On the Universal Children’s Day: At Least 29,017 Children Have Been Killed in Syria since March 2011

85% of These by Syrian Regime Forces and Its Allies

Wednesday, November 20, 2019
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.

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I. Introduction and Methodology
Since the beginning of the popular uprising for democracy in March 2011, the Syrian state has continuously witnessed the most heinous violations against children, with the ruling authorities not only failing to provide protection and stability for Syria’s children, but being responsible for carrying out the most egregious violations against them, on such a staggering scale that these actions amount to crimes against humanity.

Syria ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, as well as ratified the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and involvement in armed conflict in 2002. Whilst it’s true that all the parties to the conflict have violated the rights of the child, the Syrian regime has far exceeded all other parties in terms of the amount and level of crimes perpetrated by the regime in a characteristic and systematic manner, in particular, the rights defined in Articles 37, 38 and 6 of the inherent right to life and survival, the prohibition of torture and deprivation of liberty, and the ensuring of respect for the rules of international humanitarian law relevant to the child. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Treaty Body for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, has legal and ethical responsibilities to follow up on the situation of children’s rights in Syria and to end violations against children perpetrated by the Syrian regime.

The latest report issued by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Treaty Body for the Convention, on what is happening in Syria is extremely weak, failing completely to reflect the extent of crimes against children in Syria, which is unlike almost any other country in the world in the level of atrocities against children, especially killings due to indiscriminate
shelling, and torture inside detention centers, forced conscription, forced displacement, and shelling of schools and kindergartens. These barbaric crimes continue to occur to date, and while we at the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) had hoped they would stop or weaken their pace in order to move and focus on other children’s rights and the level of conformity of the Syrian law with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is increasingly obvious that as long as the ruling authorities’ warplanes continue to drop barrel bombs on populated areas, whose residents include many children, such a leadership is incapable of any pretense of caring about the affairs of the state, its institutions and child citizens, with the fundamental and essential solution being, as it always has been, to move from a medieval system of dynastic authoritarianism to a modern democratic system which prioritizes caring for and protecting the nation and its people, most especially the most vulnerable among them – children.

One major danger and future crisis facing the entire Syrian population is the level of illiteracy which is the highest it has ever been in Syria’s modern history. In some areas, the school enrollment rate for children has dropped to 0%; the main reasons for this decline are the forced displacement of half of the Syrian people, the difficulty for parents of finding employment, making it impossible to afford basic education costs, and the deliberate bombing of schools, mainly by Syrian-Russian alliance forces. In addition to these grave problems, extremist Islamist groups have taken over some of the schools and turned them into training camps, or - if maintaining them as schools - they have imposed extremist curricula that serve their agenda. Similarly, the Kurdish-dominated Syrian Democratic Forces have imposed curricula with racist discrimination in some schools in the areas they controlled.

Finally, many children suffer from psychological disorders due to the loss of family members or to having survived traumatic events such as bombings, mass killings due to shelling, siege, starvation, torture, or involvement in the armed conflict; the use of child soldiers has been evident amongst extremist groups and local militias fighting under the Syrian regime and among some Armed Opposition factions to a varying degree, as well as among the Kurdish Democratic Union Party forces through forced conscription of children; most children born outside areas under the control of Syrian Regime forces have also been denied official documents proving their identities; children born in refugee camps also suffered the same problems, in addition to child labor in their areas of displacement or countries of asylum, with many of these children being the sole breadwinners for their families after the death or disappearance of their fathers.
Syria will not be able to rise and attain stability, and return to being a cohesive society or to halt the steady process of decline towards a failed state unless regional and friendly countries fulfill their responsibilities to the nation’s children at the levels of rehabilitation and education, and combat the phenomenon of child conscription; achieving this requires redoubled efforts and forward planning. Without this and given the continued failure to firstly end violations against these children, and secondly to work for their rehabilitation, the prognosis is grim, with such a terrible failure of these vulnerable children leading to unpredictable consequences; based on all these factors, the international community must therefore urgently invest at the social, cultural and economic levels as part of a long-term strategy.

Fadel Abdul Ghany, Chairman of the Syrian Network for Human Rights, says:
“All the UN mechanisms stand powerless in the face of the brutal Syrian regime’s actions. These mechanisms are generally designed to deal with regimes that adopt a lenient application of laws and care for their reputation around the world, but in the case of barbaric regimes like the Syrian one, they do not work and will not work, especially if the Security Council has been thwarted from acting by vetos. Russia and China have stood by the Syrian regime and this has been enough for it to continue to commit whatever violations it wishes against Syrian children.”

Methodology
The report is based on the archive of the Syrian Network for Human Rights resulting from daily monitoring and documentation since March 2011 of violations of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrest, enforced disappearance, torture, conscription, sexual violence, attacks with various types of weapons, attacks on vital civilian facilities, and all statistics included therein documented in accordance with our methodology and with all the information and details that we have been able to access and verify.

This report outlines the record of violations against children by the main parties to the conflict in Syria between March 2011 and November 20, 2019 which SNHR’s team has been able to document, highlighting the most notable of these violations, particularly those which took place between November 20, 2018, and November 20, 2019.

The SNHR team verifies the violations received through various sources such as the media, social networking sites, cooperating activists, witnesses and survivors, collecting evidence and data about them and cross-checking them, and visiting the site of the violation if possible. SNHR’s customary policy in such cases is to rely on accounts from survivors who experienced the violation firsthand, and we try as much as possible to reach them directly,
secondly on accounts from those who witnessed or photographed this violation, in addition to analyzing available materials from open sources such as the internet and media outlets. We also talk with medical personnel who treated the injured in these incidents, examined the deceased victims’ bodies, and identified the cause of death in the incidents of weapons attacks and extrajudicial killings. We also retain copies of all the videos and photographs included in this report in a confidential electronic database and in hard disk backup copies.

We do not claim, however, that we have documented all cases, given the severe prohibitions, restrictions and persecution by the Syrian Regime forces and some other armed groups.

Some of the videos taken show children who were killed or wounded, some of whom died under the rubble of their homes, others show children who died of starvation and illness, or as a result of chemical attacks; we keep copies of all these videos and other material, with a few included in this report.

Our investigations confirm that all of the attacks included in this report that were carried out by the main perpetrator parties to the conflict in Syria targeted civilian areas where we documented no military presence or armories before or during the attacks, and where the perpetrators failed to issue any warnings to civilians prior to any of the attacks as required by international humanitarian law.

This report also draws on the accounts and interviews we conducted with eyewitnesses or child survivors in different areas of Syria, or with victims’ families, either by visiting them directly or through communication applications. This report contains 11 accounts that we’ve collected through speaking directly with eyewitnesses, which are not cited from any open sources. In some accounts, we used alias to preserve the privacy of witnesses and prevent them from being harassed and prosecuted. We explained the purpose of these interviews beforehand to the eyewitnesses, who gave us permission to use the information they provided without us offering or giving them any incentives.

This report only represents the bare minimum of the actual severity and magnitude of the violations that occurred and that we were able to document. Also, it doesn’t include any analysis of the profound social, economic, and psychological ramifications.
II. SNHR’s Cooperation with UNICEF Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism

The SNHR team conducts monthly correspondence to the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on grave violations of children’s rights in the context of the conflict and by the parties to the conflict in order to provide accurate and timely documented information on the grave violations, including killing, maiming, child conscription, sexual violence, child abduction and targeting schools and health facilities and their personnel, and denial of aid access.

The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism is mandated by the Security Council in accordance with Resolution 1612 of 2005 and subsequent relevant resolutions, and was activated in Syria in 2014 after some parties to the conflict were listed as violators of children's rights in the Secretary-General’s annual report. It is a regional mechanism composed of a number of United Nations bodies, in Syria and neighboring countries, and follows a global methodology for data collection; data and analysis are reflected in the periodic reports of the Security Council, including: the Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (public), the quarterly report of the Secretary-General on monitoring and reporting mechanism cases (confidential), and the country-specific report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (public). In addition, the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism data are used in humanitarian documents such as the Syria Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), the Periodic Monitoring Report (PMR) and other ad hoc initiatives.

In this context, the Syrian Network for Human Rights is asking the people for more cooperation in order to send the greatest possible violations related to children. On our official website, we have dedicated forms for extrajudicial killings, torture and arbitrary arrest, and our team works 24/7 to respond to, investigate and document submitted cases.

