



## No less than 204 Massacres in the First Half of 2016 Including 33 Massacres in June

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### I. Executive Summary

After the commencement of the Cessation of Hostilities statement on 27 February 2016, Most of the Syrian governorates have seen a notable and a relatively good decline in killing rates compared to the previous months since 2011. The main focus is the areas controlled by the armed opposition given that other territories such as areas controlled by the Democratic Union Party and the Syrian regime are not targeted with a heavy and daily aerial bombing which is the main cause behind the killing of more than 60% of the victims, the destruction of buildings, and displacement of residents. Nonetheless, violations haven't stopped and mainly by the Syrian regime and its allies who are seemingly the most affected party by the ongoing Cessation of Hostilities.

One day after the High Negotiation Committee decided to postpone its participation in Geneva talk on 19 April, government forces and Russian forces resumed bombing areas outside the Syrian regime's control and the killing rates increased back to its former levels before the Cessation of Hostilities.

SNHR describes an incident as a massacre if it involves: "the killing of five peaceful people at once", for more information on our [methodology](#),





• **Massacres in the first half of 2016:**

SNHR documented 204 massacres at least in the first half of 2016 as follows:

- A. Government forces (army, security forces, local militias, Shiite foreign militias): 105
- B. Russian forces: 66
- C. Extremist Islamic groups:
  - ISIS: 15
- D. Armed opposition factions: Eight
- E. International coalition forces: Five
- F. Unidentified groups: Five

The massacres of the first half of 2016 are distributed across areas of control as follows:

- 75 massacres in areas under the control of armed opposition factions.
- 29 massacres in areas under the control of ISIS.
- One massacre in areas under the control of government forces.

Massacres distribution across governorates:

- Aleppo: 61 massacres
- Idlib: 33 massacres
- Damascus suburbs: 27 massacres
- Deir Ez-Zour: 28 massacres
- Homs: 19 massacres
- Al-Raqqa: 21 massacres
- Al-Hasaka: 4 massacres
- Hama: 4 massacres
- Daraa: 3 massacres
- Latakia: 3 massacres
- Tartus: 1 massacre





## Massacres distribution by the influential party:

Massacres Distribution by the Influential Party in the First Half of 2016						
Influential Party	Government Forces	Russian Forces	ISIS	Armed Opposition Factions	International Coalition Forces	Unidentified Groups
Governorate						
Aleppo	11	36	1	8	4	1
Idlib	26	7				
Damascus Suburbs	26		1			
Deir Ez-Zour	12	10	4			2
Homs	14	2	3			
Al-Raqqa	10	8	2		1	
Al-Hasaka		3				1
Hama	4					
Daraa	2					1
Latakia			3			
Tartus			1			

According to SNHR documentation team, 2376 individuals were killed in these massacres including 654 children and 423 women meaning that 46% of the victims were women and children which is a considerably high percentage that indicates that civilian residents were the target in most of these massacres.

Death toll of the massacres are distributed by the perpetrator as follows:

Government forces: 1053 individuals including 312 children and 185 women.

Russian forces: 842 individuals including 236 children and 117 women.

ISIS: 304 civilians including 34 children and 90 women.

Armed opposition factions: 56 civilians including 25 children and eight women.

International coalition forces: 83 civilians including 38 children and 18 women.

Unidentified groups: 38 civilians including nine children and five women.





### • Massacres in June 2016

SNHR documented no less than 33 massacres in June as follows:

A. Government forces (Army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias): 24

B. Russian forces: Four

C. ISIS (Self-proclaimed the Islamic State): Two

D. Armed opposition factions: One

E. International coalition forces: Two

Massacres committed in June 2016 are distributed across areas of control as follows:

- 13 massacres in areas under the control of armed opposition factions.

- 11 massacres in areas under the control of ISIS.

