

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	1919
Land:	Syrien
Kilde:	The Syrian Network for Human Rights
Titel:	Most Notable Human Rights Violations in Syria in June and the First Half of 2023 – Irregular Migration on Death Boats Claims the Lives of Dozens of Syrian in June, Syria is Unsafe for the Return of IDP's and Refugees
Udgivet:	7. juli 2023
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	8. september 2023

Most Notable Human Rights Violations in Syria in June and the First Half of 2023

Irregular Migration on Death Boats Claims the
Lives of Dozens of Syrians in June, Syria is Unsafe
for the Return of IDPs and Refugees

Friday 07 July 2023

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	1
II. Brief Summary of June's Most Notable Developments.....	1
III. Most Notable Human Rights Violations in Syria in June and the First Half of 2023	14
IV. Attachments	24
V. Conclusions and Recommendations	24
Acknowledgment	28

I. Introduction and Methodology

Syria has seen an unprecedented number of violations since the start of the popular uprising for democracy in March 2011. Extrajudicial killings, arrests, torture, and enforced disappearances are at the forefront of the violations which the Syrian people have endured for over a decade. While the Syrian regime and its affiliated militias were the sole perpetrators of these violations for approximately the first seven months of the uprising, other parties subsequently joined in, perpetrating their own share of human rights violations against Syrians. The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) has been documenting human rights violations to the best of our abilities since the earliest days of the uprising in 2011. In 2012 and 2013, as the numbers of human rights violations rose sharply, our team was confronted by the need to issue periodic monthly reports, in order to highlight the continued suffering of the Syrian people. At that stage, we began releasing eight reports each month, and, in tandem with this, created a large and still growing database which now houses the details of hundreds of thousands of incidents sorted into the various categories of violations that have emerged during our documentation work.

By the end of 2018, however, the level of violence had fallen to some degree, which prompted another change in our reporting strategy. At this point, we opted for releasing one monthly report summarizing the most notable human rights violations in Syria that we were able to document in the previous month. As such, this report focuses on the human rights situation in Syria for the first half of 2023 up to, and including June 2023. In this report, we summarize the civilian deaths we've documented in this period at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling parties, as well as providing details of the numbers of arrests and enforced disappearances. The report also sheds light on the attacks on civilian objects documented by SNHR team during the same period. For a detailed explanation of our [methodology](#), please visit the following link.

This report only represents the bare minimum of the actual severity and magnitude of the violations that occurred. Also, it doesn't include any analysis of the profound social, economic, and psychological ramifications of these events.

II. Brief Summary of June's Most Notable Developments

Bombings and military operations

June saw Syrian regime forces continuing to carry out artillery attacks against northwestern Syria, where we documented separate attacks targeting the villages and towns of Jabal al-Zawiya in the southern suburbs of Idlib and the western suburbs of Aleppo, as well as Sahl al-Ghab in the western suburbs of Hama and the northern suburbs of Latakia; all of these areas are close to the dividing lines with armed opposition factions. On June 2, [a regime artillery attack](#) targeting agricultural lands to the south of al-Atareb city in western Aleppo caused a fire that burned approximately 10 hectares of agricultural lands, which naturally negatively affected the owners of this land and associated properties. During the same period, regime forces also shelled villages and towns in the eastern suburbs of Idlib and western suburbs of Aleppo located far from the dividing line. On June 21, Syrian regime artillery forces fired multiple shells at a main street in [Kafr Noran town](#) in western Aleppo, killing three civilians, including one child, and wounding 11 others, including children and women. Another ground attack by regime forces on June 22 targeted Sarmin city in eastern Idlib, with one of the shells hitting the popular market in the city's center, [killing one woman](#) and wounding six other civilians.



Munition remnants fired by a Syrian regime artillery on Kafr Noran town in Aleppo suburbs, which resulted in casualties - June 21, 2023

On June 27, the Syrian regime air force carried out airstrikes on agricultural land between the two towns of al-Yadoda town and Ataman in the western suburbs of Daraa governorate. While the bombardment resulted in no casualties, it is worth noting that this was the first time that those areas had been targeted since 2018.

The Syrian regime also continued to intensify its military presence in Talbisa city in the northern suburbs of Homs for a second month. On June 20, the regime opened a settlement center in the city council building, following a meeting a week earlier on June 13 between a regime security delegation, headed by Liwa (Major General) Hosam Luqa, the head of the Syrian regime's General Intelligence Directorate, and dignitaries from the city.

June also saw the most serious military escalation by Russian forces this year, with multiple airstrikes by Russian forces targeting northwestern Syria in the last 10 days of June. One of the air raids, on June 24, killed [two civilian siblings](#) who were harvesting the wheat crop and injured two other civilians, in addition to inflicting grave material damages and destruction in Basbat village in western Idlib. Another air raid the following day, June 25, targeted the vegetable market on the eastern outskirts of Jisr al-Shogohur city in western Idlib, [killing at least three civilians](#). SNHR is preparing a report on this attack, which we will be releasing once our investigations are done.

On June 11, [a civilian was shot dead](#) near Salham village in the southern suburbs of Hasaka governorate on the Syrian-Iraqi borders by international coalition personnel after he tried to flee his home following a landing operation by the international coalition in the village.

This month also saw a number of civilians killed in regime-controlled areas by unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), commonly known as drones, of unidentified source. On June 22, we documented the [killing of two children and one woman](#) in Salhab town in western Hama, while another attack on June 23 saw a drone dropping bombs on a house in al-Qerdaha city in the suburbs of Latakia, [killing one civilian](#).

Meanwhile, June saw a significant reduction in [the number of civilians killed by landmines](#), with SNHR documenting new fatalities as a result of landmine explosions every month of 2023. In June, only three children were killed by the explosion of landmines, bringing the total number of victims killed by landmines since the beginning of 2023 to 86 civilians, including 19 children and seven women.

June also saw more [assassinations of civilians at the hands of unidentified gunmen](#) across Syria. A noteworthy incident on June 3 [saw the killing of a woman](#) by unidentified gunmen in Koubak village in the suburbs of Afrin city in western Aleppo. Also on June 6, [four civilians were shot dead](#) by unidentified gunmen while harvesting the wheat crop in the 'badiya' (desert) of Tadmur in eastern Homs.

On June 14, the Israeli Air Force carried out an air raid on southwestern Damascus, injuring one Syrian regime serviceman and causing material damages, according to the [Syrian regime's Syrian Arab News Agency \(SANA\)](#).

Living and Security Conditions

In June, economic, living, services, and security conditions continued to decline across all sectors in areas under the Syrian regime's control, with a particularly sharp deterioration seen in the services sector. Regarding the power crisis specifically, the regime government is still implementing a rationing policy, exacerbating the suffering of the residents in regime areas. In June, the number of designated hours for cutting off power [rose to as high as seven hours daily in some areas](#).

Moreover, residents in regime-held areas are also still grappling with rising prices for virtually all goods, most crucially food supplies. For instance, on June 15, the [pro-regime Tishreen Newspaper](#) reported that prices for poultry goods, particularly eggs, are increasingly rising, with an egg packet (30 eggs) costing 32,000 S.P.

The rampant state of insecurity is another issue plaguing regime-held areas, with thefts continuing to rise in multiple areas, some of which have even targeted public service institutions. On June 1, the pro-regime [al-Watan Newspaper](#) reported that a medical dispensary affiliated with the Quneitra Health Directorate was vandalized, and its solar panels were stolen. A similar incident also took place in a school in the same area. Meanwhile, the only transformer providing power to [the only well feeding water to a village in Hama suburbs](#) was stolen according to a May 16 report in the same newspaper.

