

Statment

Individuals responsible for the poisoning cases must be identified and held accountable

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On Tuesday 16 September, 2014 during the vaccination campaign in the liberated areas, the Syrians were shocked by the death of 15 kids immediately after they were vaccinated. All the vaccines were at the medical center in Jarjnaz. In addition, 50 children at least were injured in – Ma’rat An-Nu’mān countryside – Jarjnaz in eastern Idlib.

Although the vaccination campaign were carried out in a number of areas in Idlib and Der Ezzor simultaneously, no other cases have been documented in any of the other areas that the campaign included.

Preliminary investigation showed that the poisonings were because of a human error where atracurium was used as a solvent with the vaccines instead of the right solvent that should have been used. The error was a result of the atracurium being in the same refrigerator as the vaccine solvent.

Most of the children who died were under two-year-old as their bodies weren’t able to endure atracurium which is a muscle relaxant that paralyses the muscles including the respiratory muscles.

SNHR believes that the preliminary investigations were carried out by doctors from the same vaccination campaign rather than independent experts or detectives. Therefore, it didn’t have the required levels of experience and impartiality.

This incident affected hundreds of thousands of families. A quick survey, conducted by SNHR, indicated a wide discontent. The families refuse now to give any vaccines to their kids regardless of the provider party which will threaten the lives of hundreds of thousands of Syrian children. The National Collation for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces and its interim government should form an independent highly-experienced impartial investigation committee. The names of the experts, on this committee, should be publically shown so the relevant parties could contact them.

All the individuals who were responsible for this crime should be held accountable starting with identifying the individuals who appointed inexperienced persons to work for the vaccination committees. Also, finding out whether the error was accidental or intentional is a priority. Either ways, the responsible individuals should be held accountable. Furthermore, the victims’ families should be redressed properly and a committee to follow-up with this matter should be appointed.

