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At Least 587 Attacks on Vital Civilian Facilities Documented in Syria in 2018

Including 31 Attacks in December



SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Tuesday, January 8, 2019

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.

Contents

- I. Introduction and Methodology
- II. December Outline
- III. Executive Summary
- IV. Details of Most Notable Incidents in December
 - a. Places of Worship
 - b. Vital Educational Facilities
 - c. Vital Medical Centers
 - d. Communal Facilities
 - e. Infrastructures
- V. Most Notable Incidents in 2018
- VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

I. Introduction and Methodology

Article 52 of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 defines Civilian Objects as: **“....all objects which are not military objectives”** with Military Objects being categorized as: **“those objects which by their nature, location, purpose or use make an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture or neutralization, in the circumstances ruling at the time, offers a definite military advantage.”**

Civilian objects include medical facilities, educational facilities, infrastructure facilities, places of worship, and other facilities used for civilian purposes.

Since March 2011, Syrian regime forces, followed by Syrian-Russian alliance forces, have been by far the worst offenders, ahead of all other parties, in terms of targeting vital civilian facilities – especially in the areas under the control of armed opposition and, to a lesser degree, in ISIS-held areas. We have recorded repeated attacks on thousands of vital facilities, proving conclusively that these facilities were deliberately destroyed and damaged. We have also recorded hundreds of massacres that resulted from attacks on such facilities. Whilst other parties have certainly committed similar violations to varying degrees, these have never been on anywhere near the same massive scale of the crimes committed by the Syrian-Russian-Iranian forces.



The attacks we have recorded include deliberate incidents of bombardment targeting civilian structures, instances of lootings, and attacks that rendered these structures unusable, undermining their purpose in serving civilians, despite the lack of any imperative military objective in such attacks and despite the fact that none of these structures were being used for combat-related purposes by any party which could conceivably have justified their being targeted by the other parties to the conflict.

In light of the prolonged duration of the conflict and of these facilities being continually targeted, as well as the ongoing demographic changes, a need arose for adapting the functions of some facilities (for example, many schools have been turned into shelters for IDPs). We have also noticed that some facilities have been forced to transfer to other buildings and areas more than once in order to evade bombardment, while others were moved to secure locations such as caves.

SNHR has dedicated a periodic monthly report to monitoring attacks on vital civilian facilities. In addition, SNHR has released extensive reports and research studies on vital facilities that have been destroyed by the parties to the conflict.

Methodology

This report monitors the attacks on vital civilian facilities that we were able to document in December. With the exception of attacks on vital medical facilities, Civil Defense centers and International Humanitarian Insignias, for which a detailed [monthly report](#) was allocated.

The report draws, firstly, upon the daily, ongoing documentation and monitoring efforts by SNHR team, and, secondly, on accounts from survivors, eyewitnesses, and local media workers who we've talked with via phone or social media. We have also analyzed a large number of videos and photographs that were posted online or which we received from local activists via e-mail, Skype, and social media. Videos posted by local activists have shown widespread destruction to vital civilian facilities. We have retained copies of all the videos and pictures included in this report in a secret online database, as well as backup copies on hard drives. For more information, please see the methodology adopted by SNHR for [classifying vital civilian facilities](#).

This report documents a number of bombings in which we were unable to identify the groups behind these attacks due to the considerable difficulty in identifying the responsible party in such incidents.



The report also documents a shooting in which we were unable to conclusively identify the perpetrators because it was not possible to visit the location or to obtain evidence to help us to identify those responsible with the accuracy required.

Most of the attacks we have documented targeted civilian areas, as our investigations confirmed, with no military bases or armories found before or during these attacks. The perpetrators in all these cases failed to take into consideration any principle of proportionality. We also found no trace of any warnings being issued to civilians by the attacking forces prior to these attacks as required by international humanitarian law.

The type and number of items of evidence vary from one case to another. In light of the aforementioned challenges, the legal description of many of these incidents has altered since they were first reported based on new evidence or information that emerged after we had released the initial reports. We have added this evidence and information to our data archive. Meanwhile, although many of the incidents documented don't fit the accepted criteria under which they would constitute a violation of international humanitarian law, they resulted in collateral damages, so we have recorded and archived these incidents to provide historical documentation of these events which can be preserved as a national record. However, they don't necessarily qualify as crimes.

This report only represents the bare minimum of incidents which we have been able to document, giving only a sample of the actual severity and magnitude of the violations that occurred. The report also doesn't cover the social, economic, and psychological ramifications of these events on the survivors and witnesses.

II. December Outline

December saw a rise in the number of attacks on vital civilian facilities compared to the previous two months, with the highest number of attacks once again being carried out by Syrian Regime forces who were responsible for 13 attacks this month, far more than any of the other parties involved in the conflict; all of these 13 attacks took place in the fourth de-escalation zone.

