

Syrian Coalition Calls for Emergency UNSC Meeting as Assad Regime Proved Responsible for Bombing of Ayn Alfija Water Facility

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A report by UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria concluded that the Assad regime forces were responsible for the bombing of Ayn Alfija water facility in the Wadi Barada valley in late 2016. The report, which was released on Monday, stressed that airstrikes on the facility amounted to the war crime of attacking objects indispensable for the survival of the civilian population as 5.5 million people in Damascus and its suburbs were left without regular access to water.

In addition to carrying out this heinous crime, the Assad regime used it as a pretext to force residents of the Wadi Barada valley from their homes with the backing of its allied Iranian militias. The regime took advantage of political and military cover from Russia which continues to fail to assume its responsibilities as a guarantor of the ceasefire agreement signed in the Turkish capital Ankara on December 29.

The report issued by the Commission indicated that either the Assad regime or Russian forces were responsible for the bombing of the permanent headquarters of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) in the city of Idlib in February. It also concluded that the Assad regime used chlorine gas in multiple attacks on the Damascus suburbs and rural Idlib.

Russia continues to encourage the Assad regime to carry on with its massacres and mass forced displacement, which makes Russia a partner in these crimes and violations of international law and the ceasefire agreement. By failing to shoulder its responsibility as a guarantor of the cease-fire agreement, Russia has so far undermined all chances of reaching a political solution.

The Syrian Coalition calls for an emergency UN Security Council session to discuss the serious findings of the UN Independent Commission of Inquiry. It calls on the UN Security Council to put pressure on Russia to shoulder its responsibilities as a permanent member of the Council and as an alleged sponsor of the negotiations and a guarantor of the regime and its allies.

