

Statement

SNHR Calls for Sanctions to be Imposed on Russian and Iranian Companies and Urges that they should be Prohibited from Contributing to Reconstruction Efforts in Syria

Any State that Contributes to the Reconstruction Efforts While the Current Syrian Regime Remains in Power is Considered to be Supportive of the Regime and of all the Crimes against Humanity for which it is Responsible

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

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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.



The Russian regime's role in Syria has had a catastrophic impact on the Syrian people and the Syrian state since the start of the popular uprising in Syria which aimed to change the oppressive system of one-family rule. This can be shown in three main ways:

First: the Russian and Iranian regimes have stood by the Syrian regime which has been responsible for thousands of violations that constitute crimes against humanity since the first months of the popular uprising against the Assad family's brutal dynastic rule that broke out in March 2011. This has been well-documented in the Commission of Inquiry's reports, as well as in numerous other reports by international human rights groups and in statements by SNHR. Under international law, Russia's and Iran's support for the Syrian regime directly implicates them in a series of sustained and egregious violations which the regime has perpetrated and continues to perpetrate thanks to Russian and Iranian support, with Russia using its veto powers at the Security Council to shield the Syrian regime for the first time on October 4, 2011, while the popular uprising that aimed for a democratic change was in its first months.

Second: Russian forces have directly perpetrated hundreds of violations that constitute war crimes since Russia's military intervention began on September 30, 2015, whether by indiscriminate or deliberate bombardment. SNHR has worked diligently to build an extensive database documenting the most notable violations by Russian forces since the start of Russia's military intervention in Syria and the violations that ensued, including killing, destruction, and displacement. In this task, we relied on continuous monitoring of incidents and on news reports, as well as cross-checking information and eyewitnesses' accounts, and analyzing photos, videos, figures, and remnants of weapon and munitions.



The toll of most notable violations of human rights perpetrated by Russian forces in Syria between September 30, 2015, and September 30, 2018

- 6,239 civilians have been killed, including 1,804 children, 92 medical personnel, and 19 media workers.
- No fewer than 321 massacres.
- No fewer than 954 attacks on vital civilian facilities, including 176 attacks on schools, 166 attacks on medical facilities, and 55 attacks on markets.
- No fewer than 232 attacks using cluster munitions and 125 attacks using incendiary munitions in populated areas.
- Approximately 2.7 million people have been displaced as a result of attacks carried out by the Syrian-Russian-Iranian alliance.

Third: Using its veto powers in favor of continuing to perpetrate war crimes and crimes against humanity, Russia has been keen to shield the Syrian regime by obstructing any Security Council Resolution that calls for holding the latter to account or even condemning it. Russia has used its veto powers 12 times in an arbitrary fashion, including six times concerning the issue of chemical weapons, as well as impeding the extension of the Joint Investigative Mechanism's mandate, and obstructing the investigations into the chemical attack on Douma in April 2018. In addition, Russia has hindered the work of the Commission of Inquiry. Russia's goal, in these three actions, was to earn as much as possible from the reconstruction process, as well as keeping the brutal dynastic Assad regime in power.

In light of these facts, SNHR calls on the international community and relevant states to:

First: The United States, the European states, and all Friends of Syria must impose sanctions on Russian and Iranian companies, which will undermine their role in the reconstruction process in Syria.

Second: Abstain from lifting those sanctions until the Russian regime establishes a genuine political process that involves the formation of a transitional governing body in which criminals have no role in anchoring the future of Syria and the reconstruction process.

Third: A message must be clearly delivered that the Russian regime should be held responsible for providing restitution for all the properties bombed and destroyed by its forces, as well as compensating victims' families.

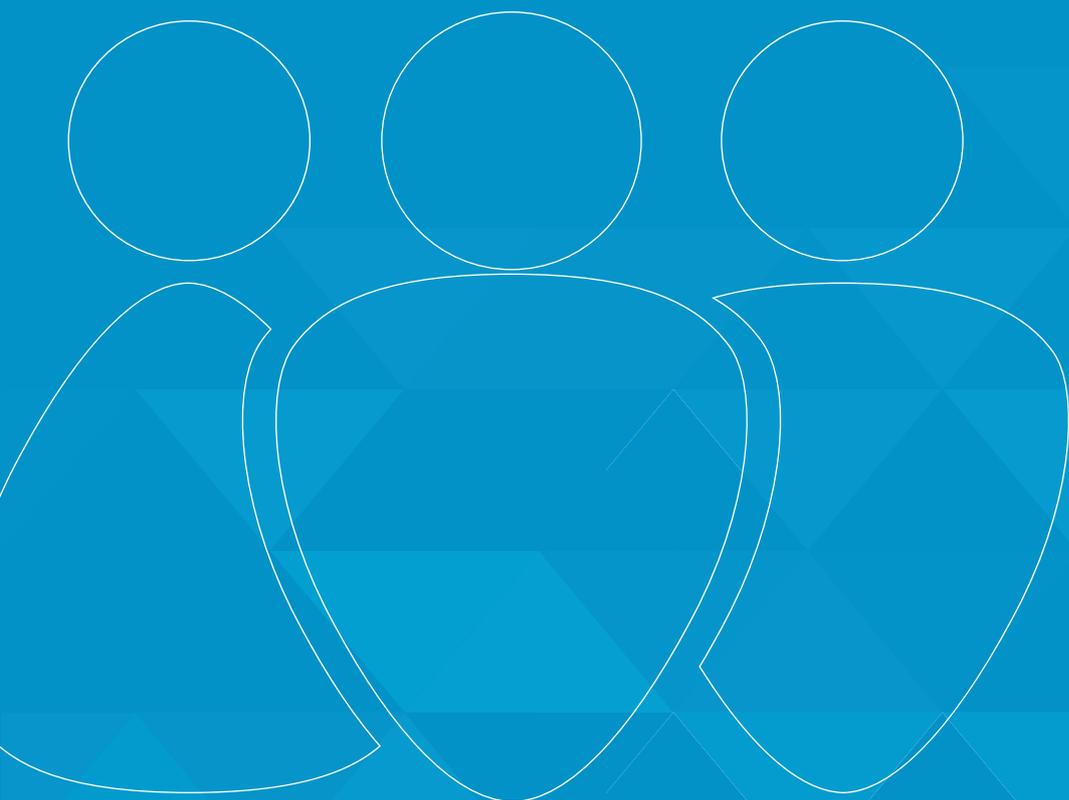


Fourth: Any European or regional state willing to strike a reconstruction deal in Syria while the current regime remains in power will be seen as being directly involved in rewarding the regime for its hundreds of thousands of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and even as being directly involved in violating the victims' rights by supporting those responsible for bombing and killing them. SNHR and its allies will not hesitate in the slightest to expose and prosecute this complicity and these practices on all levels.

Fifth: Linking the reconstruction process with a political transition process is the only option to ensure that stability returns to the Syrian state. This policy should be implemented in parallel with a strategy to hold the perpetrator of violations accountable for their actions. Launching any reconstruction process before a political transition is a recipe for long-term war and chaos.

Sixth: The Russian government must abandon its support for the current dynastic regime in Syria, cease its attempts to rehabilitate the regime, and seriously contribute to bringing about a political transition, which will ensure it a role in the reconstruction process.





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