

# Report on the Targeting of River Crossings Following the Destruction of Bridges in Deir Ez-Zour Governorate

**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.



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## I. Introduction and Methodology

Flowing along a course of 135 kilometers through Deir Ez-Zour governorate, the Euphrates River runs through the border city of al Boukamal before entering Iraqi territory. While the main river runs through the northern outskirts of Deir el Zour in the area between the governorates of Deir Ez-Zour and Hasaka, a small tributary branch off, running through the city proper. Over the years, residents of the governorate have constructed bridges to traverse the river in order to travel between the many villages, towns, and neighborhoods in Deir Ez-Zour city and governorate. SNHR has released [a report](#) shedding light on the importance of these bridges from a social, economic, and medical standpoint, after they were almost completely destroyed by Syrian regime forces, Russian forces, and US-led international coalition forces.

Traversing this river is an indispensably vital part of residents' day-to-day lives. The destruction of the bridges has, therefore, gravely affected their ability to travel and conduct their day-to-day lives, thereby weakening the economic life of the area and forcing residents to rely more heavily on river crossings. A river crossing refers to any of the points where civilians gather to be transported via small boats, ferries or other vessels to the other side of the Euphrates River. In light of the recent developments, these crossings have become the only means of escape for civilians in the area fleeing areas under bombardment to reach safer ones.



SNHR's team has documented a number of incidents of repeated targeting of river crossings, primarily by Syrian regime and Russian forces who have deliberately targeted fleeing civilians attempting to escape the indiscriminate bombardment by the very same forces.

## **Methodology**

This report documents the attacks on crossing points on the banks of the Euphrates River that were carried out by Syrian regime forces, Russian forces, and international coalition forces which our team has been able to verify. All of the attacks we have documented took place in Deir Ez-Zour governorate in areas that were under the control of ISIS at the time of the attacks in question.

Our investigations show, however, that these crossings weren't being used, on a regular basis, in any military context by ISIS, but were simply gathering places for civilians under the control of ISIS who wish to cross the river. Our monitoring clearly showed, in fact, that ISIS used different crossing points to transport their fighters and vehicles separate from the crossings used by civilians which were attacked, as documented in this report. Consequently, we can confirm that all the attacks we have documented and detailed in this report targeted groups of civilians without any military vehicles or ISIS fighters being present in the area during or even before the attacks. Also, the aggressor parties failed to warn the civilians in the vicinity prior to the attacks as required by international humanitarian law.

The SNHR team carries out its ongoing monitoring of incidents via a wide network of activists within Syria, including dozens of various sources, that we have built up through accumulating an extensive network of relations since first beginning our work. When we receive information or hear reports of a violation via the internet or media outlets, we work to investigate this news, to verify all the information we receive and to collect evidence and data. In some cases, researchers are able to rapidly visit the location of incidents. Such immediate access is rare, however, due to the incredibly high and lethally severe security risks involved, and to the frequency of daily incidents, as well as being dependent on the human and material resources available. Due to these factors, the opportunity to obtain evidence varies between one case and another, and thus the degree of certainty in ascertaining its classification also varies according to the situation. In cases where accessing the scene of the incident is problematic, the SNHR team relies on accounts from survivors who experienced the violation firsthand. We try to establish direct contact with these individuals and, secondarily, with other eyewitnesses who saw or recorded the violation, in addition to analyzing available materials from open sources such as the internet and media outlets. Thirdly, we try to speak with medical personnel who treated the wounded and assessed their symptoms, and who, in cases where the violations resulted in the victims dying, determined the cause of death.



This report contains four accounts that we have collected by speaking directly with eyewitnesses, survivors or victims' families, rather than citing any accounts collected at second-hand from any open sources. We explained the purpose of these interviews beforehand to the eyewitnesses who have given us permission to use the information they provided without being offered or given any incentives. Additionally, SNHR has attempted to spare the eyewitnesses the agony and trauma of remembering the violations perpetrated against them. Guarantees were also given to conceal the identity of any eyewitnesses who preferred to use an alias, given justifiable safety concerns.

This report outlines attacks on 20 crossings in 31 different incidents which were carried out by Syrian-Russian alliance forces and international coalition forces.