III. Toll of Violations against Children according to SNHR’s Database

SNHR is concerned with documenting a wide range of types and patterns of violations to which the children of Syria have been subjected. Because of their multiplicity, we focus on serious and life-threatening violations in the first place, with murder being the gravest type of violation. Syrian Regime forces and affiliated militias lead other parties in term of being responsible for 79 percent of the death toll of children in Syria, followed by Russian forces, who were responsible for approximately seven percent. Secondly, we shed light on the record of children who were arrested and imprisoned, many of whom have been classified as forcibly disappeared. It is worth noting that the Syrian regime is again the most prolific offender in this category as in all the other categories of violations. Thirdly, we focus on death toll of children who died due to torture in the official and unofficial detention centers, followed by child conscription, lack of education, and denial of healthcare.
Extrajudicial killing
SNHR documented the deaths of 29,017 children at the hands of the main parties to the conflict in Syria between March 2011 and November 20, 2019, distributed as follows:

- Syrian Regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias): 22,753 children, including 12,764 male children and 9,989 female children.
- Russian forces: 1,928 children, including 1,357 male children and 571 female children.
- Extremist Islamist groups: killed 1,020 children, including 621 male children and 399 female children, divided between:
• ISIS (the self-proclaimed ‘Islamic State’): 956 children, including 562 male children and 394 female children.
• Hay’at Tahrir al Sham (an alliance composed of Fateh al Sham Front and a number of factions of the Armed Opposition): 64 children, including 59 male children and five female children.
- Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (the Democratic Union Party): 214 children, including 124 male children and 90 female children
- Factions of the Armed Opposition: 984 children, including 551 male children and 433 female children.
- US-led coalition: 924 children, including 621 male children and 303 female children.
- Other parties: 1,194 children, including 780 male children and 414 female children

Arbitrary arrest and enforced disappearance
SNHR documented at least 5,043 children as being still detained or forcibly disappeared at the hands of the main parties to the conflict in Syria between March 2011 and November 20, 2019, distributed as follows:

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At least 5,043 children are still detained or forcibly disappeared at the hands of the main parties to the conflict in Syria from March 2011 to November 20, 2019.

Distributed as follows:
- **Syrian Regime forces**: 3,618 children, including 3,169 male children and 449 female children.

- **Extremist Islamist groups**: arrested 355 children, including 331 male children and 24 female children, divided between:
  - **ISIS**: 326 children, including 302 male children and 24 female children.
  - **Hay’at Tahrir al Sham**: 29 male children.

- **Syrian Democratic Forces**: 722 children, including 355 male children and 367 female children

- **Factions of the Armed Opposition**: 348 children, including 262 male children and 86 female children.

**Victims who died due to torture**

SNHR documented at least 177 children who died due to torture at the hands of the main parties to the conflict in Syria between March 2011 and November 20, 2019, distributed as follows:
- Syrian Regime forces: 173.
- Extremist Islamist groups: two, divided between:
  - ISIS: One.
  - Hay’at Tahrir al Sham: One.
- Syrian Democratic Forces: One.
- Factions of the Armed Opposition: One.

IV. Patterns of Violations against Children by the Parties to the Conflict

1. Syrian regime forces (army, security, local militias, and Shiite foreign militias)
   
   A. Extrajudicial killing
   
   From March 2011 to November 20, 2019, the SNHR documented the deaths of at least 22,753 children at the hands of Syrian Regime forces, with 12,764 of these being male children and 9,989 female children, registered in the SNHR’s database, all killed by indiscriminate and deliberate shelling of civilian and populated areas with various types of weapons, including missiles, artillery, cluster munitions, chemical weapons and barrel bombs, up to massacres by slaughtering with knives in several incidents of massacres, a number of which bore a strongly sectarian-cleansing characteristic, in Homs, Banyas, Jdeidat al Fadel, al Qalamoun of Damascus suburbs, the northern suburbs of Hama, and the suburbs of Aleppo governorate.

   Over the past eight years, we have documented incidents of attacks on schools or educational centers during working hours that have resulted in child victims, an indication of the Syrian regime’s deliberate intent to kill these children on their school desks or in their playgrounds.

   On Saturday, November 24, 2018, Syrian regime forces, stationed at Abu Dali village in the northeastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, using a missile launcher to fire a number of missiles, three of which landed adjacent to al Khansaa School, next to the Teacher Training Institute, in the southern parts of Jarjanaz town in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, during school hours. The shelling resulted in the death of nine civilians (seven children - four males and three females, all school students - and two women), in addition to the injury of one Civil Defense rescue worker, who was at the site to rescue victims, as well as inflicting moderate material damage on the school’s building and furniture. The town was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.
Visual guidance showing the location of the massacre resulted by a ground attack by Syrian Regime forces on Jarjanaz town:
SNHR contacted Mustafa Hamdo al Dghaim¹, a teacher at the Teacher Training Institute in the town of Jarjanaz, who told us that a missile landed with a very loud explosion in the residential neighborhood about 800 meters away from the institute, while Mustafa was lecturing in one of the halls adjacent to al Khansaa School: “We sent all the students of the Institute, the majority of whom are residents of the surrounding villages in the region, down to the ground floor, then a second strike followed. The sound of the explosion was stronger and closer to the institute. At that point, several cars arrived to inspect the bombing site when a third explosion was heard in the same area. After the shelling stopped, I left the institute, and I saw wounded people about 30 meters from the institute. I was told that the medical teams removed the bodies of three women and three students, who were killed by the shelling after they left the school after the first missile fell.”

Mustafa added that most of the damage was caused by the second and third missiles at a location near the school, and added: “I have not witnessed such missiles before. The explosion was stronger than the artillery strikes, and their effects were extremely large and unfamiliar.”

Abdul Sattar al Taweel², the director of the Telmennes Civil Defense Center, told us that Syrian Regime forces targeted the southern neighborhood of Jarjanaz town with four large missiles fired from a missile launcher: “We arrived at the site right after the shelling, and we removed the dead bodies of three children and two women, and took a number of the injured to hospitals and medical points near the town.”

On Friday, February 22, 2019, Syrian Regime forces used a missile launcher to fire a number of missiles at northwestern neighborhoods of the city of Ma’arat al Numan in Idlib governorate: three of the missiles landed in an open area of ground surrounded by homes located near the ancient citadel. At the time of the bombardment children were playing in the open area, with the bombing resulting in the deaths of six civilians at once (five male children and one woman). The city was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

¹ Via WhatsApp on November 24, 2018
² Via WhatsApp on November 24, 2018
Obada Thekra\textsuperscript{3} - Director of the Civil Defense Center in Ma’aret al Numan – told the SNHR that the city has been subjected to occasional sporadic ground shelling since February 16, 2019 by Syrian Regime forces stationed at the Abu Dali and Abu Omar positioning sites: “On February 22, Ma’aret al Numan was shelled by a variety of missiles, including a large one with massively destructive effects and ordinary launcher missiles. They targeted residential neighborhoods in the city. Some of these missiles landed in an empty area surrounded by a number of houses, next to the ancient citadel in the northwest of the city, causing a massacre in which five children were killed, including three brothers and another relative, in addition to a woman. All the victims were at the same site; we responded [to the emergency call-out] and headed there to recover the victims and the wounded.” Obada added that 13 other people had been killed and nearly 30 injured in the previous six days as a result of the ongoing shelling, which led to a state of great fear among the people in the city that houses more than 40,000 displaced people as well as 100,000 of its original inhabitants, causing paralysis of the movement in the city and the closure of markets and schools in anticipation of repeated bombing at any moment.

On Thursday, April 18, 2019, Syrian Regime artillery forces fired a number of missiles that landed near a group of IDPs’ tents and adobe mudbrick dwellings surrounded by several other houses in the Mazra’et Um Twaina area, which is located three kilometers west of Um Jalal village, resulting in the deaths of seven civilians at one time, including three children (one male and two females) and three women. The area was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Tuesday, May 28, 2019, fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes fired a number of missiles at Ihsem town in Jabal al Zaweya in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in the deaths of six civilians at once (four children – three males and one female - and two women). The town was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Friday, July 5, 2019, at round 21:00, two Syrian Regime helicopters dropped a number of barrel bombs on three sites in Mhambel town in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate, which resulted in the deaths of 13 civilians, including seven children, an unborn baby, and three women, and injured 20 others. The civilian death toll was distributed across the three sites as follows:

\textsuperscript{3} We contacted him on WhatsApp on February 22, 2019
The first site: Some barrel bombs fell on a complex of residential buildings about 200 meters from the Martyr Mohammad Saleh Abdul Aal Primary School in the western outskirts of the town, perpetrating a massacre of seven civilians from one family, including four children (three males and one female) and two women, who were inside the basement of a house.

The second site: Barrel bombs fell on residential buildings located in front of the Martyr Mohammad Saleh Abdul Aal Primary School, resulting in the deaths of three civilians, including two children.

The third site: Barrel bombs fell on residential buildings located near the Agricultural Extension building in the northern outskirts of the town, resulting in the deaths of three civilians who were IDPs from Damascus Suburbs governorate, namely a pregnant woman, her child and her unborn baby. Mhambel town was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Saturday, August 17, 2019, fixed-wing (Su-24) Syrian regime warplanes fired a number of missiles targeting houses at the northern entrance to al Deir al Sharqi village of Ma’aret al Numan city in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in the deaths of six civilians from one family, five children (four males and one female), along with their mother. Al Deir al Sharqi village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.
The child, Abdul Razzaq Khalaf al Rahil, aged 15, from Khsham town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, was shot dead on September 20, 2019 by personnel affiliated with Syrian Regime forces near al Ma’bar checkpoint in al Salehiya town in the northern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which is under the control of Syrian Regime forces.

The SNHR contacted Mr. Ali al Deiri⁴, from al Hasan town in western suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, who witnessed the indiscriminate gunfire by Syrian Regime forces. He told us: “There was a call for a demonstration near the al Ma’amel roundabout north of Deir Ez-Zour city center to demand the withdrawal of the regime forces and the return of the displaced people from villages and towns under the control of Shiite militias, extending from al Salehiya town to Khsham in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. I was near the Ma’amel roundabout at around 12:00 p.m.; the demonstrators started to move towards the checkpoints of the regime, which are about 5-7 km from the roundabout; before we reached al Ma’bar checkpoint, about one kilometer away, the regime forces stationed at the checkpoint started firing at us indiscriminately, causing variable levels of injuries to dozens of people. I discovered later that the child Abdul Razzaq was one of the wounded and died hours after he was injured; he was taken to a field hospital in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour.”

