

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	1799
Land:	Syrien
Kilde:	Syrian Network for Human Rights
Titel:	On World Children's Day: SNHR's 11th Annual Report on Violations Against Children in Syria
Udgivet:	20. november 2022
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	19. december 2022



On World Children's Day: SNHR's 11th Annual Report on Violations Against Children in Syria

No fewer than 29,894 children killed in Syria since March 2011, including 182 children who died due to torture, while 5,162 children are still detained and/or forcibly disappeared

Sunday 20 November 2022

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.

SNHR
SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Content:

I. Children in Syria Have been Suffering Violations for over 11 Years. Syria is One of the World's Worst Countries in Terms of Several Violations Against Children in 2011 According to the UN Secretary-General's Reports	2
II. SNHR Cooperates with the UNICEF's Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances	5
III. SNHR Nominates the Syrian-Kurdish Girl Sirin Mathloun Na'san for the International Children's Peace Prize 2022	6
IV. Most Notable Violations Against Children according to SNHR's Database	7
V. Comparison between the most Notable Patterns of Violations Against Children from March 2011 Until the 2021's World Children Day and the 2022's World Children Day	17
VI. Sample Details and Incidents from the Most Notable Patterns of Violations Against Children in a Year (Since the Last Annual Report)	19
VII. Conclusions and Recommendations	52

I. Children in Syria Have been Suffering Violations for over 11 Years. Syria is One of the World's Worst Countries in Terms of Several Violations Against Children in 2011 According to the UN Secretary-General's Reports

Children are one of the most vulnerable groups for many reasons, not the least of which are their specific and sensitive requirements including nutritional, medical, educational, and psychological needs. Children also lack individual legal agency. This is why children are worse affected by violations than other groups, especially in times of armed conflicts. Protecting children is, therefore, a responsibility shared by all active components of society, with numerous international law texts that promulgated to ensure their protection and the preservation of their rights. In the eyes of international law, children are accorded general protection as noncombatant civilians not engaged in hostilities, as well as special protection as members of vulnerable, and non-armed groups.

What started as a popular movement in March 2011 had, 18 months later, already turned into an internal armed conflict. Crimes against humanity have been committed during and before the conflict, including against children. Not only has the Syrian regime failed to protect the Syrian people, but it has been and remains the primary culprit in the various types of violations that Syria has seen throughout this time period; including killing, enforced disappearance, torture, forced displacement, sexual violence, conscription, targeting schools and hospitals, and obstructing the delivery of humanitarian aid. Of the wide range of violations the Syrian Network of Human Rights (SNHR) has been documenting since 2011, almost every type of violation has been perpetrated against children, a fact that we have underlined in all of our annual reports. It is utterly heartbreaking that this is still going on to this very day, as we try to shed light on this part of the reality in our 11th annual report on children in Syria.

By releasing an [extensive report](#) on World Children's Day every year, SNHR is endeavoring to highlight the sheer magnitude of Syrian children's suffering. In our annual reports, we try to reflect the latest updates to our database on violations against children and identify the new consequences of these violations, as well as to underline the fact that those heinous violations have been ongoing for the last 11 years.

Syria has ratified the 1993 Convention on the Rights of the Child¹, and its two optional protocols: Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and the 2002's Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict². While it may be true that all parties to the conflict in Syria have been guilty of violating children's rights, the Syrian regime bears by far the greatest responsibility in terms of the number of crimes perpetrated in a manner which exhibits a clear pattern and demonstrates a systematic aspect in its violation of children's rights, particularly of those rights established in Articles 6, 37, and 38 - namely the inherent right to life and the survival and development of the child (Article 6), children's right not to be subjected to torture nor suffer the deprivation of their liberty (Article 37), and that state parties are to respect and ensure the respect for the rules of international humanitarian law which are relevant to the child during armed conflicts (Article 38)³.

¹ [United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

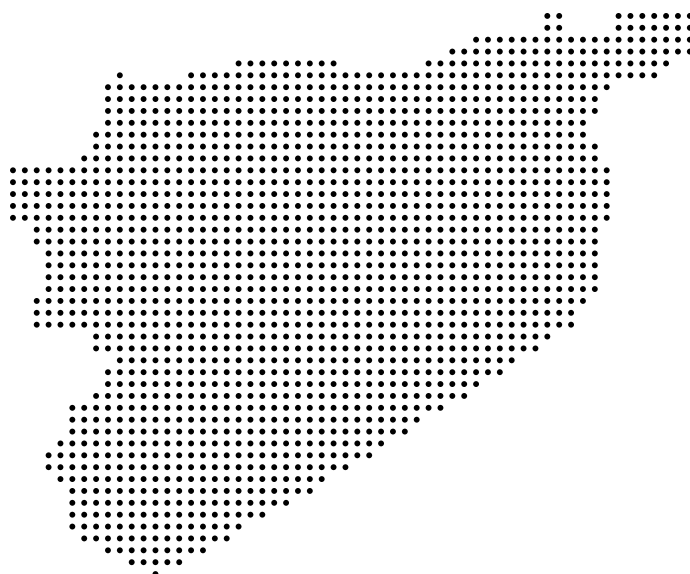
² [United Nations, Optional Protocol to the Convention](#) on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict

³ [United Nations, Optional Protocol to the Convention](#) on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

The Syrian regime's crimes amount to crimes against humanity, which highlights the legal and moral responsibilities of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to monitor the state of children's rights in Syria and put an end to the Syrian regime's violations⁴.

Lastly, in June of this year, the UN Secretary-General submitted [his annual report on children and armed conflict for the year 2021](#). On reviewing the report and comparing Syria with the rest of the world, we noted the following points:

- Syria is the **world's worst** country in terms of conscription and use of children.
- Syria is the world's **second-worst** country in terms of killing and maiming children.
- Syria is the world's **third-worst** country in terms of attacks on schools and hospitals.
- Syria is the world's **fourth-worst** country in terms of denial of humanitarian access.



Fadel Abdul Ghany, executive director of SNHR, says:

For over 11 years, the armed conflict has had catastrophic effects on the children of Syria. This report reflects only a glimpse of these violations and their ramifications. It must be underlined that we did not expand on many of the rights of the Syrian children in light of the continued harrowing violations. We have monitored economic exploitation, violating the rights of disabled children, and a drop in the levels of medical and educational care. All of these violations still need to be further highlighted and documented, and of course combated.

⁴ Fadel Abdul Ghany. (2021). [The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Its Committee Are Helpless in Effectively Defending Children Rights in Syria and Around the World](#). Syrian Network for Human Rights.

Methodology

The report draws upon SNHR's archive, the result of daily monitoring and documenting since March 2011, which encompasses violations of extrajudicial killing, arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearance and torture, conscription, sexual violence, attacks that saw the use of various weapons, and attacks on vital civilian facilities. All the figures included in this report have been documented according to our [methodology](#), and are based on all the information and details we have been able to access and verify. The report is a detailed account of the most notable violations perpetrated by the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces against children that the SNHR team has been able to document between March 2011 and November 20, 2022. Also in this report, we provide a summary of the most notable of these violations with a particular focus on those which took place between November 2021 and November 20, 2022.

SNHR's database features a filter function that enables us to sort cases of arrests/detention by the governorate in which the arresting incident took place, as well as by the detainee's governorate of origin. In this report, as in most of our reports, we categorize arrests by the place where the arrest took place rather than the detainee's governorate of origin. In some cases, however, we opt for categorizing arrest cases by the governorate of origin in order to highlight the magnitude of loss and violence suffered by a certain governorate in relation to other governorates. Whenever that is the case, we ensure that a note is made of it in the same report.

SNHR's team strives to verify the violations we include in our reports by consulting with various sources, including media outlets, social media, collaborating activists, eyewitnesses, and survivors. Our team also goes to great lengths to gather and cross-check evidence and data and to visit the location of the violation whenever possible. We try to locate and rely first and foremost on the accounts of survivors who suffered the violation firsthand as a primary source. Secondly, we try to locate people who witnessed or recorded the violation. This report also draws upon accounts and interviews with eyewitnesses, child survivors, and victims' families from various Syrian governorates. We conduct those interviews in-person or using various communication channels. This report contains 10 first-hand accounts we have collected directly from eyewitnesses, rather than any second-hand sources. In some cases, we have used aliases in order to maintain the eyewitnesses' confidentiality, and more importantly to protect them from harassment or persecution. The interviewees did not receive any financial compensation for the interviews, nor were they promised any such compensation. We informed all of the individuals interviewed of the purpose of the report beforehand, and they gave us permission to use the information they revealed in the service of the goals of the report and our documentation efforts. Such procedures are part of our rigorous internal protocols, which we have maintained for years. We always strive to improve our protocols, so as to better take into account the mental and emotional anguish of the victims.

Moreover, this report additionally draws upon the information available from open sources such as the internet and media, and thirdly through talking with medical personnel who worked on the treatment and examination of victims' bodies and determined the cause of death in attacks and extrajudicial killings. We keep copies of all the videos and pictures included in this report in a confidential database, as well as multiple backup copies in hard drives. Still, we do not claim to have documented all cases in light of the proscription and persecution by Syrian regime forces and other armed groups.

Some of the pictures and video footage in our archives show harrowing images such as dead and wounded children, some of whom suffocated to death under the rubble, while others died of starvation and illness. We have copies of this footage, and we have included some of it in this report.

All of the attacks included in this report, which were carried out by the various parties to the conflict in Syria, targeted civilian areas where we documented no presence of any military personnel or weapons arsenals during or before the attack. Additionally, no warning was sent out to civilians by the assaulting forces prior to these attacks as required by international humanitarian law.

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. SNHR Cooperates with the UNICEF's Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

Since 2014, the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) has been systematically documenting and investigating violations committed against children in the course of the armed conflict. The MRM has been mandated by the Security Council in accordance with [Resolution 1612](#) (2005) and the subsequent resolution. The MRM has been invoked in Syria after the parties to the conflict responsible for committing grave violations against children were named in the UN Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict.

SNHR has been cooperating with the MRM through monthly sharing of the data our team has been able to document on various forms of violations against children, such as killing and maiming children, conscription, abduction, arrest/detention, attacks on schools, hospitals, and health and educational staff, sexual violence, and denying humanitarian access to children.

SNHR underlines the important and vital role played by the MRM in Syria, and stresses that we will continue to cooperate and share data with the Mechanism, as with many of the other UN organs that are active in Syria. It is our belief that exposing and applying pressure on the perpetrators of violations and those who support them is very much part of the course of justice as a precursor to holding them accountable, which paves the way for a path of transitional justice towards stability, democracy, and human rights, thereby ensuring that these monstrous violations against children will never recur in Syria in the future.

Moreover, SNHR [regularly](#) sends messages to the UN on Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. We have received many official responses showing the cases about which the Working Group has made inquiries with the Syrian regime, which were some of the cases we shared. The Working Group also includes those cases in the special annex to the UN report on enforced disappearance in Syria. We also ensure that inquiries are submitted about cases of children forcibly disappeared by the Syrian regime.

Additionally, we send briefs on all of these cases to 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, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

We have also created [a form](#) on our website that families can fill in, which is then automatically sent to our team dealing with detainees and forcibly disappeared persons, which reviews the case and contacts the family to complete the documentation and registration processes. We regularly receive documents from the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on the cases submitted by SNHR about which the UN has contacted the Syrian regime to make inquiries and to demand that their fate is disclosed.

In this context, SNHR urges the families to cooperate more, so as to enable us to report as many cases of forcibly disappeared children as possible to the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. Our team works tirelessly to build relationships with the families of forcibly disappeared persons and access and store whatever data is available on children and forcibly disappeared persons. We have created secure communication channels and dedicated a special phone number to facilitate access for victims' families.

III. SNHR Nominates the Syrian-Kurdish Girl Sirin Mathloun Na'san for the International Children's Peace Prize 2022

Building on the years-long collaboration relationship between the world-renowned [KidsRights Foundation](#) and SNHR, a Syrian-Kurdish girl [Sirin Mathloun Na'san](#) was nominated by SNHR for the [International Children's Peace Prize 2022](#) in acknowledgment of her exceptional efforts in [supporting her peers and highlighting their suffering](#) as a result of the violations they experienced in the midst of the armed conflict in Syria. We are delighted and honored to reveal that our nomination has been accepted, and, as such, [Sirin will be one of 170 boys and girls from across the globe to be nominated for this great honor](#). Sirin has our utmost gratitude and best wishes for her success. In October 2022, we released [a statement](#) to shed light on the award and support Sirin's nomination.



SIRIN

AGE: 13

NOMINATED IN 2022

TOPIC: Art for peace

COUNTRY: Syria

Nominated by Syrian Network for Human Rights

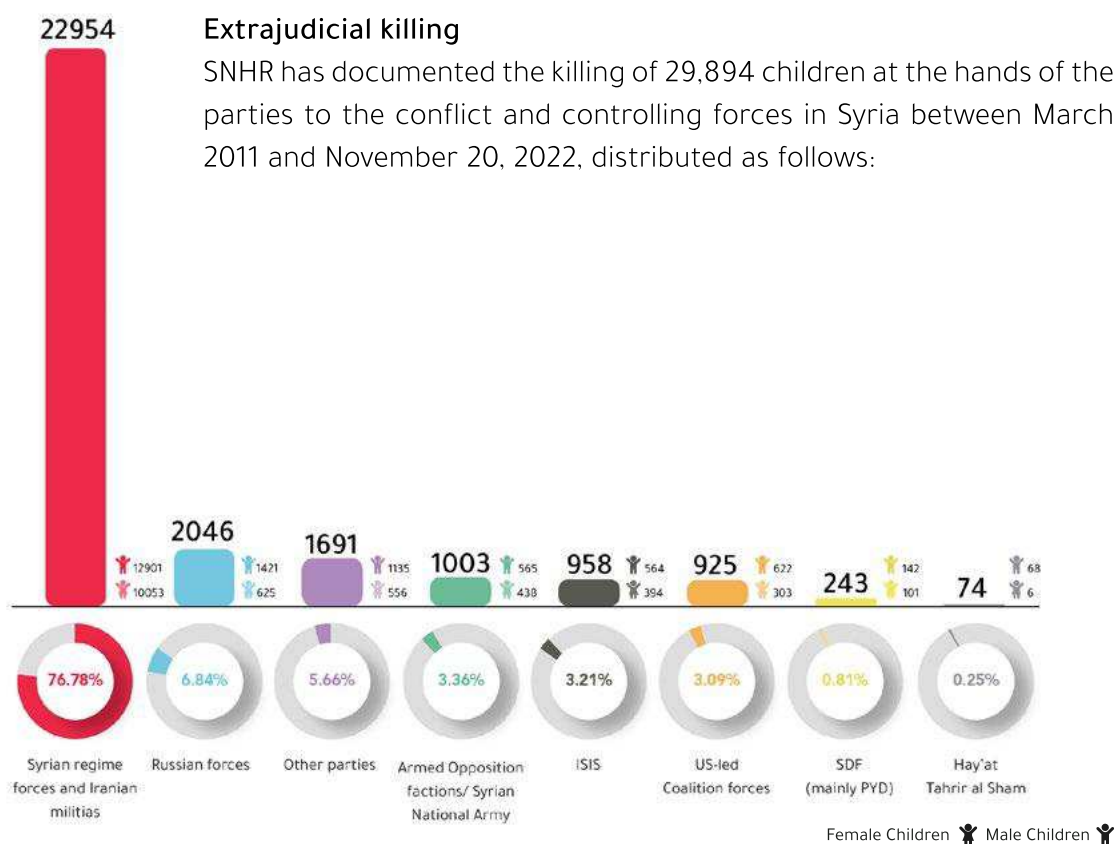
ALL 2022 CHILDREN'S PEACE PRIZE NOMINEES

Our message to the world is that today, as children, we want to live in safety, have our rights protected, and practice our hobbies and activities to the fullest so that we can always offer the best and most beautiful for today and future.

It should also be noted that SNHR nominated a Syrian boy, [Muhammad Nour al-Asmar](#), for the 2021 award. Muhammad competed with 162 boys and girls from all over the world, [and advanced to the next round with 28 other children](#). In 2020, SNHR nominated Syrian girl [Anar al-Hamrawi](#). Those nominations are part of our attempts to focus more on nominating children who are active in their local communities and our broader goals to support Syrian children and their personal involvement in defending children's rights.

IV. Most Notable Violations Against Children according to SNHR's Database

Children in Syria experience various and repeated patterns of violations that differ in their severity, commonness, and current and future ramifications on Syrian children. At SNHR, we focus on the gross and life-threatening violations as determined by the UN Security Council, which are documented based on our methodology. Naturally, killing children is classified as the primary and most dangerous violation taking place in Syria, more especially considering the significantly high numbers of children victims. The second most dangerous violation is arrest/abduction which goes on to become enforced disappearance in the overwhelming majority of cases, and then torture. We also focus on child conscription and attacks on educational facilities, which results in children falling out of the educational process. The Syrian regime is responsible for the vast majority of the violations in comparison to the other parties to the conflict.



