

The situation in Daraa since the Government of Syria Took Control of the Province

Monitoring of violations – Report 5

March 2019

I. Introduction

The Syrian Civic Platform monitors violations in Daraa province, which have been subject to Russian-brokered settlement agreements with the Government of Syria (GoS). This report is the fifth report that monitors the situation in Daraa after the GoS took control of the province.

The GoS committed a number of provocative actions in the province during March. The most notable is the re-installation of a statue of former President Hafez al-Assad in the Tishreen square in Daraa to coincide with the ninth anniversary of the popular movement which began in the province in 2011. This action led many civilians to take part in demonstrations on March 10, in the following towns and neighborhoods: Daraa al-Balad, al-Sad, al-Mokhayam, Tafas, al-Sora, al-Hirak, al-Yadudah, Tasil and al-Sanamayn.

In addition, arrests continued in several areas of the province, and armed groups of unknown orientation emerged as the Popular Resistance.



II. Security situation

During March, the SCP has witnessed a marked increase in arrests, indiscriminate arms proliferation, and security chaos in most areas of the province. There have been multiple armed forces present in the area. However, it is not clear whether these armed forces are affiliated with the Syrian army, the security services or the opposition armed groups.

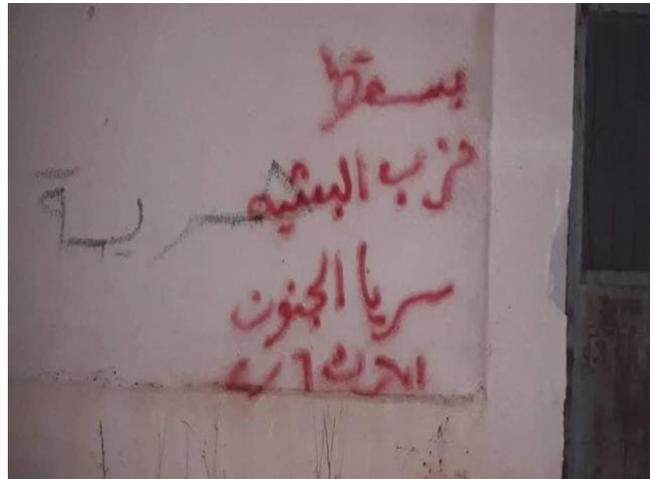
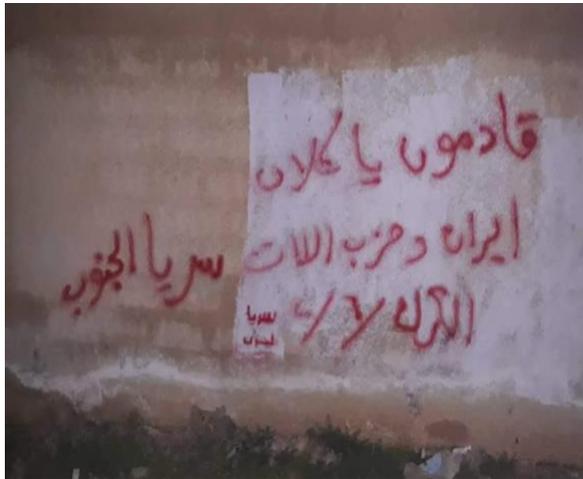
There has also been a marked increase in arrests and new military checkpoints in sensitive areas have been established, putting more pressure on the movement of citizens and separating some areas from each other.

Deaths under torture were documented for students Ala Majid al-Miqdad and Muhammad Rikan al-Miqdad after nine months in detention. In addition, a number of detainees were released after

seven years in detention. The GoS still releases the names of the deceased detainees in its prisons by sending the names of the dead to the Civil Status Department, where about ten names were registered in March.

