

Statement

1000 Days Have Passed Since the International Coalition's Operations Started in Syria

**1256 Civilians Have Been Killed
Including 383 Children**

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



Since the intervention of the US-led international coalition forces started on September 23, 2014, SNHR has been working on following-up and documenting the violations perpetrated by these forces. In this regard, SNHR has released 11 [special reports](#) that focused on the incidents where civilians were killed and vital civilian facilities were targeted.

These days mark 1000 days since the start of these operations. According to the periodic follow-ups and the daily and monthly incidents that we have recorded, we feel it is important to point out on the following main points:

First: Human losses are unacceptably high and reflects a glaring carelessness

The international coalition forces' attack in 2014 and 2015 demonstrated a greater precision and were more focused in targeting ISIS's military sites, and caused less civilian casualties. In contrast, the attacks that were carried out in 2016 and up until May 2017 were more indiscriminate and chaotic as we noticed.

International coalition forces killed 1256 civilians at least, including 383 children and 221 women (adult female), from the start of the intervention on September 23, 2014 until the beginning of May 2017. We have the details on most of those victims.

Interestingly enough, approximately 80% of the total number of victims that have been killed since the start of the intervention were killed between January 1, 2016 and the beginning of May 2017 with no less than 998 civilians, including 304 children and 178 women, killed.

Furthermore, a total of 51 massacres have been perpetrated by the international coalition forces since September 23, 2014 as of this writing. Of those 51 massacres, 34 were perpetrated in al Raqqa governorate alone, up to 67% of the total number of massacres, and 12 in Aleppo governorate.



Second: Severe material losses by bombing vital civilian facilities

International coalition forces were responsible for no less than 106 incidents of attack on vital civilian facilities, including 46 attacks on bridges which were the most targeted facilities. Most of these bridges were rendered out of service, which led to economic and social ramifications that affected the lives of the local residents. We don't believe that these bridges were used regularly in the service of military operations. We have released a report in that regard entitled: "[Deir Ez-Zour, a limb-severed governorate](#)" which documents the bombing of bridges in Deir Ez-Zour alone by international coalition forces.

We think that the human and material losses were too great and can't be justified. International coalition forces haven't distinguished between civilians and fighters in many of these attacks, nor they have respected the principle of proportionality in the use of force. Therefore, many of these attacks constitute war crimes.

Third: Supporting a portion of the Syrian society with foreign terrorist attachments under the pretext of fighting ISIS

in late-2015, international coalition forces have openly sided with the Kurdish-majority Self-Management forces. This group mainly consists of the Democratic Union Party, a branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party who is listed as a terrorist group. Under the pretext of fighting ISIS, this method is clearly flawed, as it is impossible to defeat the extremist group ISIS, which is based on a fundamentalist religious ideology, by relying on an extremist group (PYD) who is based on a fundamentalist ethnic, separatist ideology that seeks to break off from the Syrian state and the Syrian people. A very great portion of the rebels, the Syrian opposition, and the other segments of society see these groups as an enemy who fought them, and took over areas that were under their control such as Tel Ref'at area and its vicinities. This disordered support will establish for a long-lasting societal war.

In order to defeat ISIS, we believe, finding a social alliance (all of the united members of society) that would stand in the face of the danger that is ISIS which threatens their existence and unity. They would have to fight ISIS because they are feeling the threat it poses on their lives and future, and not because the international coalition, or anyone else, have told them to do so.



The recent developments in al Raqqa governorate is a perfect example on this catastrophic failure of this method that we pointed out. Since February 4, 2017, international coalition forces have been intensifying their airstrikes in al Raqqa suburbs for the sake of supporting the advancements of the Kurdish-majority Syrian Democratic Forces in their battle that they announced in November 2016 to take over al Raqqa governorate. These airstrikes have killed no less than 297 civilians including 99 children and 51 women and resulted in thousands of residents fleeing al Mansoura town, al Karama town, and al Tabaqa city in the suburbs of al Raqqa to the ISIS-held al Raqqa city.

The human, material, and spiritual costs are direly too great, and could have been reduced had there been a different strategy in place from what the international coalition forces have been doing since early-2015 and are still doing with no revisions or modifications.

Fourth: ISIS is still in control of vast areas. Deir Ez-Zour is the main stronghold

The international coalition forces have weakened ISIS and killed many of the group's leaders and first-rank figures, while the group also lost many of its area of control. However, ISIS is still in control of vast areas and have expanded in the eastern suburbs of Homs for example.

We believe that ISIS's crucial battle won't al Raqqa as some people falsely think that it is ISIS's main stronghold, but Deir Ez-Zour. To take down ISIS, forces from the same areas would have to be founded and established while taking into consideration the tribal factor and how much ISIS invested into that. Otherwise, the human and material costs will be bitter and ever-lasting.

Fifth: Admitting to the wrongdoings is not enough

The command of the international coalition forces has admitted to about 74 incidents in Syria. The Central American Command noted in last April that they killed 299 individuals in Syria and Iraq without distinguishing between the two states. Our documentations, however, show a greatly different story. Although all of this time had passed, we haven't heard of an accountability process, or an apology, or an attempt for compensation, or discharging those who were responsible for incidents that constitute war crimes. This is a negative indicator for the Syrian people, and especially the neighborhoods and cities that have lost their sons, and significantly undermine the international coalition forces' credibility with regard to its war on ISIS.





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