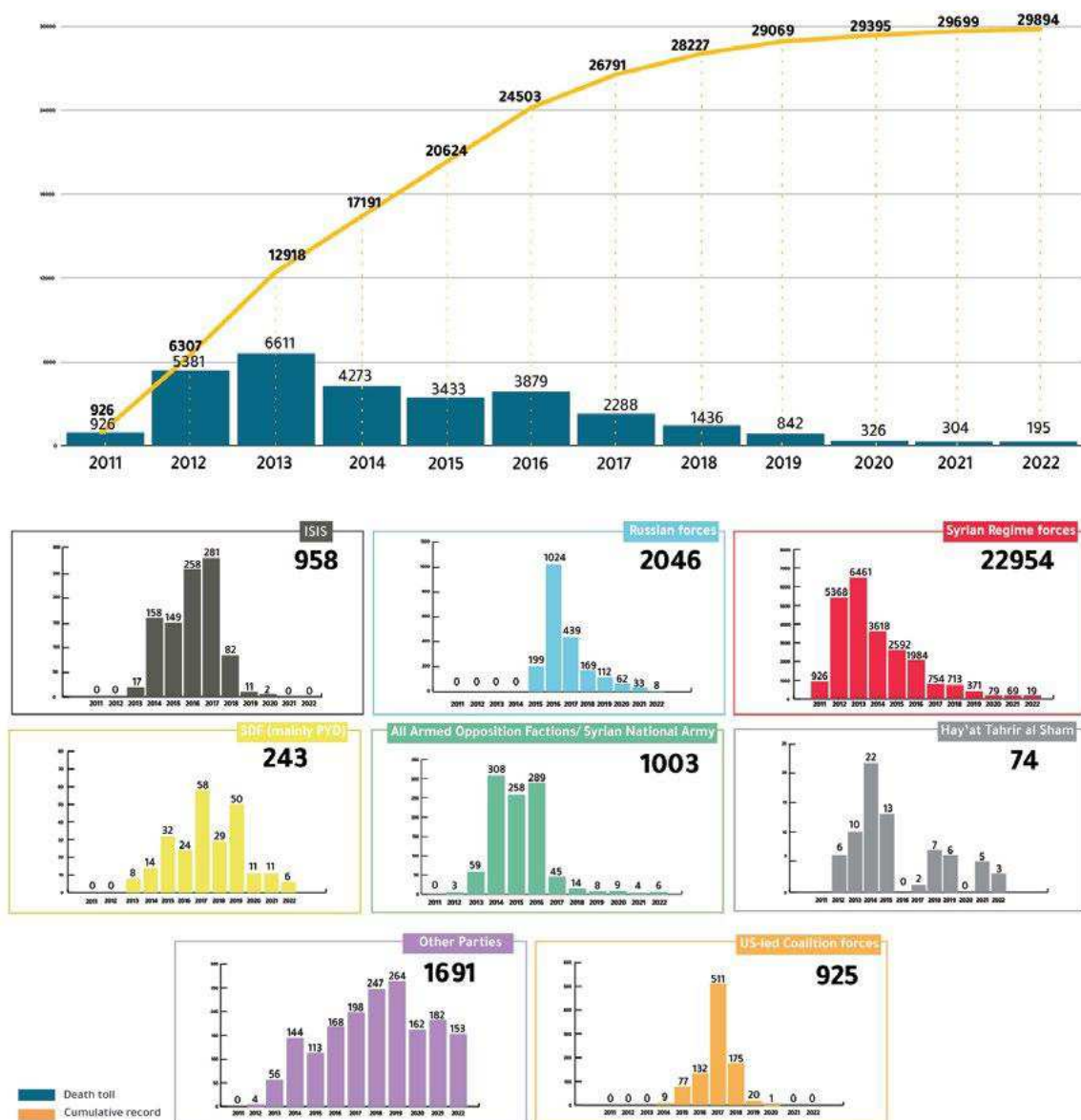
- **Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias)⁵**: 22,954 children - 12,901 male children and 10,053 female children.

⁵ 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 a personalist/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. The Minister of Justice cannot even summon a low-ranking security office, let alone a security branch head. Syria is ruled by the heads of the security branches with the president. 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.

- **Russian forces:** 2,046 children - 1,421 male children and 625 female children.
- **ISIS (the self-proclaimed 'Islamic State'):** 958 children - 564 male children and 394 female children.
- **Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham/HTS⁶ (an alliance composed of Fateh al-Sham Front and a number of armed opposition factions):** 74 children - 68 male children and six female children.
- **Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces/SDF (Democratic Union Party/PYD):** 243 children - 142 male children and 101 female children.
- **All armed opposition factions/Syrian National Army (SNA)⁷:** 1,003 children - 565 male children and 438 female children.
- **International coalition forces:** 925 children - 622 male children and 303 female children.
- **Other parties:** 1,691 children - 1,135 male children and 556 female children.

As the chart shows, the Syrian regime is responsible for roughly 77% of all cases of extrajudicial killing involving children. This implies that the Syrian regime has been targeting children in a deliberate and calculated manner.

The children's death toll at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria is distributed by year as follows:

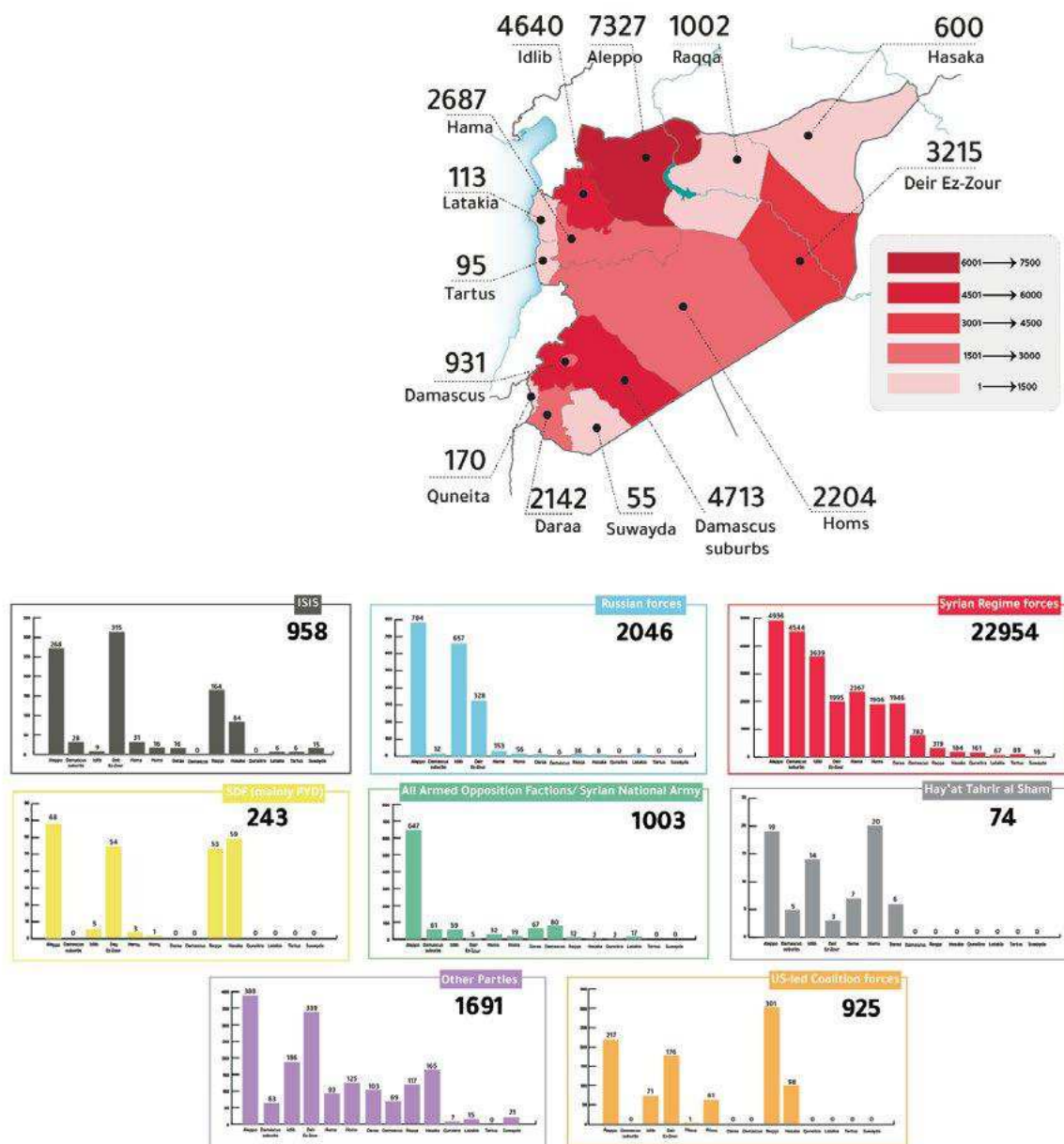


⁶ Was designated as a terrorist group by the UN.

⁷ All armed opposition factions: all factions that have been founded since 2011 in the various Syrian neighborhoods and areas. Many of those factions are now non-existent, and many did not have a central command. Towards the end of 2017, the Syrian National Army was founded as an umbrella organization for the armed opposition factions that remained in existence at the time.

According to the table above, 2013 was the worst year in terms of children's deaths, most of which were at the hands of Syrian regime forces, followed by 2012, then 2014, and then 2016. The Syrian regime was responsible for over half of all the children's deaths we recorded in all of these years.

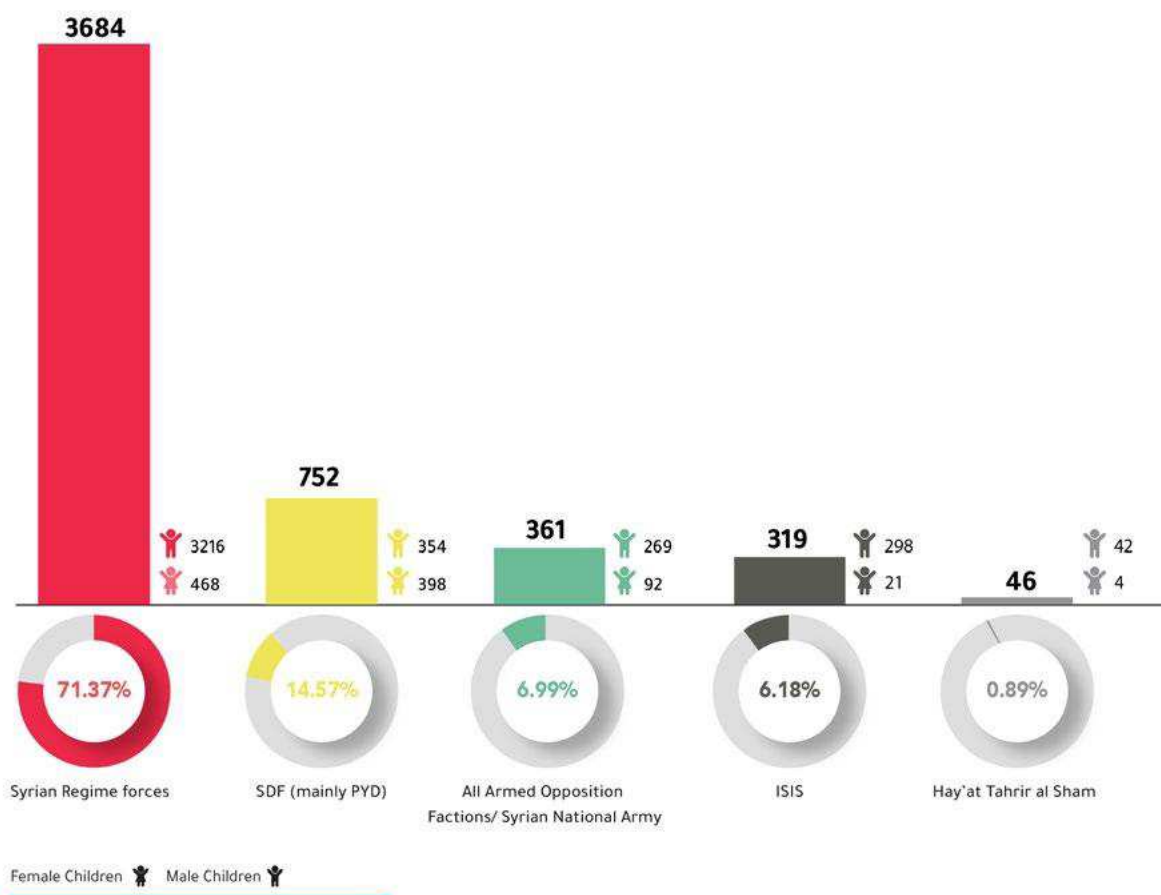
The children's death toll at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria is distributed by governorate as follows:



As shown in the table above, the highest number of children's deaths was documented in Aleppo governorate, followed by Damascus suburbs, then Idlib, and then Deir Ez-Zour.

Arbitrary arrest/detention and enforced disappearance

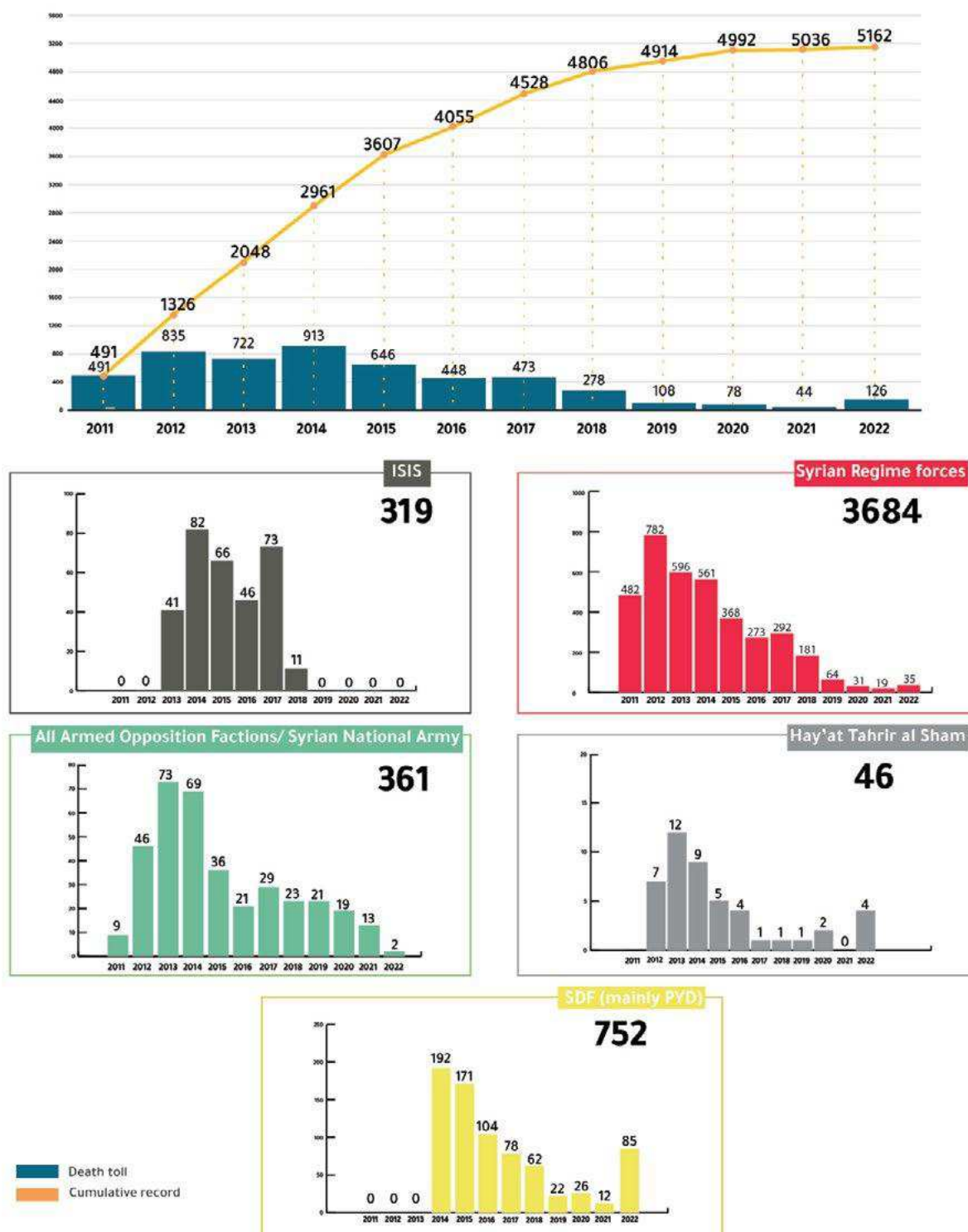
According to SNHR's database, no fewer than 5,162 of the children arrested, detained, and/or forcibly disappeared at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling force in Syria since March 2011 are still under arrest, in detention or forcibly disappeared as of November 2022, distributed as follows:



- Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias): 3,684 children - 3,216 male children and 468 female children.
- ISIS: 319 children - 298 male children and 21 female children.
- HTS: 46 children - 42 male children and four female children.
- SDF: 752 children - 354 male children and 398 female children.
- All armed opposition factions/(SNA): 361 children - 269 male children and 92 female children.

