

Statement

Following Khan Sheikhoun, the Syrian Regime Carries Out yet another Chemical Attack

The Syrian Regime Must be
Stopped from Perpetrating
any more Massacres with any
kinds of Weapons

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

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The Syrian Network for Human Rights, founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, non-profit independent organization that is a primary source for the United Nations on all death toll-related statistics in Syria



No more than 72 hours have passed since the chemical attack that the Syrian regime warplanes carried out in Khan Sheikhoun city in Idlib governorate, and the Syrian regime is challenging the international community again, using chemical weapons in an attack on al Qaboun neighborhood in the capital Damascus.

SNHR recorded that on Friday, April 7, 2017, approximately at 16:00, Syrian regime forces used two hand grenades loaded with a poison gas on the eastern battlefield of al Qaboun neighborhood, which caused two armed opposition fighters to exhibit symptoms such as suffocation, breathing difficulties, and severe coughing.

We talked to one of the armed opposition fighters, called “Khalil”, who was injured in the bombing and said that the scent of the used gas is similar to that of chlorine’s, as he suffered from bronchial damage, severe coughing, and breathing difficulties. He was treated using an oxygen mask and bronchodilators. Khalil’s account consisted with the pictures and videos we received, and have copies of.

This attack comes after the U.S.’s military strike on al Shayrat military airbase, which reportedly was the airbase from which the Syrian warplanes took off to carry out the chemical attack on Khan Sheikhoun city. This is a clear message that the Syrian regime will continue using chemical weapons even on a smaller scale that will not draw attention. Furthermore, the Syrian regime, along with his Russian ally, is still carrying out more bombardment operations using barrel bombs and missiles, as the killings haven’t stopped since the Khan Sheikhoun attack. We are working on a report outlining the most notable violations and the civilian death toll that will be published soon. Apparently, the American airstrike wasn’t compelling enough for the Syrian regime to change its behavior. We even have information about warplanes taking off from Shayrat airbase after it was bombed following the Russian leadership’s commands for the Syrian regime to evacuate the airbase before the American strike.



By adding this new attack to SNHR's record in the archive of chemical attacks which we have been updating since 2012 through [periodic reports](#), we have no less than 168 chemical attacks by the Syrian regime after Security Council Resolution 2118 -adopted on September 27, 2013- including 99 attacks after Security Council Resolution 2209 -adopted on March 6, 2015- and 43 attacks after Security Council Resolution 2235 -adopted on August 7, 2015- which established the Joint Investigative Mechanism. These attacks resulted in the killing of 208 individuals divided into:

- 155 civilians, including 65 children and 29 women (Adult female).
- 46 armed opposition fighters.
- Seven captives from Syrian regime forces who were being kept at an armed opposition prison.

Additionally, 2409 individuals at least were injured.

The Syrian regime didn't use the nerve agent in al Qaboun neighborhood that was highly likely used in the Khan Sheikhoun attack. However, the regime definitely used a poisonous chemical substance that we couldn't identify, as it is impossible to access the site and take samples. Instead, we relied on symptoms, testimonies, and analyzing the pictures and videos. This constitutes a violation to all the Security Council Resolutions and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

The Syrian regime won't be stopped from perpetrating more violations that amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide unless by applying serious pressure towards accomplishing a political transition that leads Syria to democracy, and respecting freedoms and human rights. The Syrian regime unequivocally refuses any form of a fair political solution.

Russia and China have exercised their veto powers seven times during the Syrian crisis in favor of the Syrian regime, which led to a complete failure on the Security Council's part to protect the law and the international system. In addition, any efforts to form a general consensus at the United Nations General Assembly have been fruitless, because dictatorships always support each other. A serious question must be raised by the legal experts, especially the supporters of the Responsibility to Protect norm, about the next step in such cases, because the Syrian regime, over the course of seven years, believes that he has a green light that allows him to do boundless crimes, and will continue to do so undoubtedly.





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