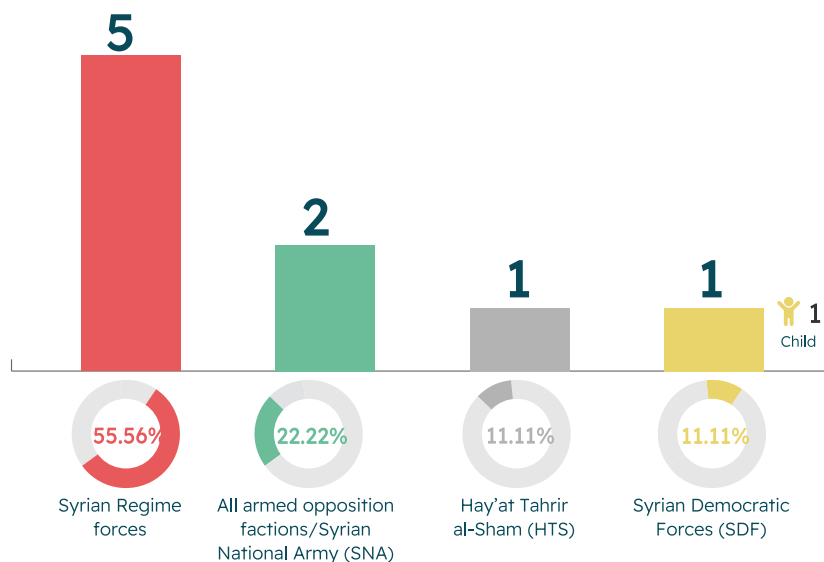


As the graph shows, Raqqa governorate saw the highest number of civilian deaths in February accounting for 24 percent, with all victims killed in the governorate being killed by other parties. Raqqa governorate was followed by Deir Ez-Zour governorate which accounted for approximately 18 percent, and then by the two governorates of Daraa and Homs, accounting for approximately 17 percent each.

V. Deaths due to Torture

In February 2024, SNHR documented the deaths by torture of nine individuals, including one child, at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria.

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



A. Main parties

- Syrian regime forces: Five individuals
- Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS): One individual.
- All armed opposition factions/Syrian National Army (SNA): Two individuals.
- Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF): One child.

Below are the most notable cases:

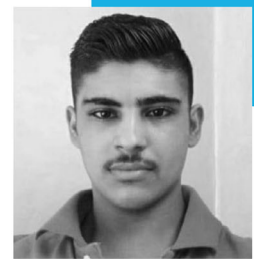
Nasser Saber Bunduq, born in 1967, was a renowned Syrian writer and poet, who also worked at the Arab Institution for Media in Damascus city. Nasser, who originally came from Remat Hazem village in western rural Suwayda governorate, was living in Sehnaya town in western Rural Damascus governorate at the time of his arrest on Monday, February 17, 2014, by personnel from the Syrian regime's Military Security Intelligence Directorate, who detained him in a raid on his home in the town. He was then taken to the Military Security Intelligence's Branch No. 227, also known as al-Manteqa branch, in Kafrsousa town in Damascus city. He has been classified as forcibly disappeared ever since, with the Syrian regime denying any knowledge of his whereabouts and refusing to allow anyone, even a lawyer, to visit him.

On Monday, February 5, 2024, Nasser Bunduq's family obtained a family statement from the state registry office which stated baldly that Nasser had died on March 5, 2014, providing no other details, including the place or cause of death. By cross-checking this document with the data on Nasser's arrest stored on SNHR's database, it can be concluded that he died 17 days after his arrest. We can confirm that he was in good health at the time of his arrest, indicating a strong probability that he died due to torture and medical negligence. We can also confirm that Syrian regime forces failed to publicly announce Nasser's death when it happened, and also failed to return his body to his family.



↑ 👁 Nasser Saber Bunduq

Bashar Mohammad al-Salama, a boy originally from al-Qouriya city in eastern rural Deir Ez-Zour, was 15 years old when he was arrested in 2017 in Hasaka city, where he was living at the time, by SDF personnel. Bashar has been classified as forcibly disappeared ever since with the SDF denying any knowledge of his whereabouts and refusing to allow anyone, even a lawyer, to visit him.



↑ 👁 Bashar Mohammad al-Salama, a boy

On Monday, February 19, 2024, Bashar's family received the news from an SDF-affiliated intermediary that he had died in an SDF detention center. We are still investigating and collecting information about Bashar's death. However, SNHR can confirm that he was in good health at the time of his arrest, indicating a strong probability that he died due to torture in the SDF detention center. SNHR can also confirm that the SDF has yet to return his body to his family.

IV. Deaths among medical personnel

In February, we documented the killing of one medical personnel at the hands of other parties.

