

No less than 34 Massacres in May 2017

International Coalition Forces Have
Perpetrated more Massacres than
any other Party

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Tuesday, June 6, 2017

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



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I. Executive Summary

The fourth round of negotiations was held in Astana city, Kazakhstan's capital, on 3 and 4 of May 2017. Russian, Turkish, and Iranian representatives attended as the sponsoring states of Ankara Ceasefire Agreement. The three states agreed on establishing four de-escalation zones, wherein the agreement is to commence on May 6, 2017. The agreement outlined four major de-escalation areas – Idlib governorate and the surrounding areas (parts of Aleppo, Hama, and Latakia governorates), northern Homs governorate, Eastern Ghouta, and parts of Daraa and al Quneitra governorates in the southern parts of Syria. It was provided that an expert committee would accurately assign the borders of said zones at a later date. The agreement provided for a cessation of combat operations, passage of humanitarian aids, and for IDPs to go back to their areas. Since the agreement went into effect, these areas saw a relatively noticeable and good decrease in killing rates compared with the previous months since March 2011.

Nonetheless, breaches didn't stop, mainly by the Syrian regime, who is seemingly the party that would be most affected should the ceasefire go on, and in particular extrajudicial killing crimes and, more horrendously, deaths due to torture. This strongly asserts that there is a ceasefire of some sort on the table, but the crimes that the international community -especially the Russian, Turkish, and Iranian sponsors- won't see are still going on as nothing has changed.



We didn't record any drop in the number of massacres by Syrian regime forces across Syria in this month compared to what have been recorded since last February. On the other hand, international coalition forces continue their ruthless campaign, committing massacres in the eastern governorates for the third month in a row, and even more aggressively than the past two months.

SNHR documented no less than 34 massacres in May 2017, which were distributed as follows:

- A. Syrian regime forces (Army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias): 9
- B. Russian Forces: 1
- C. Extremist Islamic groups:
 - ISIS (self-proclaimed the Islamic State): 5
- D. Self-Management Forces (consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party – a branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party): 2
- E. International coalition forces: 14
- F. Other parties: 3

SNHR describes an incident as a massacre if it involves the killing of five peaceful individuals at the same time. For more information about our [methodology](#) in documenting victims, please see the Following URL

Massacres perpetrated by Syrian regime forces during the month of May 2017 were distributed by areas of control as follows:

- Two massacres in areas under the control of armed opposition factions.
- Seven massacre in areas under the control of ISIS

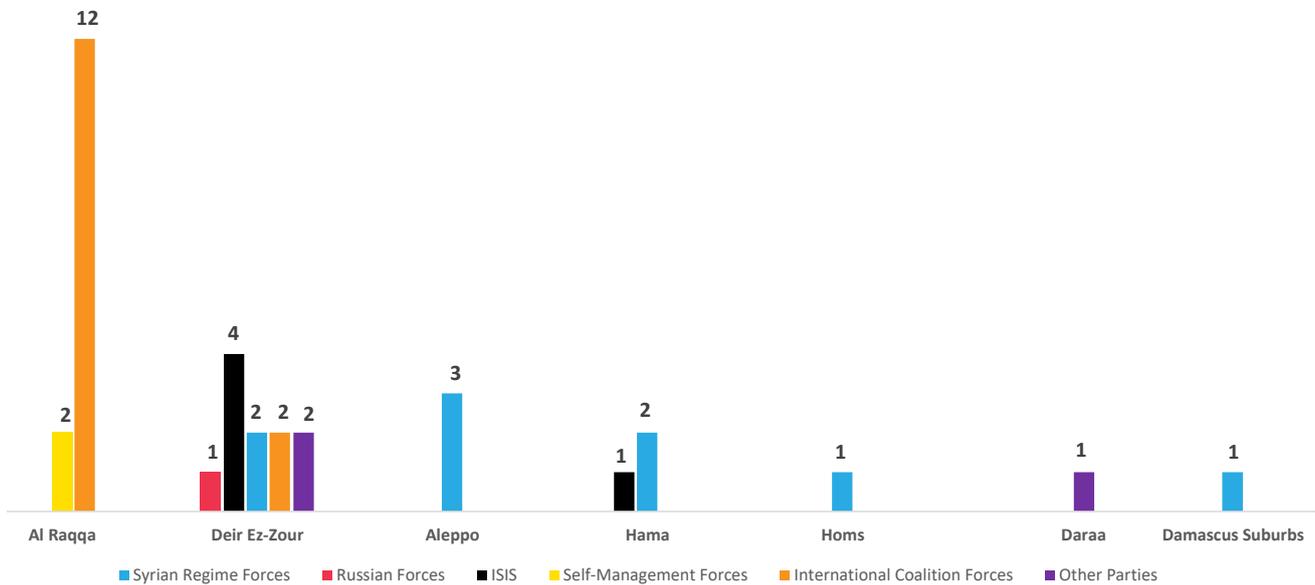
Massacres were distributed across Syrian governorates as follows:

