I. Introduction

Media activism in Syria is continuously deteriorating in light of many international organizations not paying enough attention to what is happening in Syria and the notable decline in media coverage over the last year compared with previous years.

SNHR publishes a monthly report documenting the violations against media activists who play a prominent role in the civil movement and the armed conflict.

It should be noted that a journalist is a civilian according to the international humanitarian law regardless of his nationality. Any attack directed against a journalist is considered a war crime. However, when a media activist gets close to action-heavy zones, he is responsible for his own actions where targeting him in such case would be seen as collateral damage. Also, he would lose the right to protection if he was involved in military operations. We believe that media activists must be respected whether they have identification papers as media workers or don’t considering the many difficulties they encounter to acquire these papers.

Fadel Abdul Ghani, chairman of SNHR, says:

“Media activism is especially important because it often sheds light on string of various crimes that are taking place on a daily basis. Therefore, we record the violations perpetrated by conflicting parties in our monthly reports on violations against media activists.”
SNHR emphasizes that serious and quick steps must be taken to save media activism in Syria and renews its condemnation of all violations against the freedom of media activism regardless of the perpetrators. The freedom of media must be respected and the workers in the media field must be protected and particularly considered. All individuals involved in violations against journalists and media activists must be held accountable. The international community, represented by the Security Council, must act upon its responsibilities in order to protect civilians and media activists in Syria.

II. Methodology
According to SNHR’s methodology, a civilian journalist is anyone who plays a notable role in reporting and publishing news. He is not necessarily impartial as a journalist should be.
In case a civilian journalist carried a weapon and was directly engaged in offensive military operations, he is no longer deemed a citizen journalist whereas it is possible that he would be referred to as a civilian journalist again provided he retires completely from military action.

This report draws upon SNHR archive and the investigations conducted by the Network in addition to accounts by victims’ families, information from local activists, and analyzing the pictures and video footages that we have been receiving and archiving in our records since 2011.

To read more about SNHR methodology in documenting victims: http://sn4hr.org/public_html/wp-content/pdf/english/SNHR_Methodology_en.pdf

In light of the security and logistic difficulties to access all the areas where violations take place, it is worth noting that these statistics and incidents are only the bare minimum of the actual magnitude of crimes and violations that happened.

III. Executive Summary
Violations against media activists in July 2016 are distributed as follows:
A. Extrajudicial killing: SNHR documented the killing of 10 media activists as follows:
- Government forces: Killed six media activists
- Russian forces: killed two media activists
- Extremist Islamic groups:
  - ISIS: killed two media activists
B. Injuries: we recorded 21 injuries as follows:
- Government forces: 12 injuries
- Russian forces: six injuries
- Extremist Islamic groups:
  ISIS: two injuries
- Unidentified groups: one injury

C. Missing cases: we recorded one missing case
D. Other violations against media activists: we recorded three assaults against media offices as follows:
- Government forces: one incident
- Extremist Islamic groups:
  Al Nussra Front: one incident
- Unidentified groups: one incident

**IV. Details**

**A. Violations by government forces (Army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias)**

- **Extrajudicial killing**

  Saturday 2 July 2016, media activist Amjad Al Danf was killed by a rocket shrapnel that hit his head. The shrapnel, which was from a bombing with missiles by the regime warplanes on Jayroud city, located in the Damascus suburbs governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions along with Al Nussra Front, hit him as he was helping evacuate the wounded who have fallen in a previous bombing on the city.

  Amjad, known as **Mohammad Al Umari**, is a photographer for Jayroud city coordination a media activist for the Syrian Revolution Coordination Union, and head of the medical office in Jayroud city. Amjad is from Jayroud city in Damascus suburbs governorate, 27-year-old, has a certificates from a health institution, married and a father of two.

  Sunday 3 July 2016, media activist Mohammad Nour Al Shaikh “His name shall remain undisclosed for security reasons” by a shell fired from a government forces tank. The shell fell near him as he was covering ongoing clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions at Al Khaldiya battlefront in Aleppo governorate.
Mohammad Nour, a photographer for Division No. 16, an armed opposition faction, from Urm Al Jouz village in the suburbs of Idlib governorate, born in 1988, has a secondary school certificate, single.