In the first quarter of 2018, 60 percent of the total number of attacks on vital civilian facilities were recorded following the military escalation witnessed in the three de-escalation zones (specific areas within the northern Homs governorate, parts of Daraa and Quneitra governorates, and the Eastern Ghouta in Damascus Suburbs governorate) which caused extensive destruction and led to the forced displacement of those areas' residents, with the areas

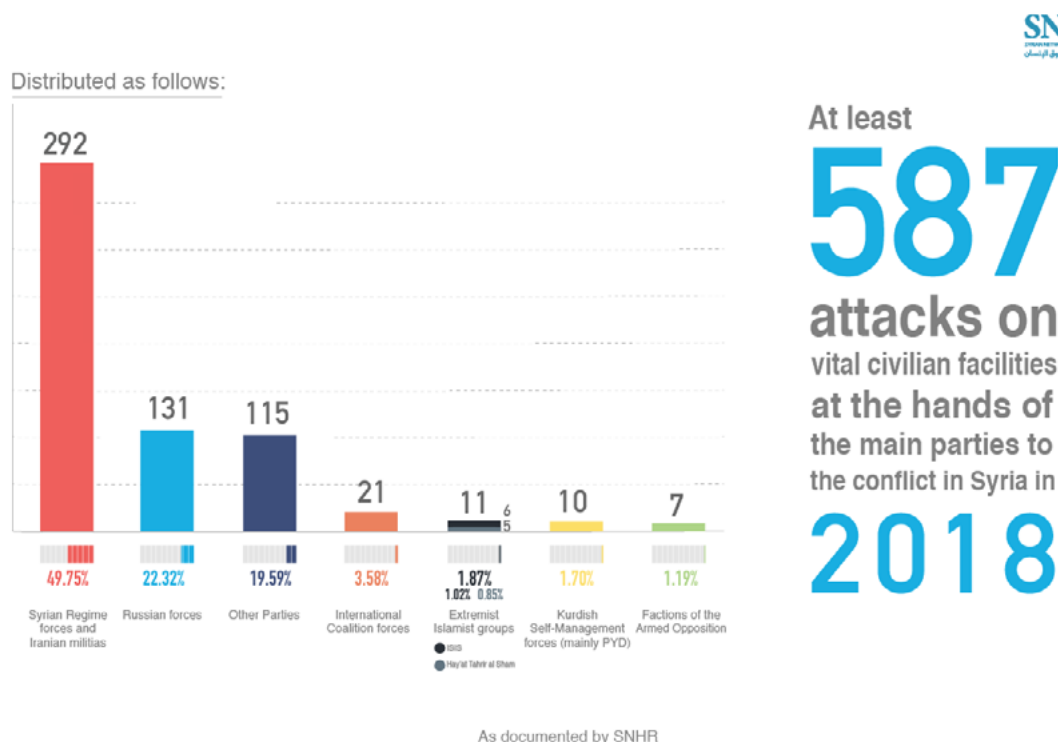


coming under the control of Syrian Regime forces. The last nine months have witnessed an unprecedented increase in the frequency of bombings, with most of these taking place in the northern Syria region which previously broke free from the control of Syrian Regime forces, with these attacks accompanied by attacks on vital civilian facilities. Syrian-Russian forces committed 73 percent of the attacks on vital civilian facilities, once again leaving them far ahead of the other parties involved in the conflict in Syria, with 68 percent of these attacks targeting medical facilities, schools, mosques and markets.

III. Executive Summary

A. Record of Attacks on vital civilian facilities in 2018

Through daily documentation and monitoring, we, at SNHR, recorded at least 587 attacks on vital civilian facilities in 2018, distributed by the perpetrator party as follows:



A. Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias): 292

B. Russian forces: 131.

C. Extremist Islamist groups:

- ISIS (the self-proclaimed 'Islamic State'): Six.
- Hay'at Tahrir al Sham (an alliance composed of Fateh al Sham Front and a number of factions of the Armed Opposition): Five:

D. factions of the Armed Opposition: Seven.

E. Self-Management forces (primarily consisting of the Democratic Union Party – a branch of the Kurdistan Workers' Party): 10.

D. International coalition forces: 21

F. Other parties: 115



- Most notable attacked facilities:

139 infrastructure facilities, 132 vital medical facilities, 121 places of worship, 115 vital educational facilities, 50 communal facilities, 17 refugee camps, nine special emblems of humanity, and four vital cultural facilities.

