Prepared by:
Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR)
The Scope of the Report: Documenting the aggressive air strikes against Dariyya city in Damascus countryside from 31 Dec, 2013 until 20 Feb, 2014.

Introduction:
Darriya city is located in Damascus countryside 8 Km to the west of Damascus, the capital

The approach of this report is based on the investigations conducted by SNHR’s team in Damascus countryside with some of the residents and activists, this report includes some witnesses’ testimonies in addition to news, pictures, and videos that we received almost every day during that time via activists, and cooperating journalists. We attached this information we received after reviewing and editing it by experts in SNHR as no one of our team was able to visit the city during the time in which we were preparing this report, please note that the names of the witnesses were modified upon their request for safety purposes.

Details:
After the excessive air strikes with explosive barrels against Aleppo by the government forces, that destroyed large sections of Aleppo’s neighborhoods and killed thousands of victims under absolute international silence especially on the Security Council part, whose phrases about Syria were very general in regard to using this kind of indiscriminate weapons that don’t achieve anything but destruction and killing without any particular and accurate military target; all this enticed the Syrian government to escalate its attacks of the explosive barrels and move to Daraa like what happened in Al-Muzereieb and Tsyl towns. It also moved to attack Darriya city in Damascus countryside. During the time in which we made this report we de

Barrel Bombs......More than 330 barrels on Darriya alone

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ected that no less than 330 bombs were used against Darriya which killed 29 victims including seven women and seven children. There were also 250 wounded. The notable low number of victims was because of the displacement from Darriy city where 175,000 have left the city while less than 8,000 stayed.

The number of explosive barrels used by the government forces has exceeded 5375 barrels that killed 6493 people, more than 97% of which were civilian. Moreover, the explosive barrels caused the destruction of no less than 5840 building including schools, hospitals, Mosques, and churches as the explosive barrels have mainly targeted residential areas.

In Darriya city alone there were no less than 150 explosive barrels from 31 Dec, 2013 until 15 Jan, 2014. The armed opposition managed to binge down one of the helicopters that was used to launch the explosive barrels, consequently the air strikes ceased for 8 days until 22 Jan, 2014 before it resumed with a rate of 22 bombs per day in the last days of January.

SNHR contacted the field-activist Mohannad Abuzzain from Darriya and he talked to the SNHR about the conditions of the city during that time:

“The air strikes started on 31 Dec, 2013, the first barrel was on Martqla church in the middle of the city and was followed by another three barrels, the air strikes continued for ten days with a rate of 4-6 barrels per day. The residential areas in the south and the middle of city were the primary targets, during that time there was no clashes with the FSA, however the campaign was after the FSA advanced 1 Km on the borders of Dariyya, so it was out of vengeance; Subsequently, rebels managed to neutralize one helicopter so the shelling ceased for 8 days before it resumed worse than before”

“Dariyya has been under siege for more than 15 months were no one was allowed to enter or exit the city, the people’ only resort was the shelters and basement that became their permanent residence. Due to the continuous shelling the number of wounded during the first month amounted to more than 60 including women and children, in addition to a lot of people whom we had to extract from underneath the rubbles as they were suffering from several bruises, also the shelling targeted some of the rebels’ vital centers such as the police station, the media office, and the restaurant that was affiliated to them. However the residential areas were still the main target which contributed in increasing the numbers of wounded women and children”.

Although a unanimous resolution were adopted at the Security Council on 22 Feb, 2014 to stop immediately the indiscriminate use of weapons in residential areas, and referred specifically to the explosive barrels, nothing changed, even though the resolution stated that there will be necessary procedures in case of lack of commitment to the resolution.
Hosam, a media activist from Darriya city who works for SNHR, says:
“This ongoing campaign started with the end of the year on 31 Dec, 2013, the campaign was slow-paced at the beginning before it escalated gradually with the time. Air strikes are targeting mainly residential areas more than rebels areas as the field-hospital was targeted several times as well as the police station and central kitchen. Dariyya has become a weapon laboratory where the regime tests all of its weapons; nonetheless, the explosive barrels had the most destructive power, the buildings that have two floors were destroyed completely if it was hit by a barrel. The problem is the siege that prevented the civilians from leaving considering that the shelling was usually between 9 AM and 6 PM which is the time when people usually move around the city. The destruction increased significantly with the start of this year until the middle of February, the destroyed buildings were 50% of the total number of buildings, however the buildings that weren’t destroyed completely are not suitable for living from an engineering standpoint”.