The most significant events that took place during the reporting period are:

- The town of Dael: An attack took place on the center controlled by the Air Force Intelligence Directorate. The attack was repeated more than three times and killed five security men according to GoS sources. Unknown gunmen also attacked a military checkpoint in the town, clashes broke out and the statue of the president was smashed at the entrance to Dael.
- The town of Alma: There is ongoing tension in the town because of the practices of military security which has imposed royalties/fines on the population.
- Daraa al-Balad: A child was arrested by a GoS military at a checkpoint in Daraa al-Balad.
- Al-Hirak: The GoS arrested some men from the province known to be affiliated with Russia.
- Al-Mutaiya: Military Intelligence attempted to arrest a Jordanian citizen, leading to a clash between citizens and security forces. Barriers were set up to prevent the entry of military security.
- Sheikh Miskeen: There were raids and arrests of shops' owners working in construction in the town due to anti-government graffiti on schools' walls.
- The town of Jassim: There were raids on the houses of some activists in the town.
- Tel Shehab: The arrest the Syrian Relief & Development's (SRD) local Director.
- Daraa al-Balad: Unknown gunmen fired shells at the Sajneh neighborhood, in addition to clashes.
- The military intelligence launched RPGs on al-Arbaeen neighborhood.



III. Assassinations and arrests

- Attacks or attempted assassinations were documented in the following areas: Dael, al-Yadudah, Miliha El Sharqia, Daraa al-Balad, Daraa Station, al-Kirk, Tafas, Al Faqeea, Tell Shehab, Jassim, Atman, al-Naima, al-Sanamayn, Jassim, Muzayrib and al-Sora. Most of the assassinations were attempted on men affiliated with the GoS.
- Arrests continued at the same pace. In addition to opposition figures, the arrests targeted men who had cooperated with the GoS for reconciliation.

IV. Economic situation and services



- Residents in Daraa suffer from poor road conditions, as there is a lack of maintenance work and rubble has not been removed yet, which hampers public transportation. The relevant stats institutions have not intervened to repair roads, posing a threat to citizens especially children who move on unsafe roads containing explosive remnants. Many civilians were killed and injured by mines planted or remnants of bombs thrown at civilian areas. As a result, 8 people were killed in the towns of Adwan, Sheikh Miskeen, Khirbet Ghazaleh, Alma, and Nawa.
- The absence of market control in the province in general, as non-edible materials are still being sold in markets.
- The absence of local councils and services in some areas, which had led to the spread of many animals that found shelter in the ruins as well as a clear absence of rodent control services.
- Continued power outages and increased rationing hours.
- The water network needs restoration, but this work has not yet started and therefore water cuts continue. It is also very costly to access clean water.
- The demand for gas is generally low due to improved weather and partial availability of the material
- Lack of bread and the prices of vegetables and fruits are high due to exportation to Jordan.

V. Health status

Medical services in the province are declining, and there is a shortage of many medicines, which have led to the use of alternatives such as herbs or drugs of unknown origin. The health situation in the province can be summarized as follows:

- The decline of women's health care and the absence of competent family associations that provided care and awareness to women.
- The inability of the Health Directorate to reach remote communities to raise awareness or provide vaccines.
- Lack of resources and specialized health centers to treat diabetes, heart and kidney diseases.
- The high cost of treating incurable diseases such as cancer, in addition to the lack of treatment, which is available only in Damascus.

VI. Civil activism

- Incidents of graffiti continue in most areas of the province. Most of these writings denounce the GoS, Iran and Hezbollah and glorify the Syrian revolution.
- The photos of Bashar and Hafez al-Assad were burned at the entrance to the town of al-Hirak after a warning by people to remove it.



VII. Other incidents

- A unified opposition political body was put forward inside Syria, under the auspices of Russia, with funding from the UAE. Russia is forming a local faction directly affiliated with the Russian military police and which should protect this political body.
- The property of a group of activists were confiscated on the pretext of their affiliation to terrorist organizations in accordance with the decision of the Ministry of Finance No. 3920.