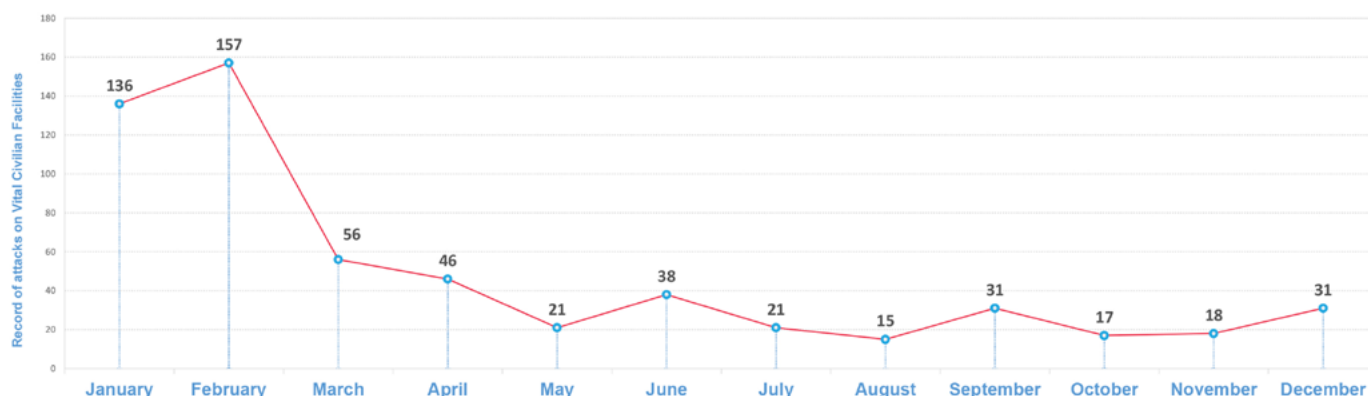
Distribution of Attacks on Vital Civilian Facilities by the Perpetrator Party in 2018								
Perpetrator Party	Syrian Regime Forces	Russian Forces	Extremist Islamist Groups		factions of the Armed Opposition	Self-Management Forces	International Coalition Forces	Other Parties
Attacked Facility			ISIS	Hay'at Tahrir al Sham				
Places of Worship								
Mosques	66	17	2	1		2	12	17
Churches and Monasteries	1							3
Vital Educational Facilities								
Schools	53	26	3	1		3	1	14
Kindergartens	4							1
Universities	1	2		1				1
Institutes	3							
Orphanages								1
Vital Medical Facilities								
Medical Facilities	60	25				2	5	16
Ambulances	3	14						7
Vital Cultural Facilities								
Archaeological Sites	1							1
Museums	1	1						
Communal Facilities								
Gardens								2
Markets	35	4				1		7
Malls and Commercial Centers								1
International Humanitarian Insignias								
Red Crescent	5							4
Infrastructures								
Power Stations and Energy Sources		1			1			
Civil Defense Centers	37	17						3
Water Systems	1	3						1
Official Headquarters	10	7			1		1	26
Transportation Systems		1		2	5			1
Bakeries	1	1					1	2
Grain Silo		1						
Domestic Animal Farms		1						
International Organizations and Headquarters								2
Industrial Facilities	2	2					1	4
Refugee Camps								
Refugee Camps	5	8	1			2		1
Total	292	131	6	5	7	10	21	115



Record of attacks on vital civilian facilities was distributed by month as follows:



At least 587 attacks on vital civilian facilities in Syria in 2018

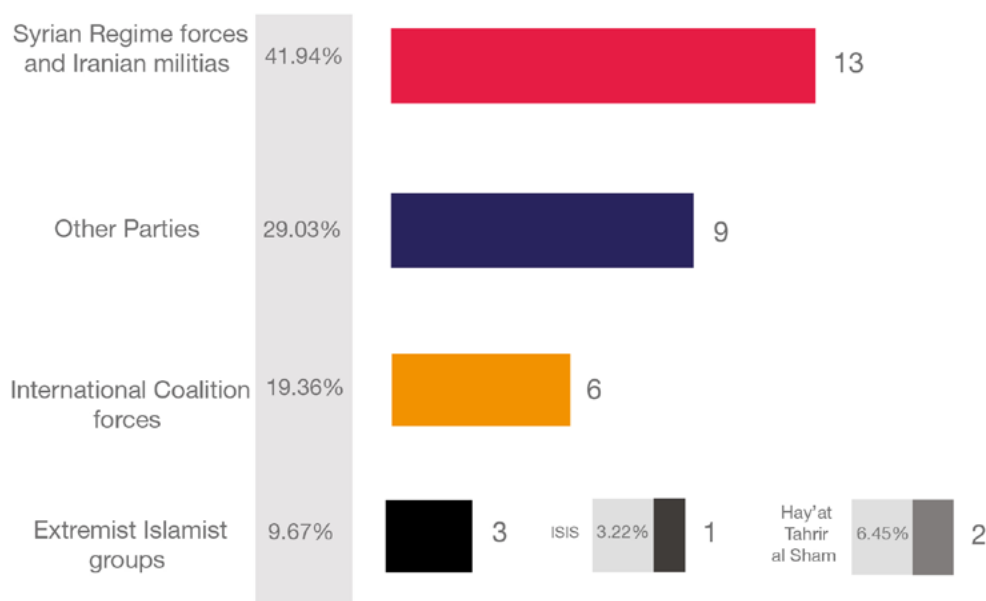


As documented by SNHR

B. Most notable attacks on vital civilian facilities in November

Through daily documentation and monitoring, we at SNHR recorded at least 31 attacks on vital civilian facilities in December 2018, distributed by the perpetrator party as follows:

