

Most Notable Violations of Human Rights in Eastern Ghouta in the Ten Days Following Security Council Resolution 2401

329 Civilians Killed including
57 Children

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Wednesday, March 7, 2018

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, independent group that is considered a primary source for the OHCHR on all death toll-related analyses in Syria.



Contents

- I. Introduction and Report Methodology
- II. Executive Summary
- III. Details
- IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

I. Introduction and Report Methodology

Resolution 2401 was [unanimously adopted](#) by the Security Council on the evening of February 24, 2018 after months have passed since the heavy offensive by the Syrian regime and its allies started on November 14, 2017 in Eastern Ghouta. However, it only took the Syrian regime and its allies merely a few hours to resume bombardment operations, and, as pointed by many cases, the bombardment rates and severity were higher compared to before the Security Council Resolution was adopted. Even though the Resolution provided for a 30-day truce across all of Syria, allowing for humanitarian aids delivery, Russia chose to interpret the Resolution as it suits them and felt that a five-hour pause was enough from 09:00 until 14:00 every day, but the bombardment wasn't ceased even during this hours. All of this constituted a heavy insult to the rest of the state member states of the Security Council.

Prince Zeid bin Ra'ad al Hussein, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, [spoke](#) before the Human Rights Council, emphasizing that Security Council Resolution 2401 must be respected.

Panos Moumtzis, the United Nations Regional Humanitarian Coordinator, called, in [a statement](#) released on March 4, 2018, for action to access civilians in the besieged areas in Syria and cease the bombardment on them and their objects.

The International Committee of the Red Cross [requested](#) an immediate access to Eastern Ghouta after Security Council Resolution 2401 was adopted. The Committee also called for a cessation of hostilities for a sufficient period of time wherein humanitarian convoys entering Eastern Ghouta could be guaranteed. On March 5, 2018, Syrian regime forces allowed



a 46-truck convoy of humanitarian aids to enter Douma city in Eastern Ghouta. The convoy has enough supplies for 27,500 people according to the Committee. However, the convoy was thoroughly inspected by Syrian regime forces and approximately three trucks were emptied of their contents of medical supplies. Bombardments never ceased even while the convoy, which had to leave before unloading of all its freights, was there.

A closed talks session is set to be held today, Wednesday, at the Security Council at the request of France and the UK to discuss the present situation in Syria. Indicators of a severe shortage of food and scarcity of medical supplies in Eastern Ghouta pointing towards an imminent humanitarian catastrophe have surfaced after 17 days of the vicious offensive during which civilians had to live in shelters that lack the most basic of life needs, including 10 days after a Security Council Resolution that was supposedly should aid them was adopted.

Fadel Abdul Ghany, chairman of SNHR, says:

“All of the states of the Security Council are aware that Russia was the one who doomed their Resolution, and that it is manipulating them based on a psychological unrest towards the west, and the people of Syria are paying the price for that. The Security Council needs to find a solution to stop the daily bloodbath as this is the Council’s responsibility and even if Russia was the one bearing the greatest political and moral iniquity, it remains everyone’s responsibility along with Russia.”

Report Methodology

The report documents the most notable violations by Syrian Regime/Russian forces in the opposition-held Eastern Ghouta in eastern Damascus suburbs governorate from when Security Council Resolution 2401 was adopted on February 24, 2018, until the evening of March 6, 2018. We have analyzed the pictures and videos we received and verified their authenticity using special software we have. We have also spoke to survivors from the attacks, victims’ relatives, or eyewitnesses to some of the incidents.

In the course of the ongoing monitoring for incidents and developments by SNHR team through a wide network including tens of various sources that have been built over an accumulation of extensive relations since the start of our work. When we receive information, or hear some news about a violation via the internet or media outlets, we work on following-up on this news and try to verify and collect evidences and data. In some cases, the researcher is able to visit the incident location at the soonest. However, this is a rarity in light of the incredibly high security risks, and given the frequency of daily incidents and in light of the



human and material resources at hand. Therefore, the possibility to access evidences vary from one case to another, and, hence, the degree of its classification. Usually, what we do, at SNHR, in such cases is relying on accounts from survivors who experience the violation firsthand, where we try to access those directly, and, to a second degree, who saw or filmed the violation, in addition to analyzing available materials from open sources such as the internet and media outlets. Thirdly, we try to speak to medical personnel who treated the wounded, assessed the symptoms, and determined the cause of death.

Please see the methodology adopted at SNHR for [documenting victims](#) and [classifying vital civilian facilities](#)

the investigations included in this report have proved that the targeted areas were civilian areas where no military centers or armories for armed opposition factions or extremist Islamic groups were found before or during the attack. Also, the aggressing forces didn't alert the civilians prior to the attacks as the international humanitarian law requires. SNHR has analyzed the videos and pictures that were posted online, or were sent to us by local activists via e-mail, Skype, or social media. Some of the videos published by activists show the location of the attacks, the dead bodies, the injured, and the huge destruction in the aftermath of the bombardment.

This report only represents the bare minimum, which we were able to document, of the magnitude and severity of the violation that occurred. It also doesn't cover the social, economic, mental, and demographic ramifications.