SNHR has also analyzed the videos and photos posted online and others sent to our team by local activists via e-mail, Skype, or social media. Also, some videos posted by activists show the attack sites, the dead bodies, the injured, and the huge destruction to the boats and ferries in the aftermath of the attacks perpetrated by the parties involved.

We have stored copies of all the photos and videos mentioned in this report in a secure online database, as well as keeping backup copies on hard drives. Nonetheless, we can't claim to have documented all cases, given the continuing media blackout and persecution imposed by Syrian regime forces and other armed groups.

This report only reflects the bare minimum that we have been able to document of the unimaginably immense severity and terrible magnitude of the violations that occurred. It also doesn't cover the social, economic, and psychological ramifications.

## **II. Analysis of Incident Data Shows a Deliberate Pattern of Targeting People Fleeing from Horrendous Bombardment by Syrian-Russian Alliance Forces**

Usually, when Russian-Syrian alliance forces start carrying out airstrikes on a target location in this area, the residents, fearing for their lives and the lives of their children, flee by crossing the river to the other side using rudimentary, locally-made boats, most of which are antiquated and need repairs which are currently impossible to carry out due to the lack of the necessary materials; this makes the escape trip itself, as well as the bombardment, a life-threatening and often traumatic experience. We have recorded a number of incidents in which these boats have capsized or sunk and passengers have drowned. The incidents we have been able to document left no fewer than 17 civilians dead, including seven children and one woman, who drowned. Despite the residents' terror during these desperate



attempts to flee death and save their children's lives, Syrian and Russian warplanes have followed the vessels and bombed them on their trip across the river in an act that monumentally reflects the level of barbarism shown by the regime's and Russia's forces have in dealing with fleeing civilians.

Analyzing the data on these incidents which we have documented on SNHR's database shows that 90 percent of the attacks carried out by the Russian-Syrian alliance forces have targeted groups of civilians as they were trying to flee the bombardment carried out by those forces against their villages and towns to reach safety in villages on the other bank of the Euphrates River.

The use of this strategy was especially notable in the offensive launched by Russian-Syrian alliance forces against the eastern and western suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour (Shamiya villages to the west of the Euphrates River) in mid-August 2017 which lasted until the end of November 2017. In the course of this offensive, we recorded no fewer than 25 attacks on crossings which were concentrated in the villages of the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour (Shamiya villages). Most of these attacks targeted civilians fleeing to the other bank (Jazira villages).

### **III. Toll of Targeting River Crossings at the hands of the Parties to the Conflict according to SNHR's Database**

SNHR has documented the targeting of no fewer than 20 river crossings by three main parties. All the crossings are located in Deir Ez-Zour governorate. We've recorded that a number of crossings were targeted in multiple attacks signaling a deliberate intention to target and inflict harm upon civilians. Between November 28, 2014, the date of the first incident of a river crossing being targeted according to SNHR's database, and October 30, 2018, we recorded 31 attacks on river crossings, distributed according to the parties involved as follows:

- Syrian regime forces: 15
- Russian forces: 13
- International coalition forces: 3

These attacks resulted in the death of 241 civilians, including 28 children and 23 women (adult female), distributed according to the parties involved as follows:

- Syrian regime forces: 98, including seven children and nine women.
- Russian forces: 143 civilians, including 21 children and 14 women.