At least 31 attacks on vital civilian facilities in Syria in December 2018



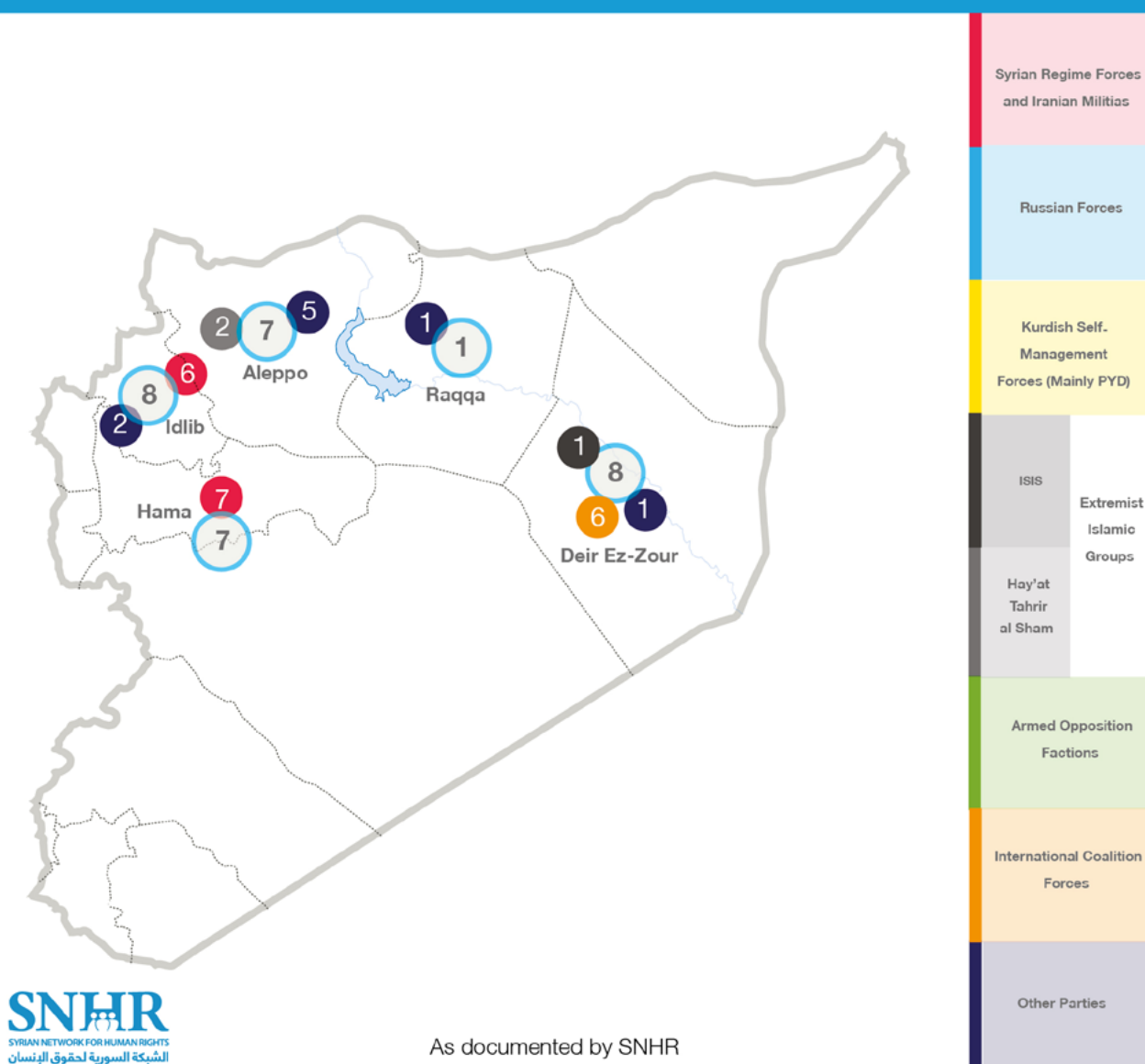
As documented by SNHR



- A. Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias): 13
- B. Extremist Islamist groups:
 - ISIS: One
 - Hay'at Tahrir al Sham: Two
- C. International coalition forces: Six
- F. Other parties: Nine

The record of attacks on vital civilian facilities in December was distributed across governorates by the perpetrator party as follows:

At least 31 attacks on vital civilian facilities in Syria in December 2018



- Most notable facilities that were attacked in December 2018:
11 infrastructure facilities, nine vital educational facilities, six places of worship, four vital medical centers, one communal facility.

Distribution of Attacks on Vital Civilian Facilities by the Perpetrator Party in December 2018					
Perpetrator Party	Syrian Regime Forces	Extremist Islamist Groups		International Coalition Forces	Other Parties
Attacked Facility		ISIS	Hay'at Tahrir al		
Places of Worship					
Mosques				6	
Vital Educational Facilities					
Schools	5	1			2
Kindergartens	1				
Vital Medical Facilities					
Medical Facilities					2
Ambulances					2
Communal Facilities					
Markets					1
Infrastructures					
Civil Defense Centers	7				
Official Headquarters					1
Transportation Systems			2		
International Organizations and Headquarters					1
Total	13	1	2	6	9

IV. Details of Most Notable Incidents in December

This report outlines the most notable attacks on vital civilian facilities. We have stored the complete details of all these incidents on SNHR's database.

A. Syrian regime forces

Vital educational facilities:

- Schools

On Saturday, December 21, 2018, Syrian Regime forces, stationed at Abu Dali village in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, used missile launchers to fire a number of missiles that landed near al Tah Elementary Martyrs School in al Tah village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The school furnishings and building's exterior were moderately damaged. The village was under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.