Al Raqqa: 14, Deir Ez-Zour: 11, Aleppo: 3, Hama: 3, Homs: 1, Daraa: 1, Damascus suburbs: 1



The following table shows the distribution of massacres by the perpetrator party

Distribution of Massacres by the Perpetrator Party in May 2017



According to SNHR’s victim documentation team, 404 individuals were killed in these massacres including 143 children and 90 women (adult female) which suggests that 58% of the victims were women and children. This considerably high percentage is an indication that civilians were targeted in most of these massacres.

The death toll of these massacres is distributed by the perpetrator as follows:

Syrian regime forces: 85 individuals, including 36 children and 25 women.

Russian forces: five civilians, including two women.

ISIS: 99 civilians, including 25 children and 15 women.

Self-Management Forces: 21 civilians, including six children and five women

International coalition forces: 146 civilians, including 52 children and 36 women

Other parties: 48 civilians, including 24 children and seven women.



II. Details

A. Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias)

Hama governorate

Tuesday, May 2, 2017, Syrian regime helicopters dropped a number of [barrel bombs](#) on al [Latamna town](#) in northwestern suburbs of Hama governorate, which resulted in the killing of seven civilians (five children and their parents). The town is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Tuesday, May 16, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes of the Syrian-Russian alliance (investigations are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party accurately) fired missiles at Hamada Omar village in eastern suburbs of Hama governorate, which resulted in the killing of 10 civilians, mostly from the same family, including three children and four women. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Aleppo governorate

Sunday, May 7, 2017, around 04:00 AM, fixed-wing warplanes of the Syrian-Russian alliance (investigations are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party accurately) fired missiles at al Knawyya village in eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, which resulted in the killing of 11 civilians, including seven children and two women. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Tuesday, May 9, 2017, around 21:00 PM, fixed-wing warplanes of the Syrian-Russian alliance (investigations are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party accurately) fired a number of missiles at [Rasm al Faleh village](#), which follows Maskna county, in eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, which resulted in the killing of nine civilians, including two children and five women. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Wednesday, May 10, 2017, Syrian regime helicopters dropped a number of barrel bombs on Smouma village, which follows Maskana county, in eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, which resulted in the killing of 14 civilians, including 10 children and two women. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



Homs governorate

Tuesday, May 9, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes of the Syrian-Russian alliance (investigations are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party accurately) fired a number of missiles at al Latoum village, located to the northwest of al Sekhna city in eastern suburbs of Homs governorate, which resulted in the killing of five women from the same family. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Monday, May 22, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at al Aradi neighborhood in eastern Deir Ez-Zour city, which resulted in the killing of eight civilians, mostly from the same family, including three children and one woman. The neighborhood was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Wednesday, May 24, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at al Mayadin city in eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of 16 civilians, including six children and five women. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Damascus suburbs governorate

Monday, May 1, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes of the Syrian-Russian alliance (investigations are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party accurately) fired a number of missiles at Saqba city in eastern Damascus suburbs governorate which resulted in the killing of five individuals at once. Additionally, about 20 others were wounded. The city is under the control of armed opposition factions.