B. Arrest, enforced disappearance, and torture

Syrian Regime forces have not excluded children from the arbitrary arrests they carry out, often deliberately arresting them and subjecting them to brutal torture, not only to extract confessions, but also to deter them from participating in the popular uprising, to punish and take revenge on them, and to warn Syrian society of the consequences of continuing to oppose the ruling authorities. They then used them as a means of pressuring their families to surrender or release them for exorbitant amounts of money.

In many incidents, we have recorded the detention of children accompanied by their mothers while they are passing through checkpoints or leaving their homes. These children remain detained for the entire duration of their mothers’ detention and are subjected to the

⁴ By phone on October 12, 2019
same horrendous conditions of detention as the mothers. Mothers are routinely threatened with the torture or murder of the children detained with them if they do not make specific confessions. The severity of conditions of detention increase when children are born in detention centers, with these mothers and babies deprived of all forms of the essential postnatal and infant health care. We recorded at least 84 births in detention centers, with all these babies suffering from a severe lack of any post-natal health care and essential medical requirements, resulting in the deaths of seven of the babies.

From March 2011 to November 20, 2019, we documented at least 3,618 children, distributed to 3,169 male children, and 449 female children, who are still detained or forcibly disappeared by Syrian Regime forces. In the same period, we documented the deaths of at least 173 children as a result of torture in the regime’s detention centers.

The child, Abdul Rahman Samir Idris, was a 15-year-old student in the ninth grade of basic education in the Second Cycle at the time of his arrest in 2012. Abdul Rahman, a Palestinian-Syrian national born in Douma city in the Eastern Ghouta east of Damascus Suburbs governorate, was a resident of al Yarmouk Camp south of Damascus city. He was arrested by members of Syrian Regime forces on Friday, September 21, 2012, in an area near the reserve automatic bakery in al Zahera al Jadida neighborhood in the southeast of Damascus city. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR, as well as to his family.

We contacted Abdul Rahman’s mother, Sanaa⁵, who was with her son when he was arrested. She told us, “I left the house in a hurry in search of Abdul Rahman after I called him repeatedly and his cell phone was switched off. I found my son near the reserve automatic bakery. The minute I reached him, members of the security forces gathered around me, and told me that they would only take Abdul Rahman for interrogation and then release him. When I tried to stop them, they beat me and then took him and he’s never come back. Then I started the search for him. We asked about him in Sydnaya Prison, in the military police in al Qaboun area, and in the Palestine Branch, but I didn’t get any information; all their responses denied his existence.”

⁵ By phone on October 12, 2019
Sanaa said that at the end of February 2013, she received information about her son from a released detainee who told her that he had been imprisoned with Abdul Rahman a week after the boy’s arrest at the State Security branch in Najha area south of Damascus. He also told her that the reason for Abdul Rahman’s arrest was the similarity of his name with someone else’s. Sanaa told us that since then she has received no news about her son.

The child, Ahmad Ayman al Khatib from Idlib city, who was born in 1996, was a secondary school student at the time of his arrest by Syrian Regime forces on Wednesday, September 26, 2012, in a raid on his place of residence in al Nakhla square area in the center of Idlib city. He was last seen in January 2012 in the Syrian regime’s State Security branch in Idlib city before the withdrawal of the Syrian regime from the city. Ahmad has been forcibly disappeared since that date. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR as well as to his family.

Abeer Qreiti, Ahmad’s mother, told us⁶: “Since Ahmad’s arrest from the house, we have only received a few reports from those released and we have not been able to obtain any official information about him and cannot go to regime areas for fear of being arrested.”

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⁶ By phone on September 15, 2019
The child, Nour al Din Badr al Din Mahmoud, from Saqba town in the Eastern Ghouta, east of Damascus Suburbs governorate, was aged 15 at the time of his arrest in 2013. Syrian Regime forces arrested him on Saturday, July 20, 2013 in al Wafdin Camp near Douma city in the Eastern Ghouta, east of Damascus Suburbs governorate. His fate remains unknown to the SNHR, as well as to his family.

The SNHR spoke with Mrs. Adiba7, Nour al Din’s mother, who told us about the circumstances of her son’s arrest: “He was stopped by members of the regime forces in al Wafdin Camp after they shot at his leg, injuring it. Several months later, a man who had been released told me that he had seen Nour al Din in the Air Force branch in Damascus city. A few months later, another detainee was released and told me that he had seen Nour al Din in the 248 branch of Military Security in Damascus city. In 2015, I learned that Nour had been transferred to Sydnaya Military Prison, and, since then, I have not heard any news about him.”

Adiba said that she has been unable to obtain any information about the fate of her son apart from the reports she received from the released individuals, all of whom confirmed that Nour al Din had been severely tortured, despite his injury.

On Tuesday, Wednesday, February 26 and 27, 2019, Syrian Regime forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in al Rastan city in the northern suburbs of Homs governorate. We recorded the arrests of 50 children, most of whom were still in the basic education level at school, after regime personnel discovered scraps of paper, on which phrases criticizing the Syrian regime had been written, near the al Omari Mosque in al Rastan city. Forty of the children were subsequently released consecutively during March 2019, while the fate of the remaining ten children remains unknown up until the time of publication of this report.

Tareq Mahmoud Shahhoud and Mohammad Shehada, both children from Raqqa city, who were aged 16 at the time of their arrest, were last seen in Adra Central Prison in Damascus city in October 2019 by a former inmate; they had been sentenced by the Counter-Terrorism Court to 12 years’ imprisonment.

7 By phone on June 9, 2019
C. Use of prohibited weapons (cluster munitions and chemical weapons)

Chemical weapons

Through the use of chemical weapons, the Syrian regime has repeatedly and undeterred violated international humanitarian law prohibiting the use of such weapons under any circumstances. It also violated the Chemical Weapons Convention signed by Syria in September 2013 and violated all the relevant Security Council resolutions. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry and Joint Investigative Mechanism have many times proven the Syrian regime’s use of chemical weapons.

The Syrian regime resorted to launching large-scale attacks with munitions loaded with poison gases and chemicals within populated areas in order to terrorize the residents of these areas and force them to yield and surrender. Due to the vulnerable nature of children’s bodies, they were worst affected by these attacks, especially since they were most often carried out at night or early morning while the people were often asleep; these attacks have often been accompanied by other attacks on medical centers providing first aid to the injured, causing a higher toll of injuries among children.

We documented 217 chemical weapons attacks carried out by the Syrian regime since the first documented use of this weapon on December 23, 2012 up to 20 November 20, 2019, which resulted in the deaths of at least 186 children who suffocated to death.

On Monday, April 3, 2017, at around 21:15, Syrian regime helicopters dropped two barrel bombs containing poison gas. The barrel bombs landed in al Janoubi neighborhood of al Habeit village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in the death of one infant who suffocated to death, while 13 other civilians from two families were injured, suffering from symptoms of suffocation. The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the day of the attack.

According to www.worldweatheronline.com, the temperature in al Habeit village averaged 20 Celsius around the time of the attack, with the windspeed estimated at five mph.

Injured children in the aftermath of an attack by the Syrian regime air force which dropped a barrel bomb containing a poison gas, al Habeit, Idlib – April 3, 2017

An infant who suffocated to death in the aftermath of an attack by the Syrian regime air force which dropped a barrel bomb containing a poison gas, al Habeit, Idlib – April 3, 2017
Cluster munitions
The use of cluster munitions in attacks by Syrian Regime forces has led to widespread repercussions, especially as most of these attacks are indiscriminate and inaccurate, within populated and agricultural areas. In addition to the victims killed by the explosion of cluster munitions at the time of their impact, around 10-40 percent of these munitions remain unexploded, and their sub-munitions often have shiny bright colors that can attract children, making them the most vulnerable to danger.

Since the first documented use of cluster munitions in July 2012 to November 20, 2019, the SNHR team has documented at least 242 cluster munition attacks carried out by Syrian Regime forces, resulting in the deaths of at least 404 children, who were killed in attacks in which the Syrian regime used cluster munitions or as a result of the explosion of old remnants of cluster munitions.

On Saturday, February 16, 2019, Syrian Regime forces used a missile launcher to fire a number of missiles loaded with cluster munitions, which targeted al Sharqi neighborhood of Ma’aret al Numan city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in the deaths of four civilians, including one child and one woman, and injuring two others. The city was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.
On Thursday, April 4, 2019, Syrian Regime forces used a missile launcher to fire a number of SMERCH-9m55k missiles loaded with 9n235 cluster submunitions, targeting the popular al Khamis Market and residential buildings in the center of Kafranbel city in the southern suburbs of Idlib. The explosion of the munitions resulted in the deaths of 13 civilians, including five children and two women, and injured more than 20 others. Some of the victims were killed in the market area, while others were killed inside their homes in many locations; the explosion of munitions also caused material damage to civilians’ properties. The area was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Monday, October 14, 2019, Syrian Regime forces used missile launchers to fire a number of missiles loaded with cluster munitions, which targeted the western and southern sides of al Bara town in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. One of the missiles landed near a private bakery belonging to the Hanin family, known as the Hanin Bakery. The attack resulted in the deaths of one woman and her son, and injured two others. The town was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

**D. Siege**

Since 2012, Syrian Regime forces have imposed a partial or complete siege on a large number of cities and neighborhoods that had broken free of regime control. In most of these areas, the sieges lasted for years during which access to food and medical supplies for these neighborhoods was severely impeded by the regime as a way to force the residents into submission. In addition, Syrian Regime forces deliberately targeted vital facilities in the besieged areas such as hospitals, food warehouses, and drainage systems, which greatly increased the number of severe malnutrition cases and spread disease, while formerly eradicated diseases, such as poliomyelitis, returned, along with increased chances of birth defects and miscarriages amid a shortage or complete lack of necessary medications to treat these and other conditions, especially chronic ones such as kidney disease and cancer. Syrian Regime forces also barred the evacuation of serious medical cases into regime-controlled areas for treatment.

