

No less than 35 Massacres in April 2017

Including 21 Massacres at the
hands of the Syrian-Russian Alliance

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Saturday, May 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

SNHR documented no less than 35 massacres in April 2017, which were distributed as follows:

- A. Syrian regime forces (Army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias): 11
- B. Russian Forces: 10
- C. Extremist Islamic groups:
 - ISIS (self-proclaimed the Islamic State): 1
- D. Self-Management Forces (consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party – a branch for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party): 1
- E. International coalition forces: 9
- 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 April 2017 were distributed by areas of control as follows:

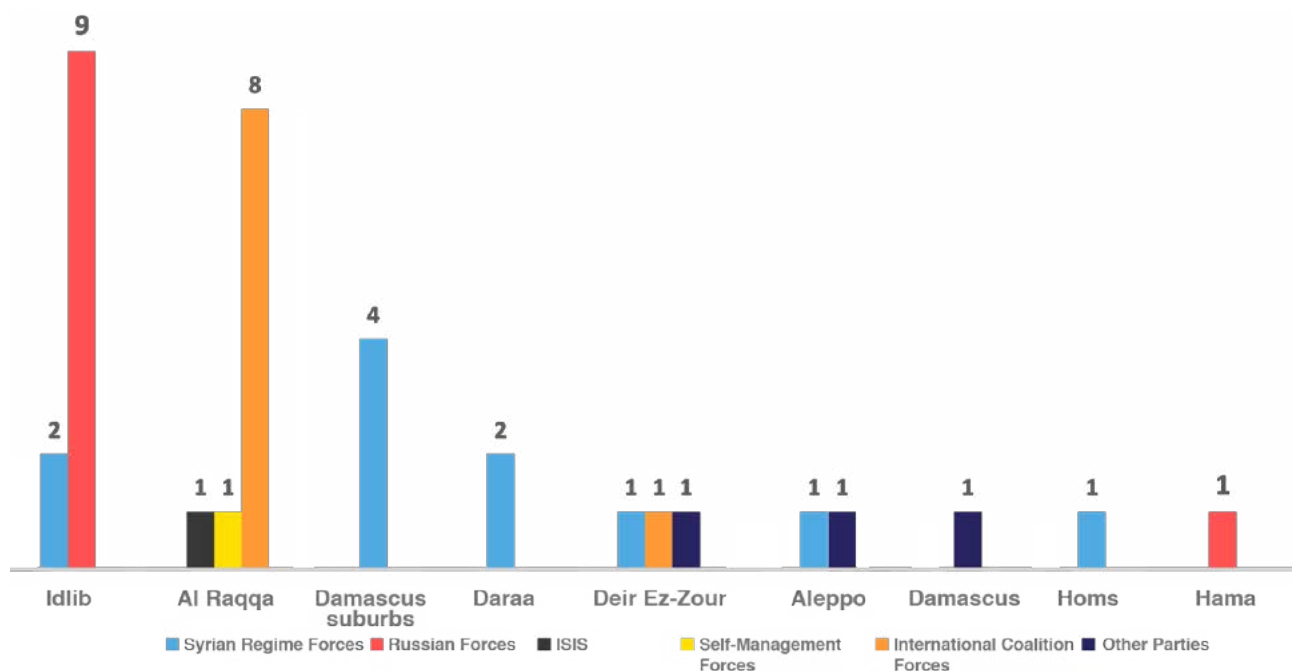
- Eight massacres in areas under the control of armed opposition factions.
- Two massacres in areas under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front
- One massacre in areas under the control of ISIS

Massacres were distributed across Syrian governorates as follows:

Idlib: 11, al Raqqa: 10, Damascus suburbs: 4, Deir Ez-Zour: 3, Daraa: 2, Aleppo: 2, Damascus: 1, Homs: 1, Hama: 1

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

Distribution of Massacres by the Perpetrator Party in April 2017



According to SNHR’s victim documentation team, 450 individuals were killed in these massacres including 160 children and 77 women (adult female) which suggests that 53% 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: 184 individuals, including 64 children and 38 women.

Russian forces: 103 individuals, including 48 children and 17 women.

ISIS: 10 civilians, including four children and two women.

Self-Management Forces: six civilians, including four children.

International coalition forces: 72 individuals, including 26 children and 17 women

Other parties: 75 individuals, including 14 children and three women.