B. Russian forces

Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Tuesday, May 9, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired a number of missiles at al Aradi neighborhood in eastern Deir Ez-Zour city, which resulted in the killing of five civilians at once, including two women. The neighborhood is under the control of ISIS.



C. Extremist Islamic groups

- ISIS

Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Sunday, May 14, 2017, ISIS artillery fired a number of shells at al Qosour neighborhood in northwestern Deir Ez-Zour city, which resulted in the killing of seven civilians at once, including three women. Additionally, about 10 others were wounded. Al Qosour neighborhood was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.

Thursday, May 18, 2017, ISIS artillery fired a number of shells at a wedding in Harabesh neighborhood in eastern Deir Ez-Zour city, which resulted in the killing of 15 civilians, including five children and five women. The neighborhood was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.

Friday, May 19, 2017, a group of ISIS fighters sneaked into [Jazrat al Boshams village](#) in western suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, and shot 19 civilians dead, including two children and two women. The village was under the control of the Kurdish-Majority Syrian Democratic Forces at the time of the incident.

Monday, May 29, 2017, ISIS artillery fired a number of shells at al Wadi street in al Joura neighborhood in northwestern Deir Ez-Zour city, which resulted in the killing of 13 civilians, including three children and one woman. Additionally, about 50 others were wounded. Al Joura neighborhood was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.

Hama governorate

Thursday morning, May 18, 2017, a group of ISIS fighters sneaked into Aqareb al Safiya village, located to the east of al Salamiya city in eastern suburbs of Hama, and slaughtered city residents using knives and randomly opened fire, killing 45 civilians including 15 children and four women. Aqareb al Safiya village was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.



D. Self-Management forces (primarily consisting of the Democratic Union Party – a branch for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party)

Raqqa governorate

Friday, May 12, 2017, Kurdish-majority Syrian Democratic Forces artillery fired a number of shells at Mazra'at Ya'rub village, which follows al Mansoura county in western suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians at once, including one woman. Additionally, about 10 others were wounded. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Saturday, May 13, 2017, Kurdish-majority Syrian Democratic Forces fired a number of shells at Mazra'at al Asdiya village, which follows al Mansoura county, in western suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of 16 civilians, mostly from the same family, including six children and four women. Additionally, about 10 others were wounded. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

E. International coalition forces

Raqqa governorate

Wednesday, May 3, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired missiles at a house in Palestine street in al Tabaqa city, western suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of 18 civilians, mostly from the same family (IDPs from Harbnoush village in Idlib governorate), which resulted in the killing of 11 children and three women. It should be noted that the city was a ground for clashes between Syrian Democratic Forces and ISIS, before the former managed to take over the city.

Tuesday, May 9, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at a house in [al Salihya village](#) in northern suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of 12 civilians, including four children and four women. Additionally, about 12 others were wounded. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.





Two children's dead bodies in the aftermath of a massacre perpetrated by international coalition forces in al Salihiya village, Raqqa – May 9, 2017

Tuesday, May 9, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at the 3rd neighborhood in al Tabaqa city, western suburbs of al Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of eight civilians, mostly from the same family, including four children and two women. The neighborhood, in al Tabaqa city, was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Wednesday, May 10, 2017, around 20:00, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at Be'r al Hashem village in northern suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of 13 civilians from the same family, including six children and six women. It is worth nothing that the victims are from al Mshallab neighborhood in al Raqqa city. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Thursday, May 11, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at Ma'mal al Ghaz area in northern Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of five civilians from two families, including one woman. Raqqa city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



Friday, May 12, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at [Shnina village](#) in northern suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of [seven children](#) at once. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



Some of the victims' dead bodies in the aftermath of a massacre perpetrated by international coalition forces in Shnina village, Raqqa – May 12, 2017

