



Security Council

Distr.: General
15 October 2019

Original: English

Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017), 2401 (2018) and 2449 (2018)

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is the sixty-third submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), paragraph 10 of resolution 2165 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2191 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2258 (2015), paragraph 5 of resolution 2332 (2016), paragraph 6 of resolution 2393 (2017), paragraph 12 of resolution 2401 (2018) and paragraph 6 of resolution 2449 (2018), in the last of which the Council requested the Secretary-General to provide a report at least every 60 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The information contained herein is based on data available to agencies of the United Nations system and obtained from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and other relevant sources. Data from agencies of the United Nations system on their humanitarian deliveries have been reported for August and September 2019.

II. Major developments

Key points: August and September 2019

1. Despite the ceasefires in Idlib announced by the Russian Federation and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, on 2 and 30 August respectively, civilian casualties, including confirmed deaths of civilians, continued to be reported over the reporting period. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), air strikes and other hostilities between 1 August and 22 September killed 209 civilians. Following the announcement of the ceasefire on 30 August, there was a notable decrease in the number of air strikes, although heavy exchanges of ground-based strikes continued to be reported. In total, since late April, OHCHR has reported that more than 1,000 civilians have been killed. In addition, there have been more than 400,000 people displaced and significant damage has been caused to civilian infrastructure.



2. Health-care and education services continued to be affected by hostilities during the reporting period, with 13 incidents affecting health-care facilities and assets confirmed by the World Health Organization, and 11 incidents affecting education facilities verified by the United Nations. The incidents, many in the north-west of the country, resulted in the killing and injuring of women, children, people in need of medical care and humanitarian workers.

3. Conditions inside Rukban, on the Syrian-Jordanian border, continue to be extremely challenging. According to findings from an inter-agency assessment mission in August, food insecurity has reached critical levels with most of the population reporting dependence on negative coping mechanisms to meet their needs. From 5 to 11 September, the United Nations and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent conducted a joint mission to Rukban to provide urgent assistance, including delivering a one-month food ration and nutrition supplies for up to 15,000 people. From 26 to 29 September, United Nations and Syrian Arab Red Crescent teams provided additional aid and also supported the voluntary departures of 329 people wishing to leave Rukban. Since late March, more than 18,000 people have left Rukban, however, thousands remain in the area and are in need of continued assistance until durable solutions are found for them.

4. In the north-east of the country, the Hawl camp in Hasakah Governorate now hosts 68,600 people, 94 per cent of whom are women and children. Humanitarian access to the annex hosting non-Syrian and non-Iraqi nationals for the sustained delivery of services continued to be limited. Tensions remain high in the camp, with security incidents reported on a weekly basis, including incidents grounded in ideology, with one serious incident occurring on 30 September, which resulted in the death of one female resident and seven other women being injured.

5. Humanitarian assistance provided by United Nations agencies included food for an average of 4.1 million people in need each month and more than 620,000 health and medical treatments to people throughout the country. Cross-border assistance, authorized under Security Council resolutions [2165 \(2014\)](#), [2191 \(2014\)](#), [2258 \(2015\)](#), [2393 \(2017\)](#) and [2449 \(2018\)](#), remained a vital part of the humanitarian response. In August and September, 1,388 trucks (41 consignments) delivered general food assistance for over 1 million people (monthly average).

6. Response efforts from within the Syrian Arab Republic continued at scale in response to assessed needs throughout much of the country, even as access to some areas and for some humanitarian actors, including the United Nations, remained limited. During the reporting period, the United Nations and/or its partners deployed 1,119 missions throughout the country and also reached new areas, such as Palmyra, and some areas that recently shifted control in southern Idlib (Sinjar subdistrict), although not yet in a sustainable manner.

7. During the reporting period, a number of access constraints were reported in parts of Idlib, northern Hama and south-eastern Aleppo Governorates, owing mostly to heightened hostilities, although some response efforts are under way in those areas. Access was also limited in Raqqah city and east of the Euphrates River in Dayr al-Zawr, including the Hajin enclave, owing mostly to widespread explosive hazard contamination. Some areas in the south of the country were also not accessible in a sustainable manner to some humanitarian actors, including the United Nations, owing to administrative restrictions and in some locations, insecurity. The United Nations has not been able to gain access to the collective shelters in Homs for those leaving Rukban and conduct assessments and monitoring in the areas of second destination for people leaving Rukban, including areas in Homs and Rif Dimashq Governorates.

Humanitarian update

3. Despite the ceasefires announced by the Russian Federation and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in Idlib, on 2 and 30 August respectively, civilian casualties continued over the reporting period. According to OHCHR, air strikes and other hostilities between 1 August and 22 September killed 209 civilians. Following the announcement of the ceasefire on 30 August, there was a notable decrease in air strikes, although heavy exchanges of ground-based strikes continued to be reported. In total, OHCHR has reported that more than 1,000 civilians have been killed since the escalation of hostilities in late April. In addition, there have been more than 400,000 people displaced and significant damage has been caused to civilian infrastructure. One air strike was reported by the international counter-ISIL coalition, on 31 August, against what the coalition described as an “Al-Qaida in Syria leadership” facility north of Idlib city. The strike reportedly resulted in civilian casualties.