Tuesday, December 18, 2018, Syrian Regime forces used a missile launcher to fire missiles at Hittin School in [Jarjanaz](#) town in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The school building was partially damaged. The village was under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

- Kindergartens:

On Saturday, December 21, 2018, Syrian Regime forces, stationed at Abu Dali village in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, used a missile launcher to [fire](#) a number of [missiles](#) that landed near Amal [al Ghad Kindergarten](#) in al Tah village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The [kindergarten building](#) was largely destroyed, and its furnishings were [severely damaged](#). The village was under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.



Destruction following a ground attack by Syrian Regime forces on Hittin School, Jarjanaz town – December 12, 2018



Destruction following a ground attack by Syrian Regime forces near al Ghad Kindergarten in al Tah village, Idlib – December 1, 2018 - Mohammad Bal'as



B. Extremist Islamist Groups

- ISIS:

Vital educational facilities:

- Schools:

On Wednesday, November 28, 2018, an ISIS artillery group fired a number of mortar shells which landed near a primary school in al Sukkariya village of al Boukamal city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The school building was moderately damaged. On Wednesday, December 5, 2018, we were able to communicate with the area activists who have confirmed the incident. The village was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.

- Hay'at Tahrir al Sham

Infrastructure:

- Transportation systems:

On Sunday, December 2, 2018, members of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham detonated two bridges linking the towns of al Eys and al Hader with the southern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, mining them with 'TNT' under the pretext of preventing Syrian Regime forces from using them to advance to the town of al Eys. The explosion caused great damage to the bridges. At the time of the incident, al Eys town was under the control of Hay'at Tahrir al Sham, while al Hader town was controlled by Syrian Regime forces.

C. International Coalition forces:

Places of worship:

On Saturday, December 1, 2018, fixed-wing International Coalition forces warplanes fired missiles at [al Jaber Mosque](#) in Hawwama neighborhood in [Hajin](#) city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The mosque building was severely damaged, putting it out of service. The city, which was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident, is under the control of the predominantly Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces at the time of this report's publication.

On Sunday, December 16, 2018, fixed-wing International Coalition forces warplanes fired missiles at [al Boukhater Mosque](#) in al Boukhater neighborhood in Hajin city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The mosque building was completely destroyed, putting it out of service. The city, which was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident, is under the control of the predominantly Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces at the time of this report's publication.



On Tuesday, December 18, 2018, fixed-wing International Coalition forces warplanes fired missiles near [al Rahma Mosque](#) in al Qal'a neighborhood of Hajin city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The mosque building and furnishings were moderately damaged. The city, which was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident – is under the control of the predominantly Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces at the time of this report's publication.

D. Other parties

Vital educational facilities:

- Schools:

On Wednesday, December 12, 2018, an IED placed inside a car near the [Ibn Zaydoun Primary School](#) in the center of [Izaz](#) town in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, exploded. The explosion resulted in a number of casualties, in addition to causing severe damage to the school building and furnishings, putting it out of service. We have been unable to identify the perpetrator of this bombing up to the time of this report's publication due to the considerable difficulty in identifying the responsible party in such attacks. The city was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident.



Damage following an explosion of an IED whose source is so far unknown - near Ibn Zaydoun Primary School in Izaz city, Aleppo – December 12, 2018



Communal Facilities:

- Markets:

On Sunday, December 16, 2018, an IED placed inside a car exploded in [al Hal market](#) in the center of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, [inflicting](#) a massacre of people nearby, as well as causing [substantial damage](#) to a number of [shops](#) and [market facilities](#). We have been unable to [identify](#) the perpetrator behind these bombings up to the time of this report's publication due to the considerable difficulty in identifying the responsible party in such incidents. The city was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident.



Damage caused by the explosion of an IED whose source remains unknown-
in al Hal market in the center of Afrin city, Aleppo – December 16, 2018

V. Most Notable Incidents in 2018

A. Syrian Regime forces:

On Saturday, January 6, 2018, fixed-wing warplanes belonging to the Syrian-Russian forces (verification efforts are continuing to determine which party was responsible) fired missiles at and around al Tuffahiya village Mosque in the Kurds Mountains in the northern suburbs of Latakia governorate, causing extensive destruction to the [mosque building](#), as well as extensive damage to the mosque cladding, in addition to damaging nearby houses in the village. The village was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident.



On Sunday, January 21, 2018, militias affiliated with Syrian Regime forces attacked [Khalid ibn al Walid Mosque](#) in [Buqrus Tahtani](#) village in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, stealing some of [the mosque's](#) furnishings and burning other articles of furniture. Buqrus Tahtani village was under the control of Syrian Regime forces at the time of the incident.



Damage caused by the burning of Khaled Ibn al Walid Mosque in Buqrus Tahtani village by Syrian Regime forces, Deir Ez-Zour – January 21, 2018

On Monday, February 5, 2018, fixed-wing Syrian Regime forces warplanes fired a missile at a popular market in the center of [Beit Sawa](#) town in the Eastern Ghouta, in the east of Damascus Suburbs governorate, inflicting a massacre, and [partially destroying](#) a number of shops, as well as [moderately damaging](#) others. The city, which was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident, is under the control of Syrian Regime forces up to the time of this report's publication.

On Friday, February 16, 2018, at around 14:50, Syrian Regime artillery forces fired an explosive cylinder at an area near [Teir Ma'la high school](#) in the center of Teir Ma'la village in the northern suburbs of Homs governorate, partially damaging the school wall and causing minor damage to its building and furnishings. The village, which was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident, is under the control of Syrian Regime forces up to the time of the report's publication.



