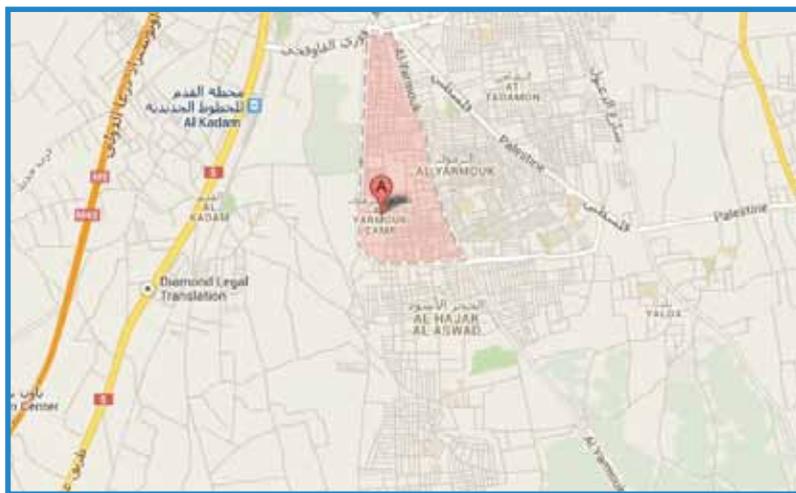


PFLP-GC (Popular Command for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command) targets a line of four thousand people in Al-Yarmouk camp

The Scope of the Report: documenting the attack by PFLP-GC against an aid convoy in Al-Yarmouk camp on Sunday 23 March, 2014

Introduction

Al-Yarmouk camp, the largest Palestinian camp in Syria, is located about 10 KM away from the center of Damascus city as this link indicates:



Al-Yarmouk camp is bordered on the east by At-Tadamoun Ad-Damashqi neighborhood, which is destroyed completely due to the wide and systemic air strikes by the Syrian regime's war planes and artillery, while bordered by Al-Hajar Al-Asswad and Yalda on the south. The north of the camp is an entryway of the southern neighborhoods of Damascus city.

The Gradual Siege of the Camp

The siege of Al-Yarmouk camp has been enforced since 10 July, 2014 when all the entry points were closed except for the Northern one, this was followed by an air strikes by the Syrian governments against several areas inside the camp which killed 28 civilians including a two-year-old kid and five women according to the [SNHR's](#) documenting team. This led to armed clashes between the security forces, militias and the popular committees that are affiliated to PFLP with some factions of the armed opposition who managed to hold the camp at the end. Consequently the Syrian regime, in cooperation with its loyal Palestinian militias closed the final entry point to start the siege that escalated gradually until it reached its climax on 17 July, 2013 when the food and medications have become strictly prohibited from entering the camp.

In light of these rough conditions 185,000 people decided to leave the camp to become IDPs in other areas inside Syria or travel to the neighboring countries.

The lengthy siege evoked some of the residents to steal and loot inside the camp in order to secure food or medication which was the case in most of the areas that suffered from a lengthy siege as we proved in several previous reports. This of course is one of the outcomes that the Syrian regime hopes to achieve inside the besieged areas.

In this report we documented the shelling by the PFLP against a line of more than 4000 people who were waiting for their turn to get aids.

The approach of this report is based on the investigations conducted by the [SNHR](#)'s team with activists and eyewitnesses from Damascus countryside as this report includes testimonies in addition to the pictures and videos that was verified by our team after we received it from cooperating activists from inside the city given that no one of our team was able to get in the targeted area.

Please note that the names of the witnesses were modified according to their own wills.

[More information about the approaches that we follow in documenting the victims](#)

Details

The PFLP forces have targeted the line of aid distribution in Ar-Rija square in Al-Yarmouk camp with a mortal shell which killed 7 people at least including a lady and wounded 20 others whom most of them are in critical condition.

According to the [SNHR](#) investigation that included pictures, videos, and several interviews there were no known military target or members of the armed oppositions where the shelling took place.

Qusai, one of the activists inside Al-Yarmouk camp, talked about the incident to the [SNHR](#): “We were informed that they are about to give away some aids to the residents, so the people started to gather in thousands and the distribution process started. Between 4:00 and 5:00 PM we noticed that there was no presence of any members of the PFLP-GC or the Syrian regime and the security forces who were surrounding the area from the rooftops of the near buildings, suddenly and for no reason the line that has more than 4000 civilians, who were mostly women, was attacked by a mortal shell which killed 7 people on the spot”.

Fadel Abdulghani, the head of [SNHR](#), says: “the crime of besieging Al-Yarmouk camp and

blocking any aids wasn't enough for the Syrian government; it also terrorized the camp with rapid air strikes through its militias. The Syrian regime is the main responsible of the worsening humanitarian conditions for more than 50 thousand people inside Al-Yarmouk camp”.