4. The overwhelming majority of people displaced in the north-west as a result of the hostilities are reported to have moved to densely-populated areas close to the Turkish border, in northern Idlib Governorate, where humanitarian assistance is already overstretched. Camps for displaced people are overcrowded, with many people forced to stay in the open air. The humanitarian community continues to respond, but after months of intensified needs, pipelines are running low and gaps have emerged, which remain to be addressed. The most critical need is for shelter. In addition, with winter rapidly approaching, people need warm clothes, blankets and other winter items to withstand the colder weather. The 2019–2020 academic year began in September, and many school-aged children are deprived of education opportunities as a consequence of the size of the recent displacement to already densely-populated areas, the heavy damage sustained by civilian infrastructure, including schools, the use of schools to house displaced populations, and the lack of learning supplies and materials.

5. Conditions inside Rukban, on the Syrian-Jordanian border, remain extremely challenging. Since late March, more than 18,000 people have left Rukban, but thousands remain in the area and are in need of continued assistance until durable solutions can be found for them. According to findings from an inter-agency assessment mission in August, food insecurity has reached critical levels, with most of the population reporting dependence on negative coping mechanisms to meet their needs. During the reporting period, the United Nations and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent conducted two joint missions to Rukban to assist the population. The first was conducted from 5 to 11 September, to deliver food and nutrition items for 15,000 people. The second was conducted from 26 to 29 September and saw United Nations and Syrian Arab Red Crescent teams support the voluntary departures of people wishing to leave Rukban, with 329 people assisted in leaving the area. In addition, over 1,000 people who were not reached by the convoy in early September received food and nutrition items, over 110 medical consultations were conducted and 850 protection and legal consultations were also provided.

6. The Hawl camp in Hasakah Governorate in the north-eastern part of the Syrian Arab Republic currently hosts about 68,600 people, 94 per cent of whom are women and children. Around 67 per cent of the residents of the camp are under the age of 18 and 55 per cent are under the age of 12. During the reporting period, more than 300 Syrian internally displaced persons departed the camp and returned to their areas of origin in Raqqah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates; a small number of third-country nationals also departed. Since the beginning of June, approximately 2,640 residents departed the camp, including around 1,240 Syrians and 1,400 third-country nationals, including women and children. A number of irregular departures of Syrians, who

leave without coordinating with the camp, have also taken place in recent months, contributing to the overall reduction in residents. The humanitarian situation in the camp has stabilized, compared with previous months, but needs remain considerable and there is, as yet, no long-term solution across all sectors. Procedures for medical referrals remain challenging, despite ongoing advocacy. Tensions remain high in the camp, with security incidents reported on a weekly basis, including incidents grounded in ideology. One serious incident occurred on 30 September, which resulted in the death of a female resident and seven other women injured, as well as the arrest of up to 50 women. Protection and the need to realize durable solutions for camp residents remain the key concerns.

7. Tensions and attacks continued to be reported in the south-west of the country. In Dar'a, the security situation remained unstable, with tensions rising between Syrian Government forces and local populations. Syrian government security branches reportedly detained individuals with former links to armed opposition groups, including those who had signed so-called local agreements with the Government. In response, local cells of former opposition fighters reportedly carried out attacks on Syrian Government-linked targets. Concerns have emerged regarding the impact of insecurity on freedom of movement for the population in the area, as well as on access for humanitarian aid deliveries.

8. In late September, the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations released a joint report on crop and food security in the Syrian Arab Republic, finding that favourable rains and improved security led to an improved harvest compared with 2018, despite crop fires which affected a number of farmers. The wheat output almost doubled. The overall output remains, however, at almost half of pre-crisis levels. Higher food prices, largely due to rising fuel prices and depreciation in the Syrian pound on the informal market, are placing a great strain on many Syrians, in particular the most vulnerable.

Update on overall developments

9. On 23 September, I announced the agreement of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the opposition Syrian Negotiation Commission for a credible, balanced and inclusive Constitutional Committee that will be facilitated by the United Nations in Geneva (see [S/2019/775](#)). The agreement was facilitated by my Special Envoy for Syria in accordance with Security Council resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#).

10. On 7 August, Turkey and the United States of America reportedly concluded an agreement on a so-called safe zone, or security mechanism, for the border area in the northern part of the Syrian Arab Republic. Joint patrolling of the zone by the United States and Turkey also began during the reporting period. The Syrian Democratic Forces also reportedly handed over existing positions to local military councils. The perimeter of the so-called safe zone, including its length, width and the extent of demilitarization, as well as the related administrative arrangements, remain unclear.

Protection

11. The impact of the ongoing hostilities and violence against civilians and civilian objects remained severe and extensive in parts of the country, particularly in the north-west. Of the 209 civilian deaths documented by OHCHR due to hostilities in the north-western part of the Syrian Arab Republic between 1 August and 22 September, 116 were men, 34 were women and 59 were children (45 boys and 14 girls). The deaths were the result of air strikes by government and pro-government forces, and ground-based strikes exchanged between government and pro-government forces and non-State armed opposition groups, as well as one air strike by the international

counter-ISIL coalition. The greatest concentration of casualties continued to be reported in the north-west of the country, despite the unilateral ceasefires.

