

[CONTENT WARNING: THE REPORT CONTAINS DESCRIPTIONS OF DISTRESSING EVENTS]

23 Child Casualties and 73 Injuries to Others in Less Than a Week

In northwest Syria, urban and rural areas have been under intense rocket and artillery bombardment by Syrian government forces since the beginning of this month. Shockingly, these attacks primarily focus on residential areas, despite being verified by local residents and our field team to lack any military presence. As a result, this ongoing campaign has already resulted in the heartbreaking loss of **23 children**, 19 boys and 4 girls among them, with **73 more children** sustaining injuries, including 49 boys and 24 girls. Regrettably, these numbers are on the rise.

As a direct consequence of the concentrated attacks on educational institutions, every single school has been forced to shut its doors. A shocking total of **21 schools** have been directly or indirectly targeted, causing various levels of damage that fall under grave violations against children. Furthermore, alarming attacks have taken place perilously close to **5 other schools**, with a proximity of no more than 50 meters.

“The dust of bombs filled the sky. My colleagues and I were frightened thinking about our students who were on their way back home at the time. I was worried about my student Aboudeh who lives near the bombed area. The idea of him being hurt terrified me.” Salam, a teacher at one of the targeted schools.

In addition, **Idlib University Hospital** was targeted with explosive rockets, resulting in two casualties and material damage to the building.

"The numbers in this report are likely lower than the actual figures due to the extremely challenging circumstances. We can no longer document all cases due to the precarious security situation in the area, and the high risk associated with field operations. There remain five cases of fatalities and 14 injuries that we were unable to reach directly to verify their status. The situation is nothing short of catastrophic."

A spokesperson from the Documentation Department of the Hurras Network stated.

Humanitarian teams face immense difficulties and risks that hinder them from providing protection and assistance to children in northwest Syria, despite the increasing need caused by the relentless and brutal campaign. Movement and access to those in need have become impossible due to indiscriminate shelling of civilian areas.

"Equipment and medical supplies are no longer sufficient. All the ambulance beds are filled with the injured, forcing us to lay them on the hospital floor. The injured can't stop calling out for their children and fathers." Saed, an ambulance worker

All civilians in northwest Syria are at imminent risk if immediate action is not taken to halt these crimes against civilians and civilian objects.

"Targeting schools constitutes an act of terrorism! It terrifies entire communities, and any indiscriminate attack specifically endangers children. It places half a million children and their families in peril. Schools should serve as safe sanctuaries, not military objectives for intimidating and displacing civilians." Alaa, founding member of Hurras Network

"In no circumstance should civilian persons and those who have laid down their arms be exposed to attacks, and they must be spared and protected."

Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and Additional Protocols I and II

Parties involved in the ongoing non-international armed conflict in Syria must adhere to the principles of international humanitarian law, particularly by ensuring the protection of civilians and refraining from targeting their locations. The indiscriminate shelling and attacks on civilians must cease immediately.

Furthermore, the conflict parties must abide by the principles of distinction and proportionality as outlined by international humanitarian law.

Those responsible for these actions must be held accountable. This act is considered a violation of international humanitarian law due to the failure to distinguish between civilians and military personnel. Additionally, it violates international human rights law by directly exposing the lives and safety of civilians to danger.



A glimpse of the destruction inflicted upon one of the schools in the city of Binnish. [Photo credit to [Shafaq](#)]



Destruction at a School in Abzemo caused by a missile strike