Sunday, May 14, 2017, international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at a gathering for IDPs tents on al Aqtan road between al Marouda and Shnina village in northern suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians from the same family, including three children and one woman. Additionally, about five others were wounded. The area was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Sunday, May 14, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at a car transporting some women who work on harvesting the crops “a harvest party” in al Ekershi village, eastern suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of 12 civilians, including 11 women. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



Sunday, May 21, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at [Kderan village](#) in western suburbs of [Raqqqa governorate](#), which resulted in the killing of 17 civilians, including five children. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



Some of the victims' dead bodies in the aftermath of a massacre perpetrated by ISIS in Kderan village, Raqqqa – May 21, 2017

Tuesday, May 23, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at al Barouda village in western suburbs of Raqqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of 16 civilians, mostly from the same family, including six children and six women. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Saturday, May 27, 2017, international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in the middle of Raqqqa city, which resulted in the killing of six civilians from the same family (IDPs from Deir Ez-Zour city), including one child and two women. Raqqqa city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.



Monday, May 29, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at a car near the Gas Factory in northern Raqqa city, which resulted in the killing of eight civilians, mostly from the same family, including one child. Raqqa city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Wednesday, May 10, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at al Sour town, northern suburbs of Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of 14 civilians, including four children. The town was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Friday, May 12, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at Badiyat al Qouriya city, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians at once. The area was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

F. Other parties

Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Wednesday, May 10, 2017, two weapon warehouses for ISIS exploded in al Mayadin city, eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians at once, including one woman and one female child. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Monday, May 15, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes fired a number of missiles at al Bokamal city in eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of 35 civilians -at the time of this writing- including 15 children and six women. As of this writing, we haven't been able to identify the party who was responsible for the bombardment. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

Daraa governorate

Thursday, May 18, 2017, a number of rocket shells fell on al Umaoyeen park in [al Kashef neighborhood](#) in Daraa al Mahata area, northern Daraa city, which resulted in the killing of eight children. As of this writing, we haven't been able to identify the party who is responsible for the shelling. The neighborhood was under the control of Syrian regime forces at the time of the incident.



III. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Syrian regime forces and Russian forces

1. SNHR can confirm the bombing cases, deliberate or indiscriminate, targeted armless civilians, thus, the Syrian-Russian alliance forces have violated the rules of the international human rights law which guarantee the right to life. Furthermore, these violations were perpetrated during a non-international armed conflict which amounts to war crimes as all elements of a war crime have been fulfilled.
2. SNHR believes that the acts of killing that took place during these massacres can be classified as crimes against humanity.
3. These attacks, especially bombardment, have resulted in collateral damages that involved casualties, injuries, and damages to civil facilities. There are strong indicators that compel to believe that the damage was deeply severe compared to the anticipated military benefit. In all of the cases, we couldn't confirm that there were any military targets before or during these attacks.
4. The magnitude of the massacres, its frequent pattern, the exaggerated use of strength, its military nature, the indiscriminate manner of the bombing, and the coordinated approach of these attacks must be based on high orders, and a state policy.

Other forces

According to this report, international coalition forces, ISIS, Self-Management forces and other parties (includes groups that we weren't able to identify in addition to Turkish, Lebanese, and Jordanian forces) have committed massacres that constitute war crimes. However, these crimes are not crimes against humanity as with the case of Syrian regime forces and their pro-regime forces that are committing massacres in a widespread and systematic manner.

Recommendations

The United Nations and the Security Council

1. Refer the case in Syria to the International Criminal Court and stop the disrupting of the decisions that must be adopted by the Security Council against the Syrian government. This disruption is a wrong message to all dictatorships around the world and supports the culture of crime.
2. Impose urgent punishments on those who are involved in widespread violations of human rights in Syria.
3. Bind the Syrian government to allow all relief and human rights organizations to enter Syria as well as the International Intendent Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic and journalists and let them work without any obstructions.