12. Civilians continued to be killed and injured, also as a result of an increase in the indiscriminate use of improvised explosive devices, including the use of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices in populated areas under the control of various non-State armed opposition groups in northern and eastern parts of the country. Given the consistent pattern of civilian harm, OHCHR reports that it appears highly likely that parties to the conflict have failed to respect the key international humanitarian law principles of distinguishing civilians from fighters and civilian objects from military objectives; refraining from indiscriminate attacks; proportionality in attack; and precaution in the conduct of military operations. Civilians were also killed and injured by abandoned mines and explosive remnants of war, including unexploded ordnance.

13. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has continued to receive reports of arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances of civilians, including of returnees in areas under the control of the Government by various government security forces. Relatives of those persons were not informed of, or were denied information about, the detention, fate and whereabouts of their family members. Such patterns raise concerns about what appears to be enforced disappearance, as well as whether due process was adequately followed and whether all relevant rights were afforded to detainees, as required by international law.

14. In the northern part of the Syrian Arab Republic, the situation for civilians also remains worrying. Non-State armed opposition groups and Security Council-designated terrorist groups continue to systematically use intimidation and harassment as tactics against civilians, including elderly people, and media and health service providers, through targeted killings, abductions, the deprivation of liberty, ill-treatment, torture, enforced disappearances, looting and the confiscation of property. The whereabouts and fate of many detainees remain unknown to their families.

15. Military operations affecting educational facilities continued to be reported by humanitarian organizations. A total of 11 incidents were verified by the United Nations during the reporting period,¹ including 8 in Idlib, 2 in Hasakah and 1 in Aleppo Governorates:

(a) On 1 August 2019, Ahmad al-Alloush school in Kafr Nubl, Idlib Governorate, reportedly sustained partial damage due to an air strike;

(b) On 10 August, Abu al-Aala secondary school for girls in Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, Idlib Governorate, was reportedly damaged during air strikes;

(c) On 11 August, Has primary school in Idlib Governorate was reportedly partially damaged by air strikes and ground-based shelling;

(d) On 16 August, Wafa primary school, a health-care facility and surrounding buildings in Has, Idlib Governorate, were reportedly damaged by an air strike;

(e) On 16 August, Hussein al-Ali and Tariq Bin Ziad schools in Hish, Idlib Governorate, were reportedly damaged;

¹ These attacks have been confirmed using tried and tested systems, whereby the United Nations receives reports from partners on the ground and reviews them against at least two other independent sources. Only attacks that are fully vetted and confirmed by all independent sources are included in the list of confirmed attacks. These systems are used worldwide and are widely respected.

(f) On 17 August, Amal school in Hazzarin, Idlib Governorate, reportedly sustained significant damage;

(g) On 19 August, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device reportedly exploded near the Industrial High School in Qamishli, Hasakah Governorate, without causing casualties or structural damage;

(h) On 20 August, non-State armed opposition groups reportedly occupied Sinaa school in Atarib, Aleppo Governorate;

(i) On 21 August, Rifiyyah primary school in Bushayriyah, Idlib Governorate, was reportedly rendered inoperable owing to air strikes;

(j) On 28 August, non-State armed opposition groups reportedly occupied Hidaj school, Shaddadah, Hasakah Governorate;

(k) On 31 August 2019, an air strike reportedly caused significant damage to Halbah school in Halbah, Idlib Governorate.

16. During the reporting period, the Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care of the World Health Organization reported 13 incidents affecting health-care facilities and assets.¹ The incidents reportedly resulted in the killing of 11 health workers and patients and the injuring of an additional 10 people, as well as damage to the facilities. Seven of the health-care facilities in the north-western part of the Syrian Arab Republic were attacked between 28 and 30 August. The number of outpatient consultations in the north-west of the country have decreased by over 20 per cent when compared with the first quarter of the year, which is estimated to be, in part, a result of the volatile conflict environment.

17. On 1 August, I announced my decision to establish an internal United Nations Headquarters board of inquiry to investigate a series of incidents that have occurred in the north-western part of the Syrian Arab Republic since the memorandum on the stabilization of the situation in the Idlib de-escalation area was signed between the Russian Federation and Turkey on 17 September 2018. The investigation will cover the destruction of, or damage to, facilities on the deconfliction list and United Nations-supported facilities in the area. The board, whose composition was announced on 13 September, commenced its work on 30 September. It will ascertain the facts of the specific incidents concerned and report to me once it completes its work.

Humanitarian response

18. United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners reached on average around 6.3 million people in need each month, including children, adolescent girls and women of reproductive age, throughout the Syrian Arab Republic. During the reporting period, humanitarian assistance provided by United Nations agencies included food delivered for 4 million people in need in August and 4.3 million people in September. More than 1.3 million health and medical treatments were provided to people throughout the country during the reporting period (see table 1).

Table 1
Average number of people reached each month by the United Nations and other organizations through all modalities throughout the Syrian Arab Republic: August and September 2019

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Average number of people reached monthly</i>
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	10 000
International Organization for Migration	17 000
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	647 000
United Nations Children's Fund	1 382 000
United Nations Development Programme	1 368 000
Mine Action Service	5 000
United Nations Population Fund	363 000
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	82 000
World Food Programme	3 593 000
World Health Organization	650 000

19. From inside the Syrian Arab Republic, humanitarian assistance provided by United Nations agencies included food for 2.67 million people in Government-controlled areas and in the north-east, on average, each month. In total throughout the reporting period, approximately 723,000 people received water, sanitation and hygiene services and supplies. Nearly 543,000 children and mothers were reached with primary health-care, maternal and reproductive health and immunization services. Moreover, some 308,000 people benefited from gender-based violence prevention, protection and psychosocial support services and child protection services. United Nations operations from within the Syrian Arab Republic also included the distribution of nearly 776,000 health and medical treatments to people throughout the country.