In light of these sieges, the number of child victims, particularly newborns, sharply increased. As of November 20, 2019, SNHR documented the deaths of at least 305 children who died due to lack of medication and food shortages across the besieged areas, particularly in the governorates of Homs, Damascus Suburbs, Damascus, and Deir Ez-Zour. It should be noted that the repercussions of these sieges on children have not yet ceased...
after those areas were controlled by Syrian Regime forces following the Russian-sponsored settlements, with the siege survivors continuing to suffer severe psychological and physical effects inflicted by many years of living in conditions that lack the most basic means of life, not to mention families who lost their children because of hunger, cold or lack of health care.

The last year has seen the siege of the al Rukban Camp, located in the demilitarized zone on the Syrian-Jordanian border. The Syrian regime bears the greatest responsibility for the camp’s siege, and we have documented many deaths since then, and have issued a special report on the living conditions in the camp.

The child, Omar Khaled al Abdullah al Serjam, 14 years old, from Tadmur city in the eastern suburbs of Homs governorate, died on March 16, 2019, in al Rukban Camp due to lack of food and health care in the camp, located on the Syrian-Jordanian border in the demilitarized zone; the Syrian regime is main responsible for the siege of the camp.

The child, Abdul Raouf Turfa, from Tadmur city in the eastern suburbs of Homs governorate, died on March 28, 2019, in al Rukban Camp due to lack of food and health care in the camp, located on the Syrian-Jordanian border in the demilitarized zone; the Syrian regime is main responsible for the siege of the camp.

E. Deprivation of education and child labor

Children’s opportunities to access to education and to attend schools and educational centers in areas outside the control of Syrian Regime forces have declined, and the possibility of children having regular access to education has become elusive as regime forces deliberately target schools and kindergartens during school hours with various types of weapons, with further disruption caused by repeated waves of displacement, as children are forced to leave schools and homes because of the heavy bombardment. Families are often afraid to send their children for education in schools for fear of their being bombed or subjected to massacres, causing panic and fear among children and their families. Due to the regime’s targeting of schools, families are convinced that they are dangerous and insecure places and that educational opportunities for their children are lost. This is exacerbated by the lack of available education facilities due to the destruction of school buildings, leaving them unfit or unsafe for use due to the damage to their infrastructure. An additional problem is the decline in the level of support for education from donor parties, leaving many of the still functioning schools unable to pursue their educational programs.

We documented at least 1,141 incidents of attacks on school by Syrian Regime forces from March 2011 to November 20, 2019.
On Tuesday, December 18, 2018, Syrian Regime forces used a missile launcher to fire missiles at Hettin School in Jarjanaz town in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, causing partial destruction to the school building. The town was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay'at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Tuesday, March 26, 2019, at around 08:30, Syrian Regime forces’ artillery, stationed in Abu al Duhour area, fired a shell at a walled compound containing two schools – the Ali Rajab Deban Primary School and al Sheikh Idris Secondary School - in al Sheikh Idris village in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The shell fell in the yard of Ali Rajab Deban School during school hours, resulting in the death of one student, and injuries to five others. In addition, the primary school building was moderately damaged, although no material damages were recorded in al Sheikh Idris Secondary School. Al Sheikh Idris village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, April 7, 2019, Syrian Regime forces, stationed in Abu al Duhour area in the eastern suburbs of Idlib, used a missile launcher to fire two SMERCH-9m55k missiles loaded with 9n235 cluster submunitions, which fell near the Mus’ab Bin Omair Primary School in al Janoubi neighborhood in al Nayarab village in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate, during the school hours, causing minor material damage to the school building and yard. The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Thursday, May 23, 2019, fixed-wing Syrian Regime forces’ warplanes fired a number of missiles at and around Iqraa Primary School in Kafr Aweed village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in the deaths of two children, as well as partially destroying the school's building and surrounding fence, and inflicting significant material damage to the school furniture. The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.
On Saturday, June 15, 2019, fixed-wing Syrian Regime forces’ warplanes fired a number of missiles near the Martyr Hasan al Mdwar Primary School in al Bara village in Jabal al Zaweya in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, inflicting a massacre of six civilians at once, namely five children (one male and four females) and one woman, as well as partially damaging the school building and perimeter wall, and inflicting moderate material damage to the furniture. Al Bara village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Saturday, August 31, 2019, Syrian Regime forces’ helicopters dropped a barrel bomb near al Wehda Preparatory School in Ma’ar Shamarin village in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, partially destroying the school building, and causing significant material damage to its furniture. We note that the bombardment took place before the ceasefire declared by the Russian regime entered into force at 06:00 the same day. Ma’ar Shamarin village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

Repeated attacks on schools, instability and insecurity, widespread poverty, displacement and enforced displacement have resulted in children and their families being reluctant to pursue or continue their education, with children often forced to work, becoming family breadwinners after the loss of the main breadwinner; many children are forced to engage in work not commensurate with their physical size, strength and age, such as working in
car maintenance or construction work, loading goods, etc., in exchange for minimal income with no option due to the dire circumstances of their lives in light of the armed conflict in Syria, and the loss of their right to education guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, international human rights law and the provisions of international humanitarian law, the articles of which provide for the protection of the education system, students and educational facilities, prohibit targeting them and ensure the continuation of their work.

F. Conscription

The Syrian regime has formed irregular groups to fight on its side, such as mafia-type plain-clothes gangs, with forcibly conscripted children often press-ganged into joining these groups; in January 2013, the regime formed a militia called the “National Defense Forces” which in turn spawned several more, similarly militias such as the ‘popular committees’ and others; these militias are staffed by nominal volunteers of different ages, including children and adults. These volunteers usually undergo short training courses on carrying weapons. After being conscripted, the children often serve the officers in charge of these militias, being entrusted with menial tasks like transporting ammunition and cleaning. Often, Syrian Regime forces send conscripted children into combat operations following severe human losses in the ranks of the regime’s fighters. We have recorded many incidents of child soldiers captured or killed during fighting and clashes.

Although children often join Syrian Regime forces voluntarily, the reasons for their involvement in these forces are many, the most important of which are extreme poverty or following in the footsteps of their fathers who are already serving with these forces. Recruiters will also take advantage of children’s naïve and impressionable nature through indoctrination and promises of money and power. In addition, the regime forces facilitate the conscription of children through deploying conscription and enrolment offices within cities across Syria, with the recruiters failing to impose the minimum age requirement to join their forces. The Syrian regime’s media has also contributed to militaristic propaganda about revenge and retaliation in order to indoctrinate children, influence their beliefs and to urge them to choose conscription to “defend their homeland” and “fight terrorism”.

We have also documented that Syrian Regime forces forcibly conscripted many children after arresting them, in areas near the fighting fronts, as happened in Deir Ez-Zour city and the Eastern Ghouta areas in Damascus Suburbs governorate.
The conscription of children by the regime forces has resulted in the deaths of at least 37 children on Syria’s battlefields since the beginning of 2013 until 20 November 20, 2019.

Mohammad Fares Abdin al Fares, aged 16, from Aqareb al Safia town of al Salamiya city in the eastern suburbs of Hama governorate, was forcibly conscripted into the Syrian Regime’s forces on Wednesday, June 12, 2019. He was killed while taking part in a battle between Syrian Regime forces and Armed Opposition factions in the northwestern suburbs of Hama governorate.

Hamza Salman, aged 16, from Jeb Hasan neighborhood northeast of Latakia city, was forcibly conscripted into the Syrian Regime’s forces. On Saturday, August 17, 2019, he was killed while taking part in a battle between Syrian Regime forces and Armed Opposition factions in the northwestern suburbs of Hama governorate.

Rawad Qusai Merhej, aged 17, from al Owainiya village in the suburbs of Tartous governorate, was conscripted by the Syrian Regime forces into the “Tiger Forces” militia. On Monday, June 10, 2019, he was killed while taking part in a battle between Syrian Regime forces and Armed Opposition factions in the western suburbs of Hama governorate.
G. Sexual violence

Sexual violence against children has been practiced mainly in detention centers of Syrian Regime forces or during their abduction, where children are subjected to harassment during searches, forced nudity and verbal sexual extortion such as sexual insults or sex practice charges. We recorded in many cases the official media affiliated with the Syrian regime broadcast images of female child detainees who made clearly forced confessions to having sex with members of Armed Opposition factions; these children were forcibly disappeared after their appearance.

In many cases, sexual violence has reached its most extreme degree, rape, causing long-term physical and psychological trauma to child victims and their families. Families of children are often reluctant to talk about this violation for fear of stigma in society.

From March 2011 to November 20, 2019, the Syrian Network for Human Rights documented at least 532 incidents of sexual violence against children.