II. Executive Summary

This report outlines the most notable violations by Syrian regime/Russian forces from the evening of February 24, 2018, until the evening of March 6, 2018.

A. massacres and other acts of unlawful killing: we've recorded the killing of 329 civilians, including 57 children, 29 women (adult female), one doctor, and one civil defense member. Also, we have recorded no less than 12 massacres.

B. Attacks on vital civilian facilities: we've documented no less than seven attacks on vital civilian facilities, as follows: two mosques, two medical facilities, and three civil defense facilities and vehicles.

C. Prohibited weapons: we have documented one use of incendiary ammunitions by Syrian regime forces. Also, we have recorded that Syrian regime helicopters dropped no less than 81 barrel bombs.



Most notable violations of human rights in Eastern Ghouta at the hands of the Syrian-Russian alliance forces after Resolution 2401 was adopted From the evening of February 24, 2018 until the evening of March 6, 2018

Massacres and other acts of unlawful killing



including



No less than
12
massacres

Attacks on vital civilian facilities

7 attacks on vital civilian facilities

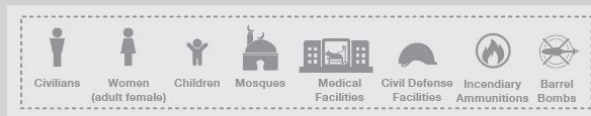


Prohibited weapons

Syrian regime forces



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As documented by SNHR

III. Details

A. Most notable massacres and other acts of unlawful killing

Hamouriya town – Sunday, February 25, 2018

Around 10:00, Syrian regime forces artillery fired a number of shells at the town, which resulted in the killing of one woman.

Saqba city – Sunday, February 25, 2018

Around 12:20, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in the city, which resulted in the killing of two civilians.



Douma city – Sunday, February 25, 2018

Syrian regime forces artillery fired a number of shells at the city, which resulted in the killing of three civilians (two children and their mother).

Otaya town - Sunday February 25, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at the town, which resulted in the killing of one child.

Al Shifouniya town - Sunday, February 25, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian Regime/Russian forces warplane (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at the town, which resulted in the killing of one female child.

Al Reihan town – Sunday, February 25, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime forces fired a number of missiles in a parallel with an artillery shelling by Syrian regime artillery in a number of areas in the town, which resulted in the killing of five civilians.

Hazza town – Sunday, February 25, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) warplanes fired a number of missiles in the town, which resulted in the killing of three civilians, including one woman.

Douma city – Monday, February 26, 2018

Monday dawn, fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) warplanes fired a number of missiles in the city, which resulted in the killing of 14 civilians, including five children and three women.

The area connecting Misraba and Beit Sawa towns – Monday, February 26, 2018

Monday evening, fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles in the area, which resulted in the killing of five civilians from one family, including two children and two women, while about 10 others were wounded.



Douma city – Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Syrian regime forces artillery fired a number of shells at the city, which resulted in the killing of two civilians, including one woman.

Jisreen town – Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Syrian regime forces artillery fired a number of shells at the town, which resulted in the killing of two civilians, including one child.

Kafr Batna town – Thursday, March 1, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at the town, which resulted in the killing of one female child and her mother.

Al Ash'ari town – Thursday, March 1, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at the town, which resulted in the killing of four civilians.

Al Mohammadiya town – Saturday, March 3, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of [missiles](#) at the town, which resulted in the killing of five civilians at once, including one female child.

Beit Sawa town – Saturday, March 3, 2018

Syrian regime forces helicopters dropped a number of barrel bombs on the town, which resulted in the killing of the female child Hala Naziir al Madani.

Hamouriya town – Saturday, March 3, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at the town, which resulted in the killing of one child and his mother.



Douma city, Sunday – March 4, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles in parallel with an artillery shelling by Syrian regime forces using shells and rocket launchers at the city, which resulted in the killing of 27 civilians, including 11 children and two women.

Hamouriya town – Monday afternoon, March 5, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at a residential neighborhood in the city, which resulted in the killing of eight civilians at once. It should be noted that the attacks by Syrian regime/Russian forces on that day resulted in the killing of 23 civilians.

Harasta city – Monday, March 5, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles in parallel with a shelling by Syrian regime forces rocket launchers on the residential neighborhoods in the city, which resulted in the killing of nine civilians as we have been able to document as of this writing.

Jisreen town – Monday, March 5, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at the town throughout the day, which resulted in the killing of 12 civilians, including five children and six women.

Kafr Batna town – Monday, March 5, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at the residential neighborhoods in the town, which resulted in the killing of 23 civilians, including one child.

Douma city – Monday, March 5, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at the residential neighborhoods in the city, which resulted in the killing of six civilians at once, including two women.

Jisreen town – Tuesday, March 6, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at the residential neighborhoods in the town, which resulted in the killing of five civilians at once. It should be noted that the same warplanes' airstrikes on that day resulted in the killing of nine civilians, including two children.



Ein Tarma town – Tuesday, March 6, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at the town, which resulted in the killing of two children.

