

No less than 21 Massacres in January 2017

Including 11 Massacres at the
Hands of the Russian and Syrian
Regime

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Wednesday, February 8, 2017

The Syrian Network for Human Rights, founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, non-profit independent organization that is a primary source for the United Nations on all death toll-related statistics in Syria



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I. Executive Summary

On December 30, 2016, a comprehensive ceasefire was announced in Syria under a Russian-Turkish sponsorship. The parties signing to the statement - the Syrian regime, on one hand, and armed opposition factions, on the other hand, pledged to cease all combat operations including aerial airstrikes, and cease all raids and advancements on the ground. However, military ISIS-held areas (Self-proclaimed the Islamic State) were excluded from the agreement. Since the Ankara Ceasefire Agreement went into effect, there has been a decent and notable drop in the rates of killing throughout Syria in comparison with the previous months from March 2011 until now. The main focus here is the areas under the control of armed opposition factions, as the Syrian regime-held areas aren't subjected to heavy, daily aerial bombardment, which has resulted in the killing of no less than 60% of the victims, and destroyed buildings, displacing the people of Syria.

Nonetheless, breaches haven't stopped, mainly by the Syrian regime, who is seemingly the party that would be affected the most should the ceasefire go on, especially crimes of extrajudicial killing, and, more horrendously, deaths due to torture, which strongly proves that there is some sort of ceasefire on the table. The crimes, however, that the international community wasn't able to notice, and particularly the Turkish and Russian sponsors, are still ongoing as nothing has changed in that regard.

SNHR documented no less than 21 massacres in January 2017 which were distributed as follows:

- A. Syrian regime forces (Army, security, local militias, Shiite foreign militias): 6
- B. Russian Forces: 5
- C. ISIS: 3



D. International coalition forces: 4

E. Other parties: 3

SNHR describes an incident as a massacre if it involves the killing of five peaceful individuals at the same time. For more information about our methodology in documenting victims, please see the Following [URL](#)

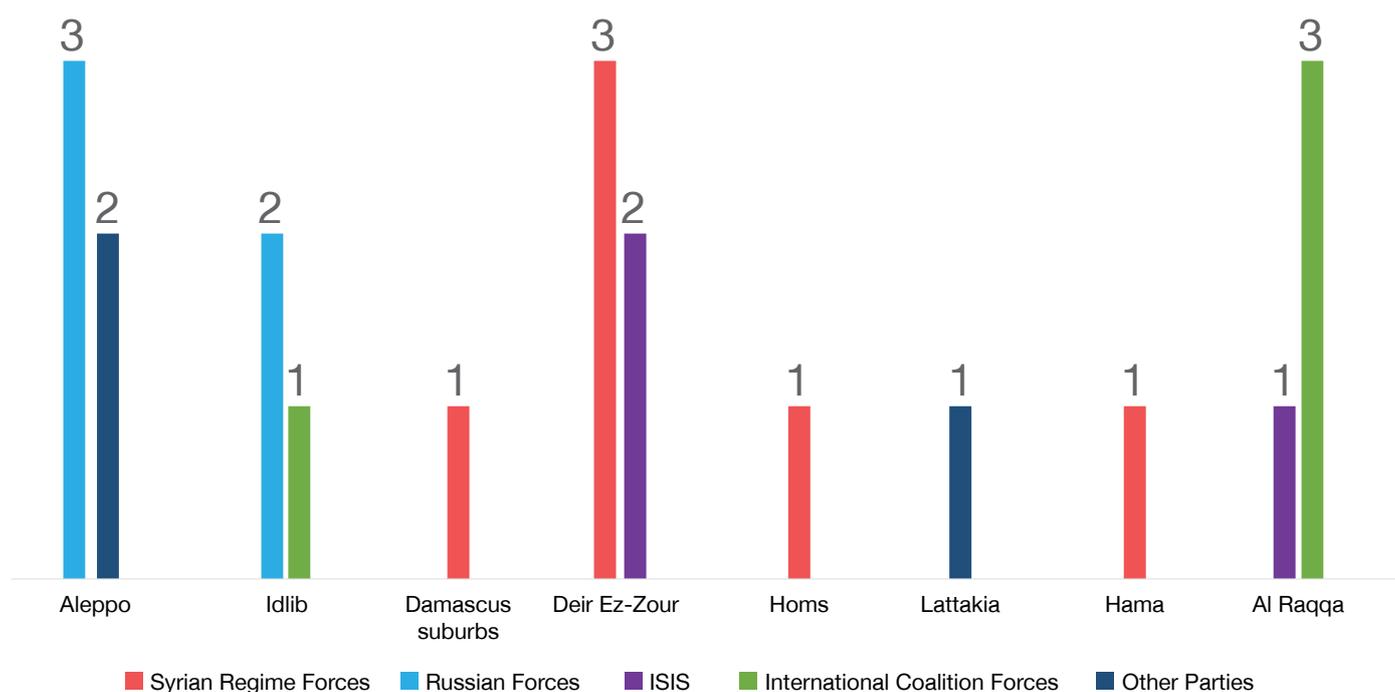
Massacres perpetrated by Syrian regime forces during the month of January 2017 were distributed by areas of control as follows:

- 2 massacres in areas under the control of armed opposition factions.
- 1 massacre in areas under the control of Fateh Al Sham Front
- 3 massacre in areas under the control of ISIS

Massacres were distributed across Syrian governorates as follows:

Deir Ez-Zour: 5, Aleppo: 5, Idlib: 3, Al Raqqa: 4, Damascus suburbs: 1, Homs: 1, Hama: 1, Latakia: 1

The following table shows the distribution of massacres by the perpetrator party



According to SNHR's victim documentation team, 205 individuals were killed in these massacres including 64 children and 27 women which implies that 45% of the victims were women and children. This considerably high percentage is an indication that civilians were targeted in most of these massacres.

The death toll of these massacres is distributed by the perpetrator as follows:

Syrian regime forces: 48 individuals including 21 children and eight women.

Russian forces: 31 individuals including 14 children and eight women.

ISIS: 18 civilians including nine children and two women.

International coalition forces: 27 civilians including nine children and two women.

Other parties: 81 individuals including 11 children and seven women.

II. Details

A. Syrian regime forces

Damascus suburbs governorate

Sunday, January 15, 2017, tanks from the Syrian regime forces and pro-regime militias that are stationing in area overseeing [Kfeir Al Zeit village](#) fired shells at an IDPs gathering in Al Rim hall in [Der Qanoun village](#) in Wadi Barada area, located in the northwestern Damascus suburbs governorate, which resulted in the killing of [12 civilians](#). The village was under the control of armed opposition factions, with a minor presence for some Fateh Al Sham Front members in the village, at the time of the [massacre](#), whereas it is currently under the control of Syrian regime forces.



Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Sunday, January 15, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes fired missiles at Al-Labed neighborhood in Mohasan city, located in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and is under the control of ISIS, which resulted in the killing of six civilians, who were mostly from the same family, including two children and three women.

Tuesday, January 17, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes fired missiles at Al Ummal neighborhood, located in eastern Deir Ez-Zour city and is under the control of ISIS, which resulted in the killing of 10 civilians including five children and two women.

Monday, January 23, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes fired missiles at Al Ummal neighborhood, located in eastern Deir Ez-Zour city and is under the control of ISIS, which resulted in the killing of seven civilians from the same family (Five children and two women).

Homs governorate

Sunday, January 22, 2017, around 11:23, fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes carried out an airstrike, where it fired two missiles at southern Taldao city in Al Hola area, located in the northern suburbs of Homs governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions, which resulted in the killing of seven civilians at once including four children and one medical personnel.

Hama governorate

Monday, January 16, 2017, around 22:15, fixed-wing Syrian regime/Russian forces warplanes (Investigation are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party precisely.) fired missiles at a residential house in Aniq Bajra in northern [Al Se'in area](#), located in the eastern suburbs of Hama governorate within the parts that are under the control of Fateh Al Sham Front, which resulted in the [killing](#) of [six civilians](#) from the same family (Five children and one woman).



Russian forces

Aleppo governorate

Thursday dawn, January 12, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles at the eastern parts of Babka village, located in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions, which resulted in the killing of [six civilians](#) at once (Three children and three women).

Monday noon, January 23, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles in the vicinity of the cemetery in the eastern parts of Qasr Al Brij village, located in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of ISIS, which resulted in the killing of seven civilians from the same family including three children and two women.