2. Russian forces

A. Extrajudicial killing

Since its military intervention in Syria on September 30, 2015, Russian forces launched deliberate and large-scale aerial bombardment of populated areas. The Russian regime considered Syria a live and effective training ground for testing weapons manufactured by Russian companies. According to the Russian Defense Ministry, the military operation in Syria saw testing 231 models of modern and modernized weapons, including warplanes, helicopters, robot tanks, rockets, as well as a large number of ammunition. We have monitored through our reports the most notable types of weapons that Russian forces have participated in since their military intervention in Syria, including cluster munitions, incendiary munitions, fortified piercing missiles, Caliber missiles, and Toshka-style missiles. The Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu has announced that his country has stopped the production of 12 models of Russian weapons after its failed experience during the military operation in Syria, while updating 300 others.

All of these weapons were tested on populated areas, and targeted schools, kindergartens, medical facilities, shops and commercial centers, displacing tens of thousands of children in various areas bombed by Russian forces who escaped from killing or injury. According to the SNHR database, at least 1,928 children, distributed to 1,357 male children and 571 female children, have been documented killed by Russian forces in Syria since their military intervention on September 30, 2015 until November 20, 2019.
On Thursday, March 21, 2019, fixed-wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, fired missiles at a house, housing a displaced family from al Traimsa village in the northwestern suburbs of Hama governorate, in al Fqea village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in the deaths of five family members (four children – three females and one male - and their father). The village was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On the night of Sunday, May 19, 2019, fixed-wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, carried out consecutive raids using missiles on a residential neighborhood in the west of Kafranbel city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, which resulted in the deaths of 11 civilians, mostly from one family, including seven children (three males, three females and one unborn baby) and two women. The city was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Wednesday, July 24, 2019, fixed-wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, fired a number of missiles at houses in Tbaish village to the north of Khan Sheikhoun city in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, which resulted in the deaths of ten civilians, most of whom were members of one family, including six children (four males and two females) and one woman. The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and the Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.
On Friday, August 16, 2019, at around 19:20, fixed-wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, took off from Hmeimim Airbase in the suburbs of Latakia governorate, before firing a number of missiles on al Rahma IDPs residential village in east of Hass village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, resulting in the deaths of 14 civilians, all IDPs from the northern suburbs of Hama, including seven children (three males, three females and one fetus), and three women, and leaving around 20 others injured, in addition to causing extensive destruction of residential buildings housing IDPs. The area was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

The SNHR contacted the media activist Fadi Yasin⁸, from Kfarrouma village, who was approximately 1 km away from the site of the bombardment at the time of the incident. He said: “Air observatories circulated reports via walkie talkies about Russian warplanes taking off from Hmeimim Airbase in Latakia suburbs and heading towards us. A few minutes later, the warplanes carried out raids. I saw from the distance the missiles falling al Rahma residential village near Hass village, which is a village sheltering the displaced people from Hama suburbs. I rushed to the site, where I saw the remains of victims scattered among the buildings. The place was badly destroyed and fires broke out. I helped the Civil Defense members and the families who preceded me to the scene to recover the disemboweled body of a woman whose fetus had come out of her stomach, and we took her to Ma’aret al Numan Hospital in the hope of saving the fetus, but it died.”

⁸ Via WhatsApp on August 16, 2019
Fadi told us that about 12 victims and dozens of wounded had arrived at Ma’aret al Numan Hospital.

**B. Use of prohibited weapons (cluster munitions)**

Russian forces have used cluster munitions in their attacks intensively and in a widespread manner, either by dropping them from the air over populated areas and agricultural land or by firing them from the ground. We have noted the expansion of Russian forces’ use of ground cluster munitions since the beginning of 2018. Between the start of the Russian intervention in Syria on September 30, 2015, and November 20, 2019, SNHR documented at least 236 attacks by Russian forces using cluster munitions. These attacks resulted in the deaths of 67 children.

**C. Targeting schools and kindergartens**

In their attacks, Russian forces have targeted many schools and kindergartens, partially or completely destroying them. These attacks have resulted in child victims. We have recorded at least 201 incidents of attacks on schools carried out by forces which we believe were Russian. Between the start of the Russian intervention in Syria on September 30, 2015, and November 20, 2019.

On Tuesday, April 30, 2019, fixed-wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, fired missiles at al Qassabiya Primary School in al Qassabiya village in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate during school hours, causing severe destruction to the southern part of the school, as well as causing significant material damage to its furniture. The village was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Friday, July 26, 2019, fixed-wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, fired a number of missiles at the Ahmad Juma Orabi School in Morek town in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate, partially destroying the school building, and causing severe material damage to its furniture. Morek town was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

On Monday, August 26, 2019, fixed-wing warplanes, which we believe were Russian, fired missiles at the Ihsem Middle School for Girls in Ihsem town in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate, causing severe destruction to the school building, and causing significant material damage to its furniture. Ihsem town was under the joint control of factions of the Armed Opposition and Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.
3. Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (the Democratic Union Party)

A. Extrajudicial killing

From the first days following the establishment of the PYD’s Self-Management forces in January 2014, the Syrian Democratic Forces have practiced indiscriminate shelling of areas outside their control and have planted mines in homes and agricultural land before withdrawing from areas of its control. Also, on many occasions, its patrols were firing randomly from checkpoints, in markets or during raids. We also documented victims killed by sniping operations that the SDF was responsible for in many incidents was responsible for the siege of areas by targeting streets with sniper fire; all of that resulted in the of at least 214 children, distributed to 124 male children and 90 female children, who have been documented on the SNHR database since January 2014 to November 20, 2019.

On Sunday, December 16, 2019, Syrian Democratic artillery Forces fired a number of shells at al Hawwama neighborhood in Hajin city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, resulting in the deaths of eight civilians from one family, including three female children and four women. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

On Wednesday, January 9, 2019, Syrian Democratic artillery Forces fired a number of shells at a residential neighborhood in al Sousa town, administratively a part of al Boukamal city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, resulting in the deaths of five civilians from one family (three children and their parents). The town was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.
B. Arrest and enforced disappearance

The SDF targeted children with abductions and arrests to forcibly conscript them mainly into its forces and taking them to military training camps by abducting them from roads, schools and while playing in front of their homes. They also arrested children during their raids to pressure their parents to surrender; we recorded a number of arrests on ethnic backgrounds or under the pretext that the children were affiliated with ISIS in areas controlled by these forces after the withdrawal of ISIS.

From January 2014 to November 20, 2019, the SNHR team documented at least 722 children who are still detained or forcibly disappeared in SDF detention centers, distributed to 355 male children and 367 female children.

The child, Mohammad Mhaisen al Ali al Abdullah, age 17, from al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. On June 20, 2019, a Syrian Democratic Forces patrol backed by a fixed-wing warplane of US-led coalition arrested him in his house in al Sh-heil city and took him to an undisclosed location.

SNHR contacted Hasan al Abdullah⁹, who witnessed the incident, who told us, “US-led coalition’s reconnaissance aircraft were over the skies of the city. At around 02:00 a.m, several military vehicles (Hummer and pickups) in parallel with two helicopters, raided al Arisha neighborhood (al Dandal) in al Sh-heil. The elements stormed a house inhabited by IDPs from outside the city (from Iraq) and arrested two of the IDPs and then raided and searched the house of the child Mohammad’s family, who was in the house with his mother, and found a hunting rifle; they arrested Mohammad, and his fate remains unknown to date, although the child does not belong to any party.”

Hanan Mohammad Khalaf, a 16-year-old female child from Ein al Arab city, known as Kobani, in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was arrested for enforced conscription on January 13, 2019, by Syrian Democratic Forces in a raid on her home in al Karaj area in Ein al Arab city, and was taken to an undisclosed location.

⁹ We contacted him on October 10, 2019
On Thursday, June 20, 2019, Syrian Democratic Forces backed by US-led coalition’s helicopters carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The arrest of three civilians, including one child, was documented, and were taken to an SDF detention center in al Omar oil field in the Badyia of Theyban city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate.

On Sunday, July 14, 2019, Syrian Democratic Forces arrested five civilians from one family, including two children and two women, in al Jalaal village, which is administratively a part of al Boukamal area in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. They were arrested while they were passing through one of the group’s checkpoints in Jdaidet Kahit village, which is administratively a part of al Karama district in the eastern suburbs of Raqqa, and were taken to an undisclosed location.

On Tuesday, July 30, 2019, Syrian Democratic Forces carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in al Hasya neighborhood of al Sh-heil city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The arrest of eight civilians, including two children from one family, was documented, and were taken to an undisclosed location.

C. Conscription

SDF conscripted children in its forces on a widespread manner in all areas it controlled to compensate for manpower shortages in its ranks and increase its numbers, and established dozens of training camps for children to accommodate the growing number of children forcibly conscripted. The SDF has practiced abduction mainly to conscript and detain children in training camps, preventing them from contacting or allowing them to visit their families, in order to further affect the children’s beliefs and to direct them to fight within their forces voluntarily, nor did they obtain the consent of the families of the children before conscripting them, and refused to respond to their demands to return their children or allow them to see them and know their whereabouts.

After the end of the children’s training period in the camps, which may last from six months to eight months, Syrian Democratic Forces force them into battles and combat operations, as well as involve children in the transport of ammunition, cleaning, fortifying the fronts, and distributing them to checkpoints.

