

**Press Release**

# **Comprehensive Strategy Needed to Stop Assad's War Crimes**

**SNHR**

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Saturday, April 14, 2018

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, independent group that is considered a primary source for the OHCHR on all death toll-related analyses in Syria.



Following the launch of US, French and UK missile strikes on Syrian regime military targets in Syria on Saturday morning, Syrian civil society representatives are calling on the US and Europe to develop a comprehensive strategy to deter future atrocities by Assad's forces.

"The United States, France and United Kingdom have sent an important message that Assad's days of gassing Syrian civilians with impunity are over", Fadel Abdul Ghany of the Syrian Network for Human Rights said. "For too long, the international community has stood on the sidelines as Assad's forces gassed, starved, and bombed civilians. Red lines went unenforced. War crimes went undeterred. Today, we are hopeful that this shameful period of inaction ends, and a new era of civilian protection begins."

"Without a larger strategy to end the crisis, however, today's actions will not change Assad's calculus – to the contrary, they could make the humanitarian situation worse", Dr Zaher Sahloul, President of [Med Global](#), said. "Assad and his allies will most likely escalate their attacks elsewhere, like in Idlib, where 2.5 million Syrians - half of them internally displaced - are stuck, or in Daraa and North Homs. Such escalation will exacerbate the grave humanitarian catastrophe and trigger large displacement of population and new refugee crisis. Any action therefore should be part of a broader diplomatic effort – and pressure on Russia – to bring Assad to the negotiating table, prepared to accept political transition based on Security Council resolution 2254. The US and Europe must make clear that there will be consequences if Assad continues to bomb civilians. Without those consequences, today's strikes could prove counterproductive."

"For US and Europe strategy to be sustainable, it must focus on protecting civilians from indiscriminate violence, whether of a chemical or conventional nature. As horrific as chemical attacks are, they represent just a fraction of all civilian deaths", Rafif Jouejati, the co-founder of [FREE Syria](#) said. "The primary killer of Syrian civilians – and the key to Assad's military strategy – is indiscriminate aerial bombardment. As long as Assad is given a free pass to bomb Syrian civilians, the suffering will continue, as will the Syrian conflict. The US and Europe should therefore adopt a comprehensive strategy to deter all indiscriminate attacks, taking all necessary precautions to prevent civilian casualties. This action is key to enforcing the ceasefire mandated by Security Council resolution 2401 and reaching a political solution to the Syrian crisis."





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