**SNHR contacted his brother, Raed Al Shaikh, who offered his account:**

“Around 10:00 AM, while my brother was covering clashes between rebels and the regime forces at Al Khaldiya battlefront in Aleppo, a shell fired by a tank belonging to the regime forces fell near him which resulted in a number of shrapnel hitting him in many parts of his body, His friends tried to aid him but he died immediately.”

Wednesday 13 July 2016, media activist Mohammad Walid Salah was killed by shrapnel in his head from a mortar shell fired by government forces artillery as he was tending to the wounded civilians in Al Shifouniya town in Damascus suburbs governorate after the bombing on the town by government forces.

Mohammad, a photographer for the center 250 which is affiliated to the civil defense, from Douma city in Damascus suburbs governorate, born in 1998, has an elementary school certificate, single.

Friday 22 July 2016, we received information confirming that the journalist Mohammad Amer Barakat Al Zou’bi died due to torture in Sydnaya military prison, which is affiliated with government forces and located in Damascus suburbs government. It should be noted that government forces arrested him from his home in Al Mzerieb town in the suburbs of Daraa governorate on 20 December 2011.

Mohammad Amer, an independent journalist, from Al Yadoda town in the suburbs of Daraa governorate, born in 1981, has a certificate from the facility of media in the University of Damascus, single.

SNHR contacted the lawyer Asem Al Zou’bi, Mohammad Amer’s brother, who told the Network:

“My brother was sitting at home with my mother when a security patrol raided the home and arrested him on 20 December 2011. Since then, we only were able to
know information about him through released prisoners. On 22 July, a former prisoner, who was imprisoned in Sydnaya, called us and confirmed that he was next to my brother at his last moments in the dormitory after he was infected by a virus. We contacted a number of former prisoners at Sydnaya military prisoners who assured us that he died due to sickness and negligent health care in Sydnaya. We haven’t been able to know the accurate date of his death.”

Friday 22 July 2016, media activist Abu Samer Al Kisswani, “his family didn’t reveal his name for security reasons” was killed by shrapnel that hit his head. The shrapnel was from a shell fired by government forces artillery stationed at Al Kabousiya hill as he was covering clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions at Al Salam highway battlefront in Damascus suburbs governorate. Abu Samer, a photographer for the media office of Al Kiswa city and a member of the unified media office of Western Ghouta. He is from Al Kiswa city in Damascus suburbs governorate, 30-year-old, single.

Friday 22 July 2016, media activist Abu Saddam Al Kisswani, “his name wasn’t revealed by his family for security reasons” by shrapnel that hit him in the abdomen. The shrapnel was from a shell fired from government forces artillery as he was covering clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions at Al Salam highway battlefront in Damascus suburbs governorate.

Abu Saddam, a photographer for the media office of Al Kiswa city and a member of the unified media office of Western Ghouta. He is from Al Kiswa city in Damascus suburbs governorate, 26-year-old, single.

- Injuries

Friday 1 July 2016, media activist Abdullah Ammar Mohammad was injured in different parts of his body by shrapnel after a missile was fired near he was by the Russian/Syrian regime warplanes (Investigations are still ongoing to identify the perpetrator party precisely) as he was covering clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions at Kansba village battlefront in the suburbs of Latakia governorate.
Abdullah, known as Abu Ammar Al Lathqani, reporter for Baladi media network, from Latakia suburbs, born in 1992, has a high school diploma, married and a father of one child.

SNHR contacted media activist Abdullah Ammar Mohammad who told the Network: “As I was working on covering the liberation of Kansba village in Jabal Al Akrad in the suburbs of Latakia governorate and the clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions, warplanes fired a missile near me. A number of shrapnel hit me in my hands, legs, and chest.”

Monday 4 July 2016, media activist Wasim Fawwaz Gazal was injured by shrapnel from a government forces tank shell as he was covering clashes between government forces and ISIS in Ain Theker town, which is located in western Daraa governorate. The shrapnel caused a number of fractures in his left hand in addition to losing his left eye and injuries in his bladder and left leg.