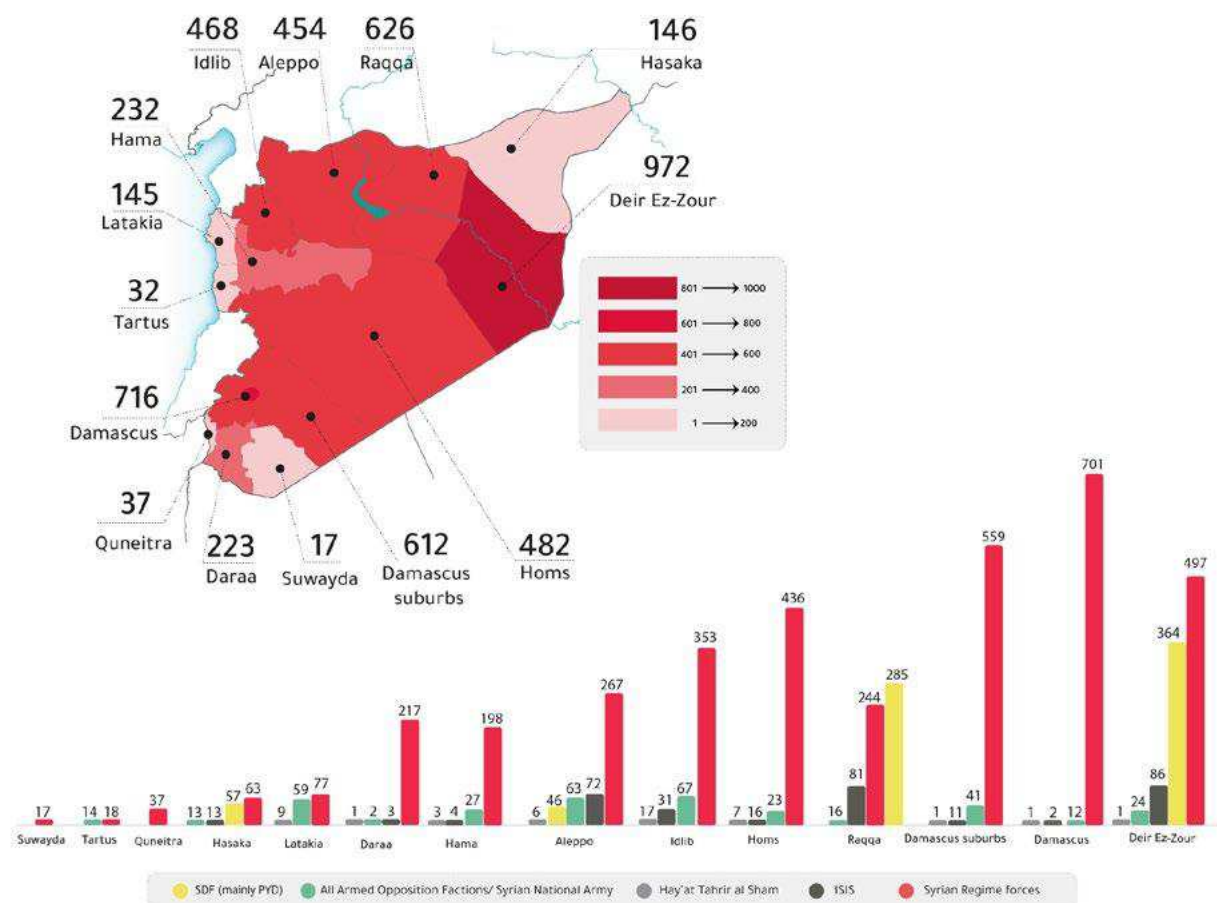
As the chart shows, the Syrian regime is responsible for 72 percent of all cases of arrest and enforced disappearance involving children. This implies that the Syrian regime has been pursuing, arresting, and disappearing children for various motives in a deliberate and calculated manner.

Cases of arrest/detention and/or enforced disappearance involving children at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria are distributed by year as follows:



According to the table, 2014 was the worst year in terms of arrests targeting children, with roughly 61 percent of all arrests of children that year being carried out by Syrian regime forces, followed by 2012, then 2013, and 2015. The Syrian regime was responsible for over half of all the arrests of children which we documented in all of these years.

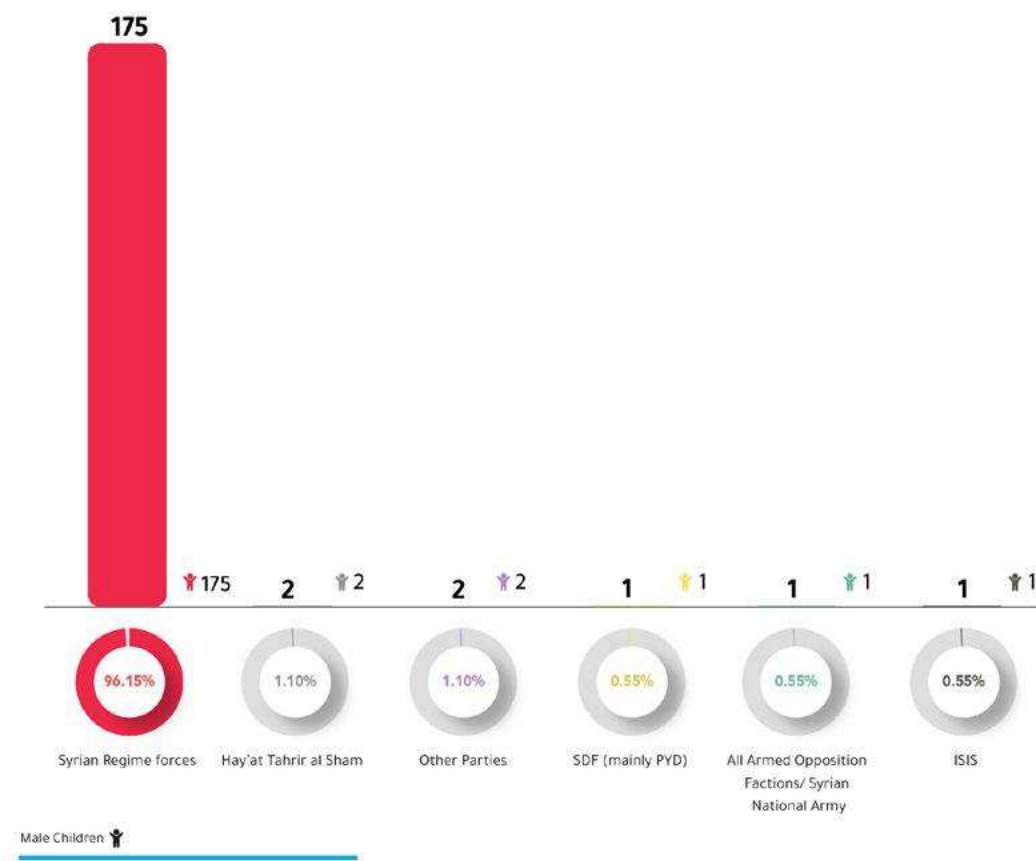
Cases of arrest/detention and/or enforced disappearance involving children toll at the hands of the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria are distributed by governorate as follows:



According to the table above, the highest number of child arrests was documented in Deir Ez-Zour governorate, followed by Damascus, then Raqqa, and then Damascus suburbs.

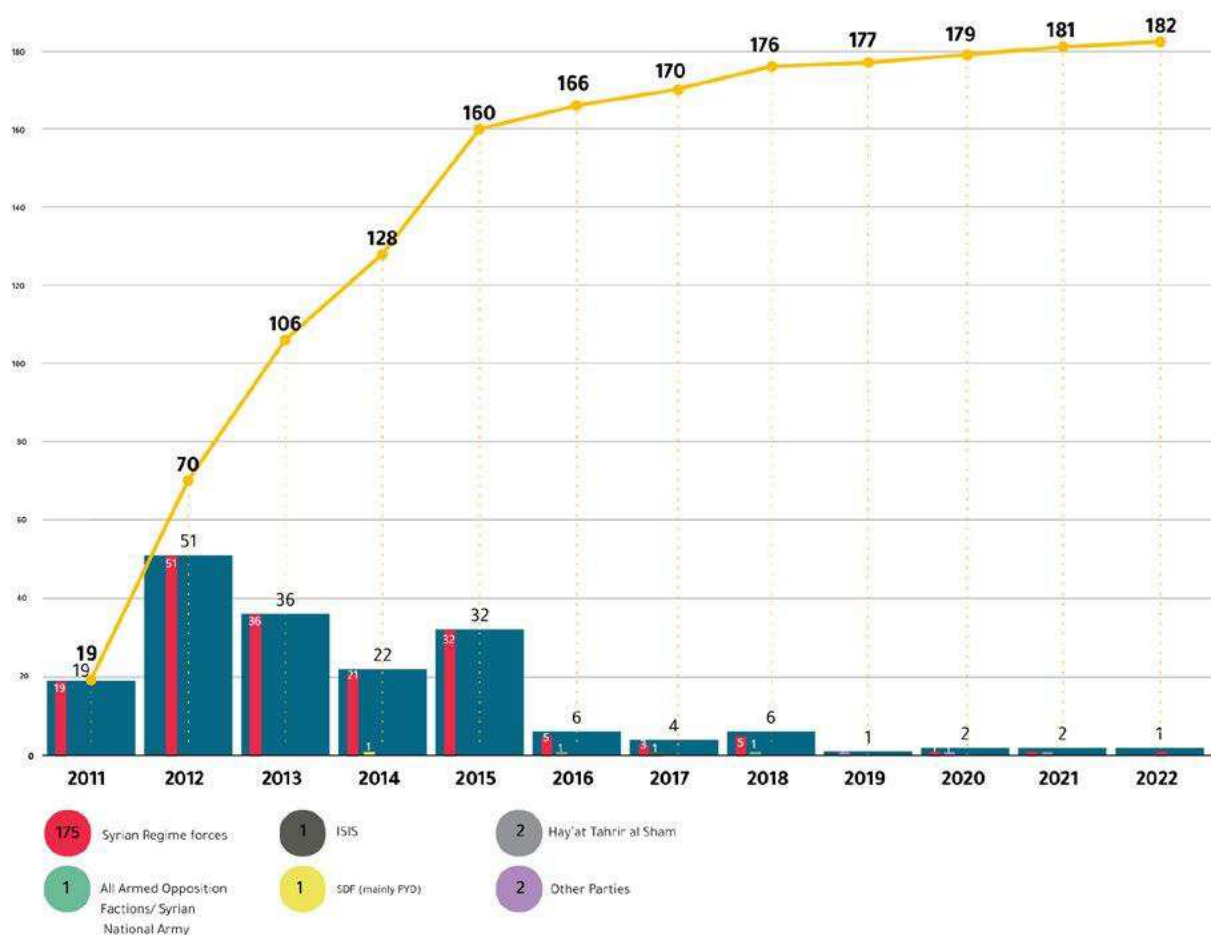
Children's deaths due to torture

Between March 2011 and November 20, 2022, we recorded no fewer than 182 children's deaths due to torture at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria, distributed as follows:



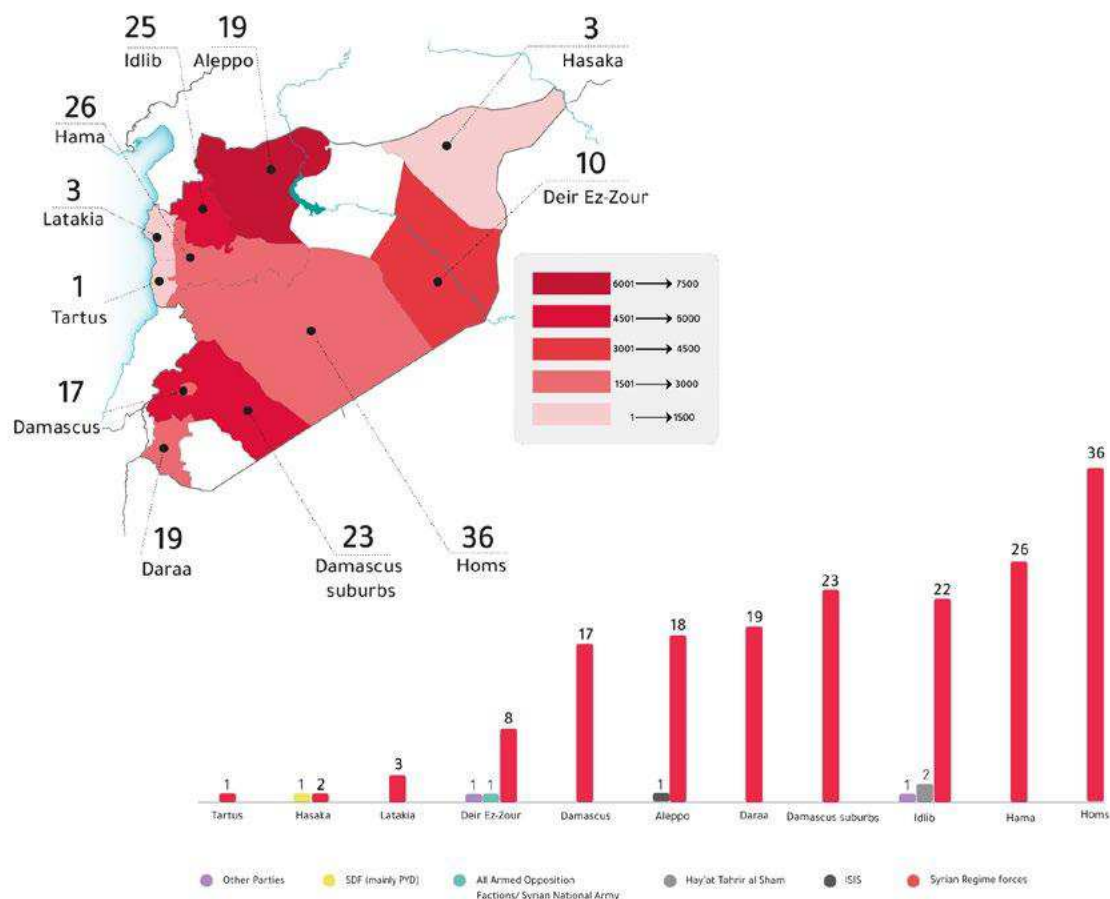
- Syrian regime forces: 175
- ISIS: 1
- HTS: 2
- SDF: 2
- Armed opposition/SNA: 1
- Other parties: 2

The death toll of children who died due to torture at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria was distributed by year as follows:



As the graph shows, 2012 was the worst year in terms of children deaths due to torture, with Syrian regime forces being responsible for all cases that year, followed by 2013, then 2015, and then 2014. The Syrian regime was also the only party responsible for all deaths in all of these years except for one.

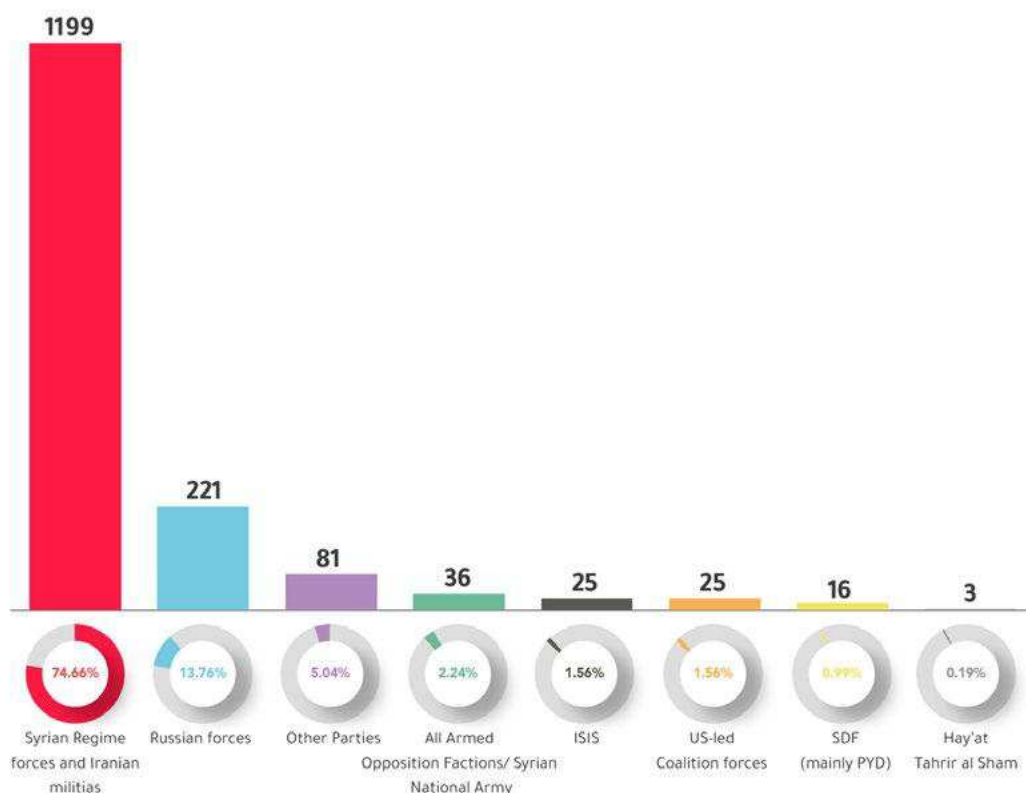
Toll of children deaths due to torture at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces in Syria was distributed by governorate as follows:



According to the map, the highest number of children's deaths due to torture was documented in Homs, followed by Hama, then Damascus suburbs, and then Idlib.