In northwestern Syria, civilians' already severe suffering continues to worsen under deteriorating economic and living conditions in parallel with rising prices for food and grocery supplies; including chicken, sugar, rice, and fuel, all intensified by the Turkish Lira's value which has plummeted to exchange rates as low as 25 TRY for 1 USD, coupled with people's waning purchasing power due to widespread unemployment and poverty, especially in areas housing internally displaced persons (IDPs) camps, with wages for those in work in the area also continuing to decline.

On June 1, the Bab al-Hawa Border Crossing on the Turkish-Syrian borders announced on [its official Facebook page](#) that the transference of cancer patients from Syria to Turkey for treatment is set to resume on June 5. This followed a four-month halt to these transfers, which further intensified these patients' suffering in light of the dire medical situation in northwestern Syria, especially in the wake of the February 6 Earthquake that put many medical institutions out of commission and caused the death of a number of medics.

On June 27, Sarmada city in northern Idlib saw civilian protests by residents of Hama governorate over Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham detaining a number of prominent figures in the region over their opposition to HTS. In response, the HTS security forces and the Salvation Government surrounded the protesters participating in a demonstration at the roundabout in Sarmada city and set up checkpoints to prevent other protestors from reaching the area.

Meanwhile, the rampant state of insecurity continues to plague the residents of areas under the control of the Syrian National Army (SNA) in northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, especially in al-Bab city. SNHR documented daily armed clashes in the city's neighborhoods and popular markets in June, mostly between different armed factions. We also documented a number of assassinations targeting civilians unaffiliated with any military formation. On June 26, we also recorded an assault by gunmen on the teaching staff of the International Sham University, a private university. SNHR released [a statement](#) condemning the assault on the day following the incident.

The situation in Northeastern Syria remains similarly dire, with worsening living and security conditions. Prices of food, fuel and other essential commodities in the region continue to rise due to the controlling forces' failure to regulate the market, not to mention the state of rampant insecurity in the area that has continued for a few months.

Forced displacement

In June, the suffering of IDPs in northwestern Syria continued in relation to both living conditions and the ongoing humanitarian crisis, with the ever-increasing prices, especially of food supplies, on one hand, and the widespread unemployment and virtually non-existent purchasing power among residents in the area, especially those in IDP camps, on the other, during a period characterized by severe shortages of humanitarian relief, meaning that humanitarian needs are reaching unprecedented levels.

We also documented more fires in IDP camps in northwestern Syria in June. On June 3, an electrical malfunction in a number of [IDPs' tents](#) caused a fire in Bab al-Salama Camp near Sejjo village in northern Aleppo. Three tents and their contents were completely destroyed by the blaze, which also caused moderate damage to some of the nearby tents.

The IDP camps in northwestern Syria were also subjected to further bombardment in June. On June 17, Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) used a rocket launcher [to target](#) a group of concrete-built residential units housing IDPs in the Jabal al-Khaldiya area near Meryamin village in the suburbs of Afrin city in northwestern Aleppo governorate. The shelling partially destroyed a number of the homes, and injured four civilians, including a girl and two women, to varying degrees.

In al-Rukban Camp on the Syrian-Jordanian borders in the eastern suburbs of Homs governorate, [the Syrian Emergency Task Force \(SETF\)](#) revealed on June 20 that relief aid have been delivered to the camp with the help of US military aircraft as part of an operation named 'Syrian Oasis'. The aid shipments contained seeds and irrigation tools, in addition to school supplies for children in the camp.

In the camps in northeastern Syria, on the subject of foreign states repatriating their nationals, [the Danish government](#) revealed on June 23 in an official statement that it has repatriated two children and their mother from al-Ruj Camp in northeastern Syria.

On June 12, Ahmad al-Sahhaf, a spokesperson for the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, revealed that an international meeting has been held to discuss the subject of al-Hawl Camp in Syria. According to [Iraqi News Agency \(INA\)](#), another meeting is planned to discuss the Iraqi government's vision regarding the al-Hawl Camp in Syria, which will be attended by the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Security Advisory, and delegates from other organizations operating in Iraq. Al-Sahhaf also called on the international community to put pressure on all states with nationals in the camp to repatriate their citizens as quickly as possible in order to shut down the camp which has turned into a dangerous social point. It should be noted that SNHR has demanded in numerous reports that the SDF releases the thousands of people detained in al-Hawl Camp in a way that ensures their return to the areas from which they were displaced. SNHR has also called on the UN to put pressure on the states with nationals detained in the camp to repatriate their citizens.

With regard to Syrian refugees and asylum seekers, on June 7, [Independent Arabia](#) reported that 15 Syrians, including children and women, mostly from the Ein al-Arab city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate died by drowning on June 5 near the Algerian coast as they were attempting an irregular migration by boat heading for the Spanish coasts, with one child surviving the tragedy.

On June 14, SNHR recorded the death by drowning of at least 37 more Syrians, including women, mostly from Daraa governorate, after a boat carrying migrants, most of whom were from Egypt, Syria, and Pakistan, capsized and sank near the Greek coasts. We have already released [a statement](#) calling on the Greek authorities and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to launch an investigation into the tragic incident, and are currently working on a detailed report on it. Meanwhile, [Reuters reported](#) that no fewer than 79 immigrants of multiple nationalities met their demise in the tragedy, while hundreds of others are still missing, feared drowned. The Reuters report also noted that the boat was carrying approximately 750 people. On June 18, the [BBC](#) published an investigative report into the incident, revealing that the boat was not moving for seven hours before capsizing, which contradicts the claims of the Greek Coast Guard, which stated that the boat was in a good state and showed no need of rescue on its way to Italy. On June 23, Vincent Cochetel, the UNHCR special envoy for the situation in the Western and Central Mediterranean, called for launching an independent investigation in order to determine what had transpired.

On June 29, the [Associated Press \(AP\)](#) reported that the UK Court of Appeal has determined that the UK government's plan to deport asylum seekers from Rwanda is illegal. SNHR welcomes this decision, which is in the best interest of refugees and supports their right to secure a safe and stable environment.

Political and human rights situation

On June 1, Faisal Mekdad, the Foreign Minister in the Syrian regime's government, met with Corinne Fleischer, the World Food Programme (WFP) Regional Director for the Middle East, North Africa and Eastern Europe. As reported by [SANA](#), the meeting discussed the WFP's activities and projects in Syria, including the early recovery projects. This was not the only visit by a UN official to Damascus in June. [SANA](#) reported that, on June 26, Martin Griffiths, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, met with Bashar Assad, the head of the Syrian regime, with the meeting featuring discussion of the efforts to mobilize support for early recovery programs related to the return of Syrian refugees and the requirements for these, and how best to keep the refugees issue in its humanitarian and moral framework. It is worth noting that this visit came one day after a Russian airstrike targeting Jisr al-Shoghhour city in western Idlib that resulted in civilian fatalities, which provided further categorical proof of the Syrian regime's and its allies utter disregard for securing a safe environment, which remains the main obstacle impeding the return of refugees.

On June 4, the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor released [a statement](#) stressing that the Danish government has abandoned a Danish child who has been left in “arbitrary and unlawful” detention for years in a prison camp in northeastern Syria, describing the situation as “heartbreaking”. The statement calls on the Danish government to act to end the detention of the child and his mother, and evacuate them immediately, noting that “most of the thousands of foreign ISIL suspects and family members still detained in northeast Syria are youths under the age of 12. Although they are far too young to have played any active role in ISIL, their governments refuse to take them back, citing national security concerns or fearing public backlash despite their established nationality...”

On June 4, [SNHR](#) released a statement to mark the International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression, in which the group revealed that it has documented 30,034 children in Syria since March 2011. Of those children, 198 died due to torture, including 190 at the hands of Syrian regime forces. The statement stresses that any restoration of relations with the Syrian regime only protracts the conflict without providing a political solution, as more & more child victims will face more aggression.

