

FACT SHEET: SYRIA (MARCH 2011 – OCTOBER 2015)

Intro

The United Nations ranks the Syrian conflict as the world's largest humanitarian crisis since World War II. Today, Syrians are the biggest refugee population from any single conflict. An entire generation is exposed to extreme violence and war, and increasingly deprived of basic protection, services and education. The “Syrian Center for Statistics and Research” (CSR) is one of four groups that have provided the majority of verifiable and identifiable data used by the UN Office of the Commission for Human Rights.¹

Refugees

- 12.6 Mio.** persons in need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria (EU-Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department, ECHO)
- 7.6 Mio.** internally displaced persons (UN-Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNOCHA)
- 4.6 Mio.** persons live in hard to reach areas or under siege (ECHO)

Deaths

The UN declared in January 2014 that it would discontinue recording the death toll in Syria. Of the monitors below, CSR records only deaths confirmed by name, place and cause of death.

Source	Casualties	Time Period
United Nations	220,000 killed	Mar 2011 – Jan 2014
Syrian Observatory for Human Rights	330,381 killed	Mar 2011 – Aug 2015
Syrian Center for Statistics and Research	191,298 killed	Mar 2011 – Aug 2015
Syrian Network for Human Rights	230,000 killed	Mar 2011 – Sep 2015

Breakdown

CSR has recorded a proportion of 73% civilian deaths, including 8.25% women and 11% children. Only 26.5% of all documented deaths were active or former military servicemen. Such findings are extraordinarily high and indicative of deliberate targeting of civilians in direct contravention of their status as vulnerable populations under the laws of war, such as the Geneva Conventions.

Perpetrators

- 92% killed by regime forces / militias
- 3.6% killed by ISIS
- 2.2 % killed by opposition rebels
- < 2% by unknown perpetrators
- 0.21% killed by the international Anti-ISIS Coalition / Russia

UNSC-Resolutions

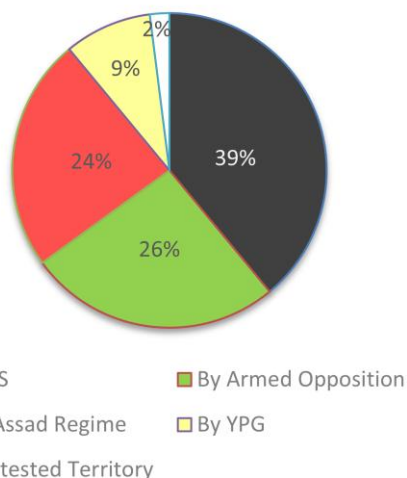
Resolution	Decision
S/RES/2235 (7 August 2015)	Requested the establishment and operation of a UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism to determine responsibility for the use of chemical weapons in Syria.
S/RES/2209 (6 March 2015)	Condemned the use of toxic such as chlorine, without attributing blame; stressed that those responsible should be held accountable
S/RES/2165 (14 July 2014)	Authorized cross-border and cross-line access for the UN and its partners to deliver humanitarian aid in Syria without state consent; monitoring mechanism for 180 days.
S/RES/2188 (27 September 2013)	Required the verification and destruction of Syria’s chemical weapons stockpiles and endorsed the establishment of a transitional governing body in Syria with full executive powers.

Fact: Since 2011, Assad regime forces were responsible for 25 times as many civilian deaths as ISIS. In 2015, Assad regime forces killed 7 times more civilians in Syria than ISIS.

¹ <http://press.psprings.co.uk/bmj/september/civiliandeaths.pdf>

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Territorial Control



Detainees 78.278 persons have been identified in Assad jails, incl. 3014 women and 166 minor girls. Evidence of thousands of other detainees exists, but without names or files. The Assad regime is the only state actor known to have engaged in photographic documentation of its systematic torture. CAESAR, a member military police presented 55.000 pictures of tortured detainee bodies. This material was considered authentic by an international forensic and legal team. The UN-Human Rights Commission considers it clear evidence for systematic human rights violations.

Forced Disappearances an estimated **100.000 persons** are missing in Syria. They are a large extent victims of forced disappearance.

Scale of Destruction ca. **2 Mio. housing units** (out of 4.7 Mio. total in Syria)²
ca. **1 Mio. public utility structures**

- Mass destruction of residential areas was caused (to 90%) by indiscriminate use of arms in the possession of the Assad Regime: barrel bombs, heavy artillery and ballistic missiles. This also led to the complete destruction of rural areas such as Al-Qusayr in Western Homs (June 2013), Maliha in Eastern Damascus (April 2014) or Kafar Nabuda in Southern Idlib (Oct. 2015).
- The destruction of industrial infrastructure was caused by frontline combat, as well as by systematic looting.
- Mass destruction of public facilities (schools, hospitals, bridges, places of worship, etc.) were caused by all of the above, in addition to improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Few parties to the conflict refrain from misusing public facilities for military purposes (ex. Kindi Hospital in Aleppo; National Hospital in Jisr al-Shughur). Only the Assad regime was found to have deliberately targeted historic sites (Krak des Chevalier, Umayyad Mosque of Aleppo, Idlib Museum).