20. As part of its countrywide humanitarian response, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners continued to deliver life-saving assistance to more than 800,000 people each month in the three Governorates of the north-eastern part of the Syrian Arab Republic, namely Dayr al-Zawr, Raqqah and Hasakah Governorates. At the Hawl camp, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners continue to implement a major relief operation, where some 35 humanitarian partners are providing more than 50 activities and services to camp residents. Efforts to improve overall living standards in the camp continue. Partners make daily deliveries of water and also deliver the monthly provision of food rations and hygiene and dignity kits (20,000 per month). However, there is a constant need to maintain and upgrade existing facilities such as latrines and water tanks, as well as to replace worn out or damaged tents. Currently, partners are in the process of replacing up to 3,000 tents across the camp, with 1,177 tents having already been replaced. Aside from support to the Hawl camp, efforts also continue to deliver regular assistance to the 120,000 internally displaced persons residing in 58 sites, camps and informal settlements for internally displaced persons across the north-east of the country, as well as to communities hosting large numbers of internally displaced persons.

21. As mentioned above, the United Nations and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent conducted two joint missions to Rukban to assist the population. During the first mission, from 5 to 11 September, the two organizations delivered much-needed humanitarian assistance for close to 15,000 internally displaced Syrians. Food was

distributed to civilians in Rukban and nutritional supplies were provided for children. The joint convoy consisted of 22 trucks, carrying food rations and 50 kg sacks of wheat, as well as high-energy biscuits. The second mission, from 26 to 29 September, included a top-up delivery of assistance to those who did not receive aid in the first delivery. The mission also supported the departure of 329 people who opted to leave.

22. Humanitarian mine action partners continued to implement programmes across the country. In the month of August, in Aleppo and Idlib, interventions by the Mine Action Service reached 4,699 beneficiaries with risk education sessions. Another 114 people in need received victim assistance support, including physical rehabilitation, psychosocial support, vocational training and self-care support. Contamination impact surveys were conducted in 14 communities. In Rif Dimashq, risk education teams continued to deliver awareness sessions to promote safer behaviour in the communities most affected by explosive hazard contamination, focusing on such highly vulnerable groups as herders, rubble removers, adolescents and women.

23. Cross-border deliveries continued under the terms of Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017) and 2449 (2018) (see table 2). In line with those resolutions, the United Nations notified the Syrian authorities in advance of each shipment, including its contents, its destination and the number of beneficiaries expected to be reached. In August and September, 1,388 trucks (41 consignments) delivered food assistance for more than 1 million people through cross-border deliveries (see figure I).

Figure I
Number of beneficiaries assisted by the United Nations and its partners through cross-border humanitarian deliveries, by cluster: August and September 2019 (monthly average)

(Thousands)

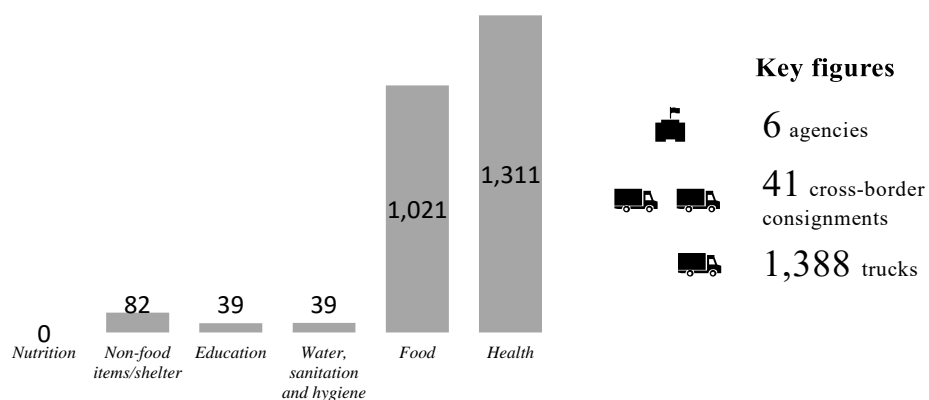


Table 2
Number of beneficiaries targeted through cross-border deliveries, by sector and by district: August and September 2019 (monthly average)

Governorate	District	Education	Food	Health	Non-food items/shelter	Nutrition	Water, sanitation and hygiene
Aleppo	Afrin	–	32 338	116	–	–	–
Aleppo	Bab	–	–	80 000	–	–	–
Aleppo	I'zaz	28 795	86 790	686 771	11 663	–	8 750
Aleppo	Jabal Sim'an	–	–	97	–	–	–

<i>Governorate</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Non-food items/ shelter</i>	<i>Nutrition</i>	<i>Water, sanitation and hygiene</i>
Hama	Suqaylibiyah	10 000	31 675	56 072	7 950	–	3 000
Idlib	Ma'arras	–	–	160 825	–	–	–
Idlib	Ariha	–	25 575	7 374	4 350	–	–
Idlib	Harim	–	–	8 342	–	–	–
Idlib	Idlib	–	845 415	290 837	56 250	–	24 300
Idlib	Jisr al-Shughur	–	–	20 644	1 800	–	3 182

24. In the north-western part of the Syrian Arab Republic, humanitarian personnel continued to provide food assistance to newly displaced households, to increase health services in areas that are receiving people and to provide emergency protection services. Owing to the growing humanitarian needs across the north-west, the World Food Programme has increased its cross-border beneficiary caseload to 1.1 million people and increased the size of the food ration to provide a total of 2,100 kcal per person per day. This aid was delivered exclusively through the cross-border modality. Tens of thousands received other services and support, such as schooling, non-food items, clean water, shelter, emergency and protection services.