On June 8, SNHR released [a report](#) entitled, **‘Only Nine Countries Out of 193 Have Voted in Favor of the Syrian Regime on UN General Assembly Resolutions Since March 2011’**, noting that some of the Arab states working to restore relations with the Syrian regime have voted against the regime on all UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions. As the report stated, only nine states have consistently voted in favor of the regime in all of the votes on UNGA resolutions on Syria since March 2011, all of which are similarly oppressive dictatorships.

On June 10, the Self-Administration authority in northern and eastern Syria published a statement on [its official website](#) revealing that it has begun the process of prosecuting the foreign ISIS fighters detained by the SDF in “public, fair, and transparent trials that comply with the international and local laws on terrorism.” SNHR stresses that world’s states must repatriate their nationals from the SDF detention centers, rather than leaving their fate in the hands of the SDF whose legal framework lacks clear laws that can be used as grounds to determine the fate of those detainees.

On June 12, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (COI) released [a paper](#) entitled ‘Gendered Impact of the Conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic on Women and Girls’. The paper notes that the conflict has affected the ability of women and girls to enjoy their most basic rights, such as the right to food and health. The paper also revealed that approximately 6 million people in Syria are currently in dire need of food assistance, with 74 percent of this number being women and girls. The paper further noted that all types of sexual violence and gender-based violence have increased throughout Syria as the conflict has gone on.

On June 13, [SNHR](#) released a statement calling on the Lebanese authorities not to forcibly repatriate Syrian regime army defector Saleh Nemer al-Samar to Syria, because this would put his life at risk. The statement revealed that, on April 19, Lebanon’s General Security forces arrested Major al-Samar while he was renewing his official residency documents at the Labweh General Security branch in the Hermel governorate in Lebanon’s Baalbek district, before taking him to the General Security branch in Beirut governorate, where he has been detained ever since. The statement further reveals that al-Samar’s family has received information suggesting that Lebanese authorities are planning to forcibly repatriate him to Syria. As the statement noted, since the beginning of April 2023 up to June 2023, SNHR has recorded the refolement of no fewer than 874 Syrian refugees to Syria from Lebanon, including 86 women and 104

children. Of these forcibly returned individuals, SNHR has so far documented the arrest by Syrian regime forces of 87, including two children, five women, and two members of the same family, in al-Masna border area, with most of them being arrested by the regime's infamous Military Intelligence Directorate.

On June 13, the WFP released [a statement](#) revealing that, due to an "unprecedented funding crisis" the WFP is forced to cut off aid to 2.5 million of the 5.5 million people in Syria relying on the WFP aid for their basic food needs. The statement further noted that "WFP took the decision to stretch the extremely limited resources by prioritizing 3 million Syrians who are unable to make it from one week to the next without food assistance." SNHR expresses its concern for the fate of millions of Syrians who will be deprived of such assistance in light of extremely dire economic conditions across all of Syria.

On June 14-15, the [EU's Seventh Brussels Conference](#) on "Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region" was held. On the conference's second day, a total of 57 state representatives and figures from over 30 organizations, attended the ministerial meeting, including the UN as well as EU bodies. The Conference's closing statement revealed that donors pledged €5.6 billion "for 2023 and beyond, including €4.6 billion for 2023 and €1 billion for 2024 and beyond." It is worth noting that this year's pledges fall short of [last year's €6.4 billion](#). We have expressed our disappointment on numerous occasions about the fact that the Brussels Conference has been turned into a fund-raising event for the Syrian people that ignores the political and human rights issues, which were one of the conference's goals in its initial format. As such, the conference failed to take any serious action to help ensure safety for civilians or to put pressure on the active parties towards actualizing a political transition process or make progress with respect to accountability.

On June 15, [Save the Children](#) released a statement, in which it stressed that the devastating February 6 earthquake has had a "profound" impact on the educational infrastructure in northwestern Syria. The statement reveals that "a staggering 54% of schools and 37% of teaching and learning spaces were affected by the earthquake - a total of 822 school buildings." The statement added that immense efforts and resources are required to repair and rebuild those facilities, so that children can resume their education.

On June 15, Geir Pedersen, the UN special envoy to Syria, [stated](#) during the Seventh Brussels Conference on the Future of Syria and the Region that the need to find a political resolution in line with Security Council resolution 2254 is more pressing today than ever, adding that, "the latest UNHCR intentionality survey describes two main reasons why many refugees remain reluctant to return to Syria in the short term: first, concerns about the lack of livelihoods and work opportunities, which is a domain where donors could help; and second, concerns about the lack of safety and security, which is the Syrian government's remit."

On June 16, Doctors Without Borders (MSF) released [a press released](#) revealing that nine out of 10 people who were displaced recently by the earthquake in the region of northwestern Syria have been displaced at least once before. The statement adds that "The lack of clean water and the use of contaminated water sources increases the risk of waterborne diseases such as cholera and hepatitis."

On June 18, the EU released [a statement](#) stressing that the conditions for the EU to restore relations with the Syrian regime and change its position on Syria have not been met. The statement draws upon SNHR's data which confirms that violations continue to be perpetrated daily in the country. It should be noted that SNHR is a principal source for most of the EU's statement on the state of human rights in Syria, as well as for many of the EU's reports. We welcome this statement and reiterate our intentions to objectively report the reality of violations in Syria.

On June 18, Josep Borrell, the EU High Representative, issued [a joint press release](#) with Ahmed Aboul Gheit, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, reiterating that the EU's position on the Syrian regime will not change until the regime makes progress in line with Security Council resolution 2254. The statement further reveals that "the [Sixth Ministerial Meeting between the EU and the Arab League] had to be postponed. It was scheduled for this week, and it had to be postponed due to the readmission of Syria to the League of Arab States." Furthermore, Mr. Borrell underlined the fact that at this moment there is no serious accountability of the regime, which is why the EU decided to push the Ministerial Meeting.

On June 20-21, the 20th round of the Astana talks was held in the Kazakhstani capital Astana, featuring representatives from the guarantor states (Turkey, Russia, and Iran), and a delegation from the Syrian regime, as well as another from the Syrian opposition. On its official website, the Kazakhstani Ministry of Foreign Affairs released [a joint closing statement](#) by the guarantor states that welcomed the constructive consultations taking place on the first day which addressed preparing a roadmap for restoring relations between Ankara and Damascus, calling for furthering efforts in this regard. The guarantor states also "expressed their conviction that there could be no military solution to the Syrian conflict and reaffirmed their commitment to advance viable and lasting Syrian-led and Syrian-owned, UN-facilitated political process in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2254." Furthermore, the attendees underscored the important role of the Constitutional Committee and expressed their serious concern over the worsening humanitarian situation in the wake of the February 6 earthquake. SNHR reiterates that the Syrian regime is still committing violations against the Syrian people, and any attempt to reestablish any form of relations with the regime are grievously insulting, first and foremost to those states deciding to take such action, sending the wrong message to their own peoples, that they support a regime that has committed crimes against humanity and choose to side with said regime atop the backs and skulls of its millions of victims. Furthermore, restoring relations with the Syrian regime encourages the regime's own impunity.

On June 23, Human Rights Watch (HRW) published [a joint letter](#) with 102 Syrian and international organizations, including SNHR, stressing that UN member states must vote to establish a humanitarian body to reveal the fate of missing persons in Syria, in order to provide Syrians with long-awaited answers about the fate of their loved ones who have been missing for too long. The letter adds that "in addition to supporting its creation in the General Assembly vote, UN member countries should ensure that it is fully funded out of the UN's regular budget and has all the support and resources necessary to fulfill its mission."

On June 23, the [UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs \(OCHA\)](#) revealed that a UN cross-border aid convoy had entered northwestern Syria from the regime-held areas in Aleppo via the al-Tranyya Crossing in western Saraqeb city in the eastern suburbs of Idlib. It should be noted that this was the eleventh cross-border convoy since resolution 2585 was adopted in July 2021, and the first since Security Council resolution 2672 in January 2023 on renewing the mandate of the cross-border, cross-line aid mechanism to deliver aid to northwestern Syria.