[SNHR](#) was able to talk to a member of Al-Yarmouk agency and gave us his account of the incident:

“We were around 4000 in the line waiting for the aids, around 4:30 the distribution was halted and we were asked to go back to the camp, afterwards we were attacked with a mortar shell by members of the PFLP-GC. Seven people were killed and 30 others were wounded half of them are clinically dead in light of a very poor medical capabilities.

The area that the attack targeted was completely empty of any FSA presence; there were only the civilians who were waiting for the aids. This incident was apparently a military response to the FSA killing a member of the PFLP-GC's militias that were affiliated previously to Ahmad Jibreel”.

Appendixes and Attachments

The [SNHR](#)'s team documented the killing of 7 civilians including a lady

[The names and pictures of the victims](#)

[A picture of an injury that the attack caused](#)

Conclusions:

1-[SNHR](#) affirms that the PFLP-GC's attack against the civilians, who were waiting in the line, was indiscriminate and targeted armless civilians, thus it has violated the articles of the international law for human rights which guarantee the right to live, furthermore this violation were pretreated during a non-international armed conflict which can be classified as war crimes.

2- The random attacks committed by the PFLP-GC are considered violations of the norms of the international humanitarian law given that it attacked residential areas rather than a specific military target.

3- These attacks, especially aerial shelling, have caused casual humanitarian and material losses. There are strong indicators that show the damage was deeply severe compared to the expected military advantage.

Reccomendations

The United Nations and the Security Council

1. Transferring the Syrian issue to the International Criminal Court and stopping the disrupting of the decisions that must be adopted by the Security Council against the Syrian government.

This disruption is a wrong message to all dictatorships in the world and an enhancement to the culture of crime.

2. Posing urgent punishment on those who are involved in the violations of human rights.
3. Obliging the Syrian government to allow all relief and human rights organizations to enter Syria, in addition to the International Investigation Committee and allowing them to work freely.
4. Banning the Syrian government all weapons because they are used in comprehensive attacks against civilians.
5. Security Council must shoulder responsibility in preserving security and civil peace in Syria because the violations of the Syrian government are considered gross threat to international peace and security.
6. Listing the militias that fight with the Syrian government and which committed massacres, like Hezbollah and the other Shiite brigades, National defense Army and Shabiah militia, on the international list of terrorist organizations. Among these militias is the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria which committed lots of crimes in the areas that are not controlled by the Syrian government.
7. Implementing the principle of “protecting civilians” adopted by the General Assembly in Syria now, as the situation there is direly requiring such a principle now.
8. After the crimes against humanity committed by the Syrian government, stopping dealing with this government as an “official side” concerning the relief issues, and stopping supplying the Syrian government with the greatest amounts of financial and humanitarian aid that don't reach those who need them in most cases and go instead to those loyal to the Syrian government.

Human Rights Council

1. Demanding the Security Council and the involved international institutions to shoulder responsibility concerning the sufferings of the Syrian people which include killing, arrest, rape and displacement.
2. Applying pressure on the Syrian government in order to stop the acts of killing and torture.
3. Holding the allies and supporters of the Syrian government - Russia, Iran and China –as materially and morally responsible for the killing that is happening in Syria.
4. Human Rights Council must be more interested and seriously concerned about the catastrophic situation of the children, families and relatives of the victims in Syria.

The Arab League

1. Punishing all those who are involved in committing crimes in Syria and urging all the coun-

tries of the world to do the same thing.

2. Increasing humanitarian aid, especially on the levels of education and health care and taking care of the Syrian refugees in the Arab countries.

3. Requesting the Security Council to execute the above recommendations.

4. Asking the Human Rights Council and the United Nations to pay more interest to the case of daily killing in Syria.

5. Taking the Syrian issue very seriously and considering it as a priority, and trying to take care of the families of the victims psychologically, materially and educationally.

6. Applying political and diplomatic pressure on the main allies of the Syrian government; Russia, Iran and China in order to prevent them from continuing to provide international and political backing and protection for the crimes committed against the Syrian people, and holding them materially and morally responsible for all the violations of the Syrian government.

The Syrian Government

1. Instantly stopping all kinds of human rights violations.

2. Respecting its international commitment to protect civilians in the time of war and respecting the articles of the International Human Law as it is one of the sides that endorsed Rome Convention, in addition to respecting the International Law for Human Rights.

3. Allowing instant access to the International Investigation Committee and facilitating its work and cooperating with the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights and national human rights organizations.

The International Investigation Committee

The International Investigation Committee must stop depicting the struggle in Syria as a struggle between two sides equal in crimes, power and the centralization of decisions. It must describe the crimes the same way they happen without belittling their extent for political reasons. The committee must also increase the number of its staff who works on the Syrian issue due to the amount of the crimes committed daily in Syria so that it can do more comprehensive documentation.