II. Details

A. Syrian regime forces

Damascus suburbs governorate

Monday, April 3, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles simultaneously with an artillery shelling in [Douma city](#) -in [Eastern Ghouta](#)- in eastern Damascus suburbs governorate, which resulted in [the killing](#) of 22 individuals including two children and two women. [Additionally](#), 50 others were wounded. The city is under the control of armed opposition factions.



Some of the victims' dead bodies after a massacre by Syrian regime forces in Douma city, Damascus suburbs – April 4, 2017.



Tuesday morning, April 4, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at the urban market in the main square in Saqba city in eastern Damascus suburbs governorate, which resulted in the killing of 11 civilians, most of whom were from the same family (five children and six women). The city is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Tuesday evening, April 4, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles in Ma'sarat al Zeit neighborhood in Saqba al Balad area in Saqba city, eastern Damascus suburbs governorate, which resulted in the killing of eight individuals at once including two children and two women. The city is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Tuesday evening, April 4, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at Hamouriya town -in Eastern Ghouta- in eastern Damascus suburbs governorate, which resulted in the killing of eight individuals at once, including four children. Additionally, about 15 others were wounded. The town is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Daraa governorate

Thursday, April 6, 2017, the fixed-wing of the Syrian-Russian alliance (Investigation are still ongoing to accurately determine the perpetrator party) fired a number of missiles in al May-sari area in Tareaq al Sad neighborhood in [eastern Daraa city](#), which resulted in the killing of [six civilian](#), from the same family, including two children, one fetus, and two women. The neighborhood is under the control of armed opposition factions.



Two dead children who were killed in a massacre perpetrated by the Syrian-Russian alliance forces in Tareaq al Sad neighborhood, Daraa – April 6, 2017



Sunday, April 30, 2017, around 11:00, two Syrian regime helicopters dropped [eight barrel bombs](#) on two under-construction buildings, which were populated by IDPs, in al Shayyah area in southern [Daraa city](#), which resulted in the killing of 12 civilians, including five children and three women. [Al Shayyah area](#) is under the control of armed opposition factions. SNHR contacted Hasan al Farouq, head of the civil defense's center 14, via WhatsApp, and he provided us with his account:

“On the morning of Sunday, April 30, around 11:00, two [Syrian regime](#) helicopters dropped eight barrel bombs simultaneously on al Shayyah area, which is a plain area located in southern Daraa city. Four of the eight barrel bombs were dropped on residencies that were being constructed, and the four other barrel bombs fell in the vicinities of these residences which were populated by IDPs from Daraa city who fled the city due to the intensified bombardment by the Syrian-Russian alliance in the city, and the ongoing battles between the regime and the rebels in al Manshiya neighborhood.”

“I headed immediately to the area along with the civil [defense teams](#). The scene was painful to watch, as there were dead bodies everywhere, and some scattered body parts, and the residencies were heavily destroyed. We pulled out 12 victims – five children, three women, and four men. Also, a number of the wounded were taken to the hospitals, as some of the cases were critical.”

“I would like to point out that the Syrian regime forces used artillery and rocket launchers to shell the agricultural lands in the vicinity of the residencies after a number of civilians took shelter there following the barrel bomb bombardment. This resulted in some injuries. The targeted area is a civilian area, with no military presence for the rebels. There are only the IDPs from Daraa city.”



Dead bodies in the aftermath of a massacre perpetrated by Syrian regime forces in al Shayyah area, Daraa with barrel bombs – April 30, 2017



Idlib governorate

Tuesday, April 4, 2017, around 06:30, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes (Su-22) fired a missile carrying [a poison gas](#) in al Shamali neighborhood in [Khan Sheikhoun city](#) in the southern suburbs of [Idlib governorate](#), which was followed with [three explosive missiles](#) that fell in the vicinity of the first missile. [The airstrikes](#) resulted in the killing of 91 individuals, including [32 children](#) and 23 women who suffocated to death. [Additionally](#), 540 others exhibited suffocation symptoms. The city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.



Dead children who were killed in the massacre perpetrated by Syrian regime forces in al Shamali neighborhood in Khan Sheikhoun city, Idlib using poison gases – April 4, 2017





Dead bodies in the aftermath of a massacre perpetrated by Syrian regime forces in al Shamali neighborhood in Khan Sheikhoun city, Idlib using poison gases – April 4, 2017

Monday, April 24, 2017, around 13:00, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired missiles at the urban market in the middle of [Khan Sheikhoun city](#) in the southern suburbs of [Idlib governorate](#), which resulted in the killing of nine civilians, including two children. The city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

Aleppo governorate

Tuesday, April 18, 2017, around 00:30, the fixed-wing warplanes of the Syrian-Russian alliance (Investigation are still ongoing to accurately determine the perpetrator party) fired a missile at Urm al Kubra village in the western suburbs of [Aleppo governorate](#), which resulted in the killing of five civilians from the same family, including three children. Additionally, two children were wounded. The village is under the control of armed opposition factions.