Monday morning, January 30, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles at Jam'ieyat Rif Al Muhandiseen in Kafr Jom [village](#), located in the western suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions, which resulted in [the killing of seven civilians](#) at once (Six children and one woman).



Idlib governorate

Friday, January 13, 2017, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian carried out two missile airstrikes at the residential houses in the eastern parts of Urm Al Jouz town, located in the southern suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh Al Sham Front, which resulted in the killing of six civilians, who were mostly from the same family, including two female children and two women. Additionally, about seven others were wounded.

Sunday, January 14, 2017, around 03:45, fixed-wing warplanes we believe are Russian fired missiles at Al Hal market in the northern parts of Ma'aret Misreen city, located in the northern suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh Al Sham Front, which resulted in the killing of five individuals at once. Additionally, about eight others were wounded.



C. Extremist Islamic groups

ISIS

Deir Ez-Zour governorate

Friday, January 20, 2017, ISIS artillery fired a number of mortar shells at Al Joura neighborhood, located in eastern Deir Ez-Zour city and is under the control of Syrian regime forces, which resulted in the killing of six civilians (Five children and their father).

Wednesday, January 25, 2017, ISIS artillery fired a number of mortar shells at Harabesh neighborhood, located in eastern Deir Ez-Zour city and is under the control of Syrian regime forces, which resulted in the killing of six civilians from the same family (Four children and two women).

Al Raqqa governorate

Wednesday, January 25, 2017, ISIS infiltrated Al Mahmoudli village, which is affiliated to Al Jarniya area in the western suburbs of Al Raqqa governorate and is under the control of the Kurdish-majority Syrian Democratic Forces, and shot dead six civilians on charges of apostasy and working with the Kurdish-majority Syrian Democratic Forces. It should be noted that the victims were IDPs from Abu Sakher village, which is affiliated to Al Tabaqa city in the western suburbs of Al Raqqa governorate and is under the control of ISIS.

D. International coalition forces

Idlib governorate

Tuesday, January 3, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired four missiles at the prison of The Judicial House which is inside one of the central bases for Fateh Al Sham Front in a mountainous area, located between Sarmada city and Kafr Daryan town in the suburbs of Idlib governorate and is under the joint control of armed opposition factions and Fateh Al Sham Front, which resulted in the killing of nine of the group's captives.

Al Raqqa governorate

Friday, January 6, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired missiles at Swediya Kabira village, which is affiliated to Al Tabaqa city in the western suburbs of Al Raqqa governorate and is under the control of ISIS. The bombardment resulted in the killing of eight civilians from the same family including six children and one woman.



Saturday, January 7, 2017, an international coalition forces drone fired missiles at Kasrat Al Sheikh village, located in the southern suburbs of Al Raqqa governorate and is under the control of ISIS, which resulted in the killing of five civilians at once including one female child and one woman.

Saturday January 7, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes fired missiles at Al Ghabban village, which is affiliated to Ain Eisa area in the northern suburbs of Al Raqqa governorate and is under the control of ISIS. The bombardment resulted in the killing of five civilians including two children.

E. Other parties

Aleppo governorate

Saturday, January 7, 2017, a suicidal bomber blew a [bomb car](#) that he was in near the central court building in [Izaz city](#), located in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of armed opposition factions, which resulted in [the killing](#) of [62 individuals](#) including [six children](#) and two [women](#). As of this writing, we haven't been able to determine the group behind the [bombing](#).



Wednesday noon, January 18, 2017, fixed-wing international coalition forces/Turkish forces warplanes (Investigation are still ongoing to determine the perpetrator party precisely.) fired missiles at Al Habousa area in Tadeef town, located in the eastern suburbs of Aleppo governorate and is under the control of ISIS, which resulted in the killing of eight civilians at once including one female child and one woman.

Latakia governorate

Thursday, January 5, 2017, a car bomb detonated in Al Mal'ab Al Baladi street in Jabla city, located in the southern suburbs of Latakia governorate and is under the control of Syrian regime forces, which resulted in the killing of 11 individuals including four children, four women, and two military personnel who happened to be in the area. As of this writing, we haven't been able to determine the group behind the bombing.



III. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Syrian regime forces and Russian forces

1- SNHR can confirm the bombing cases, deliberate or indiscriminate, targeted armless civilians, thus, Syrian and Russian regime forces have violated the rules of the international human rights law which guarantee the right to life. Furthermore, these violations were perpetrated during a non-international armed conflict which amounts 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 bombardment, have resulted in collateral damages that involved casualties, injuries, and damages to civil facilities. There are strong indicators that compel to believe that the damage was deeply severe compared to the anticipated military benefit. In all of the cases, we couldn't confirm that there were 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, ISIS, international coalition forces, and other parties (including groups that we weren't able to identify in addition to Turkish, Lebanese, and Jordanian forces) have committed massacres that constitute war crimes. However, these crimes are not crimes against humanity as in the case of Syrian regime forces and its pro-forces that are committing massacres in a widespread and systematic manner.

Recommendations

The United Nations and the Security Council

1. 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. Impose urgent punishments on those who are involved in widespread violations of human rights in Syria.
3. Bind the Syrian government to allow all relief and human rights organizations to enter



Syria as well as the International Intendent Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic and journalists and let them work without any obstructions.

4. Insure that all weapon imports to the Syrian government, who is using weapons in wide-spread attacks against civilians, are halted.

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

6. List the militias that are fighting with the Syrian government and have committed wide-spread massacres, like Iranian militias, the Lebanese group Hezbollah, other Shiite brigades, National defense Army and “Shabiha” militias, on the international list of terrorist organizations.

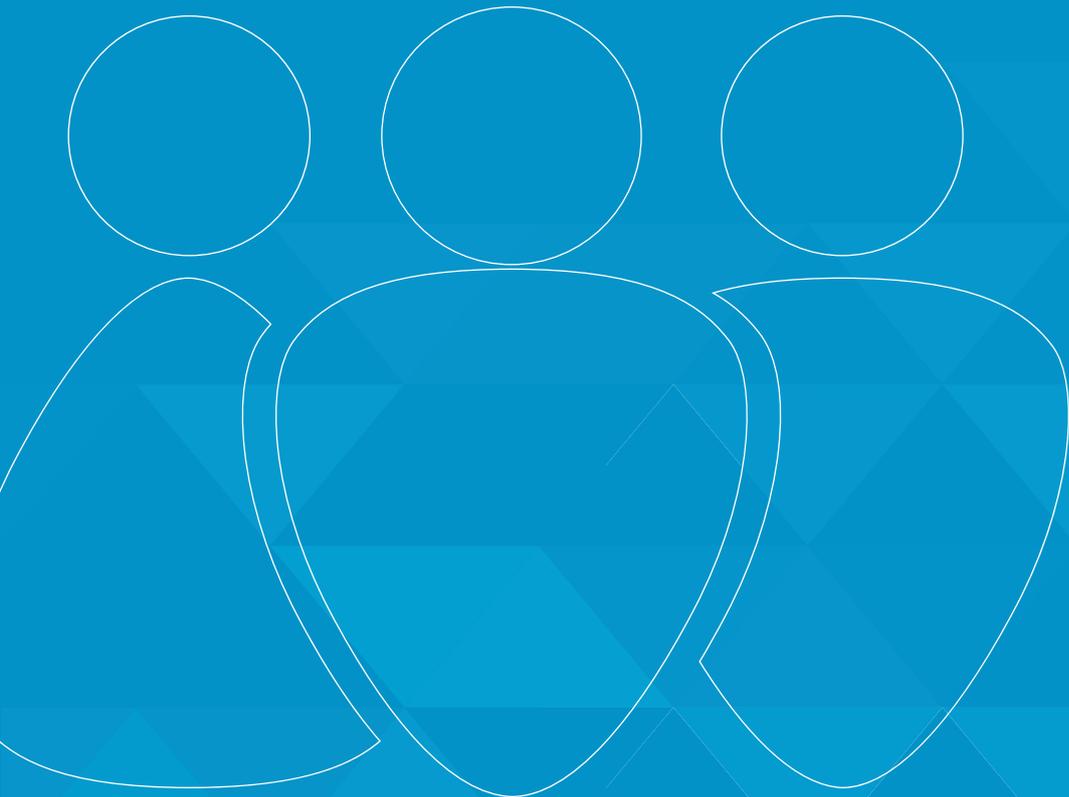
7. Implement the “Responsibility to Protect” norm, which was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005, in Syria as it is direly needed there.

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 stop 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 and Condolences

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





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