Attacks on educational facilities

SNHR recorded that no fewer than 1,606 schools were attacked by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria between March 2011 and November 20, 2022, as follows:

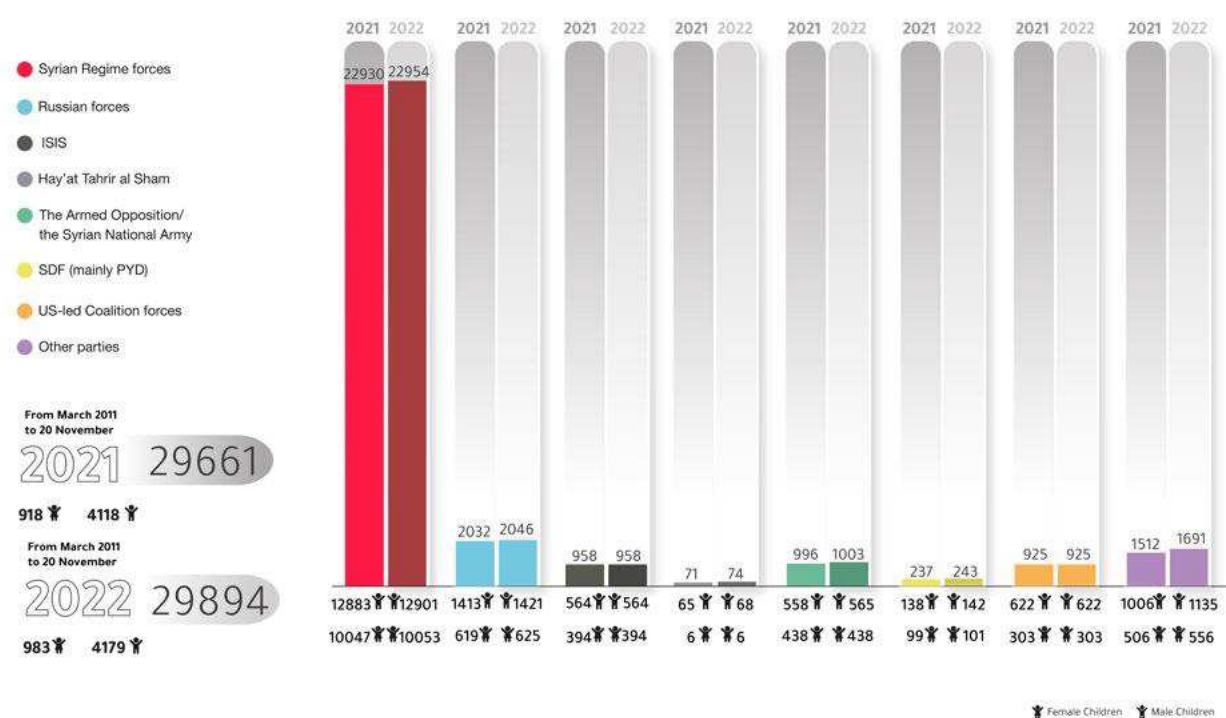


- Syrian regime forces: 1,199
- Russian forces: 221
- ISIS: 25
- HTS: 3
- All armed opposition factions/SNA: 36
- SDF: 16
- international coalition forces: 25
- Other parties: 81

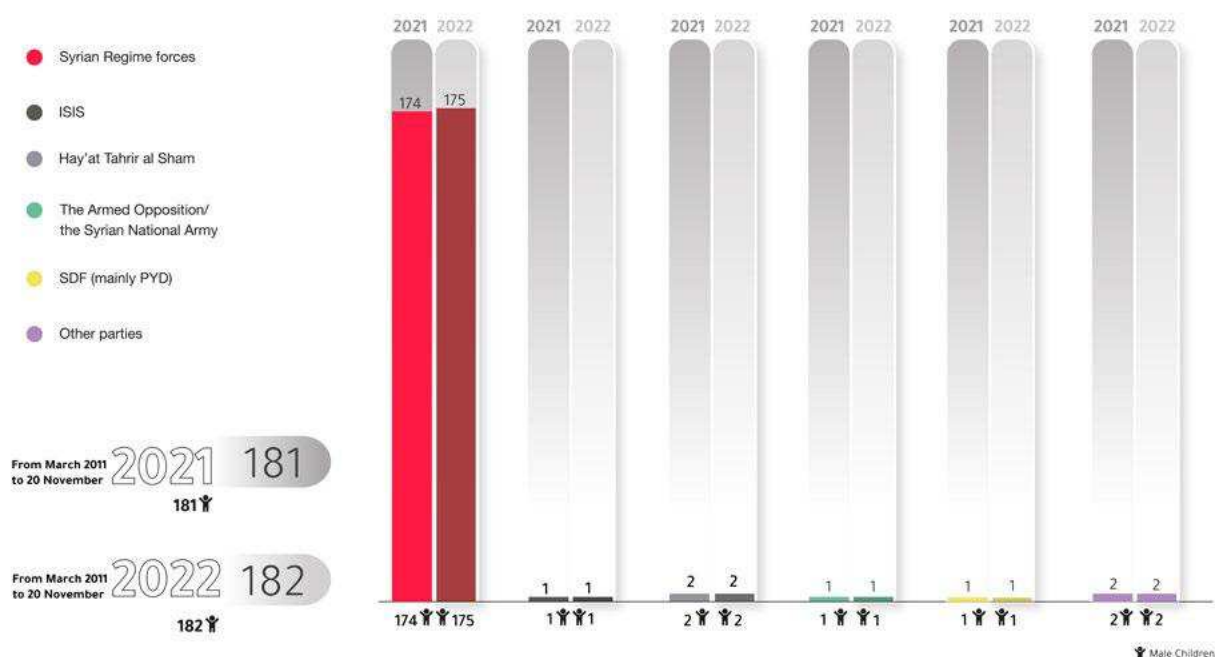
As the graph shows, Syrian regime forces have been responsible for roughly 75 percent of all attacks targeting schools in Syria. We also documented that no fewer than 30 kindergartens were attacked by Syrian regime forces in the same time period.

V. Comparison between the most Notable Patterns of Violations Against Children from March 2011 Until the 2021's World Children Day and the 2022's World Children Day

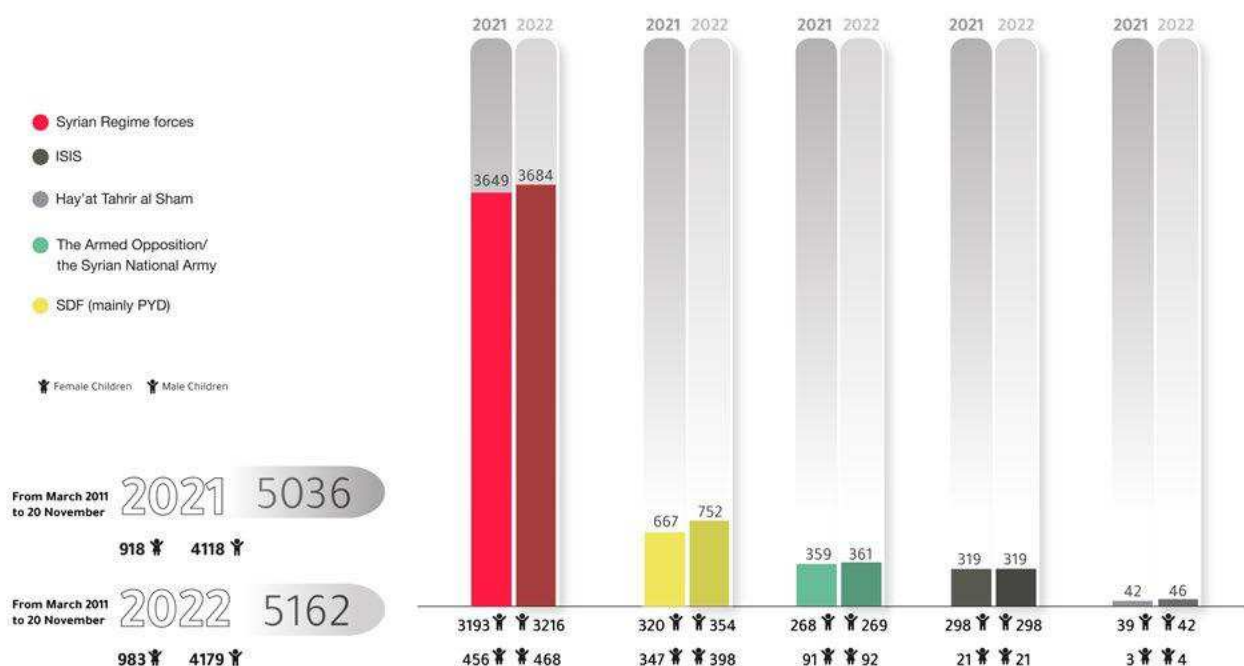
Comparison between children deaths at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces from March 2011 until November 20, 2021, and until November 20, 2022



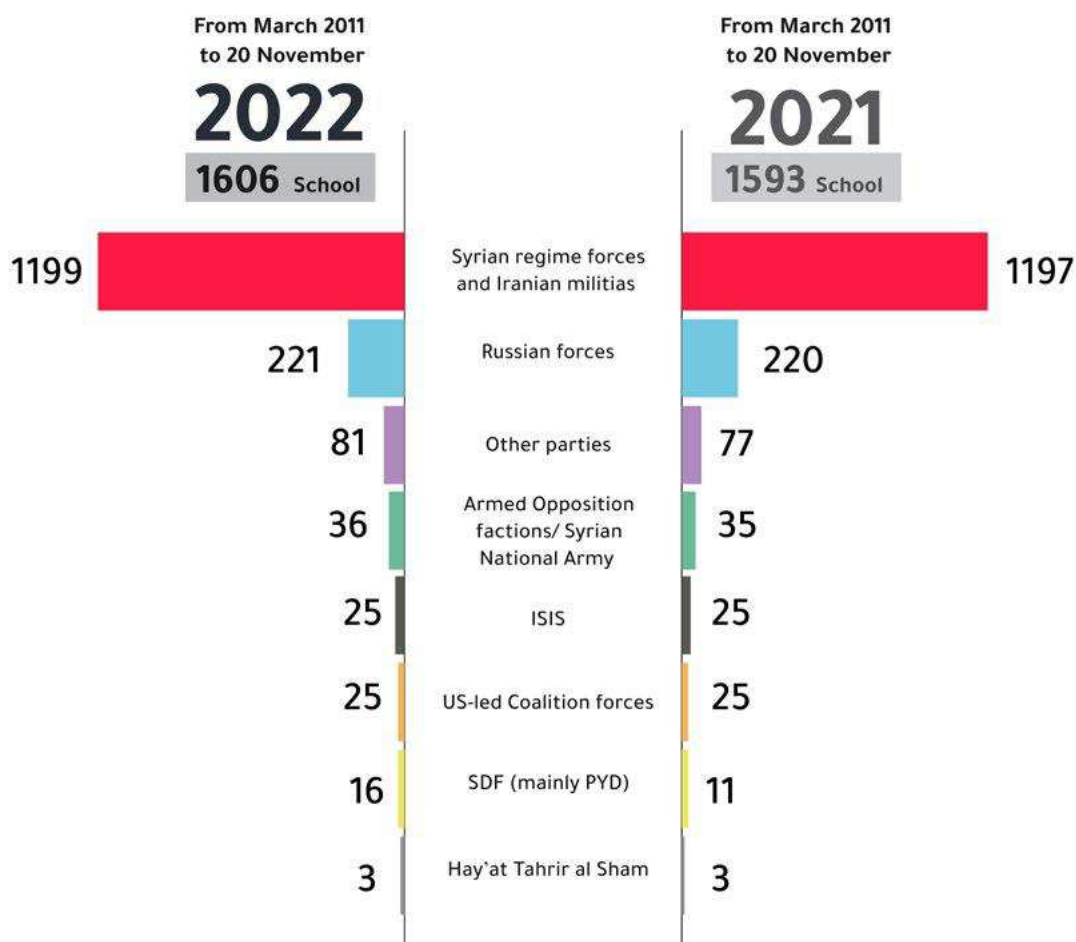
Comparison between children's deaths due to torture at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces from March 2011 until November 20, 2021, and until November 20, 2022



Comparison between the death toll among children still under arrest and/or detained at the hands of the parties to the conflict and the controlling forces since March 2011 until November 20, 2021, and until November 20, 2022



Comparison between incidents of attack on schools by the parties to the conflict and controlling forces in Syria from March 2011 until November 20, 2021 and until November 20, 2022



VI. Sample Details and Incidents from the Most Notable Patterns of Violations Against Children in a Year (Since the Last Annual Report)

1- Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias)

A. Extrajudicial killing

The overwhelming majority of children killed during this period were killed as a result of Syrian regime forces' indiscriminate and continuous bombardment, which has gone on for 11 years, with residential neighborhoods, markets, schools, parks, camps, and health facilities among the locations targeted. By default, those facilities are located in areas frequently populated and used by children and, thus, large numbers of children have been killed in their homes before their families' eyes. The Syrian regime has relied heavily on the use of barrel bombs, as well as other indiscriminate weapons, such as cluster munitions, landmines, and chemical weapons.

In many cases of indiscriminate bombing, we recorded massacres in which all the victims were children. Targeting educational facilities inevitably results in high numbers of children victims, not to mention in cases of disability and serious injuries resulting from these attacks, which in themselves bear material and psychological ramifications that change the course of the children's lives and affect their ability to learn, play, and integrate. Those issues are only exacerbated by the lack of proper attention and care given to disabled children, and the incredibly high number of disability cases which has reached tens of thousands.

SNHR has documented the killing of 22,954 children at the hands of Syrian regime forces, divided between 12,901 male children and 10,053 female children, between March 2011 and November 20, 2022. The details of these deaths have been entered into SNHR's database, where we also archive pictures and documents from the attacks in which they were killed, and photos of the victims before and after their death.

Islam Najib Haj Ali, a six-year-old girl, died on Wednesday, January 12, 2022, of wounds sustained on January 8, 2022, in artillery bombardment by Syrian regime forces who fired multiple shells at Kansfara village, southern suburbs of Idlib governorate.



Islam Najib Haj Ali

Yaser Mohammad al-Ali, a two-and-a-half-year-old boy, from Afes village, eastern Idlib governorate, was shot dead on Monday, July 4, 2022, by a sniper from Syrian regime forces while he was in his family's home in the western neighborhood of Afes village.



Yasser Mohammad al-Ali

Abdul Baset and Yousef Mustafa Jaddou, two siblings aged six and 12 respectively, were killed on Saturday, July 30, 2022, in artillery bombardment by Syrian regime forces which also wounded their father and a fourth individual. The bombing targeted a public road in the middle of Kafr Ta'aal village, in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate.

On Thursday, September 1, 2022, a hand grenade thrown by a gunman from the popular committee militias, which are affiliated with Syrian regime forces, exploded near a group of children playing football in al-Jbeibat neighborhood in Jabla city, suburbs of Latakia governorate. The hand grenade explosion killed one of the children, Haydar Mehzen Melhem, and wounded eight other civilians, including children, one of whom was rushed to a local hospital for treatment.

Haydar was a 14-year-old boy from Basna village, Latakia governorate, who lived with his family in al-Jbeibat neighborhood



Haydar Mehzen Melhem

B. Arrest/detention, enforced disappearance, and torture

The arrest/enforced disappearance of children by the Syrian regime constitute compounded violations. In most cases, arrests are made with no judicial warrant, with certain children being targeted because of the activism of their fathers or mothers. The Syrian regime has also failed to place those children in the same place of detention as their families, failed to provide the food necessary for their physical development, and in their detention the Syrian regime has denied them education. The detention conditions are only worsened and compounded when children are born in detention centers, where the newborn child is deprived of the adequate healthcare for themselves and their mother. We have recorded 93 births in detention centers, where all of the children lacked proper post-natal care, including having their necessary needs met. As a result, seven of the 93 children died.

Furthermore, child detainees are subjected to the same abysmal conditions as adults. Children are often placed with adult in the military prisons, central prisons, and security branches, as opposed to being held in juvenile detention centers, on account of the incredibly high numbers of children and adult detainees. Meanwhile, juvenile detention centers are not properly equipped and are insufficient in number to begin with. We have recorded many incidents of sexual assault against children at these centers, not to mention the routine verbal assault and psychological harm that detained children are subjected to.

Moreover, the Syrian regime has tried children in Field Military Courts and the [Counterterrorism Court](#) without any special judge for juvenile cases, except in a handful of cases. Many children received harsh and long imprisonment sentences, and even death sentences. We have documented many cases in which children were arrested in their first decade of life, and subsequently released years later after they became adults.

As with all other detainees, children are subjected to torture from the very first moment of their arrests. Syrian regime forces do not distinguish between children and adults in the sense that both are subjected to the same patterns and methods of torture. We have documented and detailed the main methods of torture used by the regime in [a special report](#). Torture may or may not lead to death, for both children and adults; however, it starts from the first moment of arrests and its harmful physical and psychological effects last after release for many years.

In many cases when children have been arrested with their mothers, we've documented that Syrian regime forces usually separate the child from his or her mother. In those cases, children are held in different cells, sent to orphanages, or taken to an undisclosed location, without informing the mothers of their children's fate, leaving them in a constant state of anxiety and fear for their children. In cases where children are taken to orphanages, they remain there for the entirety of their mother's detention, as the Syrian regime refuses to allow other caretakers to take the children from the orphanage, and denies the children any opportunity to visit their families. Ultimately, children are more or less in detention, in such cases.

Naturally, children who experience arrest and detention suffer trauma and worsening physical and psychological conditions. Those severe consequences remain with children for many years, long after their release.

SNHR has documented that no fewer than 3,684 children, divided into 3,216 male children and 468 female children are still under arbitrary arrest and/or enforced disappearance at the hands of Syrian regime forces since being arrested between March 2011 and November 20, 2022. We have also documented the deaths of no fewer than 175 children under torture in Syrian regime detention centers in the same period.

Mahmoud Marwan Assaf, from Idlib city, who lived in al-Raml Palestinian Camp in Latakia city, was 16 -years old at the time of his arrest. He was arrested on May 12, 2011, by servicemen from the Syrian regime's Political Security division while in front of his house in al-Raml Palestinian Camp, and taken to the Political Security branch in Latakia city. He has been forcibly disappeared ever since and his fate remains unknown to SNHR, as well as his family.

SNHR spoke to Mr. Yousef Qal'iya⁸, Mahmoud's cousin, who told us:

"When the child Mahmoud was sitting in front of his house with some of his neighbors in the neighborhood where he lives, armed servicemen raided the neighborhood and arrested Mahmoud and everyone who was with him. They were taken to the Political Security branch in Latakia city. In December 2011, a former detainee said he saw him in the Political Branch security in Aleppo city." Mr. Yousef added that Mahmoud's family has used every possible means in their search for him, from hiring a lawyer to checking with the Syrian regime security branches, all with no success. As of this writing, they have obtained no information on his location or fate.

⁸ Via phone on October 10, 2022.

Maher Bashir Yousef, and his siblings Ali, Lana and Obada Ahmad al-Arbiniya, born in 2002, 2005, 2007, and 2012 respectively, from Irbeen city in Eastern Ghouta, Damascus suburbs governorate, , were living with their family at a sponge factory in Adra city, Damascus suburbs governorate at the time of their arrest, having fled Irbeen city for Adra amid clashes between Syrian regime forces and armed opposition factions. They were arrested on January 28, 2013, by Syrian regime forces who raided their place of residence at the factory and taken to an undisclosed location. They have been forcibly disappeared ever since, and their fate remains unknown to SNHR as well as to their family.