On June 26, SNHR released its [twelfth annual report](#) on torture in Syria, marking the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. The report stresses that torture practices continue in Syria with no accountability for those involved. The report also revealed that a total of 15,281 individuals are documented as having died due to torture between March 2011 and June 2023, including 198 children and 113 women (adult female). The report called on the Security Council and the UN to devise a mechanism to oblige all parties to the conflict, especially the Syrian regime, to put an end to torture practices, and to disclose the locations of the victims' bodies, and return these to their families. The report also called on the international community to enact new serious punitive measures against the Syrian regime to deter it from killing Syrian citizens under torture, and to put pressure on the other parties to the conflict, through all means possible, and to put a true end to the use of torture.



On June 27, the BBC released [a joint investigative report](#) by BBC News Arabic and the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) entitled, 'From Inside the Syrian Captagon State'. The investigation, which took place in three countries: Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria; provided further proof that the Syrian regime is responsible for producing and exporting Captagon in a deliberate and calculated way that extends from the highest echelons of power in the Syrian regime all the way to the drivers of the vehicles used to transport the narcotics. The report shows that this has been a central policy for the Syrian regime which incriminates those in the highest positions of power in the regime, namely Bashar and Maher Assad, as well as Syrian regime army officials and different security checkpoint personnel, which necessarily implies that many regime security bodies are involved in and intimately aware of the details of the smuggling operations. This report completely refutes any attempts by Bashar Assad to portray himself as unable to control the Captagon trade in Syria, and comprehensively disproves his claims that he is need of financial and political assistance to stop Captagon traders in Syria. The report largely corresponds with SNHR's information, that Bashar Assad is the main source of the Captagon trade in Syria.

On June 28, the [Jordanian Armed Forces](#) revealed on its official website that it shot down a drone coming from Syria carrying narcotics, noting that this was the third such drone of its type to be shot down in June, with the Jordanian Armed Forces revealing they had shot down the first two on [June 13](#) and [June 16](#) respectively. [Many reports](#) have shown that the Syrian regime is one of the most important exporters of Captagon globally, and that most of the profits generated from the Captagon trade trace back to networks affiliated with the regime.

On June 29, the UNGA passed [resolution A/77/L.79](#) that provides for establishing an independent UN body with the purpose of working on the missing persons issue in Syria. A total of 83 states voted in favor of the draft resolution, including only two Arab states (Qatar and Kuwait), while 62 states abstained from voting with 11 states voted against: Belarus, Bolivia, China, Cuba, North Korea, Eritrea, Iran, Syria, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Russia, and Zimbabwe. SNHR welcomes the outcome of this resolution, and reiterates its willingness to collaborate with the newly formed UN body. We released [a statement](#) addressing the resolution on June 30.

Voting Ended			6/29/2023	4:16:55 PM
Item 13 - A/77/L.79				
Independent Institution on Missing Persons in the Syrian Arab Republic				
AFGHANISTAN	CAMEROON	FINLAND	KUWAIT	NEPAL
ALBANIA	CANADA	FRANCE	KYRGYZSTAN	NETHERLAN...
ALGERIA	CENTRAL AF...	GABON	LAO PDR	NEW ZEALAND
ANDORRA	CHAD	GAMBIA	LEBANON	NICARAGUA
ANGOLA	CHILE	GERMANY	LESOTHO	NIGER
ANTIGUA-BA...	CHINA	GHANA	LIBERIA	NIGERIA
ARGENTINA	COLOMBIA	GRECE	LIBYA	NORTH MAC...
ARMENIA	COMOROS	GRENADA	LIECHTENSTEIN	NORWAY
AUSTRALIA	CONGO	GUATEMALA	LITHUANIA	OMAN
AUSTRIA	COSTA RICA	GUINEA	LUXEMBOURG	PAKISTAN
AZERBAIJAN	COTE D'IVOIRE	GUINEA-BISS...	MADAGASCAR	PALAU
BAHAMAS	CROATIA	HAITI	MALAWI	PANAMA
BAHRAIN	CUBA	HONDURAS	MALAYSIA	PAPUA NEW ...
BANGLADESH	CYPRUS	HUNGARY	MALDIVES	PARAGUAY
BARBADOS	CZECHIA	ICELAND	MALI	PERU
BELARUS	DEM PR OF K...	INDIA	MALTA	PHILIPPINES
BELGIUM	DEM REP OF ...	INDONESIA	MARSHALL IS...	POLAND
BELIZE	DJIBOUTI	IRAN (ISLAMI...	MAURITANIA	PORTUGAL
BENIN	DOMINICA	IRAQ	MAURITIUS	QATAR
BHUTAN	DOMINICAN ...	IRELAND	MEXICO	REP OF KOREA
BOLIVIA	ECUADOR	ISRAEL	MICRONESIA...	REP OF MOL...
BOSNIA-HER...	EGYPT	ITALY	MONACO	ROMANIA
BOTSWANA	EL SALVADOR	JAMAICA	MONGOLIA	RUSSIAN FED...
BRAZIL	ERITREA	JAPAN	MONTENEGRO	SAMOA
BRUNEI DAR...	ESTONIA	JORDAN	MOROCCO	SAINT KITS...
BULGARIA	ETHIOPIA	KAZAKHSTAN	MOZAMBIQUE	SAINT LUCIA
BURKINA FASO	FIJI	KENYA	MYANMAR	SAINT VINCE...
BURUNDI		KIRIBATI	NAMIBIA	SAMOA
CABO VERDE			NAURU	SAN MARINO
CAMBODIA				SAO TOME-P...
				SAUDY ARABIA
				SENEGAL
				SERBIA
				SEYCHELLES
				SIERRA LEONE
				SINGAPORE
				SLOVAKIA
				SLOVENIA
				SOLOMON IS...
				SOMALIA
				SOUTH AFRICA
				SOUTH SUDAN
				SPAIN
				SRI LANKA
				SUDAN
				SURINAME
				SWEDEN
				SWITZERLAND
				SYRIAN ARA...
				TAJIKISTAN
				THAILAND
				TIMOR-LESTE
				TOGO
				TONGA
				TRINIDAD-TO...
				TUNISIA
				TURKMENIST...
				TUVALU
				TURKIYE
				UGANDA
				UKRAINE
				UNITED ARA...
				UNITED KING...
				UNITED REP T...
				UNITED STAT...
				URUGUAY
				UZBEKISTAN
				YEMEN
				ZAMBIA
				ZIMBABWE
IN FAVOUR: 83			AGAINST: 11	
			ABSTENTION: 62	

Vote outcome on the draft resolution providing for founding an independent UN body to work on the missing persons issue in Syria - June 29, 2023

On June 29, the US Department of State submitted its [‘Report to Congress on A Written Strategy to Disrupt and Dismantle Narcotics Production and Trafficking and Affiliated Networks Linked to the Regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria’](#) to Congress. The interagency plan was devised by the US Department of State in partnership with the Department of Defense, Department of Treasury, The Drug Enforcement Administration, Homeland Security, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy, in line with the requirements of the [CAPTAGON Act](#) which was approved by US President Joe Biden on December 8, 2022. On the basis of harmonizing interagency efforts, the report lays out a fourfold strategy: 1. Provide diplomatic and intelligence support to law enforcement investigators; 2. Use targeted sanctions and other financial tools to disrupt the efficiency of what the document calls the “Assad regime-affiliated trafficking network”; 3. foreign assistance and training to partner countries; and 4. use diplomatic engagements and public messaging to exert pressure on the Assad regime to curtail Captagon production. SNHR welcomes this strategy which, should it be put in motion, would put more pressure on the Syrian regime that limit its Captagon production and trade, which has been an economic lifeline for the regime recently. SNHR also reiterates that the laws aiming to combat Captagon trade in Syria must be involved based on an international coordination.