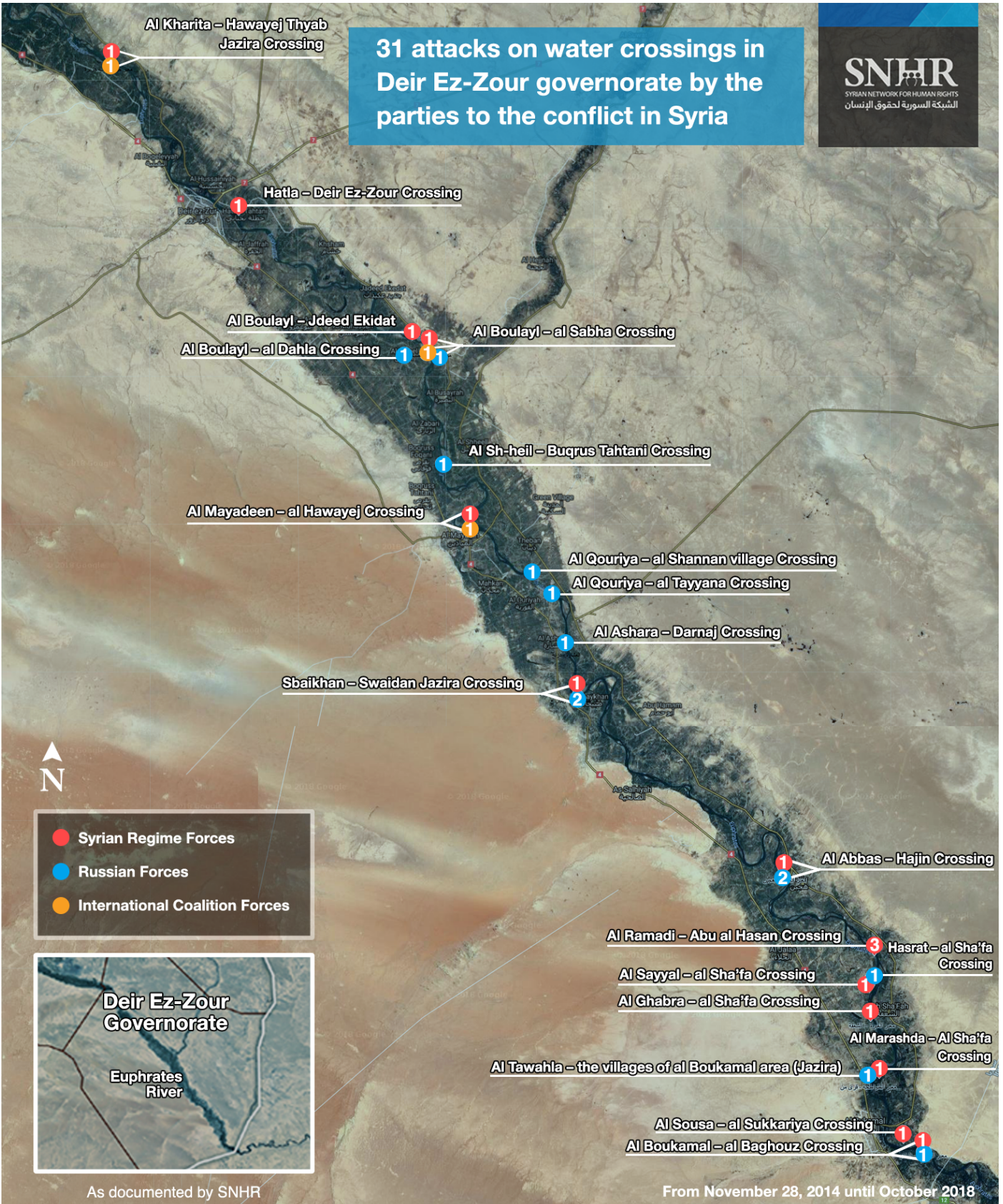
Additionally, the attacks against the crossings resulted in 15 massacres, distributed according to the parties involved as follows:

- Syrian regime forces: 9
- Russian forces: 6



# 31 attacks on water crossings in Deir Ez-Zour governorate by the parties to the conflict in Syria

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## **IV. Most Notable Attacks on River Crossings**

### **A. Syrian regime forces**

#### **Hatla–Deir Ez-Zour Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between Hatla village, in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour, and Deir Ez-Zour city. On Thursday, September 21, 2014, Syrian regime artillery forces targeted the crossing area on the Hatla village side with a number of shells, resulting in the deaths of nine civilians, including one female child.

#### **Al Ramadi-Abu al Hasan Crossing**

Located in al Ramadi village, administratively a part of al Boukamal area in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour, civilians use this crossing to reach the opposite bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

On Tuesday, October 28, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes fired a number of missiles targeting the crossing area on the al Ramadi village side of the river, resulting in the deaths of 11 civilians. In addition, the boats used by civilians to cross the waterway were heavily damaged.

#### **Al Sayyal-al Sha'fa Crossing**

Located in al Sayyal village, administratively a part of al Boukamal area in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour, civilians use this crossing to access al Sha'fa town on the opposite bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

On Monday, October 6, 2017, fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes fired a number of missiles targeting the crossing point, resulting in the deaths of six civilians, including three children and two women, while a number of ferries and boats on the riverbank, were also destroyed.