The SNHR team documented at least 86 cases of child conscription carried out by the SDF since its establishment, of whom approximately 23 children have been killed on the battlefields.
On June 29, 2019, the SDF signed an action plan with the United Nations to end and prevent the conscription of children. Under this action plan, the SDF is committed to ending and preventing the conscription and use of children, and to identifying boys and girls currently conscripted within its forces and separating them from their forces, establishing preventive, protective and disciplinary measures regarding the conscription and use of children. However, the SDF continues to be at the forefront of parties conscripting children and we continue to monitor and record abductions of children at the aim of conscripting them.

The child, Kamiran Mustafa al Alo, from Yedi Qoui village south of Ein al Arab city in the northeastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was born in 2003. He was abducted by gunmen affiliated with the Kurdish Self-Management forces on Tuesday, December 23, 2017, in Ein al Arab city and was forcibly conscripted by these forces after he was subjected to a training camp in al Shoyoukh district, which is administratively a part of Jarablos city, northeast of Aleppo governorate.
We spoke with activist Sherzan Alo, Kamiran’s cousin, who told us: “My cousin was abducted from the Nowruz Wedding Hall in Ein al Arab city ‘Kobani’ by an SDF member, called Joan Ahmad Mashu, nicknamed “Sewar Kobani”, who took him to one of SDF’s centers in Kobani. The next morning, my uncle Mustafa (Kamiran’s father) visited the SDF recruitment center and departments in the area to ask about the fate of his son and demand his return, but they did not respond to his request and denied that they had the child.” Sherzan added that in June 2018, Kamiran’s father was able to find out his son’s location in a military barracks belonging to SDF in al Qameshli area in the north-eastern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, through an SDF official. Shirzan considered that Kariman was likely put in SDF former battles against ISIS in Deir Ez-Zour.

The female child Yasmin Taha Khalil, from al Qameshli city in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, a seventh-grade student at the middle school – second cycle, was aged 13 at the time of her conscription. She was abducted and forcibly conscripted by Syrian Democratic Forces at the beginning of January 2019. On Tuesday, January 29, 2019, we learned that she was undergoing military training at an SDF camp in Hasaka governorate.

Video of the female child Yasmin Taha Khalil wearing military apparel

Lund Ismail Aleko, a 7th grade student— second cycle- at the Salah al Din al Ayoubi Middle school in al Derbasiya city in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, from al Derbasiya city, was aged 13 at the time of his conscription. Lund’s father suffers from a physical disability. Gunmen affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces abducted Lund at the end of December 2014, from a location near his school, and took him to one of the group’s recruitment camps in Jabal Qandil in the Kurdistan region of northern Iraq. In 2018, he was sent to Syria to participate in the ongoing fighting east of Deir Ez-Zour governorate between the Syrian Democratic Forces and ISIS, where his father asked about his fate several times. These requests received no response from the SDF.

In March 2019, Lund communicated with his mother Jihan via mobile phone, telling her he was in a battle in the al Baghouz area in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. On Wednesday, April 3, 2019, his family was informed of his death as a result of wounds from shrapnel sustained in a landmine explosion during fighting in al Baghouz area in the suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour.

By phone on August 1, 2019
Zagros Mohammad Amin Mirza, a fifth-grade student at the middle school – first cycle, was born in 2008. She was abducted by Syrian Democratic Forces on Wednesday, May 1, 2019, from a place near her family’s home in al Malikiya city in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, and were taken to an undisclosed location. The city was under the control of the SDF at the time of the incident.

Jamal Jabo, aged 14, from Sheran town in Afrin district in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was arrested by gunmen affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces on Wednesday, July 3, 2019, whilst in Ihres village in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, with the aim of compulsory conscription, and taken to one of the group’s training camps.

Mohammad Abdul Salam al Sheikh Ahmad, from Ras al Ein city in the northwestern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, aged 17, was conscripted by the SDF into its ranks in Hasaka governorate in February 2019 and underwent military training at an SDF camp in the Ras al Ein area. After that, he was sent to one of the border posts with Turkey in Kherbet al Banat village in Ras al Ein area. On Thursday, October 3, 2019, he was arrested by members of the Syrian Democratic Forces from his family’s house in Ras al Ein after the expiry of his vacation when he refused to return to his military point; his family learned that he was detained for two days in an SDF detention center in Ras al Ein city before being transferred to his military point in Kherbet al Banat village in the northwestern suburbs of Hasaka governorate.
Roujin Ahmad Abdul Qader, a 16-year-old girl from Ashouna village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was abducted by gunmen affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces from her tent in Fafin IDPs Camp in the north of Aleppo governorate, on Friday, January 18, 2019, and taken to an undisclosed location.

Roujin was abducted while she was alone in her tent after her mother was hospitalized. We documented Roujin's death on Monday, October 28, 2019, in battles against factions of the Armed Opposition in Ras al Ein area in the suburbs of Hasakah governorate.

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**D. Targeting schools and kindergartens**

SDF has taken over many schools in the areas under its control and turned them into military headquarters for its forces. SDF attacks have also caused damage to other schools. We documented at least nine incidents of attacks on school by SDF as of November 20, 2019.

On Friday, September 13, 2019, Syrian Democratic Forces’ artillery forces fired two shells that landed near al Urouba School in the middle of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. The shells fell on houses near the school, causing minor material damage to the school's furniture. Afrin city was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident.

On Tuesday, October 8, 2019, members affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces stormed the Zainab Bent al Hussein Preparatory School, located in Market Street in Tal Abyad city, and Tal Abyad al Sharqi School, located on the outskirts of the city, which is located in the northern suburbs of Raqqa governorate. The members closed and commandeered the two schools in order to turn them into military headquarters. The city was under the control of the SDF at the time of the incident.
4. Extremist Islamic groups

ISIS (the self-proclaimed ‘Islamic State’):

A. Extrajudicial killing

In their attacks on the areas outside their control, ISIS used indiscriminate shelling as an attempt to seize control of these areas. The group also adopted other policies, such as clashes, car bombs, and motorbike bombs in populated areas, and planted landmines before retreating from the areas previously under their control, resulting in the deaths of children passing nearby or playing with these landmines believing them to be toys.

SNHR’s team recorded a number of incidents where children were directly targeted with gunfire in their homes or whilst walking along thoroughfares, especially during the group’s attacks on areas predominantly inhabited by religious minorities.

The SNHR documented the deaths of 956 children, distributed to 562 male children and 394 female children, who were killed as a result of indiscriminate shelling operations, clashes, executions, and landmine explosions between the emergence of ISIS in April 2013, and November 20, 2019, with SNHR documenting these cases by name, photo, and place and time of death.

On Saturday, November 24, 2018, a landmine planted by ISIS in Tal al Hawa village, which is administratively a part of al Ra’ee town in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, before the terror group’s withdrawal from the area, blew up, resulting in the deaths of five children from one family (three males and two females). The village was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition.

B. Arrest, enforced disappearance and torture

The ISIS terrorist group copied the Syrian regime’s own approach in terms of arrests, disappearing a large number of detainees, and not disclosing their fate even if they executed them, adopting the worst, most brutal practices of the Syrian regime. Children have not been spared. ISIS practiced arrests and abductions against children for violating the teachings ISIS imposed in their areas under its control, such as not committing to wearing certain clothes or having their hair cut in a way contrary to that allowed by the group, while at other times their families were pressured to surrender or retaliate against them. We also documented cases of arrests of children along with their families as they attempted to flee areas under the group’s control or during attacks on other areas, particularly those of a religious or ethnic minority.
Following the terrorist group's loss of control over areas formerly under its control in northeastern Syria, ISIS evacuated its detention centers and took detainees to unknown locations, further complicating the process of determining the fate of detained children, with their families fearing that the group had carried out mass executions and eliminations against them, or forcibly conscripted them to fight for it and that they had been killed or captured, especially as the SDF, which took control of ISIS areas, hasn’t cooperated with the families of the disappeared or answered their inquiries or publicized the findings of their investigations with ISIS prisoners.

Since the establishment of ISIS in April 2013 up to November 20, 2019, the SNHR team has documented at least 326 children who are still detained or forcibly disappeared by ISIS, with 302 of these being male children and the remaining 24 being female children.

These children have been subjected to several types of physical and psychological torture used by the group in its detention centers, including severe beating, whipping, the tire, shabeh, falqa, and prolonged standing, which continued for several hours or days, to punish them or with the aim of extracting confessions from them or to take revenge on their families. Children have also been subjected to deprivation of sleep, food and healthcare, and solitary confinement for lengthy periods of time.

On Friday, February 22, 2019, 11 Yezidi children, along with some civilians and families of ISIS members, managed to escape from al Baghouz town, which is administratively a part of al Boukamal area in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. It should be noted that ISIS had abducted the children in mid-2014 from Sinjar district in Iraq, and the children were transferred to al Qameshli city in the suburbs of Hasaka governorate.
C. Conscription
Since the announcement of its emergence in April 2013, ISIS has engaged children in combat operations, and entrusted them with tasks in its incursions and clashes, and as snipers and guards. In several cases, we recorded ISIS using children to carry out executions and retribution, and even to commit suicide missions. With the aim of increasing the number of conscripted children in its ranks, the group established training camps for children to teach them to fight and carry weapons, and indoctrinated thousands of forcibly and voluntarily conscripted children through the methods of carrot and stick spread by the group among the population in areas under its control to spread the culture of carrying arms and jihad. ISIS also resorted to recruiting foreign children online, encouraging them to fight alongside it in Syria, and tempting them with the money and power that they would receive in return.