On June 29, [Martin Griffiths](#), the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, revealed that 90 percent of all residents of Syria are now under the poverty line due to the effects of the 12-year long conflict, adding that millions would have to cope with reduced food assistance allotments in the next month due to a funding shortage.

Accountability and advocacy

On June 12, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) revealed in [a statement](#) that Canada and the Netherlands have filed a joint application to institute proceedings against the Syrian regime before the ICJ with regard to its alleged violations of the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The statement further revealed that “In their Application, Canada and the Netherlands contend that ‘Syria has committed countless violations of international law, beginning at least in 2011, with its violent repression of civilian demonstrations, and continuing as the situation in Syria devolved into a protracted armed conflict’... The Applicants claim that ‘[t]hese violations also include the use of chemical weapons...’ SNHR welcomes this action as a positive step in the process of holding the Syrian regime accountable. It is our hope that the ICJ will issue a ruling and convict the Syrian regime of the charges against it, which would deter other states from normalizing relations with it.

On June 13, Baytna, SNHR, and The White Helmets held a physical forum entitled, “We know who used chemical weapons in Syria, what is next?” on the sidelines of the Seventh Brussels Conference in Brussels. Fadel Abdul Ghany, SNHR Executive Director, attended the event which tackled the topic of the Syrian regime’s continued impunity for chemical weapons use, despite it having been conclusively proven that chemical weapons have been used repeatedly by the regime in Syria, and despite the widespread international disapprobation and the exhaustive documentation efforts by internationally respected bodies, including SNHR, which resulted in the collection of thousands of items of evidence. To that end, the event aimed to assess the option available to tackle the impunity gap. On June 15, SNHR released [a statement](#) on the event.

On June 17, Fadel Abdul Ghany, SNHR Executive Director, participated in a panel discussion entitled, ‘Impunity Kills - Lessons from Syria and Ukraine’. The event, which was held in Bornholm, Denmark, was organized by the Syria-Ukraine Network (SUN).¹ The panel discussed the extraordinary challenges faced by the rules-based international system today, as well as the importance of accountability in a broader sense for the realization of sustained peace and stability, and the prospects of accountability in the context of the current international system and its rules. SNHR released [a statement](#) on its participation in this event.

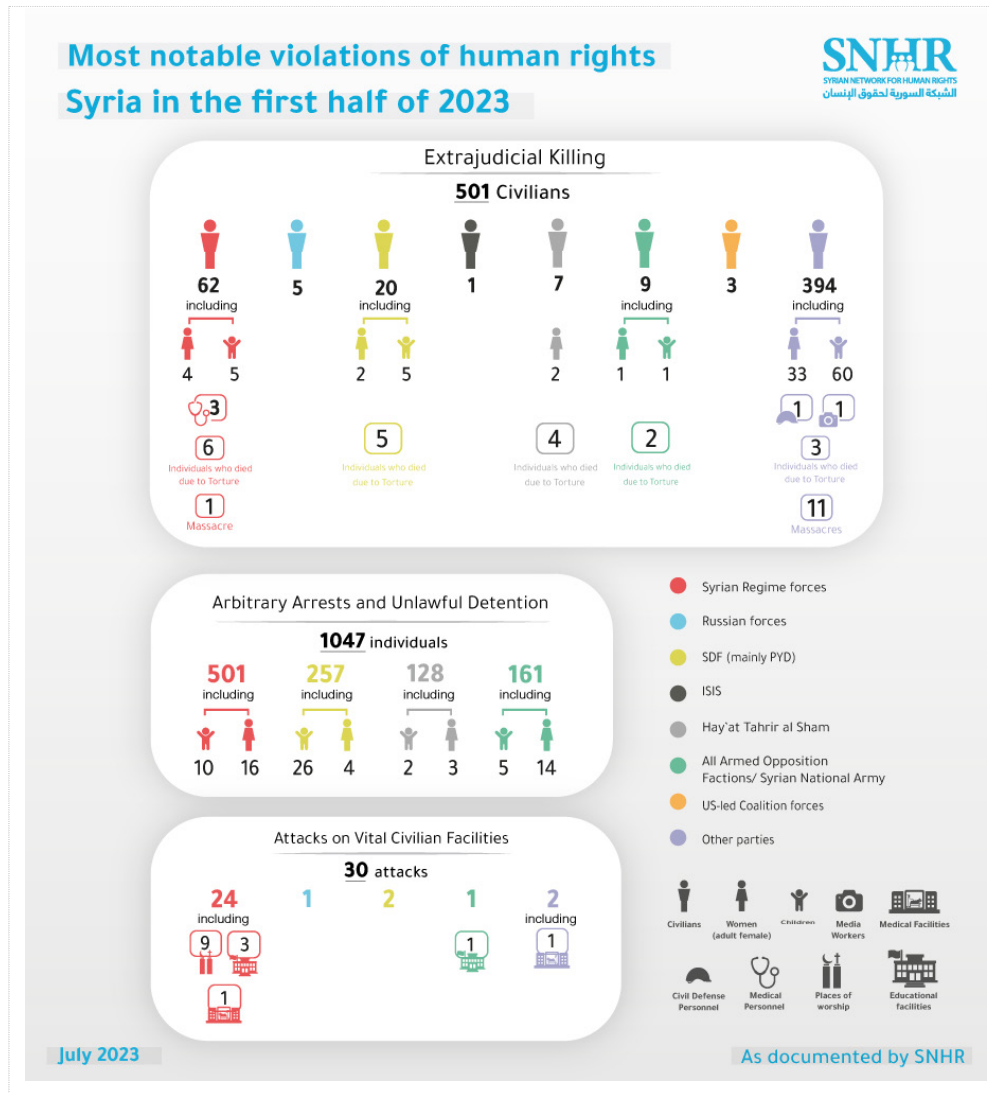
On June 19, the UK government issued [a statement](#) revealing that it has imposed new sanctions on Abdel Karim Mahmoud Ibrahim, the Chief of the General Staff of the Syrian regime’s Syrian Army and Armed Forces, and Ali Mahmoud Abbas, the Syrian Minister of Defence in the Syrian regime’s government, for their involvement in oppressing civilians in Syria and the use of rape and other forms of sexual violence and gender-based violence in a systematic way against civilians.

In June, SNHR briefed the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the UN Special Rapporteur on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights while Countering Terrorism- Specific work on victims of terrorism, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, on two cases of enforced disappearance.