SNHR spoke to Mr. Qais, a relative of Maher, who told us:

"The children were living with their families and other families in al-Sbi'i Sponge Factory after they fled Irbeen city to Adra city on account of the clashes between the Syrian regime and armed opposition. It was at that time when they were arrested along with other members of their family who were at the factory. They were taken to an unknown location. A few days later, Maher's uncle, named Ihsan, negotiated with the officer from the Air Force Intelligence that was responsible for the arrest through an intermediary. The negotiations were about releasing the children in return for money and the car owned by Ihsan. However, when it was time for the delivery, they took the money and arrested Ihsan and we've had no information about any of them ever since." Mr. Qais added that in 2018 they received information that the children were killed and buried behind the factory, but were unable to verify this information.



Lana Ahmad al-Arbiniya, girl



Maher Bashir Yousef, boy



Obada Ahmad al-Arbiniya, boy



Ali Ahmad al-Arbiniya, boy

⁹ Via phone on August 12, 2022.

Siblings Aya, Abdul Hadi, Abdullah, Yathreb, Ghena, and Abdul Qader Sayyed Eissa, from Idlib city, born in 1996, 2001, 2005, 2007, and 2011 respectively, had been living in Shattoura village in Qadaa Zahla, Beqaa governorate, Lebanon, when they were arrested on April 7, 2013, with their mother at a checkpoint in Homs city on their way back from Lebanon. They were taken to an undisclosed location. They have been forcibly disappeared ever since, and their fate remains unknown to SNHR as well as their family.

SNHR spoke to Ms. Yusra¹⁰, a relative of the children, who told us:

“On their way back from Lebanon with their mother, we lost contact with them when the bus they were taking arrived at a security checkpoint in Homs city, on a Sunday afternoon. We tried to call the mother’s phone but it was off. We tried to look for them on the way they were taken from the Syrian-Lebanese borders to Homs city, but we had no success.” Ms. Yusra added that a few years later they learned from a former detainee that he was arrested with the family, and that Syrian regime forces put them in a school near the checkpoint and then took them to an unknown location.



Yathreb Abdul Qader Sayyed Eissa, girl



Abdul Hadi Abdul Qader Sayyed Eissa, boy



Ghena Abdul Qader Sayyed Eissa, girl



Abdullah Abdul Qader Sayyed Eissa, boy

¹⁰ Via phone on June 30, 2022.

Nedal Jamal al-Makhzoum, a boy born in 1997 from Hama city, was arrested on Monday, March 10, 2014, at a checkpoint in the Kazo neighborhood of Hama city. He was taken to an undisclosed location. He has been forcibly disappeared ever since, and his fate remains unknown to SNHR as well as to his family.

Mr. Omar¹¹, a friend of Nedal's father, got in touch with SNHR, telling us:

"Nedal was leaving his home in Kazo neighborhood in Assi Square, Hama city to take care of some things. There was a checkpoint for Syrian regime forces at the entrance to the neighborhood. On his way out from the neighborhood he passed the checkpoint, where he was stopped and inspected. They found out he was wanted even though he was a child no older than 17 years of age. They detained him for a few hours at the checkpoint, and then he was taken to an undisclosed location."

Mr. Omar added that the family has received no information about Nedal's whereabouts or fate ever since his arrest.

Hussein Ali Mahmoud, a boy born in 2004 from Souran city in northern suburbs of Hama governorate, was arrested on Wednesday, July 6, 2016, by Syrian regime forces at a Hama city bus stop. He was taken to an undisclosed location. He has been forcibly disappeared ever since, and his fate remains unknown to SNHR as well as his family.

Mr. Safwan¹², a relative of Hussein, got in touch with SNHR and told us:

"Hussein was living in Souran city in the Hama suburbs and studying in Hama city. He had to commute from Souran city to Hama city everyday for his school. The last time he arrived at Hama city bus stop on his way to school, a group of Syrian regime forces servicemen arrested him for no known reason." Mr. Safwan added that a resident from Souran city was present at the bus stop at the time, and confirmed to the family that Syrian regime forces were responsible for arresting Hussein.

Saleh Ahmad Saleh, a boy born in 2008 from al-Qameshli city in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, was living in al-Ashrafiya neighborhood, Aleppo city when he was arrested on Saturday, August 13, 2022 by policemen from al-Aziziya neighborhood police station in Aleppo city, which is under the control of Syrian regime forces, in the area between al-Ashrfaiya neighborhood and al-Sabil Residences in Aleppo city, on charges of theft. Before arresting him, the regime forces brutally beat him all over his body.



Saleh Ahmad Saleh

On August 14, 2022, Saleh's family received a notice from al-Aziziya Police Station, instructing his father to come to the station. On his arrival, he was informed that his son had committed suicide by hanging himself, and told to take the boy's body away without a medical report. The father refused to take his son's body away until he had received a medical report. The family recovered the dead body from the morgue in Aleppo city after the regime's forensic pathologist confirmed the police's account of Saleh's death by suicide.

¹¹ On SNHR's e-mail address on May 13, 2022.

¹² On SNHR's e-mail address on May 13, 2022.

On Thursday, August 18, 2022, SNHR received a number of pictures and videos that confirm and clearly shows that Saleh Ahmad Saleh was brutally tortured. SNHR has released [a statement](#) condemning the murder of Saleh, a child.

C. Sexual violence

Children detained by Syrian regime forces suffer various patterns of sexual violence, including molestation, enforced nudity, sexual exploitation, being beaten on the genitals, verbal sexual abuse (such as sexual insults or accusing them of having sex). We have recorded multiple incidents where detained female children appear on the Syrian regime's official media channels to making clearly coerced confessions in which they admit to having had sexual intercourse with members of armed opposition factions, and are subsequently forcibly disappeared after their TV appearance.

Sexual violence, especially against children, is one of the most complex and challenging violations to document. In the course of documenting such violations, we encounter additional challenges to the ones we usually encounter in our methodology. Those include the extreme reluctance by the victims and their families to reveal having suffered such violations due to their sensitive nature. In the period of time covered by the report, we have been unable to record any additional cases to the 539 cases of sexual violence against children we have already documented between March 2011 and last year's report. That is not to say, however, that the Syrian regime has stopped its acts of violence against children, but rather that we were unable to prove the existence of new cases according to our documentation methodology. We found no indicators that may suggest that the Syrian regime has stopped its use of torture, including sexual violence. In fact, all the evidence indicates the contrary - the Syrian regime continues to practice torture and has changed nothing of its violent practices against detainees, including both women and children.

D. Attacks on schools leading to deprivation of education and rampant child labor

In their indiscriminate and deliberate attacks, Syrian regime forces have routinely targeted schools and kindergartens. In many of these cases, regime forces deliberately carried out attacks during school hours or targeted roads leading to schools in what was a calculated attempt by the Syrian regime to kill as many children as possible and spread mass fear among the people that would drive them to stop sending their children to schools that might be targeted. According to our data, those attacks have resulted in massacres in which children were killed.

The Syrian regime has deliberately sought to create a state of fear to deprive the communities in the areas outside of its control of their rights and stability, not the least of which is provided by schools and kindergartens. In bombing those facilities, the Syrian regime has effectively caused hundreds of thousands of children to drop out of the educational process. Consequently, these children have no choice but to work or participate in fighting, particularly given the inducements offered by the extremist groups.

The bombings that have been ongoing since March 2011 have resulted in the complete or partial destruction of no fewer than 1,199 schools and 30 kindergartens, most of which have been put out of commission as a result.

According to [figures released by UNICEF in March 2021](#), no fewer than 2.45 million children have dropped out of the educational process in Syria. We believe the current figure is much higher in light of the continuing armed conflict in Syria and the continuing violations against children. Furthermore, the consequences of the conflict will escalate as long as it continues.

On Friday, November 4, 2022, Syrian regime artillery forces fired multiple shells at Ma'ar Ballit Halaqa Oula School in Ma'ar Ballit village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The school building was partially destroyed and its interior furniture was moderately damaged. The village was under the joint control of HTS and armed opposition factions at the time of the incident.



Pictures showing the damage caused to Ma'ar Ballit School by bombing by Syrian regime artillery forces - November 4, 2022

On Monday, December 13, 2021, M'arzaf village, southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, was the target of an artillery attacks. SNHR has been unable to accurately determine the party responsible for the attacks as of this writing, while we suspect it was either Syrian regime forces or Russian forces since the bombing originated from areas under control. Investigations are still ongoing to determine the party responsible. The shell landed in front of M'arzaf Elementary School in the village. The school's fence and door were heavily damaged. The village was under the joint control of armed opposition factions and HTS at the time of the incident.

Meanwhile, the Syrian regime continues to use its kindergartens and children's schools to glorify the Baath Party and the head of the Syrian regime. Through such indoctrination, the Syrian regime is targeting the minds of children, using the school curriculum as a propaganda tool, and perpetuating themes that support dictatorship and autocratic rule. We have archived many photos and videos showing schools' teaching staff trying to demonstrate their loyalty to and lavishing praise upon the head of the Syrian regime, and teaching children party chants that date back to decades.



Photo of students carrying a picture of Bashar Assad in an event held by the Tala'ea al-Baath organization in October 2022 at Hyaleen al-Muhaddatha School in Hyaleen village, western suburbs of Hama governorate (Source: the school's social media pages).



Photo of students carrying a picture of Bashar Assad during an event held by the Tala'ea al-Baath organization in October 2022 at Hyaleen al-Muhadd-atha School in Hyaleen village, western suburbs of Hama governorate (Source: the school's social media pages).



Photo of students carrying pictures of Bashar Assad in an event entitled "Our Hope is Bashar... To Continue Our March" held on October 27, 2022, at the Mousab bin Umayer School in al-Qaboun neighborhood of Damascus city (Source: the school's social media pages).

This continues to happen even though the Children's Rights Law of 2021 which was promulgated by the Syrian regime prohibits children joining political parties and by extension prohibits the use of children in political propaganda and having them join political organizations founded by a political party (the Baath Party in this case). What this demonstrates is that the Syrian regime does not even adhere to its own laws passed by the regime itself. Since the 1970 coup, the Syrian regime has blatantly taken advantage of and brainwashed children by forcing them to join its political organizations, such as the Syria Pioneers, also known as Talea al-Baath, which was founded in 1974, and the Union of the Revolution Youth, founded in 1970. Children are automatically enrolled in those organizations on going to school, and are forced to chant their party loyalist mantras every day at public schools, which have to hang pictures of the head of the Syrian regime and teach his sayings and slogans.



Photo that circulated on social media in September 2022 of children carrying pictures of Bashar Assad in a school in Homs city at the start of the 2022 schoolyear

Using children in politics and political propaganda constitutes a violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which provides for "protecting children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation."

E. Recruitment

The Syrian regime's informal forces have been entrusted with the task of recruiting or conscripting children. Those include the National Defense Forces and the foreign and local militias and groups that operate their recruitment center. These centers encourage children and their families to join the militias and offer facilitations. With the establishment of the National Defense Force¹³, recruiting children became a more organized process, as the Syrian regime attempted to make up for its losses in manpower. Children have taken part in military operations, either as fighters or in logistical operations such as delivering ammunitions, providing support on fronts, cleaning weapons, guard duty, etc.

Furthermore, the Syrian regime facilitated recruitment for foreign militias, such as Iraqi, Iranian, Lebanese, and Palestinian militias. To that end, the Syrian regime has not carried out any investigations or inquiries about child recruitment by these forces. Rather, it has turned a blind eye to those militias' practices that include promoting adverts that encourage children to join their ranks.

In this context, informal forces take advantage of the worsening living conditions and the rampant poverty and unemployment in Syria, particularly among IDPs, in order to attract children with the inducement of steady wages, as well as other incentives, based on the tasks they receive and complete. Moreover, joining a military group appeals to certain aspects of children's psyches, where fighting and taking up arms give them a sense of power and superiority over their peers. The propagation of messages such as vengeance and revenge through the Syrian regime's media channels have affected children's beliefs and driven them to take up arms under the pretext of "protecting their countries" and "combating terrorism." Syrian regime forces have offered incentives to child recruits who reach the official legal age, such as the option to continue their military service in the same area and with the same group.

After the Syrian regime regained control of wide areas that had broken free of its control for years, we documented a rise in the rates of child recruitment in areas that saw local reconciliation agreements and settlements. This mainly took place in the governorates of Damascus suburbs, Daraa, and Aleppo. In most cases, children were recruited into the ranks of these local militias and were asked to perform military operations with no training beforehand.

Child recruitment by regime forces has resulted in the killing of no fewer than 67 children on battlefields between March 2011 and November 20, 2022. SNHR estimates that there are currently at least 1,425 child recruits serving with Syrian regime forces. We have also documented that no fewer than 86 children have been recruited by Iranian militias or pro-Iran militias, mainly by the Liwa Fatemiyoun and Liwa al-Quds. Of these, 24 children were killed in action, particularly in the Syrian Badiya during clashes with ISIS.

¹³ National Defense Force: informal forces fighting alongside Syrian regime forces. They were founded in January 2013, and it is an umbrella for many of the groups and formations across Syria such as people's committees. They accept volunteers from different ages, including children.

F. Explosive weapon remnants pose a threat to children's lives

The widespread, indiscriminate attacks by the Syrian regime and its allies against areas that broke free of its control have left many live munitions and weapons remnants that pose a serious threat to the safety and lives of children. On top of this list are cluster munitions which have an indiscriminate nature and are spread over wide areas. Around 10-40 percent of cluster munition last as unexploding bomblets that always remain a threat, as they can explode at any time. Furthermore, those munitions are spread across areas varying from buildings, rubble, agricultural lands, and camps that have been bombed, and are exceptionally difficult to find and collect in light of the instability, continued bombing, lack of experience, and lack of comprehensive maps charting the locations of minefields and cluster munitions which remains an issue to this day.

SNHR has documented no fewer than 250 attacks by Syrian regime forces using cluster munitions between the first documented use of cluster munitions recorded by SNHR in July 2012 and November 20, 2022. These attacks resulted in the killing of no fewer than 442 children, either directly as a result of the attacks themselves in which the Syrian regime used cluster munitions or as a result of old munitions exploding in areas that were previously bombed using cluster munitions.

The second most prominent threat of this nature is posed by landmines which have been planted by the various parties to conflict. The explosion of weapons remnants has increased the death toll, especially among children, who are the most susceptible group to such munitions considering the fact that they cannot distinguish weapon remnants from everyday objects. Many children have lost limbs or other body parts, or suffered permanent disabilities due to the explosion of these remnants. SNHR has documented no fewer than 732 child deaths due to landmine explosions between March 2011 and November 20, 2022.

On Wednesday, 30, 2022, Mustafa Omar al-Bakour, a 10-year-old boy, was killed by a cluster munition left from previous bombardment by the Syrian-Russian alliance in agricultural land near Shanna village in Jabal al-Zawiya in the southern suburbs of Idlib.



Mustafa Omar al-Bakour

On Saturday, July 30, 2022, Domoua' Ghassan al-Rouji, a seven-year-old girl, was killed by a cluster munition left from previous bombardment in a house populated by IDPs in al-Ghassaniya village in the western suburbs of Idlib. The girl was originally from al-Sermaniya village, western suburbs of Hama.



Domoua' Ghassan al-Rouji

[On Tuesday, February 15, 2022](#), a landmine, whose source we have been unable to identify, exploded in agricultural lands to the east of Aqareb village, eastern suburbs of Hama governorate, killing two children who were herding sheep. The two children, a 15-year-old boy named Saif al-Numan, and a 14-year-old girl named Najma al-Numan, were Bedouins from the suburbs of Raqqqa governorate. The area was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.

On Thursday, March 10, 2022, [Wahid Mohammad Qasim](#), a 15-year-old boy, died of wounds sustained on March 9, 2022, when a landmine, whose source we have not yet been able to identify, exploded inside al-Urouba School in the Jeb al-Qubba neighborhood of Aleppo city, while he was playing in the schoolyard. Wahid was from the Handarat Camp in Aleppo city. The area was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident



Wahid Mohammad Qasim

G. Children make up nearly half of the population of IDP camps in Syria

The Syrian regime's violations have caused a mass displacement affecting millions of Syrians. Despite the fact that the Syrian regime managed to regain control of many of the areas it lost, an extremely limited number of people have opted to return to their homes. Northwestern Syria, which broke free of the regime's control, houses the largest population of internally displaced people (IDPs). Children make up roughly 46 percent of IDPs. A large percentage of the displaced children were in fact born and brought up in camps, which means they lack the most basic life necessities, such as hygiene, privacy, proper bathrooms, and safe housing. Every year, these camps grapple with severe weather events, including scorching heat, torrential rains, and gale-force winds that sink, erode, damage, or destroy tents, and in some cases result in the death of children due to the lack of safety and security measure and the absence of heat-insulating materials that are necessary for building tents.

Additionally, the dire shortage of health and educational facilities has further eroded the already minimal levels of healthcare available in those camps, with children forced to travel to other areas to receive healthcare, while education has become a very expensive luxury. As a result, diseases and illiteracy have become rampant issues among displaced children.



Dozens of children receiving education in a tent in al-Nur IDP Camp, al-Karama Camps, suburbs of Idlib governorate - September 29, 2019



Videos showing part of the reality of education in IDPs camps

Ahmad Mustafa¹⁴, an IDP from Kafr Zita, warns that the reality of the lack of educational facilities in camps is a precursor for future catastrophe, with generations of children denied essential education: **“A percentage of children are out of the educational process, while others receive intermittent education, while a third group go to schools but do not receive proper education.”** Ahmad adds that the grim economic reality for residents of the camps has only exacerbated the issue, with many children turning to begging or collecting plastics from dumpsters and landfills just to provide for themselves and their families. **“Even remote education is not an option for camp children, with most of them having no access to mobile phones or internet,”** he adds.

