



The Syrian Regime Impedes the Syrian Red Crescent The siege of Zakia town in Damascus suburbs

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First: the introduction

Zakia town is a small town in western Ghouta, [it is located](#) about 30 km to the southwest of Damascus suburbs. Its rugged nature isolated it from the neighboring towns. Its population is about 28,000.

Zakia town is relatively quiet village in the western Ghouta, as it is free of any clashes between government forces and armed opposition. Sometimes, it is exposed to indiscriminate bombardment from the seventh brigade on the outskirts of the town. The Syrian government regime besieged the town by four military checkpoints stationed on the main road on the eastern town, while the western road, which is considered the only passage for the farmers, is exposed to constant bombardment by division 137 and "Al Darbakhieh" checkpoint. As a result, the farmers can't reach their lands.

The relatively quiet town is a refuge of tens of thousands of IDPs from different towns of the western suburbs of Damascus, in particular (Ain Al Bayda town, Al Thoura town, and Al Taybeh town) those areas are hot areas for clashes and, consequently, the population of Zakiya town increased reaching 55,000, most of them live inside evacuation centers, mosques, schools, or even shops.





Second: Details

On Saturday 22/March/2014, the Syrian Red Crescent did not enter Zakia town as usual, as the relief organizations deemed neutral organizations, so no statement or declaration has been issued by the Syrian Red Crescent especially that it works in exceptional conditions while the Syrian regime planted several information persons within it since several years. Many relief appeals and calls have been received by SNHR through activists inside the town.

Abu Khaled, who is in charge of relief office from Zakia town talked to SNHR:

“ we hadn't received any aids, the families and IDPs, in particular, had depended on aids of the Syrian Red Crescent, that have been distributed, no less than 4200 food baskets every two months, the basket consists of a few kilos of oil and rice, sugar, lintels...etc. this is the fifth month and we didn't receive any aid. The death threatened the town families because of the starvation and the shortage of medical aids”

The field activist, Maher Hamdan, told SNHR:

“The reason behind depriving the town of aids from the Red Crescent might be the outbreak of battels in the neighboring areas of Zakia town recently, which is : Ain Al Bayda, Al thoura and Al Taybeh, and the displacement of many families of these towns to Zakia town. Now, we have hundreds of families including women and children are unable to sustain life.”

Third: attachments

[Image of a school in Zakia town which converted to IDPs evacuation centers:](#)
[Videos of one of Zakia School](#) after it converted to evacuation centers of IDPs including [children](#) and women. It depicts their humanitarian life conditions.

Fourth: conclusion and recommendations:

The Syrian regime besieged several cities and areas, so the most of siege victims are civilians which is a collective punishment form. The International Law considers the siege a war crime, while this crime is ongoing in the western Ghouta despite Security Council Resolution 2139, adopted on 22 February 2014, which demanded that the siege is ended immediately in the populated areas and warned to take additional steps in case of no compliance SNHR demands these additional step as the Syrian regime hasn't responded.





The Security Council Resolution 2165 adopted on 14 July 2014 allows delivering aids without any restrictions but it is limited in the bordering areas only.

SNHR demands to find mechanism to deliver aids immediately to internal areas like western Ghouta, Daraya and areas in Homs governorate because they are subjected to long and hard siege.

Regarding this case, the United Nations has to reveal the investigations findings in regard to corruption by Mr. Gary Quinlan, the representative of Australia in the United Nations and the Security Council, which revealed that 90 % of aids taken by unworthy parties and to pro-government areas, these areas is in a good situation not like areas as western Ghouta where there is no aid. The friends of Syria countries have to follow the trail of the denoting money to ban using it in the areas of Syrian militias that fight with the regime, while it supposed to be as aids to the afflicted.

The Arab League has to take action regarding the relief issue at least, and it has to dedicate a fund to support education and ensure its supplies, in addition to health care which suffers from hard shortage. The denoting countries have to enlarge their aids to Syrian people to reduce the disastrous ramification of the siege. All of that in wait for the Security Council to bear its responsible toward the Syrian disaster.

