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PRESS RELEASE

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UPDATED Syria: Hospitals Overwhelmed Amid Aleppo Bombings

More Than 100 Killed and Injured by Bombs Dropped from Helicopters

UPDATE: CASUALTIES MOUNT IN ALEPPO

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 31, 2013—Airstrikes in the northern Syrian city of Aleppo killed 541 people and wounded 3,039 people from December 15 to 28, according to local medical sources, the international medical humanitarian organization Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said today.

These casualty figures were reported by 10 local hospitals that received patients. Three hospitals in Aleppo have been considerably affected by the airstrikes, and at least two paramedics died while assisting the victims.

Residential buildings, schools, hospitals, markets and bus stations have also been affected by the airstrikes.

MSF is providing hospitals in the Aleppo area with medical supplies to help them cope with the emergency. MSF has treated dozens of wounded patients in a hospital on the outskirts of the city.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 17, 2013—Hospitals in the northern Syrian city of Aleppo are overwhelmed with patients injured in an ongoing wave of airstrikes that have already killed more than 100 people, the international medical humanitarian organization Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said today.

According to local medical sources, Syrian helicopters began dropping barrel bombs on December 15 in several areas of eastern Aleppo. Despite inflicting widespread injuries and damage in civilian-populated areas, the indiscriminate and sustained attacks continued today. MSF is providing hospitals in the area with medical supplies to help them cope with the emergency.

“For the past three days, helicopters have been targeting different areas, among them a school and the Haydarya roundabout, where people wait for public transport vehicles,” said Aitor Zabalgogazkoa, MSF coordinator in Syria. “In both cases, there were dozens of dead and injured people. A dozen bodies were being lined up in front of three hospitals waiting to be recovered by families.”

The influx of injured people has overwhelmed the remaining functioning hospitals in Aleppo, leaving them with little-to-no resources. Since the war in Syria began, most of Aleppo’s hospitals have been partially damaged or destroyed, along with large segments of the city itself. The latest wave of attacks is exacting a cumulative effect on already exhausted health care facilities.

“Repeated attacks often lead to chaos and make it more difficult to treat the wounded, thereby increasing the number of fatalities,” said Zabalgogazkoa. “The ambulances are overwhelmed because they are called to several

areas at the same time. Doctors face extremely difficult decisions because they receive such a significant flow of patients.”

The structural lack of support to hospitals in Aleppo and the difficulties of sending medical supplies to them further degrade their capacity to treat patients. The massive flow of patients after this wave of attacks has emptied stocks of critical drugs and medical materials for lifesaving procedures.

“We ask all the parties in conflict, and the Syrian Government at this particular moment, to stop targeting civilian infrastructure, such as hospitals and schools, and to stop using weapons with indiscriminate effects in urban areas, where civilians are paying the highest price,” said Teresa Sancristóval, MSF emergency manager. “All parties must comply with international humanitarian law.”

In November, MSF treated 88 wounded people in less than a week following attacks in the northern areas of Aleppo.

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