25. While humanitarian needs in the north-western part of the Syrian Arab Republic have increased, the massive response by the United Nations and its partners has helped avoid a further deterioration of the humanitarian crisis. The past months have seen the highest number of trucks passing through the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic cross-border operation since its inception in 2014. More contingency stocks have been released in the past two months than in the previous two years. As a result, much of the contingency stocks in place to respond to emergencies have been exhausted, and without further funding the amount of aid available will be reduced. The United Nations and partners operating cross-border and from Damascus have contingency plans in place in case of a further escalation of violence. Donor support is urgently needed; without it, partners will not be able to scale up their operations and respond to both new and existing needs.

26. During the reporting period, the Russian Federation sent informational bulletins to the United Nations from the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides and Refugee Migration Monitoring, which outlined the provision of bilateral relief assistance. Other Member States also continued to provide bilateral and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

27. As of the end of September, the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan was funded at 35 per cent, with \$1.15 billion provided of the \$3.3 billion requested for 2019.² The response to meet the needs of the affected population in the north-western part of the country is folded into the response plan. However, the critically low level of funding to date has required partners to make difficult decisions that prioritize response efforts to ensure crucial life-saving humanitarian response in a timely manner to those people most affected. Many humanitarian partners are, for example, forced to use funds previously allocated to meet the upcoming anticipated needs during winter to fund emergency life-saving assistance for displaced persons instead. Without additional funding, significant gaps in the response are expected in the months ahead.

² See Financial Tracking Service reporting on the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan, available at: <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/663/summary>.

Humanitarian access

28. The provision of humanitarian assistance requires timely, safe, sustained and unimpeded access by the United Nations and all humanitarian partners to people in need across the Syrian Arab Republic. The access landscape in the country is complex, with different areas serviced differently and different types of services requiring different operating modalities. Access is critical for principled humanitarian action, which depends notably on the ability to independently assess needs and deliver assistance and to monitor and evaluate impact independently, including by regularly engaging directly with affected people.

29. During the reporting period, the United Nations continued to provide assistance from within the Syrian Arab Republic to millions of people in need in thousands of locations throughout the country. More than 1,700 United Nations staff members are present in the Syrian Arab Republic, with more than 500 deployed in nine hubs outside Damascus (Aleppo, Dar'a, Dayr al-Zawr, Hama, Homs, Ladhqiya, Qamishli, Suwayda' and Tartus). A further 3,860 staff members of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are deployed across the country. The decentralized presence of United Nations staff contributes to greater access and proximity to affected populations.

30. Many of the aid deliveries are implemented through national partners, in particular national non-governmental organizations and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. The United Nations is regularly deployed alongside the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, including to undertake assessments, accompany deliveries and follow up with monitoring and evaluation missions. In August and September, the United Nations conducted hundreds of missions throughout the Syrian Arab Republic (see table 3). Some of those missions, in particular those for staff based in Damascus, required formal approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see table 4), while the vast majority, in particular those for field-based staff, were deployed in accordance with agreements at the local level with governors and other relevant parties.

Table 3

Total number of missions conducted from within the Syrian Arab Republic by United Nations agencies and third parties/facilitators, by type: August and September 2019

<i>Type of mission</i>	<i>Note verbale</i>	<i>Blanket approval</i>	<i>Governorate approval</i>	<i>Total number</i>
Assessment missions	19	19	16	54
Missions accompanying aid deliveries	13	293	3	309
Monitoring missions	38	585	33	656
Security, logistics and administrative support missions	26	74	0	100
Total	96	971	52	1 119

Figure II
Total number of missions conducted from within the Syrian Arab Republic by United Nations agencies, by Governorate: August and September 2019

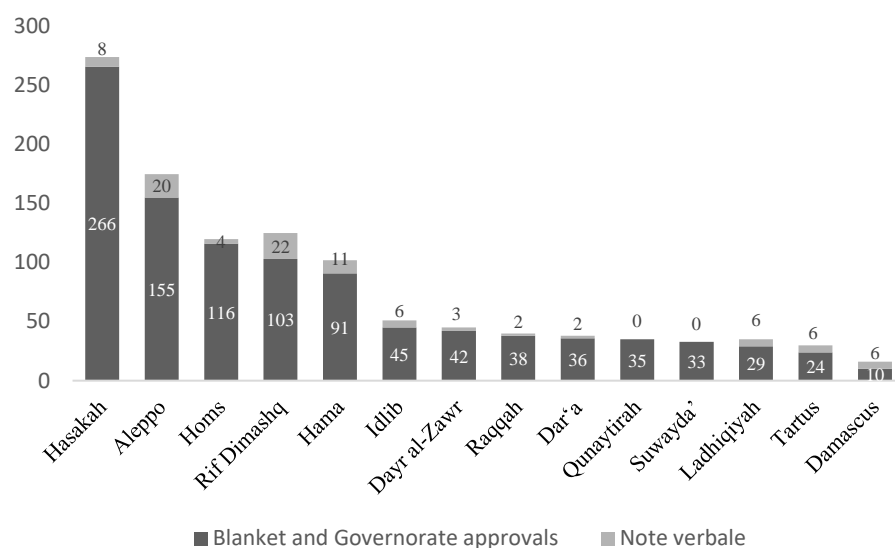


Table 4
Requests for United Nations access for single-agency missions: August and September 2019