Besides the bleak living conditions, many camps have been bombed, primarily by Syrian regime forces, or had to grapple with the consequences of fighting between SNA factions or HTS who show no regard for the dangerous ramifications of such violence on these highly populated camps which lack even the bare minimum means of protection in their infrastructure.

On August 3, 2022, we [issued](#) an urgent appeal to end the suffering of thousands of IDPs in al-Rukban Camp in light of a sharp reduction in the already inadequate allocated drinking water supplies almost by half. Those drinking water supplies were delivered through the Jordanian borders with the support of UNICEF. The situation became even more dire due to the extreme summer heat in July and August, to the point that residents, especially women and children, faced the risk of death as a result. To add to that, the camp has suffered under a crippling siege imposed by Syrian regime forces and Iranian militias, leading to an almost complete absence of healthcare and a severe shortage of basic food supplies.

Yaqin Eissa al-Salama, an infant girl from Tadmur city, eastern suburbs of Homs governorate, born in January 2022, lived with her parents in al-Rukban IDP camp in eastern Homs governorate. Yaqin suffered respiratory and nutritional deficits since birth as a result of a congenital malformation in her mouth. On October 23, 2022, Yaqin's family transferred her to Sham Medical Point in al-Rukban Camp after her health condition deteriorated. However, the medical staff there were unable to intervene to save her life due to the lack of medical and healthcare services required to treat such cases. Yaqin died on the same day.

¹⁴ Via WhatsApp on July 16, 2020.

Finally, all of the above conditions, from the violations and worsening reality of education to the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of children and rampant poverty, have led to a rise in the levels of child labor. Many children have found themselves the sole providers for their families after the families' main providers became victims of extrajudicial killing, arbitrary arrest, or enforced disappearance. Children are extremely vulnerable to exploitation in work, and terrible forms of child labor have become commonplace. Children are routinely asked to perform dangerous tasks that far exceed their limited physical capabilities, being forced into life-threatening jobs such as working at fuel and oil burners and smuggling goods, which in turn denied them the right to education guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and by the rules of international human rights law and international humanitarian law that provide for the protection of the educational system, students, and educational facilities, prohibit targeting such facilities, and call for ensuring that they remain in commission.



Photo of two children working collecting plastics
from the trash in Damascus city - 2021



A boy selling baked goods in the center of Damascus
city - November 2020 amid the coronavirus
pandemic. By: Lens Young Dimashqi (Facebook page)



A girl selling school supplies in Shukri al-Qwatli Street,
Homs city - October 2020 amid the coronavirus
pandemic. By: Lens Young Dimashqi (Facebook page)

2- Russian forces

A. Extrajudicial killing

Russian forces have carried out thousands of airstrikes, among which we've documented hundreds of instances of targeted and indiscriminate bombardment using various weapons of a more advanced and more fatal nature than those used by Syrian regime forces. Russian forces have failed to respect the principles of distinction and proportionality as established by international law. Moreover, those attacks have not distinguished between adults and children. On the contrary, children's schools have been deliberately targeted in dozens of attacks that took place during school hours, while other attacks targeted school routes, resulting in horrifying massacres of children. In fact, children account for 30 percent of all victims killed by Russian forces. Such a high percentage suggests that Russian forces deliberately target children in their operations.

According to SNHR's database, Russian attacks involving the use of various weapons have resulted in the death of 2,046 children, divided between 1,421 male children and 625 female children, since the start of Russia's military intervention on September 30, 2015 until November 20, 2022.

Russian forces have used cluster munitions heavily in most of the attacks targeting the areas that broke free of the Syrian regime's control. It is worth noting that Syrian regime and Russian forces were the only parties to use cluster munitions in the Syrian conflict, where they were utilized in artillery and rocket launcher attacks, or dropped from warplanes. These attacks targeted heavily populated areas, including refugee camps. [We have noticed an increased use of cluster munitions since the start of the Russian intervention in Syria](#), particularly in the military operations undertaken jointly by Russian forces and Syrian regime forces, which suggests that Moscow is supplying the Syrian regime with newly manufactured weapons carrying cluster munitions. [SNHR team has recorded](#) no fewer than 237 attacks involving the use of cluster munitions between the start of the Russian intervention on September 30, 2015, and November 20, 2022, resulting in the death of 67 children.

The escalating levels of violence demonstrated in Russian attacks have had the greatest impact in terms of forced displacement. In parallel with the attacks by the Syrian-Iranian alliance, Russian attacks have resulted in the displacement of roughly 4.8 million people. Some of the displaced civilians, who include children, have been displaced multiple times.

On Friday, July 22, 2022, at around 5:50 am, SU-34 fixed-wing warplanes believed to be Russian carried out four consecutive airstrikes targeting the predominantly Christian al-Jdaida village, which is affiliated with Jisr al-Shoghour city, in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate. The airstrikes reached both the northern and southern outskirts of the village. At the site of the first attack, fixed-wing warplanes believed to be Russian carried out two airstrikes in which three missiles were dropped near an IDP shelter located in agricultural lands to the north of al-Jdeida village. The shelter housed IDP families from al-Zeyadiya village in western suburbs of Idlib governorate. The attack resulted in the death of six civilians, including four child siblings, and wounded 13 others, including the dead children's parents. In addition, the bombing resulted in widespread destruction at the site targeted. The next two airstrikes, in which four missiles were dropped on two houses in southern al-Jdeida village, resulted in the death of one civilian.



Civilian victim retrieved following bombardment by fixed-wing warplanes believed to be Russian, which dropped missiles on al-Jdeida village, western suburbs of Idlib - July 22, 2022



Photos of four dead siblings killed in bombardment by fixed-wing warplanes believed to be Russian, which dropped missiles on a chicken farm in al-Jdeida village, western suburbs of Idlib - July 22, 2022



Pictures showing the aftermath of bombardment by fixed-wing warplanes believed to be Russian, which targeted a chicken farm and the vicinity of al-Jdeida village, western suburbs of Idlib, resulting in casualties - July 22, 2022

SNHR spoke with Hasan Ahmad Jamal Daoud¹⁵ from Jabal al-Zawiya who fled to al-Jdeida village and witnessed the attack. He told us:

“Around 6:00 am on July 22, a Russian warplane dropped a missile on my place of residence. I felt the missile as it was landing and took a picture from where I was. I followed four of my friends to where the attack occurred in order to help the wounded. When they got near the site, around 20 meters away, the same warplanes carried out another airstrike on the same place and dropped two missiles, leading to the immediate death of one of my friends whose name was Fajr, while the other three were wounded. I helped carrying them to the ambulance. I survived only because I was about 25 meters behind them. I was among the first to arrive to Abu Ref'at's house. I helped other civilians in transferring the civilians from the site. Meanwhile, Russian warplanes carried out two consecutive airstrikes within the space of about 10 minutes on another site near al-Jdeida. I saw the airplane and was able to clearly identify it because of the way it carried out the attack.”

On Thursday, September 8, 2022, fixed-wing warplanes believed to be Russian carried out three airstrikes using [missiles](#) on a hilly area to the south of Hafsarja village, western suburbs of Idlib governorate. The missiles landed on a stonemasonry workshop and some nearby houses. The bombardment [resulted in the deaths of seven civilians](#), including two children, and wounded 11 others, mostly stonemasonry workers. In addition, [the workshop and multiple houses in the vicinity were heavily destroyed](#), while [some IDP tents](#) located about 200 meters from the bombed site were damaged by some fragments from the missile explosions at the workshop. The area was under the joint control of armed opposition factions and HTS at the time of the incident.

SNHR spoke to Ahmad al-Ahmad¹⁶, a media activist from Hasarja village who witnessed the massacre. Ahmad told us that exactly at 11:00 on September 8, observatories sent out an alert about Russian warplanes taking off from Hmeimim Airbase in Latakia suburbs. He continued: “**The warplanes carried out three airstrikes targeting lands and farms located about 2 km from the village. Two of the airstrikes targeted a stonemasonry workshop and a house nearby owned by my cousin. The third airstrike was over 200 m away from the first two.** I headed for the bombed site after the first airstrike and entered the workshop and helped other young men pull out one of the wounded and two victims. We left the scene for a bit, as the warplanes returned and bombed the workshop again. After the bombing and after the warplanes left, civil defense teams worked on pulling out the other victims and tended to the wounded.” Ahmad said that each two airstrikes were separated by roughly 10-15 minutes, adding that two missiles were fired in the first airstrike, while three were fired in the second. He added, “Seven victims were killed, including two children - three were from Hafsarja village, and four from other areas in Idlib. About 12 were wounded as well, some were in critical conditions.”

B. Schools and kindergarten are a main target of Russian attacks

Russian forces have targeted schools and kindergartens, destroying many, either partially or completely. These attacks have resulted in children's deaths. We have documented that no fewer than 221 schools were targeted by forces believed to be Russian since the start of the Russian intervention in Syria on September 30, 2015 up until November 20, 2022.

On Friday, April 22, 2022, fixed-wing warplanes believed to be Russian fired missiles at al-Enkawi High School in al-Enkawi village in the western suburbs of Hama governorate. The school building was partially destroyed. It should be noted that the high school was out of commission at the time since most of the village's residents have fled the village due to its close proximity to the dividing lines with Syrian regime forces. Al-Enkawi village was under the joint control of armed opposition factions and HTS at the time of the incident.

3- HTS (a formation composed of Fateh al-Sham Front, formerly al-Nusra, and a number of armed opposition factions)

A. Extrajudicial killing

The military attacks by HTS in the course of its clashes with the other parties to the conflict have resulted in civilian deaths, including children, with HTS using the strategy of indiscriminate shelling in these attacks. We also recorded that HTS engaged in clashes in populated areas. The group has also opened fire indiscriminately in raids that took place in territories under its control. In total, no fewer than 74 children were killed, according to SNHR's database, at the hands of al-Nusra Front (the current HTS) since its establishment in January 2012 until November 20, 2022, divided between 68 male children and six female children.

B. Arrest, enforced disappearance, and torture

HTS has targeted children in arbitrary detention/abductions that took place in the territories under the group's control. Those practices were perpetrated under various pretexts, such as accusing the children of breaking regulations enforced by HTS, like gender separation in certain areas or 'insulting the Divine'. We also recorded in multiple incidents that HTS detained children who took part in anti-HTS protests or at checkpoints as they were entering the territories controlled by the group coming from areas controlled by other parties, particularly the Syrian regime-controlled territories. Moreover, we've recorded HTS' arrests of children who, HTS alleged, had ties to ISIS. Additionally, HTS detained children and used them as hostages in attacks against territories controlled by other parties.

HTS has no detention centers specifically for minors, who are instead held in the same cells with adults. HTS does not have courts or judges for juvenile cases. In cases where women are arrested with their children, the children are kept with their mother if they are below the age of 5-7 years. Male children older than this are separated from their mother and detained with male prisoners. In many cases, children are held for long months or years with no trial, which is the case for children accused of being affiliated with ISIS who have been detained by HTS.

HTS uses several methods of torture at its detention centers, which have numerous similarities with those used by the Syrian regime. Furthermore, the torture strategy used by the two parties is also largely similar, with torture used to force confessions out of the detainees with no distinction between children and adults. Those confessions, which have been extracted under the coercion of torture, are used against the defendant later in their trials. Many detainees have told us that they were subjected torture even before their interrogation. They were given the choice between accepting the charges they were accused of or suffering torture until they changed their mind. We also recorded many incidents of beating and assault against children at HTS checkpoints.

SNHR has documented that no fewer than 46 of the children detained by HTS between January 2012 and November 20, 2022 - divided between 42 male children and four female children - are still held under arrest or forcibly disappeared at the hands of HTS. We have also documented the deaths of two children due to torture in HTS detention centers.

Mohammad Hasan Qaddour, Belal Abdull Latif Bakkour, Amin Bakkour, Faris Abu Hashish, Osama Othman Ruqayya, Sa'd Mohammad Ruqayya, and Qusai Abdul Qader Ruqayya, aged 12, 12, 13, 13, 14, 16, and 17 respectively, were arrested on Saturday, July 16, 2022, by HTS servicemen in raids on their families' homes in Hazzano village in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The HTS personnel assaulted the children and their family members who refused to let them take their children. The arrests were made following an incident in which a phone belonging to an HTS member was stolen in an arcade in Hazzano village. We recorded that all the children were released on Sunday, July 17, 2022.

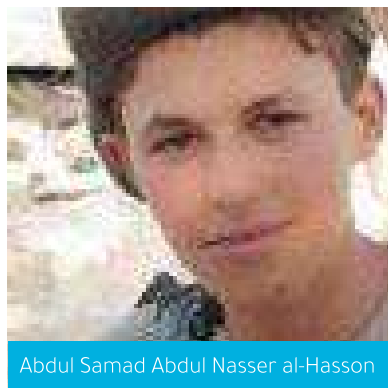
Siblings Hamza and Ahmad Hasan al-Hussein and Ahmad Farhan al-Hussein, aged 10, 16, and 16 respectively, from al-Khsheir village in the suburbs of Idlib governorate, were arrested on Monday, September 19, 2022, at an HTS checkpoint in Ariha city, suburbs of Idlib governorate, on charges of possessing suspicious items which they had collected during their work collecting scrap. We recorded that they were released on Wednesday, September 21, 2022.

C. Recruitment

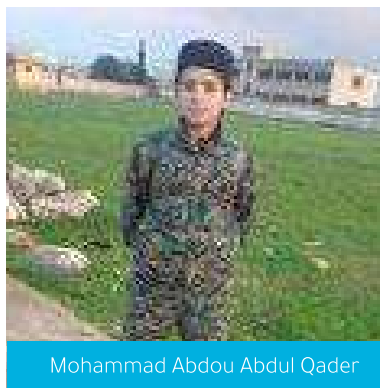
Since it was founded as al-Nusra Front in January 2012, HTS did not hide its attempts to recruit children. HTS has founded dozens of training centers and encouraged children to join its ranks, putting them through religious courses to alter their beliefs in a manner that emulates the ISIS model. Children were instructed to take up arms and engage in hostilities, then thrown onto the battlefronts. In other cases, children were assigned tasks such as guard duty, moving ammunition, or operating checkpoints. In this, HTS has exploited the widespread poverty in areas under its control, paying children extremely low wages for joining its ranks.

In our monitoring, we've noticed that HTS has launched widespread recruitment campaigns every time the Syrian regime and its allies escalated their military operations against HTS's territories.

Abdul Samad Abdul Nasser al-Hasson from al-Tah village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, and Mohammad Abdou Abdul Qader from Basratoun village in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, were both aged 16 when they were recruited by HTS in 2021. On Sunday, September 18, 2022, they were killed in Syrian regime forces' artillery bombardment of a checkpoint for Liwa Omar ben al-Khattab, an HTS battalion, in Kafr Amma in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate.



Abdul Samad Abdul Nasser al-Hasson



Mohammad Abdou Abdul Qader

D. Targeting schools and kindergartens

HTS has taken over many schools in areas under its control and repurposed them as civilian or military points. We have recorded incidents in which HTS halted the educational process at a school and turned it into a center for religious programs. According to SNHR's database, we've documented three HTS attacks on schools as of November 20, 2022.

4- Kurdish-led SDF (PYD)

A. Extrajudicial killing

Since the People's Protection Units (YPG) were founded in July 2012 (the YPG are the primary make-up of SDF), the group has carried out indiscriminate attacks on areas outside its control, as well as engaging in clashes in populated areas. We've documented many instances of SDF patrols opening fire indiscriminately from checkpoints, at markets, or during raids. We have also documented SDF sniper operations. Furthermore, in the areas that returned to SDF's control, we have recorded executions which were the outcome of summary and arbitrary procedures. In total, 243 children, divided between 142 male children and 101 female children, were killed at the hands of SDF from the time it was founded until November 20, 2022.

Located in the eastern suburbs of Hasaka, al-Hawl Camp is more of a detention center, housing tens of thousands of IDPs under inhumane conditions. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (Col) has noted in multiple reports that the PYD's Self-Administration authority is responsible for the unlawful detention of thousands of people there, including children. SNHR has released [an extensive report on](#) the al-Hawl Camp. Meanwhile, a Col [report](#), released on September 14, 2022 which covers the period between January 1, 2022 and June 30, 2022, warns that the security situation in the camp is getting worse, with 34 murder crimes being reported there between January 1 and August 31, 2022, in addition to vicious clashes between the SDF's internal security forces and the camp's residents. The report stresses that children in the al-Hawl, camp and other camps in northeastern areas of Syria are living in alarming conditions, as they lack adequate healthcare and education, while many are suffering traumas due to violence in camps. As soon as they reach puberty, these children face the risk of being taken to military detention centers along with adults who are allegedly former ISIS fighters. Those children are held indefinitely, with no legal grounds for their detention.

Moreover, another report, released by Doctors Without Borders on November 7, 2022, under the name, '[Between Two Fires](#)', shed light on the suffering of the camp's population, 64 percent of whom are children. The report describes the "dire" living conditions that [the children](#) of [the camp](#) have to suffer in light of the lack of healthcare and rising levels of violence there. According to the report, 79 children died in the camp in 2021, with children accounting for 35 percent of all deaths in the camp, including children who died as a result of acts of violence, including crossfire.

[Abadi Mohammad Ali al-Shlash](#), a boy, from al-Bedar Fatsa village, eastern suburbs of Raqqqa governorate, was shot dead on September 20, 2022, with his father, Mohammad Ali, by SDF servicemen during a raid on their house which was backed by international coalition warplanes.