#### **Al Ghabra-al Sha'fa Crossing**

Located in al Ghabra village, administratively a part of the Boukamal area in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour, civilians use this crossing to access al Sha'fa town on the west bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

The crossing point was targeted in an aerial attack on Saturday, November 11, 2017 when fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes fired a number of missiles targeting the crossing area, resulting in the deaths of seven civilians, while a number of ferries and vessels gathered on the riverbank were also destroyed.



### **Hawayej Thyab Jazira-al Kharita Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between Hawayej Thyab Jazira village and Kharita town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour which is located on the opposite bank of the Euphrates River via ferries and boats.

The crossing point was targeted in an air raid on Monday, September 11, 2017 when fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes fired a number of missiles at the crossing area from the side of Hawayej Thyab Jazira village, resulting in the deaths of 12 civilians, including one female child and two women. In addition, most of the ferries around the crossing were destroyed. The village was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

### **Al Boulayl-Jdeed Ekidat Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between al Boulayl town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and Jdeed Ekidat village on the opposite bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

The crossing point was targeted in an air raid on Saturday, September 16, 2017 when fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes fired missiles at the crossing area from the al Boulayl town side, resulting in the deaths of eight civilians, including one child. In addition, the ferries and boats on the riverbank where the crossing point is located were moderately damaged. The town was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

### **Al Sousa-al Sukkariya Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between al Sousa town and al Sukkara village on the left bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour suburbs via ferries and boats.

The crossing area was targeted in an aerial attack on Saturday, November 11, 2017 when fixed-wing Syrian regime warplanes fired a number of missiles at the crossing in al Sousa town, resulting in the deaths of five civilians, including two children and two women, who were IDPs from al Qouriya city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour. In addition, a number of ferries and boats on the riverbank around the crossing point were destroyed. The town was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

## **B. Russian forces**

### **Al Boulayl-al Dahla Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between al Boulayl town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and al Dahla village on the left bank of the Euphrates River on the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.





On Sunday, September 10, 2017, at around 12:45, fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian carried out two consecutive missile airstrikes, within five minutes, that targeted the river crossing between al Boulayl town and al Dahla village, resulting in the death of 16 civilians, including three children and one woman. In addition, most of the ferries at the crossing point were destroyed. The town was under the control of ISIS at the time of the incident.

SNHR contacted Yaman Wahhab<sup>1</sup>, a university student from al Boulayl town. Yaman said that he heard three warplanes flying over the town. Due to the difficulty in spotting the planes, he said that it is most likely that they were Russian, **“At approximately 13:00, I heard a huge explosion, and saw smoke rising near the area of the river crossing, which people use to move between al Boulayl town and al Dahla village on the other side of the Euphrates River. My house is located about 12 kilometers away from the crossing.”**

Yaman said that he heard another explosion about five minutes after the first one, where the warplanes targeted the crossing area again, **“I headed for the site about an hour later. I saw dozens of victims and wounded people at the side of the river. The airstrikes destroyed the cars and ferries at the crossing. It was such a painful thing to see. One of the survivors told me that the warplanes targeted a ferry with five civilians on it at first, as they were crossing to al Dahla village. All of them died. As the residents were trying to remove the dead bodies, the warplanes targeted the same place again. The bombardment resulted in a full-fledged massacre. Forty civilians were killed in these attacks, and their only sin is trying to cross the river. There are no ISIS or weapons here. Why are they targeting the fleeing civilians?”**

[A video](#) published by the Russian Ministry of Defense showing the bombing of al Boulayl-al Dahla crossing – September 10, 2017

[A video](#) of an airstrike by fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian on al Boulayl-al Dahla crossing – September 10, 2017

### **Al Boulayl-al Sabha Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between al Boulayl town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and al Sabha village on the other bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

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<sup>1</sup> Via WhatsApp



The crossing was targeted in an aerial attack on Sunday, September 10, 2017, at around 13:00 when fixed-wing warplanes that we believe were Russian fired a number of missiles at the crossing area, resulting in the death of 19 civilians, including three children and one woman. In addition, most of the ferries at the crossing were destroyed. We documented another attack carried out at the same time as this one, in which the Al Boulayl-al Dahla Crossing, which is about 1.5 kilometers away from the al Boulayl-al Sabha Crossing, was targeted.

