

Idlib civilians under attack

In between the right to live and the right of veto

The humanitarian situation in Idlib is getting worse day by day due to military operations and airstrikes launched by the Syrian regime and Russian drones on the southern and eastern regions of the Idlib countryside. This has led to a huge number of civilian casualties and massive damage to infrastructure, where the Syrian civil defense teams have documented. "These operations have resulted in killing of approximately 131 persons, including 29 women and 34 children including a large number of civilians who have been wounded. These strikes have also caused a wave of displacement from people who came from other areas of Syria to find shelter and safety. The number of displaced civilians have now reached nearly 203,000 persons." Civilians have been forced to leave their homes to escape from death in the middle of poor weather conditions and armed groups who have imposed fees and taxes on the work of relief organizations in order to continue operating and providing essential services to those in needs. These difficulties imposed on both civilians and relief organizations impacts the response to basic needs in dangerous circumstances.

The documented scale of violations committed against civilians in Syria and specifically Idlib is a blatant violation of international humanitarian and human rights law.

The impact of the Russian Federation and China voting for a Veto during the recent UN Security Council meeting to extend the United Nation's provision of humanitarian assistance to 4 million Syrian civilians increases the deterioration of the already poor humanitarian crisis which will threaten millions of people during the winter season. These veto votes are considered an obstruction to the role entrusted to the United Nations for protecting civilians and mitigating the impact of war and is again, a violation of human rights and international covenants.

The Syrian Civic Platform (SCP) condemns all military operations targeting civilians, educational and health facilities in Idlib and calls on all parties, domestic and international, to abide by international laws and ensure the protection of civilians and civil infrastructure. Accordingly, the SCP demands the following:

- *The immediate intervention by the United Nations to secure a humanitarian truce, in order to evacuate the areas that are being bombed, threatening new massacres against civilians and finding a guarantor of this truce;*
- *The International organizations and international community organizations need to intervene in the current conflict, halting military operations and sparing civilians from the devastation of war;*
- *All parties abide by international laws that guarantee the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure;*
- *Open humanitarian corridors for civilians fleeing shelling and not using them as human shields;*
- *Allow humanitarian access, entry of relief, food and medical assistance, and to stand as a responsible force in their duties towards civilians;*
- *The guarantor countries' commit to the pledges they made at the UN security council and diplomatically, and assume their moral responsibility towards the situation in Idlib.*