



At Least 18 Killed in a Bloody Massacre in the Abdien Refugee Camp in Syria

Special Statement concerning a horrific massacre perpetrated by Syrian regime helicopters, which targeted IDPs camp in the southern part of Idlib Province, where refugees from Idlib and Hama are sheltering. The attack occurred shortly before 11:30 am on Wednesday, October 29, leaving at least 18 dead.

Despite creation of international conventions on human rights in order to guarantee the basic rights, and the assertion that the most dangerous crimes should not pass without punishment for their perpetrators, as set down in the preamble to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and despite the fact that women and children are the most prominent victims of human rights violations according to the international norms and customs, these violations and crimes continue to occur in Syria in plain sight of human rights organizations, as part of a systematic and ongoing policy undertaken by regime forces, at the behest of its leaders. All the while, the most prominent victims are innocent women and children.

Syrian regime aircraft are deliberately targeting internally displaced persons' (IDP) refugee camps, which according to the international law may not be targeted during armed conflicts. The Syrian regime air force has perpetrated a massacre in Idlib Province in the north of Syria, by targeting an IDP camp, in which the majority of residents are children and women who have fled from violence in and around Hama and Idlib Provinces.

On the morning of Wednesday, October 29 at around 11:30 am, a Syrian regime helicopter targeted a IDPs camp in southern Idlib province, leaving dozens of civilians dead and wounded. Most of the dead were women and children.

The camp is built on a small area of agricultural land in the village of 'Abdien in Idlib's southern suburbs and can hold around 250 displaced families, most of whom come from the northern parts of Hama and southern parts of Idlib. Usually, these families return to



their home when the periods of shelling and barrel bombings cease, and then when the shelling and fighting resumes, they flee back to the camp. At the time of the attack, the number of refugees in the camp exceeded 125, the majority women and children.

The helicopter hovered over the camp for around seven minutes before dropping two barrel bombs into the center of the camp immediately killing nine and wounding more than 30 others, in addition to burning 26 tents and damaging 30.

All the wounded, injured, along with the bodies of the dead, were transferred immediately to nearby field-hospitals such as Ar-Rahma hospital in Ma'rat Harma village, the field-hospital in Ar-Rakaya village, and the seventh field-hospital which is run by the Hama Health Administration, itself affiliated to the Syrian Interim Government. The hospitals were overwhelmed due to the large numbers of wounded. Furthermore, the hospitals suffer from a shortage of medical equipment and limited supplies. Some of the bodies were disfigured, while others were completely charred and dismembered by the explosions.

Most of the killed and injured were IDPs from Al-Latamna, Al-Jbien, and Al-Jalma town in Hama's suburbs. Some of the injured were transferred via ambulance to Turkey. A number of the victims could not be identified due to the extreme disfigurement.

The logo for the Damascus Center for Human Rights Studies (DCHRS) is a watermark in the background of the page. It consists of the letters 'DCHRS' in a bold, grey, sans-serif font. Behind the letters is a stylized graphic element: a green circle with a red diagonal line through it, and a red diagonal line extending from the bottom of the circle.

To date, it has only been possible to compile an incomplete list of victims killed in the massacre:

- 1- Mohammad Hassan Ad-Daherm 60-year-old, from Al-Arba'ien village.
- 2- Hajma Hassan Adaher, 50-year-old, from Al-Arba'ien village.
- 3- Child Mohammad Hamid Al-Qaddour, 10-year-old, from Al-Arba'ien village.
- 4- Unidentified woman victim, from Hama.

<http://goo.gl/FJKE5L>



5-13- Nine unidentified victims, from Hama suburbs – Al-Jbien village (they were found as scattered body parts).

14-17- Four unidentified victims, from Hama suburbs – Al-Latamna (they were found as scattered body parts).

18- Unidentified woman victim, from Hama subrubs – Kafrhoud (carbonized).

19- Unidentified victim, from Hama (the body was scattered and carbonized).

Video footages show the shelling and the scattered body parts

<http://youtu.be/QuiznW0HJIQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y2jHLpdLQQ&feature=youtu.be>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oauCN7znw4&feature=youtu.be>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8VntuhVuT4&feature=share>

http://youtu.be/Q_NhSuggBMU

<http://youtu.be/TnvB1b4Jh7w>

Syrian regime helicopter, had been hovering above the area for about seven minutes when it dropped two barrel bombs, each weighing about 500 kg. This is clear evidence of the Syrian regime's intention to deliberately target civilians, as the Syrian regime was fully aware that the camp houses civilian IDPs. Furthermore, there were no rebel fighters present during, or leading up to, the time of the attack, or in any area nearby. According to Article 7-1-a of Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, this constitutes a crime against humanity, as it was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, with full knowledge of their presence and non-combatant status.