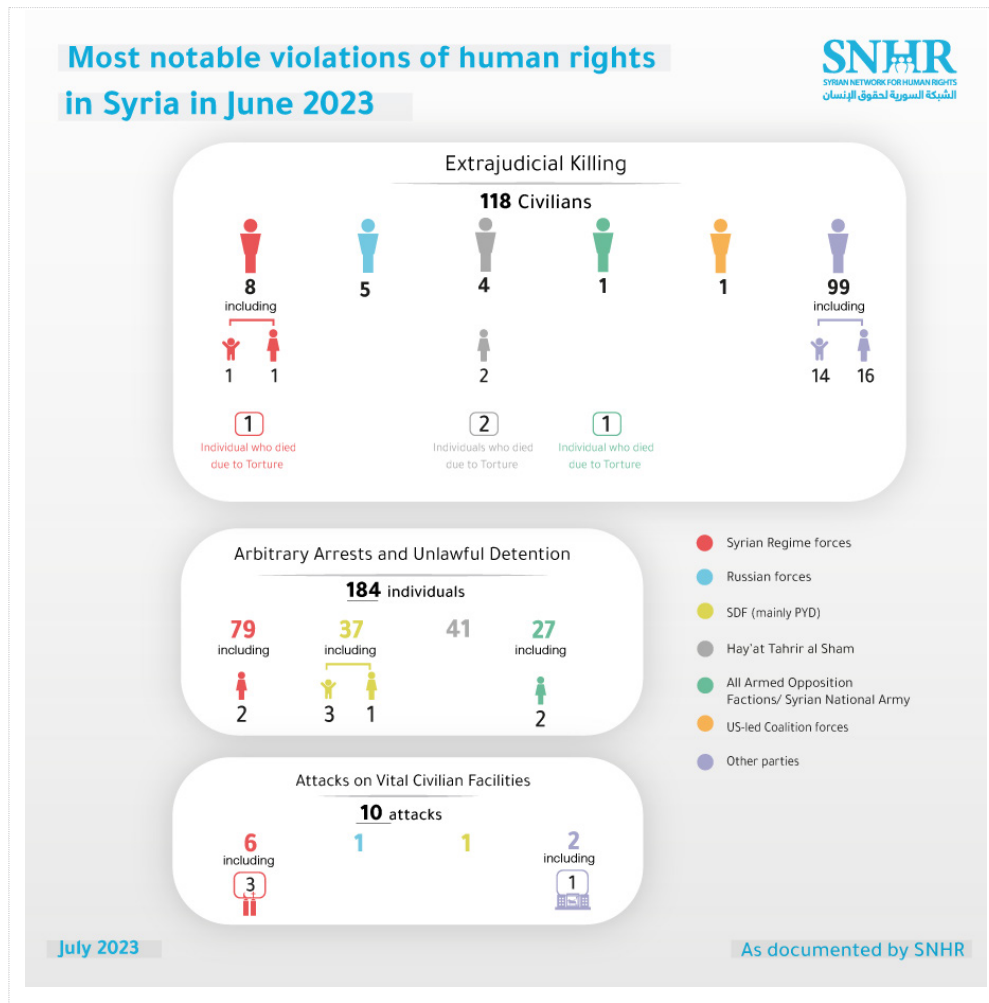
1. a coalition of organizations and individuals from Syria, Ukraine and other nations aiming to end and expose war crimes in Syria and Ukraine.

III. Most Notable Human Rights Violations in Syria in June and the First Half of 2023

This report summarizes the most notable human rights violations committed by the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria that were documented by SNHR in the first half of 2023.



This report also summarizes the most notable human rights violations committed by the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria that were documented by SNHR in June 2023.



A. Extrajudicial killing

1. First half of 2023

In the first half of 2023, SNHR documented the death of 501 civilians, including 71 children and 42 women (adult female), most of whom were killed at the hands of other parties. Among them were also three medical personnel, one media worker, and 20 individuals who died due to torture. Furthermore, we documented 12 massacres in the same period. We also issued a report on July 2 detailing the civilian victims documented killed at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria in the first half of 2023.

The death toll of civilian victims in May was distributed according to the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria as follows:

A. Main parties:

- **Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias):**² 62 civilians, including five children and four women.
- **Russian forces:** five civilians.
- **ISIS (self-proclaimed the Islamic state):** one civilian.
- **HTS:**³ seven civilians, including two women.
- **All armed opposition factions/SNA:** nine civilians, including one child and one woman.
- **Kurdish-led SDF (mainly the Democratic Union Party 'PYD'):** 20 civilians, including five children and two women.
- **International coalition forces:** Three civilians.

B. Other parties:

We documented the killing of 394 civilians, including 60 children and 33 women at the hands of other parties, distributed as follows:

- **Landmines whose source we have been unable to identify:** 86 civilians, including 19 children and seven women.
- **Gunfire whose source we have been unable to identify:** 101 civilians, including three children and three women.
- **Bombings whose perpetrators we have been unable to identify:** 24 civilians, including three children and three women.
- **Killings by parties we have been unable to identify:** 102 civilians, including 13 children and eight women.
- **Turkish forces:** One civilian.
- **Jordanian forces:** Seven civilians, including five children and one woman.
- **Death by drowning:** 63 civilians, including five children and 11 women.
- **Turkish Border Guard:** 10 civilians.

2. We generally use the term 'the Syrian regime' rather than 'the Syrian government', because the nature of the ruling power in Syria is a totalitarian dictatorship where power is concentrated in the hands of a small circle of individuals, namely the President of the Republic and the heads of the security apparatus. Conversely, the ministers, including the Prime Minister and the Minister of Interior, play a restricted, largely ceremonial role, which is limited to implementing precisely what the ruling regime orders, with no real decision-making power or active role of their own. Syria is under autocratic/hereditary family rule, with no independent decision-making structure. Rather, the government is an empty façade merely for show. The Minister of Interior receives orders from the security branches over which he supposedly presides, while the Minister of Justice cannot even summon a low-ranking security office, let alone a security branch head. Syria is ruled by the president assisted by the heads of the security branches.

We are aware that the United Nations and its agencies use the term 'the Syrian government', however, we believe that this is a completely inaccurate and misleading term in the Syrian context.

3. Was designated as a terrorist group by the UN.

2. June 2023

In June, SNHR documented the death of 118 civilians, including 15 children and 19 women (adult female), most of whom were killed at the hands of other parties. Among them were also four individuals who died due to torture.

The death toll of civilian victims in June was distributed according to the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria as follows:

A. Main parties:

- **Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias):** Eight civilians, including one child and one woman.
- **Russian forces:** Five civilians.
- **HTS:** Four civilians, including two women.
- **All armed opposition factions/SNA:** One civilian.
- **International coalition forces:** One civilian.

B. Other parties:

We documented the deaths of 99 civilians in June, including 14 children and 16 women, at the hands of other parties, distributed as follows:

- **Gunfire whose source we have been unable to identify:** 20 civilians, including one woman.
- **Landmines whose source we have been unable to identify:** Three children.
- **Killings by parties we have been unable to identify:** 11 civilians, including four children and four women.
- **Bombings whose perpetrators we have been unable to identify:** Two children.
- **Death by drowning:** 63 civilians, including five children and 11 women.

B. Arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance

1. First half of 2023

In the first half of 2023, SNHR documented at least 1,047 cases of arbitrary arrest/detention, including 43 children and 37 women (adult female), at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria. Most of these arrests were carried out by Syrian regime forces in the governorates of Damascus suburbs, followed by Damascus, and then Daraa. We issued a report on July 5 detailing the cases of arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearances which we documented in the first half of 2023 at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria.

Cases of arbitrary arrests were distributed according to the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces as follows:

- **Syrian regime forces:** 501 individuals, including 10 children and 16 women.
- **HTS:** 128 individuals, including two children and three women.
- **All Armed Opposition factions/SNA:** 161 individuals, including five children and 14 women.
- **SDF:** 257 individuals, including 26 children and four women.

2. June 2023

In June 2023, SNHR documented at least 184 cases of arbitrary arrest, including three children and five women (adult female), at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria. Most of these arrests were carried out by Syrian regime forces in the governorates of Damascus suburbs, then Damascus.

Cases of arbitrary arrests were distributed according to the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces as follows:

- **Syrian regime forces:** 79 individuals, including two women.
- **HTS:** 41 individuals.
- **All Armed Opposition factions/SNA:** 27 individuals.
- **SDF:** 37 individuals.

C. Attacks on vital civilian facilities

1. First half of 2023

SNHR documented at least 30 attacks on vital civilian facilities during the first half of 2023, at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria, including 24 attacks by Syrian regime forces, with most regime attack taking place in Idlib governorate.

Four of these attacks targeted educational facilities, two targeted medical facilities, and nine targeted places of worship.