Type of request	Number requested	Number approved	Percentage approved
Assessment missions	123	32	26
Missions accompanying aid deliveries	49	15	31
Monitoring missions	156	50	32
Security, logistics and administrative support missions	70	29	41
Total	398	126	32

31. During the reporting period, the United Nations and its partners received approval from the Syrian authorities to conduct 1,119 missions, 1,023 of which were approved at the local level (blanket approval or Governorate approval) and 96 at the national level (formal approval). During the reporting period, the United Nations and/or its partners also reached new areas, such as Palmyra and some areas that recently shifted control in southern Idlib (Sinjar sub-district), although not yet in a sustainable manner.

32. Response efforts from within the Syrian Arab Republic continued at scale in response to assessed needs throughout much of the country, even as access to some areas and for some humanitarian actors, including the United Nations, remained limited. Limitations on the ability of certain sectors to carry out structured needs assessments across the country remained. Of the 398 submitted mission requests that required formal approval at the national level by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 126 mission requests were approved (32 per cent). While some of the requests were made in the last days of the reporting period, and thus would not be expected to receive a formal response before the end of the month, the numbers indicate limitations on access for humanitarian actors.

33. During the reporting period, a number of access constraints were reported in parts of Idlib, northern Hama and south-eastern Aleppo Governorates, owing mostly to heightened hostilities, although some response efforts are under way in those areas. Access was also limited in Raqqah city and east of the Euphrates River in Dayr al-Zawr, including the Hajin enclave, owing mostly to widespread explosive hazard contamination. Some areas in the south of the country were also not accessible in a sustainable manner to some humanitarian actors, including the United Nations, owing to administrative restrictions and, in some locations, insecurity. The United Nations has not been able to gain access to the collective shelters in Homs for those leaving Rukban and conduct assessments and/or monitoring in the areas of second destination for people leaving Rukban, including areas in Homs and Rif Dimashq Governorates.

34. The United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic continued its operations as authorized under Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2332 (2016), 2393 (2017) and 2449 (2018). During the reporting period, the Mechanism monitored the delivery of 41 consignments by six United Nations agencies, consisting of 1,388 trucks, from three border crossings: 20 from Bab al-Hawa (1,185 trucks); 19 from Bab al-Salam (195 trucks); and 2 from Ya‘rubiyah (8 trucks). This brings the total number of trucks since the beginning of cross-border operations to 28,383 (20,422 through Bab al-Hawa; 3,264 through Bab al-Salam; 4,595 through Ramtha; and 102 from Ya‘rubiyah). There were no concerns or questions about the humanitarian nature of the consignments sent. The United Nations provided 48-hour notice to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding all shipments. The Mechanism continued to benefit from the excellent cooperation of the Governments of Iraq, Jordan and Turkey.

35. Response from the cross-border operation from Turkey continued at high levels to address existing needs, as well as new needs arising from the recent escalation in conflict. Access constraints persisted in frontline areas owing to the intensity of hostilities. In general, humanitarian access in areas of Idlib not affected by hostilities remained unconstrained, with some isolated incidents or bureaucratic impediments. In northern Aleppo, access challenges remained, primarily bureaucratic impediments.

Visas and registrations

36. The United Nations continued to work with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to allow for the timely provision of visas to staff (see table 5).

Table 5
Requests for United Nations visas: August and September 2019

<i>Type of request</i>	<i>Number requested</i>	<i>Number approved</i>	<i>Number rejected</i>	<i>Number pending</i>
Visas requested during reporting period	126	50	17	58
Renewals requested during reporting period	154	116	–	38
Visas pending from before reporting period	114	48	18	38
Renewals pending from before reporting period	43	40	–	3

Note: The United Nations withdrew one visa request submitted during the reporting period and 10 pending requests from before the reporting period.

37. A total of 28 international non-governmental organizations are registered with the Government to operate in the country.

Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and premises

38. The United Nations and non-governmental organizations continued to implement programmes in areas affected by frequent clashes among parties to the conflict, by air strikes and by the regular exchange of indirect artillery fire and other attacks. Humanitarian relief personnel also operate in areas highly contaminated with unexploded ordnance, explosive remnants of war and landmines.

39. Since the beginning of the conflict, hundreds of humanitarian workers have reportedly been killed, including 23 staff members of the United Nations and organizations of the United Nations system, 18 of whom were staff members of UNRWA; 66 staff members and volunteers of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent; and 8 staff members and volunteers of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. Many staff members of international and national non-governmental organizations have also been killed.

40. A total of 27 staff members of agencies and programmes of the United Nations system (all from UNRWA) were detained or missing at the end of the reporting period.

III. Observations

41. The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic remains one of the greatest humanitarian crises of our time. Active hostilities continue to be of great concern, and the risk of further destabilization inside the country and across the wider region remains ever-present. The situation in the north-western part of the Syrian Arab Republic, in particular, speaks to this fact, with over 1,000 civilians having lost their lives since the escalation of hostilities in late April. An additional 400,000 people inside the so-called de-escalation zone fled their homes towards the Turkish border since late April.