D. Sexual violence
ISIS has practiced sexual violence widely against children, ranging from molestation to sexual enslavement, and coerced female children into forced marriages, particularly those abducted or taken prisoner from ethnic and religious minorities. One female child was forced to marry many times and to several individuals, as well as being sold in slave markets exclusive to the group’s members and leaders. The group even flaunted these crimes as a supposedly appealing recruitment policy to attract would-be members. We have also documented a number of instances of sexual violence perpetrated against children that took place at the group’s training camps for children.

E. Targeting schools and kindergartens
In its attacks and indiscriminate shelling, ISIS targeted schools and kindergartens. The SNHR team documented at least 25 incidents of attacks on schools carried out by ISIS since its establishment in April 2013 until November 20, 2019.

On Wednesday, November 28, 2018, an ISIS artillery group fired a number of mortar shells which landed near a primary school in al Sukkariya village of al Boukamal city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, causing moderate material damage to the school building. The village was under the control of Syrian Regime forces at the time of the incident.
Hay’at Tahrir al Sham (a coalition group composed of Fateh al Sham -formerly al Nussra Front- and factions of the Armed Opposition)

A. Extrajudicial killing

Indiscriminate shelling operations carried out by Hay’at Tahrir al Sham during their attacks which primarily targeted areas under the control of armed opposition groups as well as clashes in populated residential areas involving the group, resulted, according to the SNHR database, in the deaths of at least 64 children, with 59 of these being male children and the remaining five being female children, between the emergence of al Nussra Front (currently known as Hay’at Tahrir al Sham) in January 2012 and November 20, 2019.

The female child, Fatima Hussam Na’na, from al Dana city in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate, was killed on Monday, February 11, 2019, at the hands of members of HTS, who shot her during raids on houses in al Dana city under the pretext of pursuing IS cells.

The male child, Bilal Hamoud al Hmoud, from al Jabin village in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate, was killed on Saturday, December 22, 2018, as a result of gunshots when members of HTS fired bullets near Batabo village junction in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate which hit the bus he was traveling in along with IDPs from the suburbs of Hama governorate.

B. Arrest, enforced disappearance and torture

HTS has targeted children with abductions and arrests during its attacks on areas outside its control, while passing through the group’s checkpoints with their families, or for violating the teachings they impose in their areas of control. We also recorded several incidents in which children were abducted by groups affiliated with HTS, then released in exchange for large sums of money from their families.
During the period of their detention and abduction, children are subjected to severe beating, whipping and falaqa. Children detained along with their mothers are also separated from and deprived of contact with them during their imprisonment. HTS members shave children’s hair and humiliate their human dignity in front of crowds of people as a punishment for violating HTS teachings.

From January 2012 to November 20, 2019, the SNHR team documented at least 29 children who are still detained or forcibly disappeared by HTS.

On Saturday, April 6, 2019, gunmen affiliated with Hay’at Tahrir al Sham carried out a campaign of raids and arrests in Sarmin city in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate. SNHR documented the arrest of seven civilians, including two children, who were taken to an undisclosed location.

In September 2019, Hay’at Tahrir al Sham members arrested two 16-year-old children in a garden in Idlib city on charges of speaking with girls. They were sued by the Hisbah, HTS’ self-appointed ‘police’ force, on charges of harassing women, and were imprisoned for several days during which time the two children were severely beaten in addition to shaving their head hair, then forced to sign a written undertaking not to repeat the act.

On Sunday, September 15, 2019, Hay’at Tahrir al Sham members stormed a house in Idlib city and arrested a civilian with his two children, aged 14 and 15, after they cursed Hay’at Tahrir al Sham members; the father and the two children were taken to Branch 107 where one of the two children was flogged with 40 lashes, being released the next day, while the other child was questioned about his family’s visitors at home and then released after HTS confiscated their mobile phones.

**C. Conscription**

In a simulation of the ISIS approach, HTS established training camps for children, enrolled them in sharia courses in an effort to influence their beliefs and direct them to take up arms and fight, then put them on the front lines; in other cases, HTS entrusted them with guard duties or sentry positions at checkpoints, and exploited the desperate poverty suffered by the people in the areas under its control, especially the residents of camps and families displaced from the areas controlled by the Syrian regime, taking advantage of this situation of destitution to provide financial salaries for those children who join their ranks, and offering them power to give them influence and dominance over their peers.
D. Targeting schools and kindergartens
HTS also resorted to the use of schools and converted them to military headquarters; we recorded incidents in which the group halted the educational process in the school and converted them to sharia institutes. According to the SNHR database, HTS carried out three attacks on schools as of November 20, 2019.

On Friday, November 23, 2018, gunmen affiliated with Hay’at Tahrir al Sham broke into the Basem Wahed Elwi School in Darkoush town in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate. The gunmen removed the school’s main door, removed the school furniture, and turned it to an HTS sharia institute, preventing the school students from entering.

We note that the same school had previously been seized for use as a ‘sharia institute’ by Hay’at Tahrir al Sham before they were forced out by civil society figures, who then restored the school to its original state, with students resuming their education again 15 days before this incident. The town was under the control of Hay’at Tahrir al Sham at the time of the incident.

5. US-led coalition
A. Extrajudicial killing
SNHR has documented the deaths of at least 924 children, with 621 of them being male children and 303 being female children, as a result of air attacks carried out by US-led coalition since the beginning of their intervention in Syria.

On Wednesday, December 5, 2018, fixed-wing US-led coalition warplanes fired missiles at a residential neighborhood east of the center of Hajin city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate; five civilians were killed (two children and three women) most of whom were members of the same family of IDPs from al Mray’iya village in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. We note that the same warplanes committed another massacre on the same day when they bombed another residential neighborhood east of the city center killing 13 civilians, including seven children and three women. The city was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

On Friday, January 18, 2019, fixed-wing US-led coalition warplanes fired missiles at a residential neighborhood in al Baghouz Tahtani village, administratively a part of al Boukamal city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, resulting in the deaths of 28 civilians, most of whom were IDPs from areas of the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, including 10 children and eight women. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.
B. Targeting schools and kindergartens
Since the beginning of the US-led coalition’s military intervention in Syria on September 23, 2014, SNHR has documented at least 25 incidents of attack on schools as a result of air attacks by US-led coalition.

6. Factions of the Armed Opposition
A. Extrajudicial killing
Between March 2011 and November 20, 2019, SNHR documented the deaths of at least 984 children, with 551 of these being male children and the remaining 433 being female children, at the hands of factions of the Armed Opposition, most of whom were killed in indiscriminate shelling operations carried out by armed opposition forces against areas that are not under their control, most prominently using mortar shelling.

The child, Amer Ramadan, from Jobar neighborhood of Damascus city, died as the result of a gunshot wound on Saturday, September 21, 2019, following clashes between members of factions of the Armed Opposition in Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate. We were unable to identify the faction responsible for his death up until preparing this report.

The child, Mohammad Muhsen al Jasem, a 15-year-old boy from Horat Amorin village in the western suburbs of Hama governorate, died on Monday, May 13, 2019, after being hit by shrapnel from several missile-propelled shells fired from an area under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition in the suburbs of Hama governorate on al Sqailbiya city in the western suburbs of Hama governorate.

B. Arrest and enforced disappearance
Factions of the Armed Opposition targeted children with abductions, especially during their attacks on areas outside their control. They also resorted to abductions, arrests and release of children in exchange for the payment of large sums of money. We have monitored an increase in the record of children arrested and abducted in opposition factions-controlled areas since the beginning of 2018. These operations have been concentrated in the northern suburbs of Aleppo.
As of November 20, 2019, the SNHR team has documented at least 348 children, with 262 of these male children and the remaining 86 being female children, who are still detained by factions of the Armed Opposition. Most of the arrest cases SNHR documented meet the criteria for being categorized as enforced disappearance.

Ibrahim Zuhair Aziz, from Kafr Zeit village, which is administratively a part of Afrin city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, was arrested by members of a faction of the Armed Opposition on Friday, June 21, 2019, in a raid on his house in his village of Kafr Zeit on charges of communicating and dealing with the SDF, and was taken to an undisclosed location.

On Saturday, August 17, 2019, gunmen affiliated with factions of the Armed Opposition arrested three civilians, including a 12-year-old female child from al Nayrab Camp in Aleppo city, as they were passing through one of their checkpoints in Afrin area in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, while on their way to the Syrian-Turkish border, and took them to an undisclosed location.

Bothers Hassan Jalal al Ayyaf, aged 16, and Abdul Rahman Jalal al Ayyaf, 18, from Ein Eisa city in the suburbs of Raqqa governorate, were arrested by gunmen affiliated with one of the factions of the Armed Opposition on Saturday, October 19, 2019, in Ein Eisa Camp in the suburbs of Raqqa governorate, and taken to an undisclosed location. Their fate remains unknown to the SNHR.

Factions of the Armed Opposition have practiced torture against children; children were subjected to severe beatings, falaqa and suspension. They were also coerced into forced labor, such as cleaning, and transporting food in detention centers of opposition factions.
This video footage, filmed on Tuesday, September 17, 2019, shows a member of the police force and the National Public Security, one of the factions of the Armed Opposition, beating two children on charges of theft in al-Bab city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate.