Furthermore, it is clear that this category of crime has become a systematic policy for the Syrian regime, as evidenced by the many consecutive massacres documented by DCHRS, which are often perpetrated within a short time frames, and result in the deaths of innocent civilians, mostly children and women. The Syrian regime has used its aerial arsenal (warplanes and helicopters) to target civilian and IDP housing areas, on numerous occasions. This can only be part of a state policy, and on the orders of the Syrian regime's military command.



DCHRS notes that this massacre is a serious violation of international laws and conventions, and can be classified openly as a war crime, as these attacks were intentionally directed against “the civilian population or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities; “ as laid out in Article 8-2-b-i and 8-2-b-ii of the Rome Statute.

Furthermore, this deliberate targeting of an IDP camp by the Syrian regime only achieved the killing and injuring of civilian women and children. This may be classified as a war crime in accordance with Article 8-2-b-iv and Article 8-2-b-v of Rome Statute.

Therefore, DCHRS, as it affirms its dedication to continue documenting and monitoring human rights violations in Syria, urges the international community and the U.N. to take immediate action in order to halt the ongoing crimes against humanity committed against Syrian civilians. It is worth noting that the Syrian regime has perpetrated, as documented by DCHR, 15 massacres in October alone. These are listed as follows:

- 1- 3 October, 2014 in Damascus suburbs – Doma.
- 2- 8 October, 2014, in Homs – Al-Wa’r neighborhood.
- 3- 9 October, 2014 in Damascus suburbs – Irbeen city.
- 4- 10 October, 2014 in Daraa – Al-Hara city.
- 5- 14 October, 2014 in Damascus suburbs – Irbeen city.
- 6- 14 October, 2014 in Damascus suburbs – Ain Tarma.
- 7- 16 October, 2014 Damascus suburbs – Jisreen city.
- 8- 17 October, 2014 Damascus suburbs – Doma city.
- 9-10- Two consecutive massacres in Daraa – Nasib town on 21 October, 2014.
- 11- 21 October, 2014 in Daraa – AL-Yadouda town.
- 12- 24 October, 2014 Aleppo – Tal Qrah town.
- 13- 25 October, 2014 in Homs - Talbiesa
- 14- 26 October, 2014 Daraa – Bosra Ash-Sham city.
- 15- **29 October, 2014 in Idlib southern suburbs**

In all of these massacres the Syrian regime warplanes used either high-explosive missiles or barrel bombs. All the victims who died in these massacre were civilians.

DCHRS, inspired by its primary mission in documenting and monitoring human rights violation in Syria and as a member of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to



Protect (ICRtoP), urges all of the concerned organizations to work to refer these massacres, and the many other massacres perpetrated by the Syrian regime, to the International Criminal Court, and other relevant courts, so as to hold the individuals responsible for these crimes to account, including Bashar al-Assad in his capacity of commander-in-chief of the army and armed forces.

Damascus Center for Human Rights

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Image showing the barrel exploding in the camp





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Images of the victims in the camp after the strike





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Images of an undefined child who was injured by the strike



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DCHRS is an independent, non-governmental organization, established in 2005, located in the Syrian capital of Damascus. Its mission is to foster a spirit of support and respect for the values and standards of human rights in Syria. As such, DCHRS recognizes and adheres to all pertinent international human rights agreements and declarations issued by the UN.

- DCHRS is a member of the following international networks:
- International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
- Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN)
- NGO Coalition for the international Criminal Court



- International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP)
- International Coalition of Sites of Conscience

DCHRS worked on a variety of documentation projects. Such projects included [daily casualty reports](#), massacre reports, and other human rights violations reports. Also DCHRS has been working on advocacy and lobbying in different human rights institutions in order to educate and acknowledge about the deteriorating human rights situation in Syria. DCHRS [opened local offices in Syria](#) in order to document, collect, and observe human rights violations on the ground. After the launch of the Syrian revolution, the center increased its activities through working, communicating, and coordinating with many members and activists. Thus the center began documenting daily violations committed by the Syrian regime forces that can be classified as crimes against humanity and war crimes. Such violations included: extrajudicial killings, massacres, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, rape, torture in prisons. DCHRS submitted those reports to many international and regional human rights organizations and communicated with the Report of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic on Syria.