SNHR contacted Abu Yazan<sup>2</sup>, a cousin of one of the survivors, who told us, **“My cousin was waiting at the al Boulayl-al Sabha Crossing as he was heading for al Sabha village after the bombing intensified on our town. The Russian and Syrian air forces have been bombing the town for three days [at that point], in addition to shelling by the Syrian regime from its artillery [forces] stationed in Deir Ez-Zour Military Airbase. Most of the town’s residents started fleeing to the villages on the other bank of the Euphrates River. Dozens of civilians were gathering at the crossings waiting for boats and ferries. My cousin said that the warplane flew over the crossing for a few seconds and people started screaming, as they were anticipating the bombing in fear. My cousin hid in a low area before the warplane dropped its load of missiles. Ten minutes later, the warplane left and he headed to the riverbank of the crossing. He described the dead bodies and the injured people he saw there. He told me that dozens of dead bodies were floating in the river. Some of the dead bodies were piled on the riverbanks. Also, the dead bodies of entire families were burned inside the cars as they were waiting for the ferry to take them.”**

### **Buqrus Tahtani-Al Sh-heil Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between Buqrus Tahtani village in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and al Sh-heil city on the other bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

The crossing was targeted in an aerial attack on Wednesday, September 27, 2017 when fixed-wing warplanes which we believe were Russian fired a number of missiles at the crossing area from the side of Buqrus Tahtani village. All the ferries at the crossing were damaged and burned, putting them out of service.

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<sup>2</sup> Via WhatsApp



SNHR spoke to Bashir<sup>3</sup>, a university student from al Sh-heil city. Bashir was waiting for one of his relatives on the other bank of the Euphrates River when the attack took place, **“At around 10:00, three warplanes were flying at a high altitude. The only thing I was able to recognize was their sound and the glittering [from the sun reflecting off the fuselage] in the sky. Fearing that the crossing might be bombed, some of the ferries’ owners asked us to evacuate about 15 minutes later. I got away a short distance, but I stayed to observe. A few minutes later, the sound of the warplane got terrifyingly louder, and the missiles were dropped on the crossing area from the side of Bu-grus village. Fortunately, most of the civilians had evacuated the crossing before the bombing, but the material damages were steep. Smoke was rising from some of the cars and ferries.”**

### **Al Abbas-Hajin Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between al Abbas town in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and Hajin city on the other bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

The crossing was targeted in an aerial attack on Wednesday, October 11, 2017 when fixed-wing warplanes which we believe were Russian fired a number of missiles at the crossing area from the al Abbas town side, resulting in the deaths of five civilians. In addition, [a number of ferries were destroyed and burned](#).

### **Sbaikhan-Swaidan Jazira Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between Sbaikhan city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and Swaidan Jazira village on the other bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

The crossing was targeted in an aerial attack on October 10, 2017 when fixed-wing warplanes which we believe were Russian fired a number of missiles at the crossing area from the side of Sbaikhan city. A number of ferries and boats were destroyed as a result.

### **Al Qouriya-al Shnan village Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between al Qouriya city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and al Shnan village on the other bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

The crossing area was targeted in an aerial attack on Wednesday, October 4, 2017 when fixed-wing warplanes which we believe were Russian fired a [number of missiles](#) at the crossing area from the al Qouriya city side, resulting in [the deaths](#) of [13 civilians](#), including seven children, while around 30 others were wounded.

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<sup>3</sup> Via phone





A number of ferries and cars burning in the aftermath of an aerial attack by fixed-wing warplanes which we believe were Russian on al Qouriya-al Shnan village water crossing in al Qouriya city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour – October 4, 2017

### **Al Qouriya-al Tayyana crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between al Qouriya city and al Tayyana village on the left side of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats. The crossing area was targeted in an aerial attack on Wednesday, October 11, 2017 when fixed-wing warplanes which we believe were Russian fired a number of missiles that targeted the crossing area from the side of al Qouriya city and al Tayyana village, resulting in the deaths of 21 civilians, including seven children and one woman, while around 30 others were wounded.

### **Al Boukamal-al Baghouz Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between al Boukamal city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and al Baghouz town on the opposite bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

The crossing area was targeted in a double-strike on Thursday, October 19, 2017 when fixed-wing warplanes we believe were Russian fired a number of missiles at the crossing from the side of al Baghouz town. Around 15 minutes later, the same planes targeted the crossing again with a number of missiles. The attack resulted in the deaths of 20 civilians, including three children and six women.