Massacres are distributed across governorates as follows:

Idlib: 8 massacres

Aleppo: 8 massacres

Al-Raqqqa: 6 massacres

Deir Ez-Zour: 5 massacres

Damascus suburbs: 3 massacres

Homs: 2 massacres

Hama: 1 massacre

### Massacres distribution by the influential party:

Influential Party	Government Forces	Russian Forces	ISIS	Armed Opposition Factions	International Coalition Forces
Homs	2				
Idlib	8				
Aleppo	1	4		1	2
Damascus Suburbs	3				
Deir Ez-Zour	4		1		
Al-Raqqqa	5		1		
Hama	1				





According to SNHR documentation team, no less than 421 individuals were killed in those massacres including 156 children and 70 women meaning that 54% of the victims are women and children which is a considerably high percentage that indicates that civilian residents were the target in most of these massacres.

Death toll of the massacres are distributed by the perpetrator as follows:

Government forces: 315 individuals including 112 children and 57 women

Russian forces: 29 individuals including 10 children and three women

ISIS: 15 civilians

Armed opposition factions: Six civilians including two children

International coalition forces: 56 civilians including 32 children and 10 women.

## II. Details

### A. Government forces (Army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias)

#### Idlib governorate:

Wednesday 1 June 2016, government forces warplanes launched two airstrikes using missiles on Seijar town in the western suburbs of Idlib governorate, which is under the control of the armed opposition, killing 16 individuals including three children and three women in addition to injuring about 30 others.

Sunday 5 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on the vegetable and carpet markets near Al-Sa'a square in northwestern Idlib city, which is controlled by armed opposition factions. As a result, six individuals were killed at once including two children and one woman in addition to about 40 others who were wounded.

Sunday 12 June 2016, government forces warplanes carried out an airstrike using [two missiles on Idlib city](#). One of the missiles targeted [the vegetable market](#) in the northwestern parts of Idlib city, which is under the control of armed opposition factions. As a result, [39 individuals](#) were killed including 14 children and three women in addition to [about 65 others who were wounded](#).





Sunday 12 June 2016, government forces warplanes carried out an [airstrike](#) using missiles that were fired on a residential area near [Al-Masri mosque](#) in [Ma'ret Al-Nu'man city](#), located in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions. As a result, [eight individuals were killed](#), seven children and one woman as most of the victims were from the same family, and [three others were wounded](#).



Monday 13 June 2016, government forces warplanes carried out two [airstrikes](#) using missiles on [Dawwar Al-Meftah](#) area in the southern parts of Idlib city, which is under the control of armed opposition factions, resulting in [the killing of five individuals](#) at once and the injuring of about seven individuals.



Tuesday 14 June 2016, government forces helicopters [dropped six barrel bombs](#) on the gold market in Al-Bara town, located in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions. Most of the barrel bombs fell in front of a hall where children go to play which resulted in [the killing of eight children](#).





Wednesday 22 June 2016, government forces helicopters dropped seven gas cylinders on the southern outskirts of Al-Bara town, located in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions. As a result, five individuals were killed at once including one female child and one woman and four others were wounded.

Saturday 25 June 2016, government forces carried out [two airstrikes using missiles](#) on a residential building in Kirratein town, located in the northeastern suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions. As a result, six individuals were killed from the same family including three children and two women and about 10 others were wounded.

### **Al-Raqqa governorate:**

Wednesday 1 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on Al-Mshllab neighborhood in Al-Raqqa city, which is under the control of ISIS, which resulted in the killing of 10 individuals including one child and two women in addition to about 15 others who were wounded.

Sunday 5 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on Shu'aib Al-Thekr village, which is located to the west of Al-Tabaqa city in the western suburbs of Al-Raqqa governorate and is under the control of ISIS. As a result, five individuals were killed, most of them were from the same family.

Tuesday 21 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on Al-Rahman car wash in Al-Raqqa city, which is under the control of ISIS, killing nine individuals including one female child.

Tuesday 21 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on Shukri Bouzan gas station in Al-Raqqa city, which is under the control of ISIS. As a result, 11 individuals were killed including four children and two women.





Tuesday 21 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on Al-Kahrbaa' area, located in western Al-Raqqa city and is under the control of ISIS. As a result, nine individuals were killed including two children and two women.