Wasim, known as Wasim Abu Nedal, media activist with Al Forqan brigades, from Kanaker town in Daraa governorate, born in 1993, has a high school diploma, single.

Monday 11 July 2016, media activist Loai Mohammad Barakat was injured by missile shrapnel that was fired by government forces warplanes. The shrapnel hit him in his head and hands as he was covering the bombing on Al Ansari Al Sharqi neighborhood, located in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Loai is a photographer for Al Boraq media institution and Images Live agency, from Aleppo city, born in 1991, a first year university student who is studying at the trading and economics faculty, married.

SNHR contacted the media activist Loai Mohammad Barakat who told the Network: “As I was in Al Ansari Al Sharqi neighborhood in Aleppo city working on covering the bombing by warplanes, I heard the sound of a missile in the neighborhood, I rushed there in my car to take pictures of the targeted location and the aftermath of the bombing. When I got there, a second missile fell near me and a number of shrapnel hit me in the head and hands. Also, my car was destroyed almost completely.”
Monday 11 July 2016, media activist Yahya Zuhair Al Rajjou was injured in his back and left leg by shrapnel after a missile fell near him as he was covering the bombing on Al Ansari Al Sharqi neighborhood, located in Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Yahya, a photographer for Al Boraq media institution and Aleppo News network. He is the vice-president of the media activists’ union in Aleppo city, from Aleppo city, born in 1992, a third year university student at the science faculty – applicable chemistry department, single.

SNHR contacted the media activist Yahya Zohair Al Rajjou who told the Network: “I was trying to cover the bombing on Aleppo city where I went to cover the bombing on Al Ansari neighborhood. Warplanes targeted the place with a second thermobaric missile to impede the paramedics, civil defense teams, and media activists. A number of shrapnel hit me in my back and left leg. My colleagues and medical teams took me to the nearest medical center where I received first aids.”

Thursday 14 July 2016, media activist Rami Mustafa was injured in his hand and loin after a surface-to-surface missile fell near him as he was covering clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions at Al Khalidiya battlefront in Aleppo city. The missile was fired by a government forces rocket launcher.

Rami, a photographer for Al Sultan Murad squad, an armed opposition faction, from Aleppo governorate, born in 1996, has a secondary school certificate, single.

Thursday 21 July 2016, media activist Anas Sabhi Al Kholi sustained burns in his face and wounds in most of his body after a mortar shell, fired by government forces artillery, fell near him as he was covering the bombing on Misraba town, located in Damascus suburbs governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions. Anas, director of the media office of Syria’s Revolutionist Assembly in Eastern Ghouta, from Misraba town in Damascus suburbs governorate, born in 1992, a university student at the political science faculty, married and a father of a one girl.

Sunday 24 July 2016, media activist Thaer Al Demashqi “his name is undisclosed for security reasons” was injured by government forces artillery’s shelling on Douma city, located in Damascus suburbs governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions. Thaer sustained wounds in his left hand.
Thaer, a reporter for Sham Network, from Aqraba town in Damascus suburbs governorate, born in 1991, a second year university student who studies network engineering, single.

SNHR contacted the activist Thaer Al Demashqi, who told the Network:
“On Sunday 24 July I was at home in Douma city, government forces artillery fired number of shells on the city. One of the shells fell inside my home and the shrapnel caused wounds in my left hand.”

Tuesday 26 July 2016, media activist Anas AbdulHakim Dalla was injured in his left leg by shrapnel after government forces fired a missile that fell near him as he was covering the bombing on Al Farhaniya village, located in the western suburbs of Homs governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Anas, known as Abu Subhi, independent media activist, from Al Farhaniya Al Gharbiya village in the suburbs of Homs governorate, 27-year-old, has a secondary school certificate, married.

Tuesday 26 July 2016, Khaled Ahmad Al Bakkour was injured in his head, chest, and right hand by shrapnel from a government forces tank shell that fell near him as he was covering clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions at Harbnafsih town battlefront in the suburbs of Hama governorate.