On Friday, May 4, 2018, Syrian Regime artillery forces fired a shell at Kafr Hamra School in [Kafr Hamra](#) village in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. The school building and furniture were [moderately damaged](#). The village was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident

The SNHR contacted media activist Mohammad al Atassi¹, who was in his home in the center of the village around 500 meters from the school when the Syrian Regime artillery shelled the school site with five shells. **“I immediately went to school to report on the event. One shell hit the school directly and caused a hole in the ceiling, in addition to damage to the furniture, while the school window got broken”** Mohammed confirmed that there was no military presence at the targeted site, and there were thankfully no casualties due to the Friday holiday meaning the school was empty of students.

On Thursday, June 28, 2018, fixed-wing warplanes belonging to Syrian-Russian forces (forces (verification efforts are still underway to determine which of the parties was responsible) fired missiles at [a kindergarten](#) in [Nawa](#) city in the western suburbs of Daraa governorate, causing partial damage to the kindergarten building and extensive damage to its furniture, putting the kindergarten out of service. The city, which was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident, is under the control of Syrian Regime forces up to the time of this report's publication.

On Sunday morning, July 1, 2018, fixed-wing Syrian Regime forces warplanes fired [missiles](#) at the historic [Roman Bosra Theater](#) in Bosra al Sham city in the northern east suburbs of Daraa governorate, causing [partial destruction](#) to the [western stand](#) of the theater. The city, which was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident, is under the control of Syrian Regime forces up to the time of this [report's publication](#).

¹ Via WhatsApp on June 5, 2018





Destruction inflicted by the Syrian Regime attack on Roman Bosra Theatre in Bosra al Sham city, Daraa – July 1, 2018

On Friday, November 2, 2018, Syrian Regime artillery forces fired [a number of shells](#) at al Sarman Camp in al Sarman village in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, which caused [moderate damage](#) to a number of tents. The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

B. Russian forces:

On Tuesday, January 16, 2018, fixed wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, fired [a missile](#) at the water pumping station in Ein al Zarqa - the collection of [several wells](#) feeding the city with groundwater - located west of Ma'aret An-Nu'man city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The bombardment set the generator on fire and put the station out of service. The city was under joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, April 29, 2018, [fixed wing](#) warplanes, which we believe were Russian, fired several [missiles](#) at [al Waleed refugee camp](#) in the northwest of Ma'ar Zita village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, [causing casualties](#), in addition to extensive damage to the [camp facilities](#), and destruction in the construction of a school built within the camp - made up of two rooms of concrete blocks - and its furniture. The village was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident.





Destruction in al Waleed camp caused by an air strike by fixed-wing war planes which we believe were Russian on the camp in Ma'ar Zita village, Idlib – April 29, 2018

On Tuesday, September 4, 2018 fixed wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, fired missiles on [al Badriya School](#) for basic education in al Badriya village in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate, [causing extensive](#) destruction in [the school building](#) and wall, as well as extensive damage to its furniture putting it out of service. The village was under joint control of factions in the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.



Destruction in al Badriya School for Basic Education caused by an air strike by fixed-wing warplanes which we believe were Russian on the school in al Badriya village, Idlib – September, 4, 2018 - Abdul Razzaq Madi



On Monday, September 10, 2018, fixed wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, fired a missile on the mosque of Hasraya village in the north-western suburbs of Hama governorate, which completely destroyed the mosque putting it out of service. The village was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident.



C. Extremist Islamist Groups:

• ISIS:

On Thursday, February 8, 2018, an ISIS artillery fired four mortar shells on [Amer bin Jarrah Mosque](#) in Heit village in the northern suburbs of Daraa governorate, resulting in partial destruction of the [mosque building](#) and moderate damage to its furniture and cladding. The village – which was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident – is under the control of the Syrian Regime forces at the time of preparation of the report.



• Hay'at Tahrir al Sham:

On Friday, March 23, 2018, [a tank belonging](#) to Hay'at Tahrir al Sham fired a shell on the mosque of Mkalbis village of Einjara village in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, causing a hole in one of the walls of the mosque and causing serious damage to the furniture. The village was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident

D. factions of the Armed Opposition:

On Friday, August 31, 2018, at around 05:00, elements of the National Front for Liberation, one of the factions of the Armed Opposition, blew up by homemade mines [al Shari'a bridge](#), which connects al Shari'a village to al Karim village in the north-western suburbs of Hama governorate. The exploding caused partial destruction in the bridge of al Shari'a putting it out of service. We note that the bridge connects between villages controlled by factions of the Armed Opposition and villages controlled by the Syrian Regime forces in Sahl al Ghab area in Hama suburbs. The bridge lies within the areas controlled by factions of the Armed Opposition.

E. Self-Management forces:

On 6 February 2018, Self-Management artillery forces, [stationed](#) in Afrin area in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, [fired three shells](#) at the al Bayan [refugee camp](#) located within Atma [camp complex](#) on the Syrian-Turkish border in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in casualties, in addition to [serious damage](#) to a number of tents. The area was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.



