



Syrian Government's Use of Barrel Bombs in May 2015 1648 Barrel Bombs Killed 330 Individuals, including 79 Children and 45 Women

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I- Introduction:

By daily observing and recording the violations after the beginning of the popular protests in March 2011, we found out that first significant use of barrel bombs by government forces (Military forces, security forces, local militias, and foreign Shiite militias) was on Monday 1 October, 2012 in Idlib – Silqean town where a helicopter dropped a barrel bomb on a two-floor residential building which collapsed completely and 32 civilians, including seven women and seven children, were killed in addition to 120 others who were injured as shrapnel scattered everywhere. It is worth noting that this might not be the first time barrel bombs were used but it was the first time it was used in such a notable manner. The international community was not familiar with that kind of weapon yet. Barrel bombs are random weapons and locally made, since it is less expensive and causes massive destruction and a great loss of lives. 99% of the casualties are civilians, where the percentage of targeted women and children ranges between 12 and 35%. The same as with any new weapon, government forces cautiously waited for the international community's respond as the Syrian government deems the international community's silence or condemnation a red light to use and employ this weapon on a larger scale which was the case when it started using aerial weapon, poison gases, cluster munitions, and Scud missiles.

The Security Council waited a year and a half before adopting resolution 2139 on 22 February, 2014 which condemned the





use of barrel bombs and mentioned it by name: “Demands that all parties immediately cease all attacks against civilians, as well as the indiscriminate employment of weapons in populated areas, including shelling and aerial bombardment, such as the use of barrel bombs” The Syrians welcomed the resolution because it expressed an intention to take further action in the events of in compliance.

The Syrian government, through its allies at the Security Council first and the other states’ failure to shoulder their legal and moral role, disregarded resolution 2139 the same way it disregarded resolution 2118, adopted on 27 September, 2013, resolution 2042 and 2043, adopted in April 2012. The Syrian government fully realizes that there are no serious consequences of its action where its forces are openly and proudly violating the Security Council resolutions and international laws (A pro-government politician said on TV that the Syrian government should use nuclear weapons to attack the areas outside its control). Our daily documentation of violations shows that there is no notable difference before 22 February, 2014 (resolution 2139) and after.

II- Executive Summary

A- Barrel Bomb use during May 2015:

Through our daily documentation, SNHR team was able to document the use of not less than 1648 barrel bombs in May 2015 alone, detailed as follows:

- Damascus suburbs: 685
- Daraa: 302
- Hama: 278
- Aleppo: 237
- Idlib: 88
- Homs: 16
- Lattakia: 16
- Al Hassaka: 9
- Damascus: 7
- Al Qunaitera: 5
- Deir Al Zour: 5

The use of barrel bombs as random weapons killed 330 individuals, including 79 children and 45 women, according to the documentation team in SNHR.

The distribution of the victim’s death toll according to the Syrian governorates:

- Idlib: 43 individuals were killed, including 7 children and 11 women.
- Aleppo: 173 individuals were killed, including 41 children and 18 women.





- Hama: 29 individuals were killed, including 6 children and 7 women.
- Al Hassaka: 9 individuals were killed, including 2 children.
- Daraa: 24 individuals were killed, including 5 children and 5 women.
- Damascus suburbs: 3 individuals were killed, including a child.
- Damascus: 5 individuals were killed, including 2 children.
- Homs: 16 individuals were killed, including 4 children and 2 women.
- Deir Al Zour: 28 individuals were killed, including 11 children and 2 women.

B- Targeting Vital Facilities with Barrel Bombs:

We cannot document all destructions caused by barrel bombs, therefore we recorded the number of vital facilities targeted by government aviation.

Barrel bombs targeted not less than 46 vital facilities, detailed as follows:

- Schools: 10
- Medical Facilities: 8
- Places of Worship: 7
- Ambulances: 7
- Markets: 3
- Service Cars: 3
- Red Crescent Headquarters: 2
- Bakeries: 2
- Civil Defense Centers: 1
- Pharmaceutical Factories: 1
- Service cars: 1
- Orphanages: 1

III- Report Details:

A- Barrel Bombs' Toll during May 2015:

Government barrel bombs resulted in several massacres, detailed as follows:

Aleppo:

- 1- On 1 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on a residential building in Aleppo, **Al Salhien neighborhood** which killed eight victims including three children.
- 2- On Sunday 3 May 2015, government helicopters dropped one barrel bomb on Al Shahid Nour Al Din Maktbi Kindergarten in Aleppo, in **Saif Al Dawla neighborhood** which killed nine victims including three children and one woman.





