

Russia & Assad Regime's Escalating Onslaught on Idlib Must Evoke Strong Response From Int'l Community

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Despite the recent flurry of calls, debates and discussions about political solution here and there, the Assad regime, backed by its Russian ally, is seeking to impose a de facto situation on the ground through its criminal policy of barrel bombing, killing, displacement and siege.

The escalating bombing campaign being carried out by the Russian occupation jets and the Assad regime helicopters for about a week on towns and villages of rural Idlib continues in parallel with attempts by regime forces and their allied-foreign militias to advance on the region from the south.

Initial counts indicated that the aerial attacks claimed the lives of at least 18 civilians on Thursday (December 28). The bombing campaign has killed dozens of civilians, including women and children, and wounded hundreds more since it began a week ago. Hundreds of airstrikes and barrel bomb attacks by the Russian and Assad regime warplanes have hit towns and villages of eastern and southern rural Idlib.

The ongoing onslaught on Idlib has clearly shown that sabotaging the political process has been the Assad regime and its allies' strategic choice since the very beginning. The international community cannot expect any change in this strategy unless it takes a wholly different position, exert real pressure on the regime and its allies, and begins to adopt a new strategy that corresponds with the size of its responsibilities and the recent developments on the ground.

The inability of the international community to protect Syrian civilians and its failure to maintain peace and security in Syria and its choosing to watch idly by the regime's endless crimes make it equally responsible for these crimes. The international community's continued silence also represents a nod of approval for the escalating campaign on Idlib, which will have dire consequences for political solution.