On Wednesday, February 7, 2024, Eyad Abdul Nasser Awarek, a pharmacist from al-Wa'er neighborhood in Homs city, was killed in an attack by warplanes believed to be affiliated with the Israeli Air Force, which targeted five sites in Homs city and the surrounding areas. One of the airstrikes targeted a two-story residential building in al-Hamra neighborhood in Homs city, completely razing it, and killing the victim. The area was under the control of Syrian regime forces and pro-regime Iranian militias at the time of the incident.



↑ 👁 Eyad Abdul Nasser Awarek

VI. Most Notable Massacres

In February 2024, SNHR documented three massacres at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria as follows:

The massacres documented in February 2024 are distributed by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria as follows:



A. Other parties: Three massacres

- Landmines of unidentified source: One massacre.
- Killings by unidentified parties: One massacre.
- Israeli forces: One massacre.

A total of 25 civilians, including one woman, were killed in the massacres documented in February 2024.



Below are the most notable massacres:

On Wednesday, February 7, 2024, warplanes believed to be affiliated with the Israeli Air Force bombed five sites in Homs city and the surrounding rural areas, [killing six civilians](#), including one woman, while 13 others were wounded. One of the attacks targeted a two-story residential building in al-Hamra neighborhood in Homs city, completely razing it. The area was under the control of Syrian regime forces and pro-regime Iranian militias at the time of the incident.

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

In this month: February

On Friday, February 14, 2018, 53 individuals, including **five children**, were killed by a car bomb of unidentified source that was detonated in front of a mosque in al-Ya-doda town in rural Daraa governorate.

On Tuesday, February 6, 2018, around 12:00, **31 civilians**, including five children and 10 women, were killed in an attack by Syrian regime air force fixed-wing warplanes and regime artillery forces who fired missiles, rockets, and shells at residential neighborhoods in Douma city in Eastern Ghouta in eastern Rural Damascus 'Rif Dimshaq' governorate. The city was under the control of armed opposition factions at the time of the incident.

On Thursday, February 8, 2018, **30 civilians**, including 10 children and four women, were killed, while at least 114 (mostly women and children) were injured, in airstrikes by fixed-wing warplanes which fired multiple missiles at Irbeen city in Eastern Ghouta in eastern Rural Damascus 'Rif Dimshaq' governorate. The city was under the control of armed opposition factions at the time of the incident.

On Wednesday, February 29, 2020, at around 22:40, fixed-wing warplanes believed to be Russian carried out three consecutive airstrikes targeting Shami Hospital, known as Ariha Surgical Hospital, and its vicinity in northern Ariha city in southern rural Idlib governorate. Some of the missiles struck residential buildings next to the hospital, killing six civilian (one child and five women) from one family, who were internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Jabal al-Zawiya area in southern rural Idlib governorate. The attack also killed one medical worker at the hospital who was directly hit by one of the missiles. The city was under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham at the time of the attack.

Recalling the massacre, Anas al-Ta'an, a Civil Defense 'White Helmets' volunteer, told SNHR:

“At around 15:00, the warplane targeted the center of Irbeen city. We rushed there, and the sight was horrifying. Dead bodies and body parts were scattered everywhere, as well as the goods sold by the vendors.”

Via Telegram on February 13, 2018.

As documented by SNHR



Victims from the Massacre of Irbeen city in Rural Damascus that was caused by a missile attack by Syrian regime warplanes - February 8, 2018 | Photo credit: Civil Defense (White Helmets) in Rural Damascus

VII. The Syrian Regime Has Failed to Register Hundreds of Thousands of 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, whether the victims were killed at the hands of the Syrian regime or by other parties, or to the families of the missing and forcibly disappeared. In fact, the regime only allows death certificates to be issued for those who meet the narrow criteria set by the regime 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, stating falsely that 'armed terrorist gangs', rather than the regime, killed their loved ones, if they wish to obtain a death certificate. 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 to obtain a death certificate, the Syrian regime relies on 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 name 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 the 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 death cases, increasing the security services' intrusion. 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 the 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 according to the governorate from which the victim originated, in order to show the extent of the losses suffered by the people of that governorate, enabling us to accurately ascertain the highest rates of violence documented in the case of 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 groups 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 by governorate, gender, age group, the party responsible for their deaths, and other criteria. There are also 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 on which we were able to document all of the available data, having obtained the consent of each victim's family members before submitting them.

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. SNHR also has signed a [Memorandum of Understanding with Humanitarian Outcomes on contributing to its Aid Worker Security Database \(AWSDB\)](#) 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 Arab and international news agencies and many international human rights organizations.

VIII. 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 were 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 Syrian Democratic Forces is considered 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 VI Convention, 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.

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 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 and implement the 'Responsibility to Protect' norm (R2P) in order to preserve 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 who were 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 Human Rights Office (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.
- 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 coalition and SDF)

- The states supporting the SDF should cease 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 the responsibility 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/SNA

- 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 and make the findings of these investigations public for the Syrian people.
- 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.

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No justice without accountability

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