

Two Consecutive Massacres in Kafr Nabbol City

28 Civilians Killed and Eight Vital
Civil Facilities Damaged

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

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



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Acknowledgment and Condolences

I. Introduction

Kafr Nabbol city is affiliated to Ma'aret Al Nu'man area in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate. The residents of Kafr Nabbol have taken part in the popular uprising that erupted in March 2011, before the city was raided by Syrian regime forces in July 2011. Armed opposition factions, however, took over the city in August 2012. The city's population is approximately 50,000 people including a large number of IDPs from Hama governorate. Currently, the city is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh Al Sham Front.

In May 2016, we published a [report](#) in which we documented the targeting of an urban market in the city by Syrian regime forces.

This report documents two consecutive massacres that were committed by fixed-wing Su-24 Syrian regime warplanes in Kafr Nabbol, where SNHR team contacted a number of residents, eyewitnesses, survivors, and local media activists. This report includes two accounts. We have explained the purpose of these interviews for the witnesses who gave us permission to use the provided information in this report.

We also have reviewed the pictures we received and verified their authenticity. These pictures show the huge destruction that resulted from the bombardment, while other pictures showed scattered body parts for the victims who were killed in the bombardment.



The investigations included in this report prove that the targeted areas were civil areas, where there is no military centers or weapon warehouses for extremist Islamic groups before or during the attack.

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

II. Details

Sunday, December 4, 2016, around 10:30, fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes carried out no less than six airstrikes at multiple areas in Kafr Nabbol city, which resulted in the killing of 28 civilians including six children and two women. Additionally, eight vital civil facilities were damaged. The airstrikes were scattered as follows:

- Two airstrikes at Hazzarein intersection on the end of Al Khatib street. This point is a vital point that is constantly crowded. The bombardment damaged Al Khatib hospital building and Al Ta'akhi bakery.
- Two airstrikes targeted Jony circle at the entrance of the city market, which damaged the rural school, Thee Qar school, Al Khair bakery, and a civil defense center.

The four aforementioned airstrikes resulted in the killing of 28 civilians including six children and two women. This was the death toll of two massacres that took place in two different nearby locations at two different, but close, times. The victims of both massacres were transferred to one hospital, which significantly complicated the task of identifying the victims of each massacre.

- Two airstrikes near Kafr Nabbol surgical hospital and Kafr Nabbol automated bakery on the northwestern side of the city. The airstrikes resulted damages to those two facilities.



A picture showing the locations of the vital facilities that were targeted by fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes in Kafr Nabbol city, December 4, 2016



A picture showing the location of the two massacres in Kafr Nabbol city, December 4, 2016



SNHR spoke to the media activist Isam Mansour, via Facebook, who provided us with his account:

“A number of successive airstrikes were carried out by the regime warplanes at different points in the city. One of the airstrikes targeted (J’ar house intersection)” which is a crossroad in the southwestern neighborhood. This intersection is constantly crowded. I saw victims in the rubbles of destroyed cars, and I saw burned cars inside of which were charred bodies. The destruction was huge, destroyed houses and burned shops. Also, a large number of cars and motorcycles were damaged. 21 martyrs at least were killed in this airstrike, before the warplanes carried out another airstrike at Jony circle which resulted in the killing of six others who were some of the vegetable vendors who were in the area.”

“Everything that was targeted by the regime warplanes was civil. There are no military aspects near the targeted locations. They are trying to kill life in our city.”

SNHR spoke to the media activist Belal Bayyoush who provided us with his account. Belal suffered the loss of one of his family members in the massacre:

“I went to the place that the first airstrike targeted minutes after the bombardment. I grabbed my camera and started documenting the destruction and blood in the place. Then, the warplanes came back and carried out five other airstrikes at the same area. Cars were burning, and body parts were in the rubbles of shops and houses. I couldn’t recognize my uncle’s dead body among the victims who were pulled by the civil defense teams. His corpse was merely scattered body parts.”

“Syrian regime forces targeted one of the most crowded area in the city, which is a civil area where there are no armed men.”

III. Appendixes and Attachments

Victims’ names



[Video](#) showing the victims killed in a bombardment by fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes that fired missiles in Al Khatib street in the western neighborhood of the city. Pictures showing the victims of the massacre



Pictures showing the destruction that resulted from the bombardment by fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes



IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

Legal conclusions

1- The Syrian regime has, beyond any doubt, violated Security Council Resolutions 2139 and 2254 which both state that indiscriminate attacks must be halted. Also, the regime violated Article 8 of Rome Statute through the act of willful killing which constitutes war crimes

2- We can confirm that the bombardment mentioned in this report has targeted armless civilians. Therefore, the Syrian forces have violated the rules of the international human rights law which guarantee the right to life. Additionally, these violations were perpetrated in a non-international armed conflict which amounts to a war crime where all elements



were fulfilled.

3- The attacks mentioned in this report, which were carried out by the Syrian regime, are considered a violation of the customary international humanitarian law, as the shells were fired at a populated area rather than a specific military object.