Hassan al Haso<sup>4</sup> is a relative of Salim al-Freih, one of the victims killed in the attack Hassan's Cousin, who witnessed the attack had described it to Hassan, which Hassan relating this account to us: **“There were three Russian warplanes flying over the city and bombing in its vicinity that day. This drove hundreds of civilians to cross at the river crossing towards al Baghouz village. At around 15:40, the Russian warplanes targeted the crossing using three missiles and targeted a gathering of civilian cars that were sitting by the crossing.”** Hassan said that a second airstrike bombed the crossing about 15

<sup>4</sup> We contacted him via WhatsApp



minutes after the first attack, while people were gathering to aid the victims from the first airstrike, **“The second attack saw four missiles that targeted dozens of civilians. The second airstrike killed everyone, the injured and the paramedics. They didn’t only target the city, but the people’s only mean of escape.”**

### **Hasrat-al Sha’fa Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between Hasrat village, which is administratively a part of al Boukamal area in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour, and al Sha’fa town on the opposite side of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats. The crossing area was targeted in an aerial attack on Thursday, November 23, 2017 when fixed-wing warplanes which we believe were Russian fired a number of missiles at the crossing area from the side of Hasrat village, resulting in the deaths of 13 civilians, including two female children and two women. In addition, a number of ferries and boats were destroyed.

### **C. International coalition forces**

#### **Al Mayadeen-AI Hawayej Crossing**

Civilians use this crossing to travel between al Mayadeen city in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour and al Hawyaej village on the other bank of the Euphrates River in the eastern suburbs of Deir Ez-Zour via ferries and boats.

The crossing area was targeted in two consecutive aerial attacks on Friday and Saturday, April 28-29, 2017, when fixed-wing international coalition forces warplanes targeted the area from the side of al Mayadeen city. A large number of ferries and boats on the bank of the crossing were destroyed as a result.

## **V. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Legal recommendations**

1. According to international humanitarian law, indiscriminate, deliberate, or disproportionate attacks are deemed unlawful. The attacks by government forces and Russian forces, as well as international coalition forces, on water crossings constitute an utter disregard for the most basic standards of international humanitarian law.
2. Syrian-Russian alliance forces and international coalition forces have, beyond any doubt, violated Security Council Resolutions 2139 and 2254 which both call for ceasing indiscriminate attacks. In addition, these parties have violated Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court through the crime of willful killing which constitutes war crimes.



3. We can confirm that the incidents of bombardment mentioned in this report targeted defenseless civilians. Consequently, Syrian-Russian alliance forces have violated the rule of international human rights law which guarantee the right to life. In addition, these violations were perpetrated in a non-international armed conflict which qualifies as a war crime, for which all parameters have been met.

4. The attacks included in this report, which were carried out by Syrian-Russian alliance forces and international coalition forces, constitute a violation of customary international humanitarian law since the projectiles were directed at a populated area rather than a specific military target.

5. The incidents of bombardment documented have resulted in collateral damage that involved massive loss of civilian lives, civilian injuries, and excessive damages to civilian objects. There are strong indicators that compel observers to believe that the damage was vastly excessive in relation to the military advantage anticipated.

## **Recommendations**

### **Security Council**

- The Syrian issue must be referred to the International Criminal Court and all involved must be held accountable, including the Russian regime whose involvement in war crimes has been proven beyond any doubt.
- Work to sustain peace and security in Syria and implement the norm of the Responsibility to Protect to save Syrians' lives, heritage, and arts from being destroyed, looted, and ruined.

### **OHCHR**

- The OHCHR should submit a report to the Human Rights Council and other UN organs on the violations involved in the targeting of water crossings, and work to implement the recommendations included in this report.

### **International community**

- In light of the divisions within the UN Security Council, action must be taken at the national and regional levels to formulate alliances to support the Syrian people. This would be achieved through protecting the Syrian people from the daily killing, by lifting the siege, and by increasing the support provided in the form of humanitarian relief. Steps should also be taken to exercise universal jurisdiction over these crimes in trying those responsible before national courts as part of fair trials for all involved.