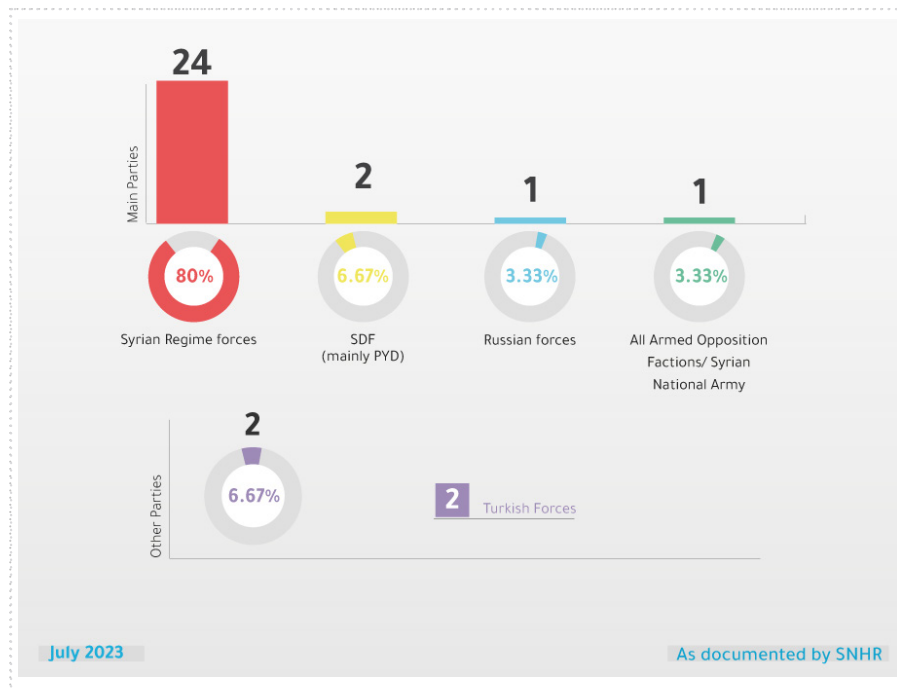
The attacks on vital civilian facilities recorded in the first half of 2023 were distributed by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria as follows:

A. Main parties:

- Syrian regime forces: 24 attacks.
- Russian forces: One attack.
- All armed opposition factions/SNA: One attack.
- SDF: Two attacks.

B. Other parties:

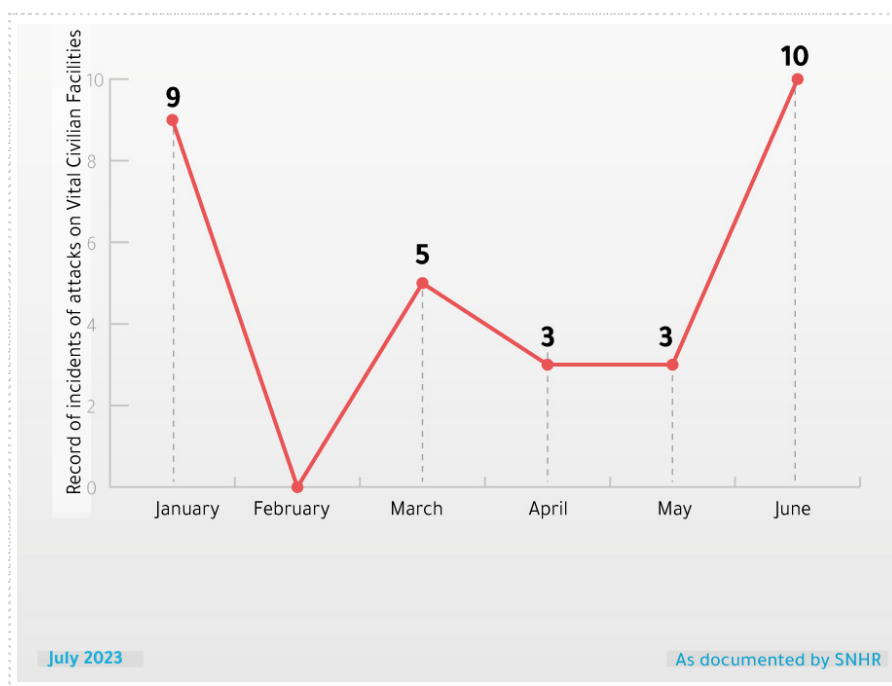
- Turkish forces: Two attacks.



Attacks on vital civilian facilities during the first half of 2023 are distributed by the perpetrator party as follows:

Perpetrator Party	Syrian Regime Forces	Russian Forces	All Armed Opposition Factions/SNA	SDF	Other Parties
Attacked Facility					Turkish Forces
Places of Worship					
Mosques	9				
Vital Educational Facilities					
Schools	3		1		
Vital Medical Facilities					
Medical Facilities	1				1
Ambulances					1
Communal Facilities					
Markets	3	1			
Infrastructures					
Water Facilities and Resources	1				
Official Service Headquarters	1			1	
Industrial Facilities	1				
IDPs Gatherings/Camps					
Regular Camps	1			1	
Irregular Camps	3				
Shelters	1				
Total	24	1	1	2	2

Attacks on vital civilian facilities in the first half of 2023 are distributed by month as follows:



As shown on the graph, June saw the highest number of attacks on vital civilian facilities in one month in 2023 to date, accounting for approximately 34 percent of all attacks recorded so far in 2023, followed by January with approximately 30 percent. It should be noted that SNHR documented 30 attacks in the first half of 2023, all of which took place in Idlib and Aleppo (18 in Idlib and 12 in Aleppo).

2. June 2023

SNHR documented at least 10 attacks on vital civilian facilities during June 2023, seven of which were perpetrated by Syrian regime forces.

One of the attacks targeted a medical facility and three targeted places of worship.

The attacks on vital civilian facilities recorded in June 2023 were distributed by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria as follows:

A. Main parties:

- **Syrian regime forces:** six attacks.
- **Russian forces:** One attack.
- **SDF:** One attack.

B. Other parties:

- **Turkish forces:** Two attacks.

Attacks on vital civilian facilities during June 2023 are distributed by the perpetrator party as follows:

Perpetrator Party	Syrian Regime Forces	Russian Forces	SDF	Other Parties
Attacked Facility				Turkish Forces
Places of Worship				
Mosques	9			
Vital Educational Facilities				
Schools	3			
Vital Medical Facilities				
Medical Facilities	1			1
Ambulances				1
Communal Facilities				
Markets	3	1		
Infrastructures				
Official Service Headquarters	1			
Industrial Facilities	1			
IDPs Gatherings/Camps				
Regular Camps			1	
Total	6	1	1	2

Most notable attacks on vital civilian facilities documented in June:

On Friday, June 16, 2023, artillery forces believed to be Turkish and stationed at one of the Turkish medical points spread across the SNA-held areas in northern Aleppo governorate fired multiple shells at Tal Ref'at city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. A number of these shells landed near Tal Ref'at Hospital on the southern outskirts of the city, injuring four individuals, [moderately damaging the hospital's building and its cladding materials](#), and shattering the glass windscreen and windows of [one of the ambulances](#). Tal Ref'at city was under the control of SDF at the time of the incident.

On Saturday, June 17, 2023, SDF personnel used a rocket launcher to target Ard al-Amal village, a gathering of concrete block residential units housing IDPs which is managed by the International Commission for Relief and Development (ONSUR). The village is located in the Jabal al-Khaldiya area near Meryamin village in the suburbs of Afrin city in northwestern Aleppo governorate. The shelling [partially destroyed a number of the homes in the camp](#), and injured four civilians, including a girl and two women. SNHR notes that Ard al-Amal village was opened on May 5, 2023, and is 500 meters away from the [Kuwait al-Rahma Camp](#). The area was under the control of the SNA at the time of the incident.



Destruction in Ard al-Amal village camp for IDPs in northern Aleppo governorate caused by an SDF ground attack - June 17, 2023

On Thursday, June 22, 2023, Syrian regime artillery forces fired shells at Sarmin city in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate. One of the shells landed in the middle of a popular market in the city center, [partially destroying a number of shops](#). The city was under the control of armed opposition factions and HTS at the time of the incident.