[Amjad Mohammad Fatih Ibeid al-Akla](#), a 17-year-old boy from al-Shnan village in eastern Deir Ez-Zour governorate, was shot dead on June 9, 2022, by SDF servicemen who opened fire at a group of students as they were passing by the river crossing in Theyban town, eastern Deir Ez-Zour governorate, on their way back from school where they had been sitting tests.

B. Detention, enforced disappearance, and torture

SDF personnel have detained and abducted children in territories under their control in a widespread manner. The main purpose of these arrests is conscripting these children who are taken to training camps after being abducted from roads and schools, or even while they are playing in front of their families' houses. Furthermore, SDF personnel have arrested children in raids to apply pressure on their relatives to surrender themselves or to use them as hostages in negotiations with tribes. We have recorded a number of arrests under the pretexts of the child in question having ties to ISIS in the areas that were taken over by SDF from ISIS. We have also recorded detentions of children by SDF with the backing of the international coalition forces in air landings operations. We've also recorded many incidents in which children were detained at checkpoints after coming from areas under the control of other parties. Some of these children were released in exchange for money payments.

SNHR's team has documented that no fewer than 752 of the children arrested or forcibly disappeared by the SDF between January 2014 and November 20, 2022 are still under arrest or forcibly disappeared at the hands of the SDF. These children are divided between 354 male children and 398 female children. The high numbers of children arrested by the SDF is related to the rising rates of abduction and detentions by the group that target children mainly for the purpose of conscription. We have been unable to determine the fate of the children abducted, and whether they were taken to detention centers or recruitment centers. Finally, we've recorded one child's death due to torture and medical negligence in SDF detention centers.

Bashar al-Abdullah al-Khalaf, a 17-year-old boy from al-Mashlab neighborhood in Raqqa city, was arrested on April 5, 2022, by SDF personnel at a checkpoint in Raqqa city. He was taken to an undisclosed location. Ever since then, he has been forcibly disappeared, and his fate remains unknown to SNHR as well as his family.



Siblings Maher and Bashar Abdullah al-Melhem, aged 14 and 17 respectively, from al-Bseira city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, were arrested on Friday, September 16, 2022, by SDF servicemen who rappelled from an international coalition helicopter in a raid on al-Bseira city. They were taken to an undisclosed location. Ever since, they have been forcibly disappeared, and their fate remains unknown to SNHR as well as to their family.

C. Recruitment

Since the first months of the SDF's operations, we have documented the group's conscription of children which has expanded in parallel with the SDF tightening its security grip on the areas under its control in northeastern Syria. The SDF has recruited children both voluntarily and compulsorily. Usually, having children join SDF armed forces involve attempts to convince, encourage, and offer incentives for children to agree to join. SDF also use the schools affiliated with the self-administration authority in its recruitment of children.

As well as recruiting children who join voluntarily, SDF carries out abductions of children from schools, streets, or residential neighborhoods for conscription.

Many local residents in SDF's territories have told us that the group has established military training camps for child recruits in areas distant from their place of residence. In general, children held in these camps are not allowed to contact their families, while many families have been warned against reporting what happened to their children to UN or human rights groups. Meanwhile, families are not allowed to visit their children, and those attempting to do so are met with insults and expulsion. The purpose of these practices is to isolate children from the outside world until their training is finished, which involves indoctrinating children into the beliefs and ideology of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), with which the PYD is affiliated. It should be noted that the PKK is designated as a terrorist group by many of the world states including the US. One can find many portraits of the head of the PKK on display in SDF headquarters.

The Kurdish Self-Administration signed [a joint action plan with the UN](#) in June 2019 to put an end to child recruitment, and release children who have been already recruited. Additionally, the People's Protection Units (YPG) and Women's Protection Units signed a deed of commitment with the Geneva Call organization in 2014 banning the use of children in wars. Nonetheless, the group's recruitment of children has not stopped, but, on the contrary, has seen an unprecedented rise compared to previous years. While the SDF founded the Office for the Protection of Children from Armed Conflicts on August 30, 2022, to receive complaints about children recruitment in areas under its control, many of the child recruits' families have received no response to their enquiries or information about the fate of their children. The UN Secretary-General's report on children and the armed conflict for the year 2019, which was released in June 2020, stressed that the SDF was the [worst party in the country](#) with respect to recruiting children, and was the third-worst party in the same regard according to the 2022's report which covers the year 2021, after SNA and HTS.

The al-Shabiba al-Thawriya 'Joanne Schurchkar'¹⁷, Women's Protection Units, and People's Protection Units are among the most prominent SDF units responsible for recruiting children and sending them to training camps and military squads. We have recorded a rise in the rates of children abductions, both male and female, since the beginning of 2020 until today. Many of the child recruits' families have told us that they have searched and asked about their children at SDF headquarters without receiving any response or answer. Some of the families were even threatened in case they reveal that their children have been recruited.

¹⁷ al-Shabiba al-Thawriya "Joanne Schurchkar", also known as the Revolutionary Youth, is an armed organization that works under the wing of the SDF and receives its directives from the PKK.

SNHR has documented no fewer than 213 children who have been recruited by and are still active with SDF since the group's foundation, while another 30 children in its ranks have been killed in action.

Mohammad Adham Khalil, from Afrin city, a boy born in 2001 from northern Aleppo governorate, was abducted on Tuesday, December 13, 2016 by SDF servicemen from his place of work at a printing press in al-Ashrafiya neighborhood in Afrin city, for the purpose of conscription. He was taken to an SDF recruitment center.

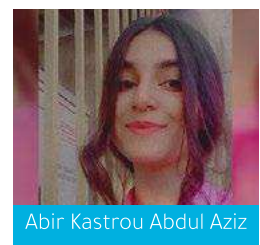


Mohammad Adham Khalil

SNHR spoke with Mr. Mahmoud¹⁸, a friend of Mohammad's family, who told us:

"Mohammad has three sisters, and is the only male son to his parents. On Tuesday evening, Mohammad was getting ready to return to his house after he finished work, but he never came home. So his father went to the press, which is close to their home, and he was informed by the owner of the press that three PKK servicemen came to the press in the afternoon looking for Mohammad and they took him. On the next day, his father went to look for him at the party's local centers and to find out the identity of the individual who took him, with no success. He went to a falafel restaurant in the same area, where Mohammad used to get his lunch everyday, and the restaurant's owner advised the father to give up his search because they would never return him. The restaurant's owner was, in fact, a member of the party who works on collecting and sending children to its armed forces. However, the father found out through footage from the surveillance camera of one of the shops that Mohammad bought lunch at 12:35 and went back to the press, before he returned to the restaurant and sat with the owner and they had a talk. After that, Mohammad returned to the press, and three party servicemen came to the restaurant to ask for Mohammad and they headed for the press and took him to an unknown place." Mr. Mahmoud added that Mohammad's father asked about him at the party's headquarters in the area, and he managed to get access to the SDF's Minister of Defense for their district who told him he can do nothing to help him. Two months after Mohammad was abducted, they received a phone from an unknown lady who told him to stop looking for Mohammad. They haven't received any new information about Mohammad ever since.

Abir Kastro Abdul Aziz, a girl born in 2006, from Balisiya village, which is administratively affiliated with al-Malikiya city in the northeastern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, was abducted on Tuesday, November 2, 2021, by SDF servicemen in al-Qamishli city in Hasaka governorate, for the purpose of conscription. She was taken to an SDF recruitment center.



Abir Kastrou Abdul Aziz

¹⁸ Via phone on September 28, 2022.

SNHR spoke with Ms. Hanan¹⁹, a friend of Abir's family, who told us:

"Abir left her house at around 12:30 pm on Tuesday. She was going to an extra school class at Hanza Institute in al-Qamishli city. On the same day at around 6:00 pm, Abir called her mother and told her she was abducted in front of the Hanza by the Joanne Schurchkar. She was only able to call her mother after repeatedly asking her abductors. Abir's mother looked for her everywhere but was not able to find her, and was only insulted during her search. There were also eyewitnesses who saw the abduction." Ms. Hanan added that Abir's health is unstable since she has a calcium deficiency and might need open-heart surgery in the future.

Sedra Khalil Ibrahim, a girl from Abodan village, which is administratively affiliated with Afrin city, northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was 14 years old when she was abducted on Saturday, November 6, 2021, by SDF servicemen in al-Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, of Aleppo city, for the purpose of conscription. She was taken to an SDF recruitment center.



Sedra Khalil Ibrahim

SNHR spoke with Mr. Ferhad Osou²⁰, a friend of Sedra's family. He told us:

"Sedra was abducted at around 8:00 by Joanne Schurchkar personnel as she was going to the grocery store in al-Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood. The neighborhood's residents informed her family that the girl had been abducted. After a long and grueling search, the Asayesh force (YPG) informed the family on December 7, 2021, that Sedra is currently located in Hasaka governorate".

Gerhad added that the Joanne Schurchkar center acknowledge to the girl's family that they were holding her, but threatened and warned them against asking about her again.

Khattab Ibeid Hasan, a boy from al-Helaliya neighborhood in al-Qameshli city, northeastern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, was 15 years old when he was abducted on Friday, November 24, 2021, by SDF servicemen in al-Helaliya neighborhood for the purpose of conscription. He was taken to an SDF recruitment center.



Khattab Ibeid Hasan

¹⁹ Via Messenger on December 2, 2021.

²⁰ Via Messenegr on December 11, 2021.

SNHR spoke to Mr. Abu Ibeid²¹, a relative of Khattab's, who told us:

"Khattab used to go every day to his work in al-Helaliya neighborhood. He would leave in the morning and come back in the evening. On Friday, he left his house but did not come back at his regular time, so we called his place of work to find out what was keeping him. His manager told us that Khattab never showed up for work today. We started looking for him in the neighborhood, and the residents told us that he was abducted by Joanne Schurchkar servicemen as he was passing through the neighborhood in the morning." Abu Ibeid added, "To this moment, we know nothing about him despite all of our attempts to find him."

Ahmad Haitham Jafo, a boy born in 2008, from Qerzaihel village (Kur-zilla) in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was living with his family in al-Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood in Aleppo city when was abducted on Wednesday, June 22, 2022 by personnel from the SDF's Joanne Schurchkar group, on his way home from the Mikhail Naimy school he attended in al-Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood for the purpose of conscription. He was taken to an SDF recruitment center.



Ahmad Haitham Jafo

SNHR spoke to Ms. Na'ima²², a relative of Ahmad's, who told us:

"Ahmad is an eighth-grade student. That Wednesday, someone abducted him along with some of his friends after they left school in al-Ashrafiya neighborhood. One of the children managed to escape and told Ahmad's father that his son had been abducted by the group that calls itself Joanne Schurchkar. His father went to their center in the Aleppo area to look for him, but they denied having him, and they told the father they had nothing with his abduction. On July 2, 2022, a woman named Zainab who works with the Joanne Schurchkar came to Ahmad's family's house and told Ahmad's mother that they'd dispatched the children to Manbej in the Aleppo suburbs, and it would be better for her to forget him because he is no longer her son. However, on Monday, July 11, 2022, Ahmad's family received information that he was transferred with the other children by an individual who works with the Joanne Schurchkar to a place called 'Asayeshi Keshti' in al-Qameshli city in the northern suburbs of Hasaka, where they stayed for seven days, before being transferred again to Kinjou area, a training place. There, the children were separated and transferred to a place called the Center of the Martyr Rezkar in al-Shaddadi city in the southern suburbs of Hasaka, where Ahmad's name was changed to Dalshir by the officer in charge of the area who is called Bahouz. At some point, one of the children who were abducted managed to escape and told Ahmad's family that their son was unable to escape when they [the Joanne Schurchkar personnel] opened fire on them, and Ahmad fell to the ground." Ms. Na'ima added that Ahmad's father spared no effort to retrieve his son, trying everything he could think of, from paying money to submitting complaints and visiting training centers but with no success to date. The last information they were able to obtain about Ahmad is that he was to be transferred to a center for military training in Aleppo.

²¹ Via Messenger on December 1, 2021.

²² Via phone on Sunday September 25, 2022.

Ghazala Mohammad Suleiman Mulla Mahmoud, a girl born in 2008, from al-Qameshli city, northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, was abducted on Monday, June 27, 2022, by SDF servicemen from al-Qameshli city for the purpose of conscription. She was taken to an SDF recruitment center.



SNHR spoke to Mr. Sheraz Anz²³, Ghazala's uncle, who told us:

"Ghazala was taking extra classes at an institute after successfully passing to the 9th grade. Her mother would take her to and from the institute everyday, since her father had passed away. On Monday, Ghazala had to go to her classes alone on account of her mother's sickness. At 12:00 pm, Ghazala called her mother and told her she would not be able to come back home because Joanne Schurchkar servicemen took her and she would be enrolled in training programs to join them. Then her phone was shut down." Ghazala's uncle added that the family does not know whether or not Ghazala was coerced into joining the SDF. They checked with a number of Joanne Schurchkar centers but were unable to learn anything about her whereabouts or fate.

Hamida Fawzi Mohammad, a girl born in 2006, from Sherkan village in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was abducted on Thursday, August 4, 2022, by personnel from the SDF's Joanne Schurchkar group from a cultural center that teaches children 'Kurdish theatre and folk dancing' in al-Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, Aleppo city, for the purpose of conscription. She was taken to an SDF recruitment center.



SNHR spoke to Mr. Raji²⁴, a relative of Hamida's, who told us:

"Hamida used to go with her two sisters to a center that teaches Kurdish language and folk dancing. On Thursday, as she was in a dance rehearsal, she was lured without the knowledge of her older sister by a group of women that were [members of] Joanne Schurchkar. When her sister noticed she was missing, she asked her around at the center and they told her that Hamida went home because she had a headache. A while later, the older sister called her mother to check on her sister, and the mother told her that Hamida had not returned. The next day, her mother went to the Joanne Schurchkar and Women's Protection Units center to ask about Hamida and they denied having her. Three days after her disappearance, a group of women from the Women's Protection Units came to Hamida's house and told her family that she is with the Joanne Schurchkar." Mr. Raji added that they have received no new information since then, and Hamida never called her family again.

²³ Via Messenger on July 1, 2022.

²⁴ Via phone on September 26, 2022.

Siblings Mohammad, Daljan, and Ejan Ahmad, aged 14, 13, and 12 respectively, from Sheran village, which is affiliated with Ein al-Arab city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, were abducted on Thursday, October 6, 2022, by personnel from the SDF's Joanne Schurchkar group for the purpose of conscription. They were taken to an undisclosed location.



Mohammad, Daljan, and Ejan Ahmad

Cases where children were discharged after being recruited,
which confirms that the SDF was initially involved in recruiting them

Zahida Subhi Kujar, girl born in 2005, from Shadera village, which is administratively affiliated with Afrin city in northern Aleppo governorate, was abducted on Monday, March 28, 2022, by SDF servicemen in front of Qahrman School in al-Sheikh Maqousd neighborhood, Aleppo city, for the purpose of conscription. She was taken to an SDF recruitment center in Manbij city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. On April 4, 2022, the SDF released her after her family demanded her return.



Zahida Subhi Kujar

Siblings Mohammad and Ibrahim Shawqi Yousef, born in 2012 and 2013 respectively, from Nahiyat Jandaris in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, were abducted on Saturday, June 4, 2022, by SDF servicemen for the purpose of conscription while they were on their way home from their work at a tailor's workshop in al-Sheikh Maqsoud neighborhood, Aleppo city. They were taken to an SDF recruitment center. They were released on June 7, 2022, after their family demanded their return.



Ibrahim Shawqi Yousef



Mohammad Shaeqi Yousef

Najma Mohammad Daoud, a 17-year-old girl from Sheikh Mohammad (Kawnda) village in Nahiyat Raju in the northwestern suburbs of Afrin city, northern Aleppo governorate, who now lives with her family in Tal Qrah village, northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was abducted on Sunday, August 7, 2022, by personnel from the SDF's Joanne Schurchkar group in Tal Qrah village for the purpose of conscription. She was taken to an SDF recruitment center. On August 9, 2022, the SDF released her.



Najma Mohammad Daoud

Mustafa Fadel Mohammad, a 13-year-old boy from Sheran village, which is administratively affiliated with Ein al-Arab city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was abducted on Thursday, September 15, 2022, in Sheran village for the purpose of conscription. The next day, his family was able to retrieve him through an SDF commander who intervened as an intermediary.



Mustafa Fadel Mohammad

D. Targeting schools and kindergartens

Indiscriminate bombardment by the SDF has caused damage to many educational facilities. Moreover, SDF has seized control of many schools in their areas of control, and repurposed them as military points. We have recorded that SDF had attacked 16 schools as of November 20, 2022.

On Monday, April 18, 2022, SDF servicemen raided al-Furat School for Elementary Education in Mazra'et al-Yarmouk village in the northern suburbs of Raqqa governorate. The SDF personnel took over the school building and repurposed it as a military point in the village. SNHR notes that the school was functional before SDF turned it into a military point. The village was under the control of SDF at the time of the incident.

On Wednesday, August 3, 2022, an SDF rocket launcher fired missiles at residential neighborhoods in Izaz city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. One of the rockets landed near al-Andalus School for Elementary Education in the southwestern parts of the city, wounding five civilians and moderately damaging the school fence. The city was under the control of SNA at the time of the incident.

On Monday, October 10, 2022, SDF servicemen raided al-Tayyana al-Gharbiya Advanced School for Elementary Education in al-Tayyana village, which is administratively affiliated with Nahiyat Theyban in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour, during school hours. The children and teaching staff were evicted, with SDF seizing control of the school and erecting fortifications around it to turn it into a military point in the village, which was under the control of SDF at the time of the incident.

SNHR notes that SDF justified its decision to seize control of the school by citing its close proximity to the Euphrates River, claiming that they needed to use the school to crack down on smuggling across the river between SDF-controlled territories and those controlled by the Syrian regime on the other side of the river.