3- On 8 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on a residential building on a residential building next to Khan Al Asal town in Aleppo which killed 5 civilians including 2 children and a woman.

4- On 12 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on a car garage in Al Jisr region in Aleppo which killed 30 civilians including 2 children and a woman. More than 50 individuals were injured.



5- On 20 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Al Balat neighborhood in Aleppo which killed 7 individuals including 3 children and 2 women. A three-story residential building was completely destroyed.

6- On 22 May 2015, government helicopters dropped two barrel bombs on Andan city in Aleppo which killed 11 civilians including eight children and three women.

7- On 25 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on an urban market in Aleppo suburbs – Tal Ad-Daman town to kill six victims.

8- On 30 May 2015, government helicopters dropped two barrel bombs on a market in Al-Bab city which killed 53 victims including three children and one woman.

9- On 30 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Al Sha'ar neighborhood in Aleppo which killed 9 individuals including 4 children and 4 women.



Deir Al Zour:

1- On 3 May 2015, government helicopters dropped 3 barrel bombs on Hatla town in Deir Al Zour which killed 8 civilians including 4 children and injured 12 others.

2- On 23 May 2015, government warplanes dropped a barrel bomb on one of the residential buildings in Al Hamadeyi neighborhood which killed 18 civilians including 10 children and a woman. 25 others were injured.





Homs:

1- On 17 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Al Sikhna city in Homs which killed 8 civilians including 4 children and 2 women.

Hama:

1- On 5 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Al Shirka town in Hama which killed 9 civilians including a child and 3 women.

2- On 15 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Al Emkeya town in Hama which killed 6 civilians including a child and two women.

Daraa:

1- On 4 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Al Yadouda town in Daraa which killed 13 individuals including 5 children and 3 women.

Al Hassaka:

1- On 3 May 2015, government helicopters dropped two barrel bombs on Al Shadadi city in Al Hassaka which killed 3 children and injured 4 others.

B- Targeting Vital Facilities with Barrel Bombs:

Medical Facilities:

1- On 2 May 2015, government warplanes dropped a barrel bomb on Orient Surgical Hospital in Ma'art Al No'man city in Idlib which injured several individuals and caused material damages.

2- On 3 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bombs dropped a barrel bomb on the medical point in Al Sukari neighborhood in Aleppo which killed an individual and injured several others. Additionally, the medical point was partially damaged.

3- On 7 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Hama's Central Surgical Hospital in Hzareen town in Idlib which killed one of the medical cadres there and damaged the hospital.





4- On 12 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on an ambulance group in Jub Al Kibbi neighborhood in Aleppo which destroyed the building almost completely.

5- On 14 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on Martyr Abdul Hadi [Al Fares Medical Center](#) in Salah Al Deen neighborhood in Aleppo which [killed 4 individuals](#) and injured 6 others. Additionally, the building was greatly destroyed. The equipment were damaged as well.

6- On 23 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on [Al Tababa medical center](#) in [Al Sukari neighborhood](#) which caused great destruction and rendered the building out of service.

7- On 24 May 2015, government [warplanes](#) dropped [two barrel bombs](#) on [Kafr Zeita hospital](#) in Hama which [killed two individuals](#) from the medical personnel, greatly [destroyed the hospital](#) and caused it to go out of service.



8- On 31 May 2015, government warplanes dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on Omar Bin Abed Al Aziz hospital in Al Ma'adi neighborhood in Aleppo which injured several individuals, caused great material damages and rendered the hospital out of service.

Schools:

1- On 4 April 2015, government warplanes dropped a barrel bomb on an elementary school in Al Raṣṭan City in Homs. We verified the incident on 5 May 2015. Eyewitnesses confirmed that several people were injured and some classrooms were almost completely destroyed.