42. I strongly condemn continued attacks affecting civilians and civilian infrastructure in the course of hostilities in the north-west. I remind all parties to the conflict once again of their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect civilians and to take constant care to spare civilians and civilian objects in the conduct of military operations. All parties must cease any indiscriminate attacks carried out through air strikes, shelling and the use of improvised explosive devices.

43. Regarding the Idlib de-escalation area, I reiterate my call to ensure the upholding of the memorandum on stabilization signed by the Russian Federation and Turkey in September 2018. This is not only essential to protect the civilian population, but also necessary to afford the emerging political process the greatest opportunity to succeed. Any military operations, including those by and against Security Council-designated terrorist groups, must respect the rules of international humanitarian law, including those on the protection of civilians and civilian objects.

44. Despite the immense challenges posed by hostilities as well as by operating in an environment where the Security Council-designated terrorist group Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham has a significant presence, humanitarian partners continue to stem a humanitarian catastrophe in the north-west through a massive cross-border operation that is delivering aid in accordance with principled humanitarian action to the 2.1 million people in need in the area. Without this operation, we would see increased numbers of civilian deaths, greater prevalence of disease and even greater suffering being inflicted on a population who cannot be reached at this scale, in such a timely and direct manner, through any other means. In order to ensure that these operations can continue, it is critical that the provisions of Security Council resolution [2165 \(2014\)](#) be further extended for another year.

45. I recall the record level of support pledged in Brussels, earlier in 2019, to support the Syrian Arab Republic and the region. However, I note with concern the low levels of funding received to date, in 2019, for the Humanitarian Response Plan, which, as of the end of September, was only 35 per cent funded. Funds are urgently needed, and I call upon all Member States, in particular those with outstanding pledges from Brussels, to follow through and provide the support necessary for the Syrian people.

46. I urge all parties concerned to extend their cooperation to the United Nations Headquarters board of inquiry as it investigates a series of incidents that have occurred in the north-western part of the Syrian Arab Republic since the signing of the memorandum on the stabilization of the situation in the Idlib de-escalation area between the Russian Federation and Turkey on 17 September 2018.

47. I am following with great concern the recent developments in the north-eastern part of the Syrian Arab Republic, in particular the reports of civilian casualties and displacements resulting from military actions. I call upon all parties to exercise maximum restraint and stress that any military operation must fully respect international law. Civilians and civilian infrastructure need to be protected at all times, and sustained, unimpeded and safe humanitarian access to civilians in need must be guaranteed in order to allow the United Nations and its humanitarian partners to continue to carry out their critical work in the northern part of the country.

48. Continued impunity for alleged serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by parties to the conflict remains of grave concern. Perpetrators of serious violations of international humanitarian law must be held accountable. I call upon all parties to the conflict, in particular the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, all States, civil society and the United Nations system to cooperate fully with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011, in particular by providing relevant information and documentation. Taking measures to address serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law is both a legal requirement and central to achieving sustainable peace in the Syrian Arab Republic. I reiterate my call for the situation in the country to be referred to the International Criminal Court.

49. In view of the ongoing serious concerns repeatedly raised with regard to respect for human rights and international humanitarian law in the Syrian Arab Republic, I continue to strongly urge the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, in line with Human Rights Council resolutions [S-18/1](#) and [19/22](#), to cooperate with OHCHR, including through the establishment of a field presence with the mandate to protect and promote human rights.

50. On 23 September, I announced the agreement of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Syrian Negotiation Commission for a credible, balanced and inclusive Constitutional Committee that will be facilitated by the United Nations in Geneva. I strongly believe that the launch of the Syrian-led and Syrian-owned Constitutional Committee can and must be the beginning of the political path out of the tragedy towards a solution, in line with Security Council resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#), that meets the legitimate aspirations of all Syrians and is based on a strong commitment to the country's sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity. It should be accompanied by real and meaningful action on the issue of detainees, abductees and missing persons, as well as improved and unimpeded humanitarian access to all Syrians in need. Only an inclusive political solution can lead to sustainable peace and put an end to one of the greatest humanitarian crises of our time.

Annex

Reported incidents affecting civilians recorded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: August and September 2019*

Idlib Governorate

- On 1 August, one civilian woman was killed and the Ahmad al-Alloush school was damaged as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Kafr Nubl in southern rural Idlib.
- On 11 August, one boy was killed as a result of what were alleged to be air strikes and ground-based strikes that hit the town of Has and damaged the Has school in southern rural Idlib.
- On 12 August, the parents of a media activist from the town of Kafr Nubl in Idlib received information through unofficial channels regarding the death of their detained son while in the custody of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham. The media activist was arrested by the group in his home in the town of Kafr Nubl on 26 December 2017, reportedly for being critical of the group. His whereabouts and fate remained unknown to his family until news of his death in the group's custody was unofficially conveyed. The parents were neither informed about the cause of their son's death nor received his body.
- On 13 August, three civilians, including one woman, were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the city of Khan Shaykhun in southern rural Idlib.
- On 13 August, three boys were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Salihyah in southern rural Idlib.
- On 14 August, three civilian men were killed as a result of what were alleged to be double-tap air strikes that hit the village of Basiqah in Ma'arrat Hurmah in southern rural Idlib. The first air strike hit an ambulance centre, killing two paramedics (an ambulance driver and a nurse) and completely destroying the centre and the ambulance. The second air strike followed soon thereafter and killed one first responder as he rushed to the area to rescue the injured.
- On 14 August, four civilians, including two women, were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the city of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man in southern rural Idlib.
- On 16 August, one civilian woman was killed and the Hussein al-Ali and Tariq Bin Ziad schools were damaged as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Hish in southern rural Idlib.
- On 16 August, one girl was killed and 20 other civilians, including four women, were injured as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the city of Ariha in southern rural Idlib.
- On 16 August, at least nine civilians, including two women and three girls, were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit a settlement for internally displaced persons in the town of Has in southern rural Idlib.