### **Deir Ez-Zour governorate**

Thursday 2 June 2016, government forces warplanes bombed Theiban town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate, which is under the control of ISIS. As a result, 7 individuals were killed most of them were from the same family including three children and two women in addition to about 10 others who were wounded.

Friday 3 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on Al-Bohlahel neighborhood. The bombing on the neighborhood, located in in Al-Boleil town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and is under the control of ISIS, resulted in the killing of 17 individuals including two children and five women.

Monday 6 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on [Al-Hannoush neighborhood](#). The bombing on the neighborhood, which is located in Al-Ashara city in eastern Deir Ez-Zour and is under the control of ISIS, resulted in the killing of 26 children including 13 children and four women in addition to about 20 others who were wounded

Saturday 25 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on [Al-Qoriyah city](#), located in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour governorate and is under the control of ISIS. As a result, 62 individuals were killed including 30 children and 20 women in addition to about 30 others who were wounded.

### **Damascus suburbs governorate:**

Sunday 19 June 2016, government forces artillery fired a number of [shells that were fired on Hazrama town](#), located in Damascus suburbs governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions, [killing nine individuals](#) including a child and two women and wounding 15 others.

Wednesday 29 June 2016, government forces warplanes carried out four airstrikes using missiles on a residential building in Khan Al-Sheih camp. The bombing on the camp, which is located in Western Ghouta in Damascus suburbs governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions, resulted in the killing of six individuals including one child and one woman. Additionally, [four others were wounded](#).







Thursday 30 June 2016, government forces rocket launchers fired surface-to-surface missiles on Otaqa town. The shelling on the town, which is located in Al-Marj area in Damascus suburbs and is under the control of armed opposition factions, resulted in the killing of 18 individuals including seven children and five women. Additionally, [about 30 others were wounded](#).

### **Homs governorate:**

Tuesday 2 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on [Talbiesa city](#), located in the northern suburbs of [Homs](#) governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions. As a result, [seven individuals were killed](#)



Monday 6 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on Abu-Zoura area. The bombing on the area, which is located to the east of Al-Sukhne city in the eastern suburbs of Homs governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions, resulted in the killing of five children from the same family.

### **Aleppo governorate:**

Wednesday 8 June 2016, government forces helicopters dropped a [barrel bomb near Al-Bayan hospital](#), located in [Al-Sha'ar neighborhood](#) in Aleppo city and is under the control of armed opposition factions. As a result, [13 individuals were killed](#) and about [10 others were wounded](#).





### **Hama governorate:**

Monday 13 June 2016, government forces warplanes fired missiles on Eqerbat city, located in the eastern suburbs of Hama governorate and is under the control of ISIS. As a result, eight individuals were killed from the same family including four children and one woman.

### **Russian forces:**

#### **Aleppo governorate:**

Sunday morning 5 June 2016, alleged Russian warplanes fired missiles on residential homes near a hardware warehouse in Al-Qaterji neighborhood in Aleppo city. As a result, 12 civilians were killed.

Sunday 19 June 2016, alleged Russian warplanes fired cluster bombs on [Al-Abze-mou village](#) in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate with. The bombing on the village, which is under the control of armed opposition factions, resulted in the killing of five siblings (one woman and four children).

Saturday afternoon 25 June 2016, alleged Russian warplanes fired missiles on residential homes in Kherbat Al-Emqeya. The bombing on the village, which is located in Kousniya town in the southern suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions, resulted in [the killing of five individuals](#) from the same family (four children and one woman).

Tuesday 28 June 2016, alleged Russian warplanes fired missiles on the southern neighborhood in Al-Khafsa town, located in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of ISIS. As a result, seven individuals were killed including two children and one woman.

### **ISIS**

#### **Deir Ez-Zour governorate:**

Tuesday 28 June 2016, ISIS published a [video](#) entitled: “Story of Slaughter” that showed the beheading of [five individuals](#) with knives in the city of Al-Bokamal in Deir Ez-Zour governorate. [The five victims](#) were killed over accusation of cooperating with Syria’s New Army. We haven’t been able to confirm the date of the killings as of this writing.