Damage caused by an attack by the Kurdish Self-Management forces on al Bayan Camp located within Atma camp complex on the Syrian-Turkish border – February 6, 2018



F. International Coalition forces:

On Monday, February 19, 2018, fixed-wing International Coalition Forces warplanes fired missiles at al Khdaiyrin bakery in Hajin city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The bakery building was severely damaged putting it out of service. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, August 19, 2018, fixed-wing International Coalition Forces warplanes fired missiles at [Khalid bin Al-Waleed Mosque](#) in al Marashda village of al Boukamal city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, causing serious damage to the mosque building and furniture putting it out of service. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

G. Other parties:

On Tuesday, January 9, 2018, a rocket shell landed on the Church of Lady of [al Niaah Cathedral](#), known as al [Zeitoun Church](#) in Bab Sharqi, east of Damascus city. The church building and cladding were [moderately damaged](#). We were unable to identify the perpetrator of this [bombing](#). The Bab Sharqi neighborhood was under the control of the Syrian Regime forces at the time of the incident.



Damage caused by a rocket shell whose source remains unknown on the Church of Lady of al Niaah Cathedral, known as the Zeitoun Church in Bab Sharqi, Damascus – January 9, 2018



On Thursday noon, April 12, 2018, three IEDs placed inside a car exploded near the orphanage building in the center of Izaz city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, causing serious damage to the façade and furniture of the building. We have been unable to identify the perpetrator of this bombing up to the time of this report's publication due to the considerable difficulty in identifying the responsible party in such attacks. The city was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident.

On Tuesday, October 9, 2018, an IED exploded near Abu al Qasem al Shabi School in [al Shaddadi](#) city in the southern suburbs of Hasakah governorate. The school wall was slightly damaged. We have been unable to identify the perpetrator of this bombing up to the time of this report's publication due to the considerable difficulty in identifying the responsible party in such attacks. The city was under the control of the prominently Kurdish Democratic forces at the time of the incident.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

Syrian regime and Russian forces

- The Syrian-Russian-Iranian alliance has, beyond any doubt, violated Security Council resolutions 2139 and 2254 which both state that indiscriminate attacks must be stopped.
- We can confirm that the incidents of bombardment cited in this report have targeted civilian structures. Therefore, Syrian-Russian-Iranian alliance forces have violated Articles 52,53,54,55, and 56 of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions.
- The attacks cited in this report that were carried out by the Syrian-Russian-Iranian alliance forces, are considered a violation of the rules of customary international humanitarian law (rules 7 through 10).
- Aerial bombardment has inflicted collateral damage which involved loss of lives, injuries, or significant damages to civil facilities. There are strong indicators suggesting that this damage was excessive compared to the anticipated military benefit.
- The indiscriminate manner of the incidents of bombing, and the coordinated approach of these attacks, as well as the repeated targeting, demonstrates conclusively that these attacks are the result of high-level orders, and form part of state policy.

The Coalition (international coalition and SDF)

The attacks by Coalition forces have caused significant damages to civilian facilities. In most cases, these attacks have also resulted in losses that involved casualties or injuries. There are strong indicators suggesting that the damage was excessive compared to the anticipated military benefit.



Other forces

ISIS and other parties have carried out attacks that targeted civilian structures, which also resulted, in some cases, in loss of lives. These violations may qualify as war crimes. However, these violations don't fit the proper criteria to qualify as crimes against humanity, as with the Syrian regime and pro-regime forces who carry out unlawful attacks in a systematic and widespread manner.

Recommendations

Security Council

- The Security Council must take additional steps following its adoption of resolutions 2139 and 2254, with no pledges to cease the indiscriminate bombing having been made to date. All parties to the conflict should respect these steps, and adhere to the rules of international humanitarian law.
- The Syrian crisis should be referred to the International Criminal Court and all those who are responsible should be held accountable, including the Russian regime whose involvement in war crimes has been repeatedly proven.
- Expand sanctions to include the Syrian, Russian, and Iranian regimes which are directly involved in crimes against humanity and war crimes against the Syrian people.
- Include the militias fighting on the side of the Syrian government who have committed multiple massacres, such as the Iranian militias, the Lebanese group Hezbollah, other Shi-ite groups, the National Defense Army, and Assad's Shabiha, on the international list of terrorist groups.
- Abstain from identifying the Syrian government as an official party in relation to the provision of humanitarian relief due to the government's responsibility for continuous and multiple crimes against humanity, and stop giving it the largest portion of financial and other aid, as this aid is being distributed solely to government loyalists rather than to people truly in-need.

International community

- In light of the schism within the Security Council and its utter inability to take any effective action, action should be taken on the national and regional levels to form alliances to support the Syrian people that would protect them from the daily killing and siege being perpetrated against them and increase support for relief efforts. Additionally, the principle of universal jurisdiction should be implemented 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” commitment in dozens of studies and reports and as a member of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP), with the efforts of all political entities from the Arab League’s plan and then Mr. Kofi Annan’s plan, as well as the Cessation of Hostilities statements and Astana agreements that followed, failing to provide any protection. Therefore, steps should be taken under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and the norm of the “Responsibility to Protect”, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly, should be implemented. This is especially crucial since the Security Council is still hindering the protection of civilians in Syria.
- Renew the pressure on the Security Council to refer the case in Syria to the International Criminal Court
- Work on fulfilling justice and achieving accountability in Syria through the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council and on activating the principle of universal jurisdiction.