Khaled, known as Abu Ishaq, is a photographer for Hama media center, from Hama city, born in 1990, has an industrial high school diploma, married and a father of two.

Friday 29 July 2016, media activist AbdulGhani Ramzi Al Aryan sustained burns in his face and hand due to a gas tank exposition as he was trying pull his family from the rubbles of his home in Selqein city, located in the suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions, where government forces warplanes bombed the vicinities of the house with two missiles.

AbdulGhani, a reporter for Anadolou Agency and Qasiun agency, from Selqein city in the suburbs of Idlib governorate, 24-year-old, a third-year university student at the faculty of literature – English department, married.

SNHR contacted the media activist AbdulGhani Ramzi Al Aryan who told the Network:
“I was documenting the bombing by the regime warplanes on my town Selqein in the suburbs of Idlib governorate when two thermobaric missiles were dropped by the same warplanes and fell in the vicinity of my home. My house was destroyed, I rushed there to save and pull out my family from rubble. As I was removing some of the rubble a gas tank that was near me blew off, I was wounded in my face and hand.”

Friday 29 July 2016, media activist Mohammad Nour Hashem was injured by an artillery shell shrapnel that was fired by government forces artillery as he was covering clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions at Handarat battlefront in Aleppo governorate.

Mohammad, a photographer for Nour Al Din Zenki movement, and armed opposition factions, from Aleppo city, born in 1999, has a secondary school certificate, single.

Sunday 31 July 2016, media activist Mohammad Khair Hak was injured in his head and chest by shrapnel from a shell fired by government forces artillery. The shell fell near a car belonging to Al Jazeera TV channel as he was covering clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions at Al Hekma School battlefront in Aleppo governorate.

Mohammad, a photographer for Al Jazeera News TV channel, from Aleppo city, born in 1993, has a high school diploma, single.

- Other violations
Friday 22 July 2016, government forces warplanes fired a missile near the office of Tle’na Al Hurriya “We Rose for Freedom” magazine in Douma city in Damascus suburbs which resulted in the contents of the office being largely destroyed.

B. Violations by Russian forces
- Extrajudicial killing
Monday 11 July 2016, media activist Ibrahim Mohammad Omar was killed by shrapnel from cluster bombs that hit him in the abdomen and head as he was covering bombings by allegedly Russian warplanes on Termanein town, located in the suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions.
Ibrahim, a photographer who cooperates with Al Jazeera Live channel and was previously a reporter for Itihad Press Network, from Kafr Hamra town in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate, born in 1978, has a high school diploma, married and has a daughter.

Thursday 14 July 2016, media activist Abdullah Mohammad Ghannam was killed after missile shrapnel hit his chest and most of his body as he was covering bombing on the makeshift hospital of Kafr Hamra town by allegedly Russian forces in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate. The hospital is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Abdullah, a reporter for Shahba Press agency and a member of Anadan media office, from Anadan city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate, born in 1988, has a high school diploma, married and a father of three.

SNHR contacted media activist Ma’moun Al Khatib, director of Shahba Press agency and a friend of Abdullah, who told the Network:

“On Thursday 14 July, Kafr Hamra makeshift hospital was bombed by Russian warplanes so Abdullah headed there to film the aftermath. As he was filming, the warplanes carried out another airstrike on the hospital which resulted in him sustaining a number of fractures in addition to an internal bleeding that they couldn’t contain. He was rushed to a hospital in the western suburbs of Aleppo where he died nearly after an hour of his injury.”

- Injuries
Sunday 3 July 2016, media activist AbdulRazzaq Al Kurdi sustained wounds in his head, hands, and legs after a missile was fired by alleged Russian warplanes near him as he was covering clashes between government forces and armed opposition factions at Handarat battlefront in Aleppo governorate.

AbdulRazzaq, a photographer for Soqour Al Jabal brigade, an armed opposition faction, from Jabal Bedrou in Aleppo governorate, 31-year-old, has a secondary school certificate, married.