5- Armed opposition factions/SNA

A. Extrajudicial killing

Armed opposition factions have been responsible for killings through attacks involving indiscriminate bombings targeting areas under the control of other parties. Additionally, children have been killed during infightings between different armed opposition factions. The year 2014 saw the highest death toll among children documented killed at the hands of armed opposition factions, followed by 2015, and then 2016, while we recorded a significant drop in children's deaths in this category from 2017 onwards. We have documented the deaths of six children at the hands of armed opposition factions in 2022.

As of November 20, 2022, SNHR has documented the killing of 1,003 children at the hands of armed opposition factions, divided between 565 male children and 438 female children.

[Ruqayya Hasan al-Hamad](#), a 12-year-old girl with special needs, was killed on June 1, 2022, by shell remnants that hit her family's home in al-Bir IDP Camp following an explosion at ammunition depository at a military camp run by Failaq al-Sham (The Levant Squad), an armed opposition faction affiliated with al-Jabha al-Wataniyya Le al-Tahrir (National Liberation Front). The depository is located in a hilly area to the north of Babsaqqa in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate, adjacent to the Syrian-Turkish borders. The original explosion triggered a series of massive explosions that shook the area, with missiles and shells flying in all directions over a wide area. One of the soldiers at the camp was also killed by the blast, with the explosions and the flying shells and shrapnel, caused damage to dozens of IDP camps in the area.



Exclusive photo for SNHR showing the damage caused to IDP camps in the Salah al-Din Camp group located near the camp by shell remnants landing there.

By: Mohannad Mohammad

[On June 18, 2022](#), three civilians were killed, including two children from the same family, while two other children were wounded, when a mortar shell hit a house amid clashes between the SNA's Failaq al-Thaleth (3rd Division) and Ahrar al-Sham's Squad 32, which is also a part of the al-Failaq al-Thaleth, which were taking place in Abla village, which is administratively affiliated with al-Bab city, eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate.

Abdul Rahim Saleh Mohammad, a boy, from Jahbal village, which is administratively affiliated with Ein Eissa city in the northern suburbs of Raqqqa governorate, was killed on January 22, 2022, in artillery bombardment by SNA forces who fired multiple shells at Jahbal village.

B. Arrest, enforced disappearance, and torture

SNA/armed opposition factions have carried out abductions and detentions involving children in areas under their control, particularly during their attacks on other parties' territories, or at checkpoints. They've also abducted and detained children to solicit ransom money from their families in exchange of their release, or to apply pressure on their families to seize their properties and force them out. Most of their abductions, particularly in the Afrin area in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, have displayed an ethnic character.

As of November 20, 2022, SNHR has documented that no fewer than 361 of the children detained by the SNA/opposition factions, divided between 269 male children and 92 female children, are still detained or forcibly disappeared at the hands of armed opposition factions/SNA. Most of the arrest cases documented qualify as enforced disappearance.

Furthermore, armed opposition factions have practiced torture against children, who were particularly subjected to brutal beatings, 'falqa', and being hanged by their arms in the air for long periods. Children were also forced to perform menial tasks, including cleaning and transferring food in armed opposition factions' detention centers.

Nour Amer Gharrab, an orphaned 15-year-old boy whose mother's name was Sumayya, lives in Shamarin village in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. On Sunday, June 19, 2022, civilian police officers from Shamarin village's police station, which is affiliated with the SNA's General Staff, beat him in the middle of the public road in front of a bakery. It should be noted that Nour is an orphan who lost his mother and father, who were both executed by Syrian regime forces in 2012 in Damascus city's al-Tadamon neighborhood.



Exclusive photo for SNHR showing the damage caused to IDP camps in the Salah al-Din Camp group located near the camp by shell remnants landing there. By: Mohannad Mohammad

Ramzi Kilo, a 16-year-old boy from Arnada village, which is administratively affiliated with Afrin city in northwestern Aleppo governorate, was detained on Wednesday, August 24, 2022, by civilian police officers affiliated with the SNA in a raid on his place of residence in Sourka village, which is administratively affiliated with Afrin city, with the police officers beating him before arresting him. We recorded that he was released on November 13, 2022



Ramzi Kilo

Ali Anas al-Sayyed Omar, Mohammad Amin Ali al-Hasan, Qutaiba Hosam al-Sayyed Omar, and Hazem Abdul Baqi al-Sayyed Omar, four children from the village of Owaijel, which is administratively affiliated with al-Atareb city in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, live in the Khubz al-Kheir IDP camp near Shran village, which is administratively affiliated with Afrin city in northwestern Aleppo governorate. They were detained on Saturday, July 23, 2022, by servicemen from al-Sultan Murad, an SNA faction, from their place of residence in Khubz al-Kheir Camp on charges of stealing a gas cylinder from a shop in the camp and taken to a detention center near the camp. We documented that they were released on the same day after they were assaulted and tortured using the 'Dulab' torture method by al-Sultan Murad, with the charges leveled against them being dismissed.

C. Recruitment

Armed opposition factions/SNA have relied widely on recruiting children in light of the absence of a structural framework with actual and real authority to prohibit the recruitment of children. Usually, the child recruit has blood relations with an adult member of the faction that recruits him. In most cases, we've documented, child recruitment is actively encouraged since children are viewed as being less costly. Also, the child recruits' difficult living conditions, including the loss of their families' main providers, are often exploited. Children are assigned tasks such as guard duty, transferring ammunition, cleaning, and operating checkpoints, as well as being deployed on the battlefronts. We have documented that 12 children were killed in action with armed opposition factions which also sent children to take part in military operations in Libya and Azerbaijan.

Mohammad Sharif Haj Sha'ban, a 15-year-old boy from al-Abzemou town, western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, who was recruited by SNA servicemen to serve in at al-Ferqa 23, was killed on Wednesday, August 17, 2022, by a landmine in Kafr'amma village in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, which acts as a dividing line between the Syrian regime's territories and the SNA's territories.



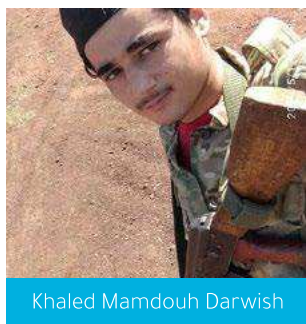
Mohammad Sharif Haj Sha'ban

Khaled Abdul Razzaq al-Mohammad Ali, a 17-year-old boy from Sou-ran city in the suburbs of Hama governorate, was recruited by Jaish al-Azza (the Pride Army), an armed opposition faction. On Monday, October 3, 2022, his dead body was found with his head disfigured in agricultural land on the southeastern outskirts of al-Bara town in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The area is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and HTS.



Khaled Abdul Razzaq
al-Mohammad Ali

Khaled Mamdouh Darwish, a boy born in 2007, from al Fattira town, southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, was recruited in January 2022 by al-Jaish al-Thani (The 2nd Army), which is affiliated with the National Liberation Front. On Thursday, June 16, 2022, he was killed during clashes with Syrian regime forces in the Sfuhun area in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate.



Khaled Mamdouh Darwish



Photo of Khaled Mamdouh
Darwish's family statement

D. Targeting schools and kindergartens

We documented that 36 schools were attacked by the armed opposition/SNA between March 2011 and November 20, 2022

6- Other parties

A. Extrajudicial killing

SNHR's documentation contains various categories including victims killed in bombings by unknown parties, by gunshots by unknown parties, by landmines of unknown source, by drowning, and victims killed by Jordanian, Turkish, or Lebanese forces.

Under this category, SNHR has documented the killing of no fewer than 1,691 children, divided between 1,135 male children and 556 female children, as of November 20, 2022.

On Thursday, January 20, 2022, multiple missiles fired by a rocket launcher of unknown source landed in Rajo Street in the middle of [Afrin](#) city in the northwestern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, which resulted in the [deaths](#) of [seven civilians](#), including five [children](#), three of whom were from the same [family](#). In addition, 16 others were wounded in the attacks. We suspect that the party responsible for this attack was either SDF or Syrian regime forces since the [attack](#) originated from the direction of their territories in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. SNHR is still trying to locate eyewitnesses and survivors to obtain more details. Afrin was under the control of the SNA at the time of the incident.

On Saturday, June 11, 2022, a landmine, which was planted by a party we have not yet been able to identify, exploded as [a car](#) transporting [civilians](#) ([workers](#) who were harvesting crops in agricultural lands) was passing by on the outskirts of [Deir al-Adas](#) village, northern suburbs of Daraa governorate. The explosion killed 10 civilians, including [four children](#) and four [women](#), and [wounded](#) 32 others. Deir al-Adas village was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.

On Friday, August 19, 2022, at around 10:40 am, a rocket launcher stationed in areas under the control of Syrian regime forces and the SDF fired approximately six missiles that targeted al-Bab city, eastern suburbs of Aleppo. The missiles reportedly originated from Sha'ala village, which is located to the west of al-Bab city and is under the control of SDF, while Syrian regime forces and Iranian militias are scattered in the area of 'Radar Sha'ala' in the same village. One of the missiles landed in the middle of a street market on a public road located in al-Bab's eastern neighborhood, known as '[Souq al-Khamis](#)', that was crowded with civilians and vendors. The missile landed in front of a falafel restaurant known as Falafel Abu al-Kheir, while the other missiles landed in areas near the market, including the Arad Roum and Harat al-Yamani [schools](#), and a female student dormitory. The bombing resulted in a massacre, and we have yet to identify the party responsible for it. We suspect that it was either Syrian regime forces or the SDF since the bombing originated from the direction of [territories](#) controlled by both. Investigations are still ongoing to determine the party responsible for the attack. We documented 15 civilians killed in the [attack](#), including six children, while over 30 were wounded, including at least 11 children.



Photos of the damage caused by a missile attack whose source we have not yet been able to identify on the Souq al-Khamis market in al-Bab city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, which resulted in a massacre - August 19, 2022

We spoke with Sharif Damkhali²⁵, a media activist, who provided his account of what happened on August 19, 2022

“When the bombing started, I headed immediately for the targeted site. On my way, I saw victims that were rushed by civilians to al-Fatih Women’s Hospital and al-Majid Hospital. I saw also women and children grieving for their children. I saw a woman crying and looking for her child who was about 500m away from her; she did not know if he was injured or had died as he was receiving medical attention. When I arrived at the market where the missile landed, I saw widespread destruction. The missile landed in a critical place where vendors sell vegetables, bread, and house supplies, and there is Falafel Abu al-Kheir where the missile landed. Civil defense teams rushed to the site to pull out the victims. I also saw policemen helping to transfer and aiding the victims. The areas where the missiles landed are very close to one another. On Saturday, August 20, 2022, there was a public strike in al-Bab city. Most of the shops were closed in mourning, and a demonstration was held in solidarity with the victims and their families.”

B. Targeting schools and kindergartens

We have recorded that at least 81 schools were damaged in attacks by other parties between March 2011 and November 20, 2022.

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

- International humanitarian law states that “Children shall be the object of special respect and shall be protected against any form of indecent assault. The parties to the conflict shall provide them with the care and aid they require.” In addition, the Convention on the Rights of the Child²⁶ defines the nature of children’s rights, with its aim being to protect children at all times. International humanitarian law also provides general protection to children as civilians who do not engage in hostilities²⁷, as well as special protection as members of vulnerable, and non-armed groups²⁸. Further, Rule 135 of customary international humanitarian law states that “Children affected by armed conflict are entitled to special respect and protection.”²⁹
- Article 3 of the Geneva Convention³⁰ states that children as “Persons taking no active part in the hostilities... shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction.” In a more general sense, international legal instruments place emphasis on protecting children from hostilities and ensuring they receive the necessary care, aid, and protection, particularly children in areas where armed conflicts are taking place.
- Customary international law prohibits the conscription of children younger than 15 years of age. This prohibition, which first was limited to international armed conflict, was later expanded to include non-international armed conflicts as well. Meanwhile, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court establishes that “Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of fifteen years into the national armed forces or using them to participate actively in hostilities” and “Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of fifteen years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities” are war crimes³¹.

²⁵ Via WhatsApp on August 20, 2022.

²⁶ United Nations, [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

²⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva Convention (IV) on Civilians, [1949, Article 3](#)

²⁸ International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva Convention (IV) on Civilians, [1949, Article 14](#)

²⁹ International Committee of the Red Cross, [customary international humanitarian law](#)

³⁰ International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva Convention (I) on civilians, [1949, Article 3](#)

³¹ International Criminal Court, Rome Statute, Article 8-2-b(26) and [Article 8-2-e\(7\)](#)

- On May 25, 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted an optional protocol that addresses the involvement of children in armed conflicts. In it, the minimum age for a child to join armed forces was raised from 15 years to 18 years. The same protocol bans conscription for those younger than 18 years of age³². However, criminal prosecution is still limited to conscription of children below the age of 15.
- Armed groups outside the scope of a state are still bound by the rules of international human rights law, including Articles 1-4 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. Article 4 states, "Armed groups that are distinct from the armed forces of a State should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities persons under the age of 18 years³³."
- Despite the abundance of international instruments as demonstrated above, violations against children in Syria have not stopped for 11 years. All parties to the conflict have failed to respect those rules. The Syrian regime has not been deterred by those conventions, despite having ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child³⁴, from committing violations against children, some of which qualify as crimes against humanity through the acts of extrajudicial killing, enforced disappearance, torture, while others qualify as war crimes through the acts of compulsory recruitment. Furthermore, many of the violations committed by the other parties to the conflict against children could amount to war crimes if they were committed in the context of the conflict, and also as widespread violations of international human rights law if they were committed against children affiliated with those forces. Arbitrary detention and torture come at the top of those violation, followed by conscription.

Recommendations

All parties to the conflict

- The Syrian regime should uphold its commitments to the Conventions on the Rights of the Child, the two International Covenants, and the Geneva Conventions, all of which have been ratified by the regime.
- The Syrian-Russian alliance, Iranian militias, and their subsidiaries should cease deliberately attacking schools, kindergartens, and areas populated by children and their families, as well as killing and maiming children.
- All parties to the conflict should release child detainees immediately, especially those detained in the context of the armed conflict. The parties to the conflict should also uphold the international laws on detaining children, especially girls, including providing adequate and sufficient food, and access to education by allowing them to go to schools, whether inside or outside detention.
- Cease torturing detained children, and separate children from adults, as established in Rules 8-D and 85 of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners³⁵, and Article 10-2-B of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights³⁶.
- Adopt the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice³⁷ when trying children. Those rules detail the guidelines regulating criminal responsibility for minors and punishments against children. Furthermore, those rules were complemented by the UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty³⁸.
- Completely cease recruiting children, and release any children below the age of 15 from any and all military entities or missions.

³² United Nations, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the [involvement of children in armed conflict](#)

³³ United Nations, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, [Article 4](#)

³⁴ Fadel Abdul Ghany. (2021). [The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Its Committee Are Helpless in Effectively Defending Children Rights in Syria and Around the World](#). Syrian Network for Human Rights.

³⁵ United Nations, [Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners](#)

³⁶ United Nations, United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ([The Nelson Mandela Rules](#))

³⁷ United Nations, United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile justice (["The Beijing Rules"](#))

³⁸ United Nations, [Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty](#)

International community and Security council

- Ensure the protection of and aid for forcibly displaced children, both IDPs and refugees, especially girls and ensure their needs are met, particularly as regards protection.
- All the world's states should ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child and uphold their commitments to it, in order to expose the Syrian regime and its crimes against the children of Syria, and should spare no effort to alleviate and put an end to the regime's crimes.
- Expose the states supporting the Syrian regime which are effectively trying to normalize and sponsor perpetrators of crimes against humanity and war crimes against the children of Syria.
- Take every available legal, political, and financial measure against the Syrian regime and its allies, as well as against other perpetrators of violations in the Syrian conflict, in order to put pressure on them to compel them to respect children's rights.
- Meet the financial pledges made to:
 - o Help neighboring countries and provide every bit of support to improve the level of education and healthcare in those countries that are housing the largest portion of child refugees.
 - o Devise mechanisms to stop the bombing of schools and kindergartens, protect those facilities, and work on creating a safe educational environment, which goes towards establishing the bare minimum of levels of protection for civilians.
 - o The issue of Syrian children is a global issue. All states should make the effort to ease the ramification of this issue by supporting schools and the educational and medical process in Syria and for child refugees.

United Nations

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

- Coordinate humanitarian relief operations by focusing on the worst affected areas, and avoid the pressure and exploitation by the Syrian regime that attempts to solicit aid in its own favor.
- Secure the necessary resources to rehabilitate children, while placing especial consideration on the special needs of girls who have been directly affected by violations and suffered sexual exploitation based on the worst affected areas.

International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) and the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (CoI)

- Investigate the incidents included in this report and shed more light on the suffering of the children of Syria.

Supporting states and the European Union

- Syria has been one of the world's worst countries in terms of many patterns of violations against children. As such, Syria needs more assistance compared to other states and areas, especially considering that violations are still ongoing up to the present day.
- Accord more resources to the UNICEF and the MRM, and rely on its database in launching a process to rehabilitate children survivors.

Neighboring countries

- Ensure Syrian refugees' ability to seek asylum and respect their rights, including non-refoulement, accelerate the family reunion process. EU countries and other states should try and ease the burden of Syria's neighboring countries by taking in more Syrian refugees. Meanwhile, donor states should increase their support for the UNHCR and local community organization in asylum countries.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

- Create a stable and safe environment for Syrian child refugees and put more effort into integrating them into their communities through long-term psychological support.
- Support investment in education and healthcare

Acknowledgment

The Syrian Network for Human Rights would like to express our most heartfelt gratitude to anyone who shared any news or information, particularly survivors, eyewitnesses, and local activists who contributed significantly to this report.



www.snhr.org - info@snhr.org



Federal Foreign Office



Institut für
Auslandsbeziehungen

Supported with German Federal Foreign Office funds by the
ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen) Zivik Funding Programme