OHCHR

The OHCHR should submit a report to the Human Rights Council and other organs of the United Nations on the incidents included in this report and the previous incidents, which are glaring abuses amongst a series of daily sporadic violations of a smaller scope. Also, the OHCHR should work on implementing the recommendations in this report.

Commission of Inquiry (COI)

Launch investigations into the cases included in this report and previous reports. SNHR is willing to cooperate and provide more evidences and data.

International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism (IIIM)

Address the cases mentioned in this report and past reports. SNHR is willing to cooperate and provide more evidences and data.

European Union and United States of America

Support the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism that was established in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 71/248, adopted on December 21, 2016. Also, establish local tribunals granted universal jurisdiction, and address the war crimes perpetrated in Syria.



Russian regime

- Launch investigations regarding the incidents that resulted in civilian casualties, make the findings of these investigations public for the Syrian people, and hold the individuals involved accountable.
- Compensate all affected facilities and centers, and reconstruct and rehabilitate them. Also, compensate all the victims' families, who were killed by the current Russian regime, as well as all the wounded.
- Immediately cease bombing hospitals, protected structures, and civilian areas, and respect customary international humanitarian law.

The Coalition (international coalition forces and Syrian Democratic Forces)

- The states of the coalition must unequivocally and truly acknowledge that some of their bombardment operations have targeted civilian structures, while some attacks resulted in the killing of innocent civilians. Rather than adopting a policy of denial, these states should take speedy steps to launch serious investigations, and immediately compensate and apologize to the victims and all civilians affected.
- The states supporting the SDF should apply pressure on these forces in order to compel them to cease all of their violations in all the areas and towns under their control.
- All forms of support, military and otherwise, should be ceased until the SDF commits itself to adhering to the previous recommendations. This is primarily the supporting states' responsibility. Providing SDF with weapons and support while knowing that these can be used in war crimes or crimes against humanity can be seen as a contribution to these crimes.

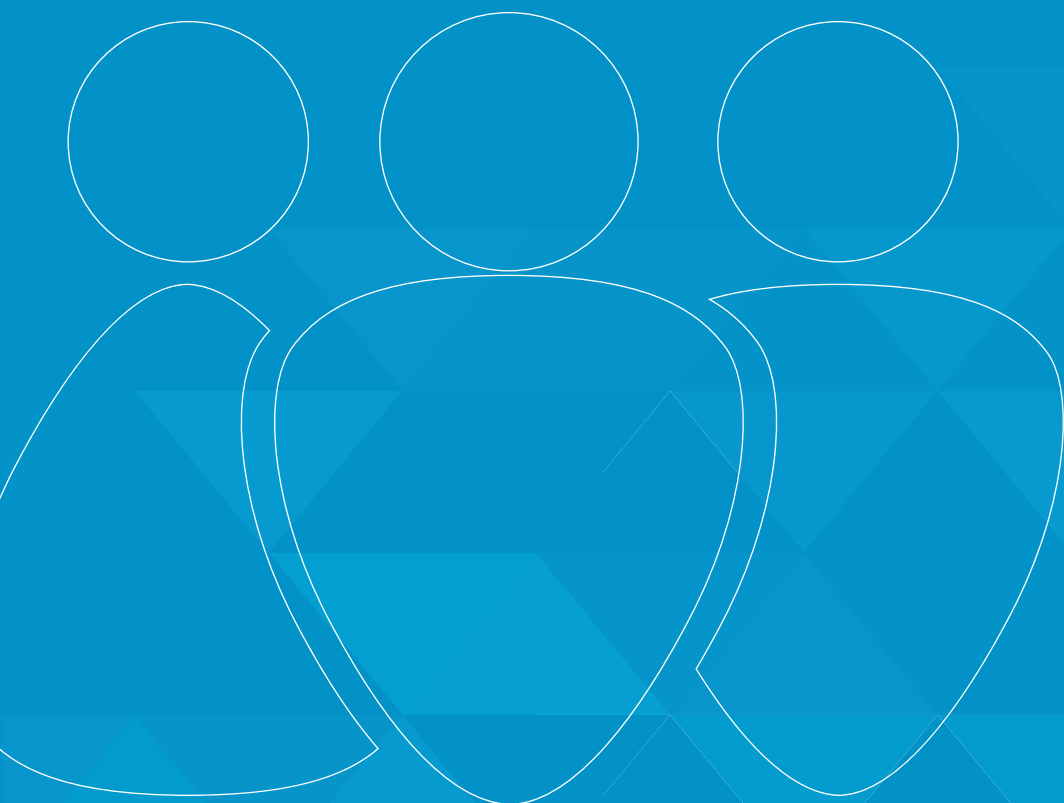
Armed opposition factions

Ensure the protection of civilians and civilian objects in all areas under their control. Also, armed opposition factions should launch investigations into the incidents included in this report.

Acknowledgment and Condolences

We would like to thank and extend our most heartfelt condolences to all the residents and local activists who contributed effectively to this report.





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