Irbeen city – Tuesday, March 6, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at the city, which resulted in the killing of three civilians, including an infant female and her mother.

B. attacks on vital civilian facilities

Saqba city – Sunday, February 25, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at [al Zahraa Maternity](#) and Women's Hospital, which is supported by the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS). The center building and its equipment were [heavily damaged](#), as the hospital was rendered out of commission.

Douma city – Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Syrian regime forces rocket launchers targeted [Um Habiba Mosque](#) in the city. The mosque building was partially destroyed and its furniture was heavily damaged.

Kafr Batna town – Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles at the Tuberculous Hospital in the town. The hospital building was moderately damaged.

Otaya town – Wednesday, February 28, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired [a number of missiles](#) at the civil defense's center 114 in the town. One of the civil defense personnel, Mahmoud al Kilani, was killed. Additionally, the center building and [an ambulance belonging to the center](#) were heavily damaged.



Douma city – Thursday, March 1, 2018

Around 08:55, fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being investigated to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired [a number of missiles](#) at [al Sleiq Mosque](#) in the [middle](#) of the town. [The mosque building](#), its furniture, and cladding materials were heavily damaged.

Saqba city – Monday, March 5, 2018

Fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (the incident is still being [investigated](#) to accurately identify the perpetrator party) fired a number of [missiles](#) near an ambulance belonging to the civil defense's center 400 in the city. Two civil defense members were injured, while the ambulance was [heavily damaged](#) and rendered out of commission.

C. Use of incendiary ammunitions

Misraba town – Friday, March 2, 2018

Around 22:45, Syrian regime forces [rocket launchers](#) used incendiary [ammunitions](#) to target the center of the town. The shelling caused fired in a number of houses

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

1- Syrian-Iranian alliance forces have, beyond any doubt, violated Security Council resolution 2401, which states that hostilities should be ceased, as well as resolutions 2139 and 2254 that preceded, as both resolutions state that indiscriminate attacks must be ceased. Also, these forces have violated Articles 7 and 8 of Rome Statute through the crime of willful killing which constitutes war crimes.

2- The bombardment has caused collateral damages that involved casualties, injuries, or significant damages to civilian objects. There are strong indicators that suggest that the damage was too excessive in relation to the anticipated military benefit.

Recommendations

Security Council

- The Security Council has to take additional steps after resolution 2401 was adopted, which explicitly provides for the cease of hostilities and facilitating the passage of humanitarian aids into besieged areas.
- The Syrian case should be referred to the International Criminal Court and all those who are responsible for crimes should be held accountable including the Russian regime whose involvement in war crimes has been proven.



- Instill security and peace in Syria and implement the norm of the Responsibility to Protect in order to protect the lives, culture, and history of the Syrian people from being destroyed, looted, and ruined.
- Expand the sanctions to include the Syrian, Russian, and Iranian regimes who are directly involved in committing crimes against humanity and war crimes against the Syrian people.

International Community

- In light of the split of the Security Council and its utter inability, steps should be taken on the national and regional levels to form alliances to support the Syrian people that would protect them from the daily killing and siege and enhance the support for the relief efforts. Additionally, the principle of universal jurisdiction must be activated in local courts regarding these crimes in order to conduct fair trials for all those who were involved.
- SNHR has repeatedly called for the implementation of the “Responsibility to Protect” in tens of studies and reports and as a member of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP) after all political channels through the Arab League’s plan and then Mr. Kofi Annan’s plan have been consumed, as well as the Cessation of Hostilities statements and Astana agreements that followed. Therefore, steps under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations should be taken and the norm of the “Responsibility to Protect”, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly, should be implemented. The Security Council is still hindering the protection of civilians in Syria.
- Renew the pressure on the Security Council to refer the case in Syria to the International Criminal Court
- Work on fulfilling justice and achieving accountability in Syria through the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council and work on activating the principle of the universal jurisdiction.
- Supply makeshift hospitals with the necessary medical equipment, especially prothesis in light of the rapid increase in amputation cases among the wounded in Syria. 2,400 various artificial limbs should be secured in all of the areas of Eastern Ghouta as soon as possible.

OHCHR

The OHCHR should submit a report to the Human Rights Council and other organs of the United Nations on the incidents mentioned in this report.



United Nations special envoy to Syria

- Expand Security Council briefings rather than only limiting them to the violations of al Nusra Front and ISIS
- Condemn the perpetrators of the crimes, the massacres, and those who were primarily responsible for breaching Security Council resolutions.

The Russian regime

- Adhere to the truce it announced and apply pressure on the Syrian regime and its Iranian militias to allow the sick and the humanitarian cases to exit first.
- Ensure the safety of the civilians who want to exit without any arrests or enforced-disappearances.
- Stop shielding the Syrian regime at the Security Council and using veto to prevent the passing of any international resolution that punishes the Syrian regime.
- Apply pressure on the Syrian regime to allow unconditional passage for humanitarian aids into Eastern Ghouta.

Acknowledgment and Condolences

Our most heartfelt gratitude and condolences to all the residents and local activists who contributed effectively to this report.





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