



At Least 23 Attacks on Vital Facilities in April 2014

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I. Executive Summary:

In April, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) recorded at least 23 attacks on vital facilities, distributed according to the perpetrator party as follows:

A. Government forces: 21

B. Parties that SNHR was unable to identify: Two

The most notable vital facilities targeted in January:

Nine places of worship, five schools, one institute, one nursery, three medical facilities, four markets, and one of power stations and energy sources.

If the Security Council is unable to compel the parties to the conflict to implement its resolution 2139 of February 22, 2014, which provides for putting an end to “the indiscriminate use of weapons in populated areas, including artillery and aerial bombardments, such as the use of barrel bombs”, that the Security Council should at the very least exert minimal pressure on government forces mainly to stop them targeting vital community centers, such as schools, hospitals, markets, bakeries, and religious places. In this report, the SNHR sheds light on the attacks on vital facilities that the network was able to document during April 2014. We emphasize that the attacks documented account for the bare minimum of attacks actually carried out due to the many practical obstacles we encountered during the documentation process.





As a result of its investigations, SNHR confirms that there were no military headquarters in the facilities included in this report, either before or during the attack. Government forces and other perpetrators must justify their attacks to the United Nations and the Security Council.

II. Details of incidents:

A. Government forces:

- Places of worship:

On Friday, April 4, 2014, government helicopters dropped [two barrel bombs](#) on Omar Bin al Khattab Mosque in Daraya city southwest of Damascus Suburbs governorate, completely destroying the mosque building, putting it out of service. The city was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, April 6, 2014, government warplanes fired two missiles at [the mosque in Tal Fakhar](#) village in the eastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, causing extensive destruction to the perimeter wall of the mosque, in addition to inflicting significant material damage to the mosque's furniture and external cladding, putting it out of service. The village was under the joint control of Armed Opposition groups and Jabhat al Nusra at the time of the incident.

On Monday, April 7, 2014, a government tank fired a shell at [Omar Bin al Khattab Mosque](#) in al N'eima village in the eastern suburbs of Daraa governorate, causing minor material damage to the mosque building, as well as partial destruction to the minaret. The village was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, April 20, 2014, a government warplane fired a missile at [Othman Bin Affan Mosque](#) in the Masaken Hanano neighborhood east of Aleppo city, causing extensive destruction to the mosque building, in addition to inflicting significant material damage to the mosque furniture and external cladding, putting it out of service. The neighborhood was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, April 20, 2014, government artillery fired two shells at an area near [a mosque](#) in Jeiroud city northeast of Damascus Suburbs governorate, inflicting a massacre, in addition inflicting significant material damage to a number of shops. The city was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.





On Wednesday, April 23, 2014, a government helicopter dropped a barrel bomb near Abu Bakr al Siddiq Mosque in al Sakhour neighborhood in Aleppo city, causing partial destruction to its perimeter fence and one of its facades. The neighborhood was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, April 27, 2014, government artillery fired shells at al Omari Mosque in Busra al Sham city in the eastern suburbs of [Daraa governorate](#). The shells hit the minaret of the mosque, causing significant material damage to it. The city was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

- Schools:

On Sunday, April 20, 2014, a government warplane fired a missile at a school in Sarmin town in the northeastern suburbs of Idlib governorate, causing significant destruction to the building, as well as inflicting extensive material damage to its furniture and [external cladding](#), putting it out of service. The town was under the joint control of Armed Opposition groups and Jabhat al Nusra at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, April 27, 2014, a government helicopter dropped a barrel bomb near the primary school in al Mzayreeb town in the northwestern suburbs of Daraa governorate, causing significant martial damage to the school building. The town was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, April 27, 2014, a government warplane fired a missile at [Jeel al Hurriya School](#) in Qah village in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate, partially destroying the school's perimeter fence, in addition to inflicting significant material damage to the school building, putting it out of service. The village was under the joint control of Armed Opposition groups and Jabhat al Nusra at the time of the incident.

On Monday, April 28, 2014, a government helicopter dropped [a barrel bomb](#) on [Mahmoud Qassar Primary School](#) in Masaken Hanano neighborhood east of Aleppo city, causing partial damage to the schoolyard and perimeter fence, as well as causing extensive material damage to the external cladding. The neighborhood was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.