This video footage was filmed on Friday, September 20, 2019, in a Free Police Station which is affiliated with factions of the Armed Opposition in Sheran district of Afrin area in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate. The video shows detained children doing forced labor “cleaning the bathrooms”.

Statement issued by the police headquarters in Sheran district in respect of the video of the children in the Free Police Station of factions of the Armed Opposition in Sheran district - Afrin area in the suburbs of Aleppo governorate.

C. Targeting schools and kindergartens
SNHR documented at least 35 incidents of attack on schools carried out by factions of the Armed Opposition as of November 20, 2019.

D. Conscription
Factions of the Armed Opposition exploited the desperate poverty prevalent in the areas under their control to conscript children in return for pay, entrusted them with guard duties, transporting ammunition, cleaning and carrying out sentry duties at checkpoints, and sometimes involving them in combat operations after enrolling them in short training courses on arms usage. We documented the deaths of five children while participating on the battlefield, along with factions of the Armed Opposition.

Mohammad Ahmad al Askar, from Helfaya city in the suburbs of Hama, was conscripted into a faction of the Armed Opposition. On Thursday, August 8, 2019, he died in battles against Syrian Regime forces in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate.
7. Other parties

A. Extrajudicial killing

SNHR’s documentation categories include numerous classifications such as the victims of bombings whose perpetrators have not yet been identified; victims of fires of unknown sources; and of landmines of unknown sources; victims of drowning, and victims who were shot dead by Jordanian, Turkish or Lebanese forces.

Under these categories, SNHR has documented the deaths of at least 1,194 children, 780 of whom were male children and 414 of whom were female children, as of November 20, 2019.

On Sunday, February 17, 2019, fighters affiliated with Syrian Democratic Forces discovered nine dead bodies of eight children and one woman from the same family in al Baghouz area, which is administratively a part of al Boukamal city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate. The family appear to have been shot dead. We are still trying to reach eyewitnesses and survivors of the incident to obtain more details and to know the date of the killing. The area was under the control of Syrian Democratic Forces at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, March 24, 2019, a landmine blew up as a vehicle carrying civilians was passing by on the road between al Bseira city and al Soor village near al Hreiji village in the northern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, resulting in the deaths of five civilians from one family, including three male children, two female children and two women. We were unable to identify the party responsible for planting the mine up until the time of publication of this report, given the extreme difficulty in identifying the perpetrators of bombings. The area was under the control of Syrian Democratic Forces at the time of the incident.

We contacted Hazem al Shummari, a cousin of the victims, who told us: “Around ten in the morning, they were in their car (a ‘Helfaya’-type homemade car) heading from al Bseira towards al Soor city, on the main road connecting the two cities, to attend a family event there. A landmine planted on one side of the road near Hreiji village blew up, resulting in the deaths of the entire family, including the children (2 years old, 4 years old, 5 months old), whose bodies were torn to pieces by the force of the explosion. We believe that it was an anti-tank landmine.” Hazem added that the children’s father was a civilian and worked in agriculture and didn’t belong to any military or political party.

11 By phone on March 28, 2019
On Tuesday, July 9, 2019, a landmine planted in Dablan village which is administratively a part of al Ashara city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate exploded, resulting in the deaths of seven male children from two families, and injuring four others. We were unable to identify the party responsible for planting the landmine up to the time of publishing this report. Dablan village was under the control of Syrian Regime forces at the time of the incident.

B. Targeting schools and kindergartens

We documented that at least 60 schools were damaged in attacks by other parties between March 2011 and November 20, 2019.

On Wednesday, December 12, 2018, an IED placed inside a car near the Ibn Zaydoun Primary School in the center of Izaz city in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate, exploded. The explosion resulted in the deaths of a female child and her father, in addition to causing severe material damage to the school building and furnishings, putting it out of service. We are still trying to reach witnesses and survivors of the incident to obtain more details. The city was under the control of factions of the Armed Opposition at the time of the incident.

On Tuesday, January 29, 2019, unknown persons burned al Keshkiya School for Boys, known as al Mhaimda school, in al Keshkiya town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, causing significant material damage to the school’s building and furniture, putting it out of service. We are still trying to reach witnesses and survivors of the incident to obtain more details. The town was under the control of Syrian Democratic Forces at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, August 18, 2019, a car bomb exploded near the Industry High School for Boys in al Arbawya neighborhood in al Qameshli city in the northern suburbs of Hasaka governorate, causing moderate material damage to the school building. We are still trying to reach witnesses and survivors of the incident to obtain more details. The town was under the control of Syrian Democratic Forces at the time of the incident.
V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Syrian Regime forces:
Government forces and pro-government militias have committed atrocities which constitute crimes against humanity against Syria’s children, through widespread and systematic killings, torture and sexual violence, in flagrant violation of Article VII of the Rome Statute, and committed other acts amounting to war crimes through forced conscription, starvation and collective siege of the population, including women and children. This is a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and relevant Security Council resolutions.

At the 2005 Summit, states unanimously agreed that each country had a responsibility to protect its population from crimes against humanity and war crimes. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, the prevention of incitement to commit them by all possible means, and when the state clearly fails to protect its population from egregious crimes, or itself is committing such crimes as in the case of the Syrian regime, it is the responsibility of the international community to intervene to take protective measures in a collective, decisive and timely manner.

Russian forces:
Most of the Russian forces bombardment has concentrated on populated areas and centers that have resulted in the death of dozens of Syrian children, all these indiscriminate attacks amount to war crimes.

Syrian Democratic Forces (PYD):
SDF committed acts amounting to war crimes through indiscriminate shelling that resulted in the death of many children and through forced conscription.

Extremist Islamist groups:
These groups have conscripted hundreds of children under the age of 15, tortured children in their detention centers, with the indiscriminate shelling they carried out resulting in the death of many children, all of which constitute war crimes.

Factions of the Armed Opposition:
Different factions have conscripted tens of children, with the indiscriminate shelling some factions carried out resulting in the death of many children, all of which constitute war crimes.
**US-led Coalition:**
Attacks carried out by US-led Coalition have incidentally caused civilian casualties, including children, injured them, or caused significant damage to civilian objects. There are very strong indications that the damage was exceptionally excessive in comparison to the desired military advantage.

**Recommendations:**
**International community and UN Security Council**
- Provide protection and assistance to forcibly displaced children, including the displaced and refugees, especially girls, and take into account their specific needs primarily for protection.
- Fulfill the obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, make serious efforts to isolate the Syrian regime and expose its practices, and stop them as soon as possible.
- Support all possible means for ensuring accountability in Syria, primarily the Independent International Mechanism, established by the General Assembly, the International Commission of Inquiry, established by the Human Rights Council, and active national human rights organizations, and expose States attempting to rehabilitate or support perpetrators of crimes against humanity against Syrian children.
- Take all possible legal, political and financial measures against the Syrian regime and its allies, as well as against all perpetrators of violations in the Syrian conflict to pressure them to commit to respect the rights of children.
- Fulfill the commitment of pledged financial contributions:
  - Aid must be delivered to the besieged children, and the Syrian regime must be forced to lift the siege on the al Rukban Camp, rather than simply dropping aid from the air.
  - Assist the bordering countries and provide all possible support to increase the level of education and healthcare in these countries which host the largest number of refugee children.
  - Establish mechanisms to end the bombing of schools and kindergartens, protect these facilities and work to create a safe learning environment, which is the least possible level of protection that could be offered for civilians.
  - The issue of Syrian children is a global one, and all countries must do their utmost to alleviate its repercussions by supporting schools and the educational and medical process inside Syria, and caring for refugee children.
**United Nations:**

**OCHA:**
- Coordinate humanitarian aid operations according to the areas worst affected, and avoid pressure and blackmail by the Syrian regime which is working to harness aid to its advantage.
- Allocate adequate resources for the rehabilitation of children, taking into account the special needs of girls who have been directly affected by violations and who have been sexually exploited, according to the areas worst affected.

**International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) and International Commission of Inquiry (COI):**
- Investigate the incidents included in this report and further highlight the suffering of Syrian children.

**Neighboring countries:**
- Ensure that refugees fleeing Syria are able to seek asylum and respect their rights, including the prohibition of refoulement. EU states and other countries should alleviate the burden on neighboring countries, receive more Syrian refugees, and donor countries should increase their assistance to the UNHCR and civil societies organizations in countries of asylum.

**UNHCR:**
- Create a stable and safe environment for Syrian refugee children and intensify work for their reintegration into society through long-term psychological treatment.
- Promote investment in education and health.

**The Syrian regime and parties to the conflict:**
- The regime must fulfill its obligations based on its ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the two International Covenants and the Geneva Conventions.
- The Syrian-Russian alliance and Iranian militias and their affiliates must stop deliberately shelling schools, kindergartens, and residential areas inhabited by children and their families, and killing and maiming children.
- US-led coalition should investigate incidents that resulted in child victims in particular, and take deterrent steps against persons suspected of involvement in these violations, should also pressure their SDF allies to stop child conscription and abide by the action plan signed by them in coordination with the UN in June 2019.
• All parties to the conflict should immediately release detained children, particularly against the background of armed conflict, and abide by international laws on the detention of children, especially girls.
• All parties must respect international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and end all grave violations committed against children.
• End all indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks on civilian areas and take all appropriate steps to protect children during military operations.

Thanks
We wish to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the victims’ families, their relatives and friends, and to local activists and media workers, whose assistance contributed to publishing this report at such a detailed level.