Homs governorate

Tuesday, April 25, 2017, around 23:30, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at residential houses in the middle of Talbisa city in the northern suburbs of Homs governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians, including four children siblings. The city is under the control of armed opposition factions.





Some of the victims' dead bodies after a massacre perpetrated by Syrian regime forces in Talbisa city, Homs – April 25, 2017

Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Monday, April 17, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at the Faculty of Agriculture -ISIS used it as a base in the past- in al Husainiya village in the western suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour, as some workers were disassembling and sorting its contents, which resulted in the killing of seven civilians at once, including two children. The village is under the control of ISIS.

B. Russian forces

Idlib governorate

Tuesday, April 4, 2017, around 14:15, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired a missile at [al Sena'a neighborhood](#) in eastern Jesr al Shoghour city in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate, which resulted in the killing of eight civilians including one child. The city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.



Tuesday, April 4, 2017, around 14:00, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired a missile at al Rawda Mosque in the middle of Salqin city in the western suburbs of [Idlib](#) governorate. Next to the mosque, there is a building for the Endowment Administration which houses IDPs. The missile fell between the two buildings, which resulted in the killing of 33 civilians including 19 children and eight women. The city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.



Some of the victims' dead bodies after a massacre perpetrated by Russian forces near al Rawda Mosque in Salqin city, Idlib – April 4, 2017

Friday, April 7, 2017, around 04:20, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired a missile at a residential building in al Shamali neighborhood in Hish town in the southern suburbs of [Idlib governorate](#), which resulted in the killing of five civilians (three children and two women) who were mostly from the same family -IDPs from Helfaya city in the northern suburbs of Hama- and injured seven others. It should be noted that the same warplanes fired a missile a few minutes earlier at a different residential building that is 100 meters away from the massacre site, which resulted in the killing of four civilians, including one child and one woman, and wounded four others. The village is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.



Saturday, April 8, 2017, around 18:30, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired two missiles at the residential houses in Ain Urm area on the western outskirts of [Urm al Jouz town](#) in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, which resulted in the killing of 17 civilians, including six children and one woman. Additionally, about 20 others were wounded. The area is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

Friday, April 14, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired two missiles at the residential houses in al Sukkariya village in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians from the same family, including two children and two women. The village is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

Tuesday, April 18, 2017, around 03:30, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired a missile in the middle of Ma'aret Harma in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians from the same family (four children and one woman). It is worth noting that the same family were massacred by the same warplanes 30 meters away from this massacre site about 90 minutes earlier. The village is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

Tuesday, April 25, 2017, around 23:50, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired two missiles at the [residential houses](#) in the middle of Bsanqoul village in the western suburbs of Idlib, which resulted in the killing of 10 civilians who were from the same family, including five children and two women. The village is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

Thursday, April 27, 2017, around 08:40, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired two missiles near al Janubi neighborhood cemetery from Ma'ar Shoreen in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, as the residents were at a funeral for victims who were killed in a bombardment on the "Syrian University" Hospital by the same warplanes in al Der al Sharqi village in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The bombardment (in Ma'ar Shoreen village) resulted in the killing of seven civilians who were mostly from the same family, including three children and one woman. Additionally, 10 others were wounded. The village is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.



Hama governorate

Saturday, April 29, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired missiles at center 107 which is affiliated to the civil [defense center](#) in [Kafr Zita city](#) in the northern suburbs of [Hama governorate](#), which resulted in the killing of eight civil defense personnel. The city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh al Sham Front.

C. Extremist Islamic groups

- [ISIS](#)

Al Raqqa governorate

Wednesday, April 12, 2017, a number of landmines implanted by ISIS exploded on al Raqqa-al Sahlabiya road in the western suburbs of al Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of 10 civilians -from al Jheishat tribe- including four children and two women. The road is under the control of ISIS.