Conduct of Hostilities

After counterinsurgency efforts in 2011, the Assad regime gradually introduced ever heavier arms to the conflict. The targeting of densely populated areas with heavy ordnance remains the main cause of death and displacement among the civilian population. In comparison, opposition forces mostly use light and medium arms against military vehicles and checkpoints. Opposition forces have also been known to use improvised explosive devices against buildings and barriers.

Chronology of Escalation

Date	Type of Arms	First used in
February 2012	Heavy Artillery	City of Homs
June 2012	Air Strikes	Idlib Countryside
September 2012	Scud Missiles	Aleppo Countryside
August 2013	Sarin Gas	Damascus countryside
September 2013	Barrel Bombs	Idlib / Homs
February 2014	Chlorine Gas	Idlib / Homs
September 2015	Cluster bombs	Idlib Province

Control of Population

Syria's official population was 22.5 million in 2010. CSR estimates the number of civilians currently within Syria at 15-16 million. This figure does not include several ten thousand foreign combatants. In late 2013, the armed opposition effectively controlled ca. 55% of the population, while the Assad regime controlled ca. 43%. Directly after UNSR-Resolution 2188 (Sept. 2013), the Assad regime began a barrel bomb campaign causing massive displacement within rebel-held areas. By mid-2015, the rebel-controlled population had dropped to ca. 19%. At the same time, the regime-controlled population increased by 2% to reach 45%. The number of Syrian civilians under the control of ISIS is estimated at below 8% of the total population.

² http://www.escwa.un.org/information/editor/Download.asp?table_name=ESCWAnews_press&field_name=id&fileID=204

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Massacres CSR has documented **2,392 local massacres** or incidents of willful and illegal execution of civilians under the control of an armed party. Some examples are:

Location	Date	Deaths	Agency	Details of Killing
Daraya (Rif Damascus)	25.08.2012	537	Assad forces	Public execution (fire arms)
Al Hula (Rif Homs)	25.05.2012	108	Assad forces	Killing (firearms, knives and burning)
Al-Tremsa (Rif Hama)	12.07.2012	103	Assad forces	Killing (fire arms, knives and burning)
Jdaydat Artuz (Rif Damas)	01.08.2012	47	Assad forces	Field execution (fire arms)
Aleppo	29.01.2013	109	Assad forces	Killing (torture)
Jdaitet Al-Fadl (Rif Damas)	21.04.2013	234	Assad forces	Public execution (fire arms)
Al-Bayda (Rif Hama)	02.05.2013	111	Assad forces / Hezbollah militia	Killing (fire arms, knives and burning)
Khan Al-Asal (Aleppo)	26.07.2013	123	Ansar al-Khilafa (Islamist group)	Public execution (shooting)
Latakia (Rural)	04.08.2013	190	ISIS / Muhajreen (Islamist group)	Public execution (shooting)
Deir Al-Zor	August 2014	ca. 700	ISIS (Islamist group)	Public execution (beheading)

Siege & Starve In June 2015, the UN nearly tripled its previous estimation of besieged persons in Syrians - from 245,000 to ca. 625,000 persons. The UN has not changed its criteria for declaring a location besieged or partly besieged. However, CSR and other independent human rights monitors hold that the UN classifications in Syria are unduly influenced by political considerations (ex. the unwarranted delisting of Yarmouk in Southern Damascus in 2015).

Beginning of Siege	Besieging Entity	Number of Civilians trapped	Location
April 2013	Assad regime forces	est. 630,000 persons, incl. 40% under age of ten	Over 60 towns and villages in eastern Damascus countryside: <i>Duma, Harasta, Zamalka, Hamuriyya, Maliha, etc.</i>
July 2013	Assad regime forces	est. 62,000 persons	3 large towns in southern Damascus countryside: <i>Yarmouk, Hajar al-Aswad, Daraya</i>
September 2012	Assad regime forces	est. 75.000 persons	4 towns in northern Damascus countryside: <i>Zabadani, Bloudan, Al-Tal, Madaya, Rankous</i>
November 2013	Assad regime forces	est. 49.000 persons	<i>Al-Waer</i> district in Homs City
April 2015	Opposition forces	est. 28.000 persons	2 villages in Idlib Countryside: <i>Kafraya, Al-Foua</i>

CSR-SY *The Syrian Center for Statistics and Research was established in August 2011. Relying on a network of 120 local sources across the country, we provide statistics and field surveys on human rights violations in Syria. Our aim is to show the complex variables that shed light on these events. CSR has been cited by the UN as an independent source on the conflict. <http://www.csr-sy.com/>*