4- The bombardment operations have caused collateral damages that involved casualties or injuries, or significant damages to civil facilities. There are strong indicators suggesting that the damage was too excessive compared to the anticipated military benefit.

Recommendations

The Security Council

- The Security Council has to take additional steps after Resolution 2139 was adopted and no pledges to cease the indiscriminate bombardment operations have been made. All the conflict parties must respect these steps and adhere to the rules of the international humanitarian law.
- The Syrian case must be referred to the International Criminal Court and all those who are responsible must be held accountable
- Instill security and peace in Syria and implement the norm of the Responsibility to Protect in order to protect the lives, culture, and history of the Syrian people from being destroyed, looted, and ruined.
- Expand the sanctions to include the Syrian and Iranian regimes who are directly involved in committing crimes against humanity and war crimes against the Syrian people.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Office must submit a report to the Human Rights Council and other organs of the United Nations on this massacre specifically and the massacres that preceded it, considering that these massacres are an explicit and glaring sign among daily sporadic and less severe massacres. Also, the Office should try to implement the recommendations in the report.

The International Community

- In light of the split of the Security Council and its utter inability, Steps must be taken on the national and regional levels to form alliances to support the Syrian people that would protect them from the daily killings and siege, and enhance the support for the relief efforts. Additionally, the principle of universal jurisdiction must be activated in local courts regarding these crimes in order to conduct fair trials for all those who were involved.

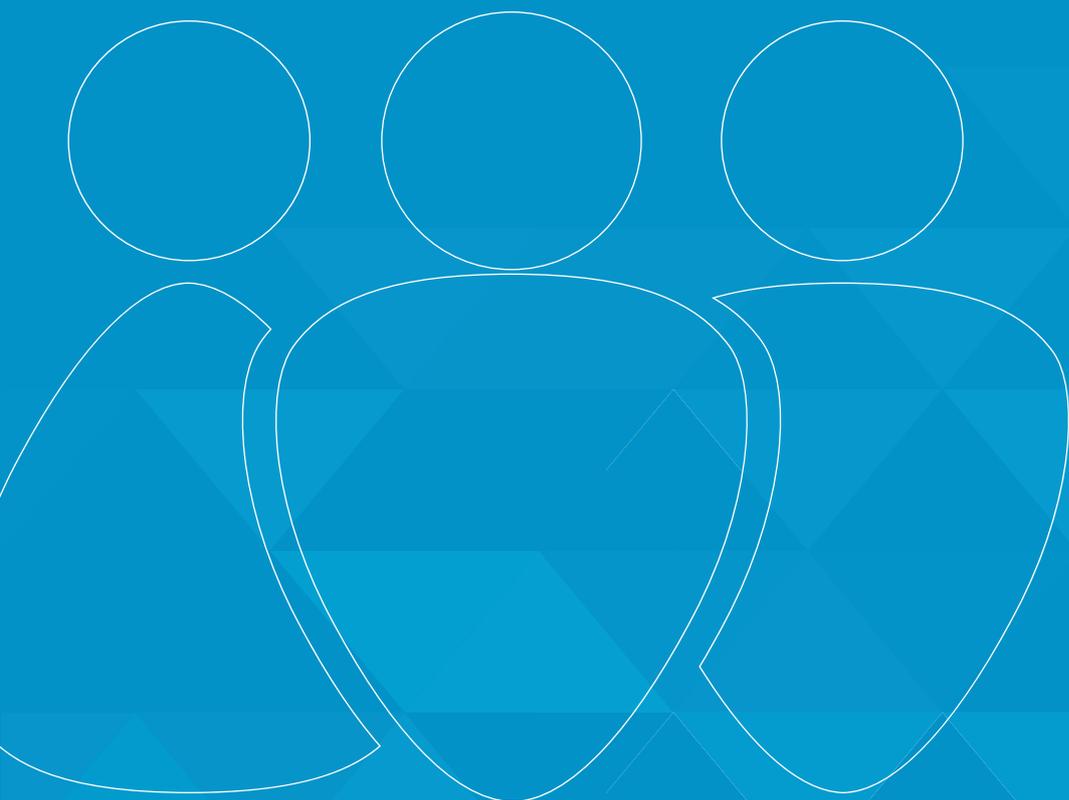


- SNHR has repeatedly called for the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect in tens of studies and reports as a member of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP) after all political channels through the Arab League's plan and then Mr. Kofi Annan's plan were brought out. Therefore, steps under Article 7 of the Rome Statute must be taken and the norm of the Responsibility to Protect, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly, must be implemented. The Security Council is still hindering the protection of civilians in Syria.
- Renew the pressure on the Security Council to refer the case in Syria to the International Criminal Court.
- Work on fulfilling justice and achieving accountability in Syria through the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council and work on activating the principle of the universal jurisdiction.

Acknowledgment and Condolences

Our thanks and condolences for the families and local activists who majorly contributed to this report.





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