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

Al Raqqa governorate

Wednesday, April 12, 2017, the Kurdish-majority Syrian Democratic Forces artillery fired a number of shells at Hzaima village in the northern suburbs of al Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of six civilians from the same family, including four children. The town is under the control of ISIS.

E. International coalition forces

Al Raqqa governorate

Friday, April 7, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at Hamrat Ghannam village in the eastern suburbs of al Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians from the same family, including two women. The village is under the control of ISIS.

Friday, April 7, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at an internet café in Hnayda village in the western suburbs of al Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of 11 civilians, including three children and one woman. The village is under the control of ISIS.



Friday, April 21, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at al Hal Market in the middle of al Tabaqa city in the western suburbs of al Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of five civilians (three children and their parents). The city is under the control of ISIS.

Monday, April 24, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at a car in al Tabaqa city in the western suburbs of al Raqqa governorate, where a number of civilians trying to flee the city were inside the car. The bombardment resulted in the killing of 11 civilians (seven children and four women) who were mostly from the same family. The city is under the control of ISIS. It should be noted that the same warplanes bombed two cars transporting IDPs in the city on the same day, which resulted in two massacres on that day.

Monday, April 24, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at a car used by civilians in al Tabaqa city in the western suburbs of al Raqqa governorate who were trying to flee the city, which resulted in the killing of six civilians from the same family, including two children and three women. The city is under the control of ISIS. It should be noted that the same warplanes bombed two cars transporting IDPs in the city on the same day, which resulted in two massacres on that day.

Tuesday, April 25, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes carried out a machine gun strike at a funeral in Kdeiran village in the western suburbs of al Raqqa, which resulted in the killing of five civilians at once. The village is under the control of ISIS.

Tuesday, April 25, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a missile at a residential house near al Ajrawi Circle in southern al Tabaqa city in the western suburbs of al Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of 15 civilians from the same family, including eight children and five women. Al Tabaqa city is under the control of ISIS.

Thursday, April 27, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at a vegetables market in al Tabaqa city in the western suburbs of al Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of six civilians at once. The city is under the control of ISIS.



Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Sunday, April 16, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired a number of missiles at al Sukkariya village, which is affiliated to al Bokamal city in the eastern suburbs of al Raqqa governorate, which resulted in the killing of eight civilians from the same family -IDPs from Aleppo city- including three children and one woman. Al Sukkariya village is under the control of ISIS.

F. Other parties

Damascus governorate

Thursday, April 6, 2017, an artillery shell fell on 7 Nisan Elementary School in al Hanbali district in Barza neighborhood in northeastern Damascus city as students were leaving the schoolyard to their classrooms, which resulted in the killing of five students at once, and wounded nine others. As of this writing, we haven't been able to determine the group responsible for the shelling. Al Hanbali district is within the parts that Syrian regime forces control of Barza neighborhood.

Aleppo governorate

Saturday, April 15, 2017, a bombing took place in [the middle of a gathering](#) for the convoys evacuating the residents of [Kufrayya](#) and al Fou'a towns who were in [al Rashideen neighborhood](#) in western Aleppo city waiting the exchange with the residents of Madaa and [al Zabadani towns](#) who were in al [Ramousa neighborhood](#) in Aleppo city. The exchange was in accordance with the Four Cities Agreement that was struck between Hay'et Tahrir al Sham and [Ahrar al Sham](#) Islamic Movement, and the Iranian militias. The bombing resulted in the killing of 53 individuals (at the time of this writing) including children and women. It is worth noting that victims killed were from the residents and armed men of Kufrayya and al Fou'a towns and the armed opposition fighters who were supervising the completion of the agreement. As of this writing, we haven't been able to determine the nature of the bombing or the group behind it. The neighborhood is under the control of armed opposition factions.





Some of the victims' dead bodies in the aftermath a bombing by unknowns in the middle of a gathering for the residents of Kafrayya and al Fou'a towns conveys in al Rashideen neighborhood, Aleppo – April 15, 2017



Some of the victims' dead bodies in the aftermath a bombing by unknowns in the middle of a gathering for the residents of Kafrayya and al Fou'a towns conveys in al Rashideen neighborhood, Aleppo – April 15, 2017



Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Monday, April 17, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes fired a number of missiles at the residential houses that are located near al Masriya Circle in al Toubiya neighborhood in the middle of al Bokamal city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which resulted in the killing of 17 civilians, including nine children and three women. As of this writing, we haven't been able to identify the group responsible for the bombardment. Al Bokamal city is under the control of ISIS.

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 widespread 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 widespread 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.





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