### **Al-Raqqa governorate:**

Wednesday 29 June 2016, ISIS bombed a car near the People's House, a center for Self-management forces (Consisting primarily of the Democratic Union Party, a branch for the Kurdistan Workers' Party) in Tal Abyad city in the northern suburbs of Al-Raqqa governorate, which is under the control of Self-management forces. As a result, 10 civilians were killed and about 20 others were wounded.

### **Armed opposition factions**

#### **Aleppo governorate:**

Saturday 4 June 2016, a number of locally-made rocket shells fell on a vegetable market in Al-Midan neighborhood in Aleppo city, which is under the control of government forces, the source of the shells was an artillery stationed in Al-Hollok neighborhood, which is under the control of armed opposition factions. As a result, six civilians were killed at once including two children and about 12 others were wounded.

### **International coalition forces**

#### **Aleppo governorate:**

Friday 27 May 2016, international coalition warplanes fired missiles on residential homes in the eastern parts of Kaljibrein town in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, which is under the control of ISIS. As a result, 33 civilians were killed including 21 children and four women. Additionally, 12 others were wounded. We haven't been able to contact with activists from the area to confirm the incident until Saturday 4 June 2016.

Friday 3 June 2016, international coalition warplanes fired missiles on residential homes in Ouj Qanna village, located in southeastern Manbej city in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of ISIS. The bombing was simultaneously with ongoing clashes between Self-management forces and ISIS. As a result, 23 civilians were killed from the same family including 11 children and six women.





## IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions:

#### Government forces and Russian forces:

1. SNHR affirms that the bombing incidents, deliberate or indiscriminate, targeted armless civilians, thus, government forces and Russian forces have violated the articles of the international human rights law which guarantee the right to life. Furthermore, these violations were perpetrated during a non-international armed conflict which amount to war crimes as all elements of a war crime have been fulfilled.
2. SNHR believes that the acts of killing that took place during these massacres can be classified as crimes against humanity.
3. These attacks, especially bombing, have resulted in collateral damage that involved casualties, injuries, and damages to civil facilities. There are strong indicators that prove that the damage was deeply severe compared to the estimated military benefit. In all of the cases, we didn't find any military targets before or during these attacks.
4. The magnitude of the massacres, its frequent pattern, the exaggerated use of strength, its military nature, the indiscriminate manner of the bombing, and the coordinated approach of these attacks must be based on high orders, and a state policy.

#### Other forces:

According to this report, International coalition forces, ISIS, and armed opposition factions have committed massacres that constitute war crimes. However, these crimes are not crimes against humanity as in the case of government forces their allies that commit massacres in a widespread and systematic manner.

### Recommendations:

#### To The United Nations and the Security Council

1. To refer the case in Syria to the International Criminal Court and stop the disrupting of the decisions that must be adopted by the Security Council against the Syrian government. This disruption is a wrong message to all dictatorships around the world and supports the culture of crime.
2. To Impose urgent punishment on those who are involved in the violations of human rights.
3. To bind the Syrian government to allow all relief and human rights organizations to enter Syria, in addition to the International Intendent Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic and journalists and let them work without any obstructions.
4. Enforce an arms embargo against the Syrian government because it is using





weapons in widespread attacks against civilians.

5. Security Council must shoulder its responsibility of preserving security and civil peace in Syria because the violations of the Syrian government entail a gross threat to the international peace and security.

6. Listing the militias that are fighting with the Syrian government and have committed widespread massacres, like Hezbollah and the other Shiite brigades, National defense Army and “Shabiha” militia, on the international list of terrorist organizations.

7. Implementing the “Responsibility to Protect” norm agreed to by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, in Syria as it is direly needed there.

8. With the crimes against humanity committed by the Syrian government, the international community should stop dealing with this government as an “official side” concerning the relief issues, and stopping supplying the Syrian government with most of the financial and humanitarian aids that, in most cases, are not being delivered to those who are in need and go instead to the people and parties that support the Syrian government.

## Acknowledgment

Our thanks and appreciations go to the victims’ families, eyewitnesses, and local activists whose testimonies contributed majorly to this report. Our most profound consolations go out to the victims’ families and friends.