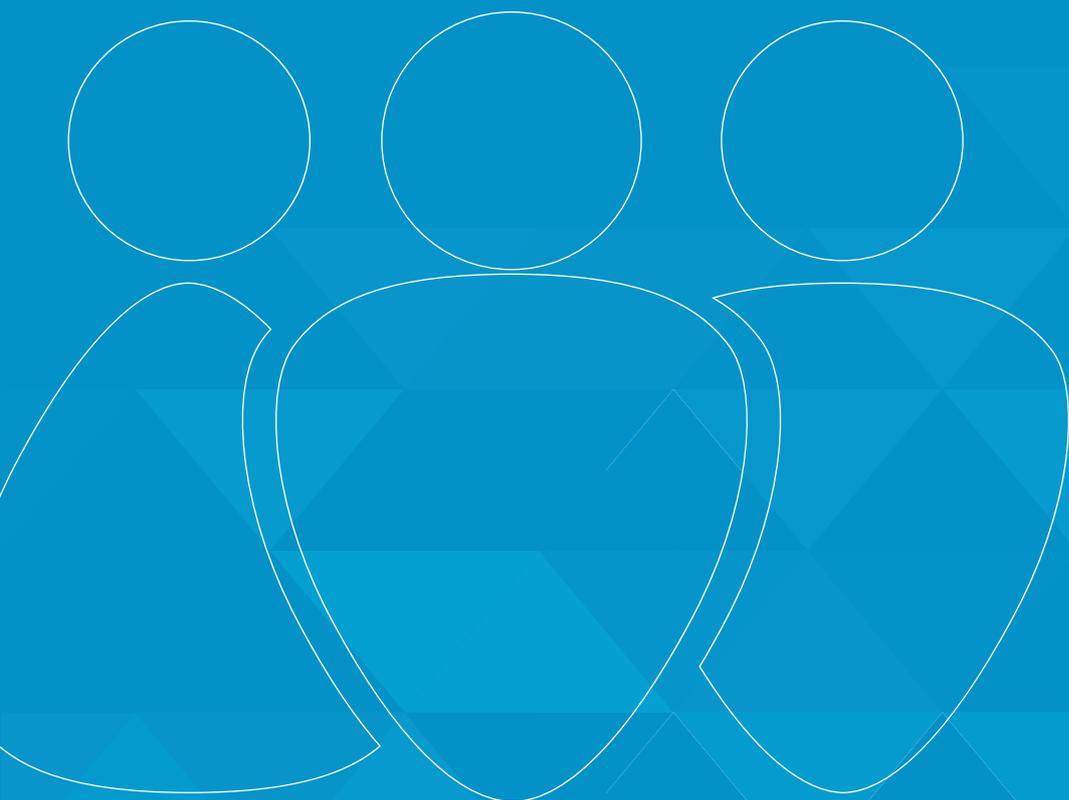


4. Insure that all weapon imports to the Syrian government, who is using weapons in wide-spread attacks against civilians, are halted.
5. the Security Council must shoulder its responsibility in preserving security and civil peace in Syria considering that the violations of the Syrian government entail a gross threat to the international peace and security.
6. List the militias that are fighting with the Syrian government and have committed wide-spread massacres, like Iranian militias, the Lebanese group Hezbollah, other Shiite brigades, National defense Army and “Shabiha” militias, on the international list of terrorist organizations.
7. Implement the “Responsibility to Protect” norm, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, in Syria as it is direly needed there.
8. With the crimes against humanity committed by the Syrian government, the international community should stop dealing with this government as an “official side” concerning the relief issues, and stop supplying the Syrian government with most of the financial and humanitarian aids that, in most cases, are not being delivered to those who are in need and go instead to the people and parties that support the Syrian government.

Acknowledgment and Condolences

Our thanks and appreciations go to the victims’ families, eyewitnesses, and local activists whose accounts contributed majorly to this report. Our most profound consolations go out to the victims’ families and friends.





@snhr



Info@sn4hr.org

www.sn4hr.org