Appendixes and Attachments
The names, pictures, videos of the victims who were killed under the air strikes with explosive barrels:
SNHR team was able to document 29 victims including seven women and seven children
The pictures and videos documenting the destruction and wounded in Dariyya

Conclusions:
1- SNHR affirms that the air strikes against Dariyya were indiscriminate and were targeting in most cases armeless civilians, therefore the government forces and militias have violated the norms of the international law for human rights which guarantees the right to live. Moreover they were perpetuated during an armed conflict so it can be classified as war crimes.
2- Also, SNHR sees that what happened in Al-Mathal’s killing crime can lead to a crime against humanity given that this is not the first case but rather it became almost daily occurrences in a manner that includes the various Syrian governorates, hence it’s considered systematic and wide.
3- The random attacks committed by the government forces are considered violations of the norms of the international humanitarian law considering that the government forces have attacked residential areas rather than a particular military target.
4- These attacks, especially the air strikes, have caused casual humanitarian and material losses. Also there are strong indicators showing that the damage was sever compared to the expected military advantage.
5- The magnitude of the massacre, the frequent nature of the massacres, the excessive level of
strength, the indiscriminate nature of the air strikes, and the coordinated attacks, all show that this must be based on high orders and is a state policy.

**Recommendations**

**The United Nations and the Security Council**

1. Transferring the Syrian issue to the International Criminal Court and stopping the disrupting of the decisions that most be adopted by the Security Council against the Syrian government. This disruption is a wrong message to all dictatorships in the world and an enhancement to the culture of crime.

2. Posing urgent punishment on those who are involved in the violations of human rights.

3. Obliging the Syrian government to allow all relief and human rights organizations to enter Syria, in addition to the International Investigation Committee and allowing them to work freely.

4. Banning the Syrian government all weapons because they are used in comprehensive attacks against civilians.

5. Security Council must shoulder responsibility in preserving security and civil peace in Syria because the violations of the Syrian government are considered gross threat to international peace and security.

6. Listing the militias that fight with the Syrian government and which committed massacres, like Hezbollah and the other Shiite brigades, National defense Army and Shabiah militia, on the international list of terrorist organizations. Among these militias is the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria which committed lots of crimes in the areas that are not controlled by the Syrian government.

7. Implementing the principle of “protecting civilians” adopted by the General Assembly in Syria now, as the situation there is direly requiring such a principle now.

8. After the crimes against humanity committed by the Syrian government, stopping dealing with this government as an “official side” concerning the relief issues, and stopping supplying the Syrian government with the greatest amounts of financial and humanitarian aid that don’t reach those who need them in most cases and go instead to those loyal to the Syrian government.

**Human Rights Council**

1. Demanding the Security Council and the involved international institutions to shoulder responsibility concerning the sufferings of the Syrian people which include killing, arrest, rape and displacement.

2. Applying pressure on the Syrian government in order to stop the acts of killing and torture.
3. Holding the allies and supporters of the Syrian government - Russia, Iran and China – as materially and morally responsible for the killing that is happening in Syria.
4. Human Rights Council must be more interested and serious concerning the catastrophic situation of the children, families and relatives of the victims in Syria.

The Arab League
1. Punishing all those who are involved in committing crimes in Syria and urging all the countries of the world to do the same thing.
2. Increasing humanitarian aid, especially on the levels of education and health care and taking care of the Syrian refugees in the Arab countries.
3. Requesting the Security Council to execute the above recommendations.
5. Taking the Syrian issue very seriously and considering it as a priority, and trying to take care of the families of the victims psychologically, materially and educationally.
6. Applying political and diplomatic pressure on the main allies of the Syrian government; Russia, Iran and China in order to prevent them from continuing to provide international and political backing and protection for the crimes committed against the Syrian people, and holding them materially and morally responsible for all the violations of the Syrian government.

The Syrian Government
1. Instantly stopping all kinds of human rights violations.
2. Respecting its international commitment to protect civilians in the time of war and respecting the articles of the International Human Law as it is one of the sides that endorsed Rome Convention, in addition to respecting the International Law for Human Rights.
3. Allowing instant access to the International Investigation Committee and facilitating its work and cooperating with the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights and national human rights organizations.

The International Investigation Committee
The International Investigation Committee must stop depicting the struggle in Syria as a struggle between two sides equal in crimes, power and the centralization of decisions. It must describe the crimes the same way they happen without belittling their extent for political reasons. The committee must also increase the number of its staff who works on the Syrian issue due to the amount of the crimes committed daily in Syria so that it can do more comprehensive documentation.