Saturday 9 July 2016, media activist Ahmad Hasan Al Ahmad was injured by shrapnel in his head and neck as he was covering a missile bombing by alleged Russian warplanes on Asia area which is administratively affiliated to Hraitan city, located in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions.
Ahmad, a photographer for Al Sham division, an armed opposition faction, and Baladi Media Network, from Batbou town in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate, born in 1987, an agricultural engineer, married and a father of two. SNHR contacted the media activist Ahmad Al Ahmad who told the Network:
“I headed to Hraitan to cover the Russian warplanes’ bombing on the area on 9 July. As I was in Asia area, warplanes carried out an airstrike on the area and a missile fell near me. The shrapnel caused wounds in the head, left leg, and right hand. I sustained a temporary memory loss that lasted for four days.”

Tuesday 19 July 2016, media activist Feras Fawzi Hreitani sustained bruises in most of his body after a missile fired by alleged Russian warplanes fell near him in Al Atareb city, located in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions.
Feras, director of the media office of the athletic executive committee in Aleppo city, from Aleppo city, born in 1982, has a secondary school certificate, married. SNHR contacted the media activist Feras Fawzi Hreitani who told the Network: “While I was heading, along with a number of my friends, to Al Atareb city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate at the city’s highway, a missile fired by warplanes fell near me which resulted in bruises in most of my body in addition to a hearing impairment in my left ear as missile fell to my left. Additionally, my car windows shattered.”

Tuesday 19 July 2016, AbdulKarim Othman was injured by shrapnel in his head and shoulder after a missile bombing by alleged Russian warplanes on Al Atareb city, located in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions.
AbdulKarim, a reporter for Al Boraq media institution, from Aleppo city, born in 1986, has a secondary school certificate, married.

Tuesday 19 July 2016, media activist Akram Najib’s shoulder was dislocated and he sustained bruises in his head and left hand after a missile bombing by alleged Russian warplanes on Al Atareb city, located in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions.
Akram, known as Abu Saleh, reporter for Al Boraq media institution, from Aleppo city, born in 1981, has an industrial high school diploma, married.

Monday 25 July 2016, media activist Mohammad Sayed Hasan was injured in his head and upper and lower limbs by shrapnel from a missile that was fired by alleged Russian warplanes. The missile fell near Mohammad as he was covering the bombing on Al Atareb city, located in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Mohammad, head of Naba’ E-journal and reporter for All4Syria website, from Al Atareb city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate, born in 1962, has a high school diploma, married and has children.

C. Violations by extremist Islamic groups
- ISIS (Self-proclaimed the Islamic State)
- Extrajudicial killing

Sunday 10 July 2016, media activist Mohammad Yahya Al Rashdan was killed by a mortar shell fired by ISIS as he was covering clashes between armed opposition factions and ISIS at Ain Theker town battlefront in the suburbs of Daraa governorate. Mohammad, known as Abu Rashed Al Hourani, is a photographer for the martyr Ghassan Al Tarboush brigade, an armed opposition faction, from Inkhil city in the suburbs of Daraa governorate, 25-year-old, a second year university student at the faculty of literature – Arabic department, married.

Monday 18 July 2016, media activist died of wounds sustained after shrapnel hit most of his body from a landmine that was planted by ISIS in the vicinity of Manbej city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate as he was covering clashes between ISIS and Syrian Democratic Forces on Wednesday 13 July 2016

Mustafa, a reporter for Ronahi TV channel, from Yabsa village in the suburbs of Al Raqqa governorate, born in 1987, has a media certificate from the faculty of media at Damascus University.

- Injuries

Wednesday 13 July 2016, media activist Kendal Joudi, a reporter for Hawar News Agency was injured in most of his body by shrapnel from a landmine that was planted
by ISIS in the vicinity of Manbej city in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate. Kendal was injured as he was covering clashes between Syrian Democratic Forces and ISIS.

Wednesday 27 July 2016, ISIS detonated a bomb truck in an area where centers for Kurdish Self-management forces are located in Al Qamishli city in the suburbs of Al Hasaka governorate which resulted in an injury for Alan Hassan who was at the center of the self-defense commission. Alan sustained minor wounds from the windows glass that scattered after the explosion.