On Saturday, June 24, 2023, Syrian regime artillery forces fired multiple shells at the Industrial City in al-Sena'a neighborhood in eastern Jisr al-Shoghour city in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate, [partially destroying a number of industrial units](#). The city was under the control of armed opposition factions and HTS at the time of the incident.

SNHR notes that this was the first shelling of the city by Syrian regime forces since October 1, 2021.

On Sunday, June 25, 2023, Syrian regime artillery forces fired a shell at [Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque](#) in Afis village in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, partially destroying the mosque building, and [moderately damaging the mosque's furniture](#). Afis village was under the control of armed opposition factions and HTS at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, June 25, 2023, at 10:08 local time, fixed-wing warplanes believed to be Russian fired two missiles at [a popular vegetable market](#) (locally known as the al-Bandoura Market/ Tomato Market) on the eastern outskirts of Jisr al-Shoghour city in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate. The bombardment was carried out at a time when the market was heavily crowded, which [resulted in casualties](#), as well as [damage to the market facilities](#).

SNHR notes that this market is designated for selling crops from Sahl al-Ghab and Sahl al-Ruj. It was recently established in a square affiliated with the Sugar factory that was destroyed by past military operations in Jirs al-Shoghur city.

It is also worth noting that the Russian airstrikes destroyed the vocational high school building and its surrounding perimeter fence which are adjacent to the market. This school was being used by the Turkistani Islamic Party as a military headquarters, with the bombardment killing multiple fighters from the faction. Jisr al-Shoghur city was under the joint control of armed opposition factions and HTS at the time of the incident.



D. Indiscriminate attacks and attacks using prohibited weapons

We documented no indiscriminate attacks or attacks involving the use of prohibited weapons in May.

IV. Attachments

1. [501 Civilians, Including 71 Children, 42 Woman, and 20 Individuals Who Died due to Torture Documented Killed in Syria, in the First Half of 2023](#)
2. [At Least 1,407 Arbitrary Arrests/Detentions Documented in the First Half of 2023, Including 43 Children and 37 Women, With 184 Arbitrary Arrests/Detentions in June Alone](#)

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

- SNHR notes that, for the past 12 years, the Syrian regime has been involved in the most horrific types of violations against the Syrian people, some of which amount to crimes against humanity. Since the Syrian regime continues to commit such violations up to the present day, as documented in the numerous reports we have released, any normalization of relations with the regime or efforts to rehabilitate it are acts of support for a criminal entity involved in crimes against humanity, which constitute a violation of international law.
- The evidence we have gathered indicates that attacks continue to be directed against civilians and civilian objects. Syrian-Russian alliance forces have committed various crimes, including extrajudicial killings, arrests, torture, and enforced disappearances. In addition, the indiscriminate bombardment and other attacks carried out caused 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.
- 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 resolution 2139, resolution 2042 on the release of detainees, and resolution 2254, all without any accountability.
- We could find no record of any warnings being issued by the Syrian regime or Russian forces prior to any attack as required under international humanitarian law. This has been the case since the beginning of the popular uprising for freedom, providing another blatant demonstration of these forces' total disregard for the lives of civilians in Syria.
- The magnitude and frequency of the violations, the disproportionate use of military force, the indiscriminate manner of the bombing, and the coordinated approach of these attacks lead to the inescapable conclusion that these acts are wholly deliberate and based on high-level orders, and as such constitute a part of state policy.
- The indiscriminate and disproportionate bombardment carried out by the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces is considered to be a clear violation of international humanitarian law, with such indiscriminate killings amounting to war crimes.

- Hay'at Tahrir al Sham has violated international humanitarian law, causing the death of many civilians, as well as damage to vital civilian facilities.
- All Armed Opposition factions/SNA have violated UN Security Council Resolution 2139 through carrying out attacks that are considered to violate customary international humanitarian law, causing civilian casualties or accidental injuries.
- All the attacks documented in this report, particularly bombings, have caused massive collateral damage involving loss of lives, injuries, or significant damage to civilian objects. There are strong indicators suggesting that this damage was excessive compared to the anticipated military benefit.
- The use of explosive munitions to target densely populated areas reflects a criminal and wholly deliberate mindset, with the perpetrators clearly intending to inflict 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 (arts. 27, 31, 32).

Recommendations

UN Security Council

- The Security Council must take additional steps following its adoption of Resolution 2254, which clearly insists that «all parties immediately cease any attacks against civilians and civilian objects as such.»
- The Syrian issue should be referred to the International Criminal Court and all those who are responsible for violations should be held accountable, while Russia must stop using the veto, as it is a party to the Syrian conflict, and the UNSC states' veto power should be withheld when crimes against humanity and war crimes are committed.
- Ensure peace and security and implement the principle of responsibility to protect civilians' lives and to save the Syrian people's heritage and historical artifacts from destruction, looting and vandalism.
- The Security Council should adopt a resolution banning the use of cluster munitions and landmines in Syria, similar to the existing prohibition on the use of chemical weapons, and include advice on how to safely remove the remnants of such dangerous weapons.
- The four other permanent member states should put pressure on the Russian government to end its support for the Syrian regime, which uses chemical weapons, and to expose its involvement in this regard.
- Request that all relevant United Nations agencies make greater efforts to provide food, medical and humanitarian assistance in areas where fighting has ceased, and in internally displaced person camps, and to follow-up with those States that have pledged voluntary contributions.

International Community

- In light of the split 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 by protecting them from daily killing and by lifting sieges, as well as by increasing support for relief efforts. Additionally, the principle of universal jurisdiction should be enacted 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' 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 have proved fruitless, along with the Cessation of Hostilities statements and Astana agreements that followed. Therefore, steps should be taken under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, while the norm of the 'Responsibility to Protect (R2P)', which was established by the United Nations General Assembly, should be implemented. The Security Council is still hindering the protection of civilians in Syria.
- Renew 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 to activate the principle of universal jurisdiction.

UN Human Rights Office

- The OHCHR should submit a report to the Human Rights Council and other organs of the United Nations on the incidents mentioned in this report and previous reports since these attacks were perpetrated by the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces.

Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI)

- Launch 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 the next report.

International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism (IIIM)

- Collect further evidence about the crimes documented in this report.

The United Nations Special Envoy for Syria

- Condemn the perpetrators of crimes and 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 establishment of a transitional governing body.

Syrian regime

- Stop indiscriminate shelling and targeting of residential areas, hospitals, schools and markets, and end the use of outlawed weapons and barrel bombs.
- Ensure compliance with UN Security Council resolutions and customary humanitarian law.

Russian regime

- Launch investigations into the incidents included in this report, make the findings of these investigations public for the Syrian people, and hold those responsible accountable.
- Compensate all the damaged centers and facilities, rebuild and rehabilitate them, and compensate all the families of victims who were killed by the current Russian regime, as well as all the wounded.
- Completely cease the bombing of hospitals, protected objects, and civilian areas, and respect customary international law.
- As a guarantor party in 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 to allow unconditional passage of humanitarian aid to besieged areas.

The Coalition (US-led coalition and Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces)

- 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.
- Syrian Democratic Forces must immediately stop conscripting children, hold the officers involved in such violations accountable, and pledge to return all children who have been arrested for conscription immediately.

All Armed Opposition factions/SNA

- The Armed Opposition/SNA must 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.
- Take punitive action against those who commit violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

Humanitarian Organizations

- Develop urgent operational plans to secure decent shelter for internally displaced persons.
- Provide protected facilities and vehicles, such as medical facilities, schools, and ambulances, with distinctive signs that can be distinguished from long distances.

Acknowledgment

Our most sincere gratitude to the victims' families and friends, and the eyewitnesses and local activists for their significant contribution to this report.



www.snhr.org - info@snhr.org