2- On 2 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Hitla School for girls in Hitla town in Deir Al Zour which damaged the building.

3- On 2 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb next to a school that sheltered displaced individuals in Kafr Ameem town in Idlib which killed two women and caused damages in the school's building.

4- On 3 May 2015, government warplanes dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on Martyr Nour Al Deen Maktabi Nursery School in [Sief Al Dawla neighborhood](#) in Aleppo which killed 9 individuals including 3 children and a woman. The school was damaged and some classrooms were destroyed.





- 5- On 11 May 2015, government warplanes dropped a barrel bomb on Shabibat Al Ba'ath School in Al Qaterji neighborhood in Aleppo which damaged the school's building.
- 6- On 17 May 2015, government warplanes dropped a barrel bomb on Ameen Marzouk School in Al Aradi neighborhood in Deir Al Zour city which greatly destroyed it.
- 7- On 19 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Youssef Al Azama School in Bab Al Nayreb neighborhood in Aleppo which killed 2 individuals and injured a woman. Great damages occurred in the school's building.
- 8- On 25 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on a school in Al Haweez town in Hama which damaged the school's roof. No injuries or casualties were recorded.
- 9- On 28 May 2015, government helicopters dropped two barrel bombs on a girls' high school in Al Latamena city in Hama which partially damaged the school's building.
- 10- On 31 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on a school in Kafr Aweed town in Idlib which caused partial destruction in the school's building.

Places of Worship:

- 1- On 14 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb next to Othman Bin Maz'oun mosque in Ba'abdeen neighborhood in Aleppo which damaged the mosque.
- 2- On 22 May 2015, government helicopters dropped barrel bombs next to Al Marah mosque in Al Zabadani city in Damascus suburbs which caused some damages. No human casualties or injuries were reported.
- 3- On 24 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on the Great Mosque in Zaytan town in Aleppo suburbs which killed 2 children and damaged the building.
- 4- On 27 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on one of the mosques in Al Tamane'a town in Idlib suburbs which damaged it.
- 5- On 29 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Hamza Bin Abdul Mutaleb Mosque in Adnan city in Aleppo which killed an individual and caused some destruction.
- 6- On 31 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Al Sawas Mosque in Jebb Al Qibba neighborhood in Aleppo which destroyed the mosque almost completely.
- 7- On 31 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on a mosque in Atshan town in Hama which caused great material damages.





Markets:

- 1- On 25 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on a market in Tal Al Daman town in Aleppo suburbs which killed 6 individuals and injured 15 others. Several shops were damaged.
- 2- On 26 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on a commercial region in Al Raſtan city in Homs which caused great destruction to the shops.
- 3- On 30 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Al Hal Market in Al Bab city in Aleppo which killed 53 individuals including 3 children and a woman. Several shops were damaged.

Ambulances:

- 1- On 3 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bombs dropped a barrel bomb on the medical point in Al Sukari neighborhood in Aleppo which killed an individual and injured several others. Additionally, the medical point and its ambulance were partially damaged.
- 2- On 12 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on an ambulance group in Jub Al Kibbi neighborhood in Aleppo which destroyed the building and two ambulances almost completely.
- 3- On 14 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on the Civil Defense center in Khan Shaykhoun in Idlib which killed 2 children and a woman. In addition to material damages, 3 ambulances were damaged.
- 4- On 14 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on an infirmary in Al Saleheen neighborhood in Aleppo which killed 4 individuals and damaged an ambulance.

Service Vehicles:

- 1- On 14 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on the civil defense centre in Khan Shaykhoun city in Idlib which damaged a bulldozer, water tank, and a fire truck.

Red Crescent Headquarters:

- 1- On 8 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Red Crescent warehouses in Jisr Al Hajj region in Aleppo which damaged the warehouses and destroyed its contents.
- 2- On 18 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Red Crescent warehouses in Jisr Al Hajj region in Aleppo which injured an individual and almost completely destroyed the warehouses and its contents.





Bakeries:

1- On 3 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on the automatic bakery in eastern Al Ghara town in Daraa which killed an individual and partially destroyed the facility.