Alan, an independent media activist, from Al Qamishly in the suburbs of Al Hasaka governorate, born in 1985, a university student at the faculty of literature – Arabic department, single.

- Al Nussra Front
- Other violations

Saturday 2 July 2016, masked element from Al Nussra Front raided the media office of Al Tahrir Army in Hazzarein town, located in the southern suburbs of Idlib city and is under the control of armed opposition factions. The raiders removed the office of all of its contents completely.

D. Violations by unidentified groups

Thursday 21 July 2016, media activist Abu-Meyzar “We refrain from disclosing his name for security reasons” sustained a fracture in his left hand after he was beaten by unknowns using a stick who raided his place of work in Mo’adameyat Al Sham city. Located in Damascus suburbs and is under the control of armed opposition factions. We haven’t been able to identify the assailters as of this writing.

Abu Meyzar, a member of the media office of Mo’adameyat Al Sham city, from Mo’adameyat Al Sham city, 30-year-old, has a high school diploma, married. SNHR contacted with the media activist Abu Meyzar who told the Network: “At exactly 10:00 PM on Thursday, I heard screaming at the door of the media office of Mo’adameyat Al Sham city. There were men who told us to open the door. About 50 people entered armed with knives and metal bars. They screamed at us and accused us of stealing money and that we are the reason the city is under siege because we are exposing the regime’s crimes against the city and its people. The attackers
trashed the furniture including tables and chairs and destroyed the equipment we have like phone cells, and stole phones and the internet modem. They also insulted the members of the office and tried to beat them but the residents intervened and they got them away. My left hand got broken because someone hit me on it with a stick.”

- Missing
As of Friday 22 July 2016, the media activist Mohammad Haj Rabea is missing. He was last known to be in Idlib city, under the control of armed opposition factions and Al Nussra Front, to cover the bombing by warplanes on the city. SNHR hasn’t been able to find out about his fate as of this writing.

Mohammad, member of the media office of squad 13, a member of the armed opposition factions, he is from Ma’aret Al Nu’man in the suburbs of Idlib governorate.

- Other violations
Thursday 21 July 2016, men armed with sticks and metal bars raided the media office of Mo’adameyat Al Sham city in Damascus suburbs governorate. About 50 individuals assaulted the office, ruined its contents and broke it, and hit three of its members. They left under the pressure of the residents. We haven’t been able to identify the party to which the attackers were affiliated.

Mohammad Nour, a member of Mo’adameyat Al Sham city media office, told SNHR: “After repeated threats by the regime through the lieutenant-colonel Yasser Slhab from the fourth squad to stop any media work and stop exposing what is happening in the city or the office members will be assassinated and the office will be directly bombed, the regime started to move its hidden elements in Mo’adameyat Al Sham and incite grudges against the office as the reason why the city is under siege and that its activists are the one who oppose the city going back to its old state. The intensity climaxed at 10:00 of Thursday when the office was raided by a group of assailters who trashed the furniture and equipment and stole phones and the internet modem. They also hit the members Mohammad Nour, Abu Kenan Al Dimashqi, and Mohammad Abu Meyzar. They were only armed with knives, spears, and metal bars. No firearms were involved. The attack ended when the neighborhood residents intervened and got the attackers away who kept promising to come back and kill.”
V. Recommendations

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights:
To condemn the targeting of media activists in Syria and sheds light on their sacrifice and suffering.

Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic:
To conduct investigations that focuses on the targeting of media activists given their vital role in recording incidents in Syria.

The Security Council:
To work on fighting the policy of impunity by referring the cases in Syria to the International Criminal Court.

International and Arabic media institutions:
To advocate their colleagues in the field of media by publishing periodic reports that shed light on their daily suffering and memorialize their sacrifice. Also, they must contact their families to console them. Finally, all parties have to respect the international humanitarian law with respect to the protection of civilians and especially media activists and their equipment.

Acknowledgment
Out most heartfelt condolences go out for the victims’ families and our thank for the families and friends of media activists who contributed effectively to this report.