On Wednesday, April 30, 2014, at around 09:00, government warplanes fired missiles at Ein Jalout School in [al Ansari neighborhood](#) east of Aleppo city, perpetrating a massacre, as well as causing [extensive destruction](#) to the school building and perimeter fence, in addition to inflicting significant material damage to its furniture, putting it out of service. The neighborhood was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

- Nurseries:

On Friday, April 18, 2014, government warplanes fired [two missiles](#) near a kindergarten in Saqba city in the Eastern Ghouta east of Damascus Suburbs governorate, causing partial destruction of the kindergarten building, as well as inflicting considerable material damage to its furniture and external cladding, putting it out of service. The city was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

- Medical facilities:

On Monday, April 14, 2014, a government helicopter dropped a barrel bomb near a dispensary in Kahil village in the eastern suburbs of Daraa governorate, causing significant destruction to the dispensary building and equipment, putting it out of service. The village was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Monday, April 21, 2014, government helicopters dropped a number of [barrel bombs](#) at the [Syrian Hospital for Relief and Development](#) (Aleppo Central Hospital) in Masaken Hanano neighborhood east of Aleppo city, causing extensive destruction to the hospital building, as well as inflicting extensive material damage on its equipment. The neighborhood was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Wednesday, April 30, 2014, a government helicopter dropped a barrel bomb near Kafr Zeita Hospital in Kafr Zeita city in the northern suburbs of Hama governorate, destroying the front of the hospital, in addition to causing extensive destruction to the hospital garage. The city was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.





- Markets:

On Wednesday, April 2, 2014, government forces used a missile launcher to fire two surface-to-surface missiles at a popular market in Kafr Batna town in the Eastern Ghouta east of Damascus Suburbs governorate, inflicting casualties, in addition to partially destroying a number of shops. The town was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Monday, April 14, 2014, government warplanes fired [two missiles](#) at the main market in Douma city in the Eastern Ghouta east of Damascus Suburbs governorate, causing extensive destruction to a number of shops. The city was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Sunday, April 20, 2014, government artillery fired two shells at a popular [market in Jeiroud](#) city in the northeast of Damascus Suburbs governorate, perpetrating a massacre, in addition to causing extensive material damage to a number of shops. The city was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

On Thursday, April 24, 2014, a government warplane fired [a missile](#) at [a popular market](#) in al Atareb city in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate, causing significant destruction and extensive material damage to a number of the shops there. The city was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.





- Power stations and energy sources:

On Wednesday, April 2, 2014, a government warplane fired a missile at one of the main power stations in the old Aleppo area east of Aleppo city, causing significant material damage to the station building, as well as destroying two generators and a large portion of the station equipment, putting it out of service. The area was under the control of Armed Opposition groups at the time of the incident.

D. Parties that we were unable to identify:

- Places of worship:

On Friday, April 18, 2014, a car bomb exploded near Bilal al Habashi Mosque in Ikrema neighborhood south of Homs city, causing significant material damage to the mosque building and external cladding. We were unable to determine the perpetrator party up to the time of preparation of this report. Ikrema neighborhood was under the control of government forces at the time of the incident.

- Institutes:

On Tuesday, April 29, 2014, two mortar shells landed on the Sheikh Badr al Din al Hasani Complex for Shari'a and Arab Sciences in al Shaghour neighborhood south-east of Damascus city, perpetrating a massacre, as well as causing moderate material damage to the complex building. We were unable to determine the perpetrator party up to the time of preparation of this report. Al Shaghour neighborhood was under the control of government forces at the time of the incident.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

According to international humanitarian law, indiscriminate, deliberate or disproportionate attacks are unlawful, with the government forces' targeting of schools, hospitals, places of worship and furnaces demonstrating a blatant disregard for even the minimum standards of international humanitarian law and UN Security Council resolutions.

Extremist organizations and some other armed groups have also targeted some of these facilities. Indiscriminate bombing constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law and is tantamount to a war crime.





Recommendations:

UN Security Council:

- Compel the Syrian regime to implement Resolution 2139, and at the very least condemn the targeting of vital facilities which are essential for civilians.
- A comprehensive arms embargo should be imposed on the Syrian government, in view of its flagrant violations of international law and UN Security Council resolutions.
- The countries that supply weapons to the Syrian regime and groups that have been proved to have committed crimes against civilians should be categorized as accomplices in these crimes, along with all suppliers and distributors involved in supplying and providing access to materials used to perpetrate them.