2- On 30 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a barrel bomb on Al Khamees bakery in Al Bou Amro town in Deir Al Zour suburbs which injured 2 individuals, almost completely destroyed the bakery and caused it to go out of service.

Civil Defense Centers:

1- On 14 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on the civil defense centre in Khan Shaykhoun city in Idlib which killed 2 children and a woman. Also, 5 members from the civil defense were injured. The center's building was greatly damaged and thus went out of service.

Pharmaceutical Factories:

1- On 22 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on Al Razi Pharmaceutical Factory in Al Mansoura town in Aleppo which greatly damaged the building.

Service Vehicles:

1- On 12 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a [barrel bomb](#) on a [service car gathering point](#) in [Jisr Al Hajj region](#) in Aleppo which [killed 30 civilians](#) including 2 children and a woman. More than [50 others](#) were injured.

Orphanages:

1- On 2 May 2015, government helicopters dropped a [barrel bomb](#) next to an orphanage in Ma'art Al No'man city in Idlib which damaged the orphanage.

IV- Conclusions and Recommendations:

The Syrian government has, beyond any doubt, violated Security Council resolution 2139 and used barrel bombs in a widespread and systematic manner. Furthermore, the Syrian government perpetrated the crime of murder in a widespread and systematic manner according to Article VII of The International Criminal Court Rome Statute. Additionally, it violated many principles of the international humanitarian law and perpetrated tens of





crimes that can be classified openly as war crimes through its indiscriminate and proportionate bombing.

1- SNHR notes that the bombing using explosive barrels is an act of indiscriminate bombing that targeted armless civilians, thus the government forces and its militias have violated the articles of the international law for human rights which guarantee the right to live. Furthermore these violations were perpetrated during a non-international armed conflict and hence can be absolutely classified as war crimes.

2- The random attacks committed by the government forces are considered violations of the customary international law considering the fact that government forces have attacked residential areas rather than a specific military target.

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

4- The magnitude of this wide systematic frequent bombing, the level of its excessive strength, its military nature, and the coordinated approach of these attacks must be based on high orders, and a state policy.

5- Government forces, and all of its leaderships and forms, are responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes as well as any parties that support the Syrian government politically, materially, and militarily – such as the Russian government, the Iranian government, and Hezbollah in addition to the weapon manufacturing companies. All of these parties must be prosecuted for the crimes they perpetrated, or contributed to, against the Syrian people.

Recommendations

The Security Council

1- The Security Council should take serious steps in order to implement its resolutions which have become ineffective and thus lost all of its credibility and purpose.

2- Also, it should impose an arms embargo on the Syrian government and prosecute anyone who supplies the Syrian government with money and weapon considering that those resources are being used to perpetrate crimes and serious human rights violations.

3- The Security Council is the party who has the authority to refer the Syrian case to the International Criminal Court. Instead of preserving peace and security, the Security Council is hindering this step. Everyone responsible for war crimes and crimes against must be prosecuted.





V- Attachments:

Images and videos that depict the barrel bomb shelling in May 2015:

A video that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Sad Al Lawz neighborhood](#) in Aleppo in 3 May 2015

A video that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Talbisa city](#) in Homs on 3 May 2015

A video that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Mo'adameyat Al Sham city](#) in Damascus suburbs on 4 May 2015

A video that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Nahlaya town](#) in Idlib on 5 May 2015

A video that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Oum Sharhouh town](#) in Homs on 6 May 2015

A video that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [the western farms](#) in Talbisa city in Homs on 6 May 2015

A video that depicts the location of a shelled barrel bomb on [Ein Zakar town](#) in Daraa on 20 May 2015

A video that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Al Mowasalat city](#) in Aleppo on 21 May 2015

A video that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Tareeq Al Bab city](#) in Aleppo on 21 May 2015

A video that depicts the moment a barrel bomb was shelled on [Masakaen Hanano neighborhood](#) in Aleppo on 30 May 2015

A video that depicts the barrel bomb shelling on [Al Shiekh Miskeen city](#) in Daraa on 30 May 2015



Syrian Network For Human Rights

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