- Despite SNHR's repeated calls, as a member of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), in dozens of studies and research reports for the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect norm, all political channels have proved to be a dead end in achieving this objective, including the Arab League agreement and Mr. Kofi Annan's plan. As such, action must be taken under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and the Responsibility to Protect, which was established by the UN General Assembly, must be implemented. At present, the Security Council is still, shamefully, hindering the protection of civilians in Syria.
- Renew pressure on the Security Council in order to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court.
- Work to fulfil justice and accountability in Syria through the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council and exercise the principle of universal jurisdiction.

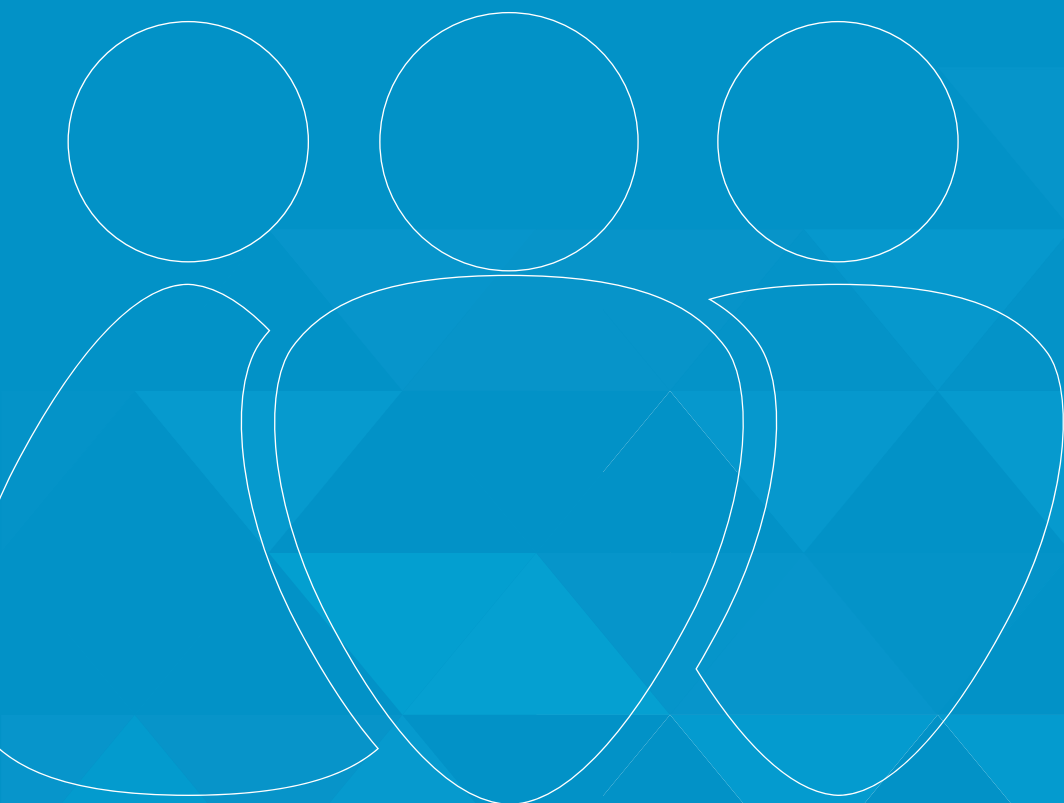
### **US-led international coalition**

- International coalition forces must respect international humanitarian law and customary international law. Accordingly, the states of the international coalition bear responsibly for the violations some of which are included in this report, and as such should assume responsibility for the consequences of all of these violations and do their utmost to avoid any recurrence.
- Enhance the manpower of the team charged with monitoring and investigating incidents, make greater efforts, and devote more resource in this regard.
- Create a data map showing the worst affected areas from the aerial attacks.
- Push to begin addressing the grave economic and moral repercussions resulting from these attacks.
- Follow up the military victory against ISIS with a concerted effort to rid other areas from the group's effects, and seriously work to establish a community-led democratic leadership in which the residents of these areas play an effective role.
- Dismiss and publicly hold to account all those found to have been involved in the attacks on river crossings following investigations into these incidents.

### **Acknowledgment**

We wish to express out most sincere and heartfelt gratitude and condolences to all the residents and local activists in Deir Ez-Zour who contributed greatly to this report.





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