* The list of incidents exemplifies human rights issues of concern raised in the report. Owing to the changing patterns of conflict and the loss of networks of credible and/or reliable sources in many conflict-affected areas, however, verifying incidents is increasingly difficult. The list, which contains only those incidents that were reported to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and that have been verified according to its methodology, should not be considered comprehensive.

- On 17 August, seven civilians (two women and five children) were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Dayr al-Sharqi in rural Ma'arrat al-Nu'man in southern rural Idlib.
- On 20 August, two children were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Banin in southern rural Idlib.
- On 21 August, three civilians, including one woman, were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Dayr al-Gharbi in rural Ma'arrat al-Nu'man in southern rural Idlib.
- On 24 August, two civilian men were killed and nine civilians (four women and five children) were injured as a result of what was alleged to be a vehicle-borne improved explosive device that detonated in the neighbourhood of Qusur in the city of Idlib.
- On 24 August, five civilians, including two women and two boys, were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Tallmannis in southern rural Idlib.
- On 25 August, one civilian woman was killed as a result of what was alleged to be a ground-based strike that hit the town of Rasif in government-controlled northern rural Idlib.
- On 25 August, six civilians (two women and four boys) were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Tallmannis in southern rural Idlib.
- On 26 August, three civilians (one man, one woman and one girl) were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Bsaqla in southern rural Idlib.
- On 26 August, three civilians (a woman and two boys) were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Ibdita in southern rural Idlib.
- On 27 August, four civilians (one man, two women and one boy) were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Ma'arr Shurin in southern rural Idlib.
- On 28 August, two civilians (one man and one boy) were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town Ma'saran in southern rural Idlib.
- On 28 August, at least 12 civilians, including two women and seven boys, were killed as a result of what were alleged to be air strikes that hit the city of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man in southern rural Idlib.
- On 29 August, three civilians, including one woman and one boy, were killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Tah in southern rural Idlib.
- On 3 September, a medical doctor working at the Ma'arratmisrin hospital in the town of Ma'arratmisrin in Idlib was subjected to beatings and shot in the legs by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham gunmen as he was driving his car in the Dana area of northern Idlib. Reportedly, other gunmen from the group raided the Bab al-Hawa hospital in the area of Bab al-Hawa and arrested the medical doctor as he was being treated, and verbally and physically assaulted hospital personnel who tried to stop them. For reasons that are as yet unidentified, the medical doctor was deprived of his liberty by the group and released a few hours later.

- On 13 September, reportedly ground-based strikes occurred near the Kiwan medical installation in the town of Kansafrah in southern rural Idlib. As a result of the strikes, the medical installation was damaged. The same installation was also affected by the hostilities on 23 May.
- On 15 September, four civilians, including two boys, were killed and three other civilians were injured as a result of what was alleged to be an explosion of unexploded ordnance that detonated in the vicinity of the Ram Balyun camp for internally displaced persons on the outskirts of the village of Ram Balyun in the Jabal al-Zawiyah area of southern rural Idlib.
- On 15 September, one civilian woman was killed as a result of what was alleged to be a ground-based strike that hit the town of Kansafrah in southern rural Idlib.

Hama Governorate

- On 6 August, three civilians (one woman and two boys) were killed as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit the village of Ayn Sulaymu in western rural Hama.
- On 17 August, three children were killed and three other children were injured as a result of what was alleged to be unexploded ordnance that detonated on agricultural land in the government-controlled village of Mas‘adah in south-eastern Hama.
- On 25 August, one civilian woman was killed as a result of what was alleged to be a ground-based strike that hit the village of Rasif in northern rural Hama.

Aleppo Governorate

- On 8 August, two civilians (one man and one boy) were killed and four civilians were injured as a result of what was alleged to be an improved explosive device attached to a motorcycle that detonated in the vicinity of the Kawa roundabout in the city of Afrin in western rural Aleppo.
- On 10 August, one civilian man was killed and six other civilians, including two boys, were injured as a result of what was alleged to be an improvised explosive device attached to a motorcycle that detonated in a marketplace in the city of I‘zaz in rural Aleppo.
- On 18 August, three civilians were injured as a result of what was alleged to be a roadside improvised explosive device that detonated near a civilian vehicle driving along the Qabbasin-Aleppo highway.
- On 20 August, one boy was killed as a result of what was alleged to be a ground-based strike that hit the town of Kafr Hamra in western rural Aleppo.
- In the city of Afrin, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) received reports that, on 25 August, gunmen raided the house of an elderly couple, aged 78 and 74, in the Ashrafiyah neighbourhood, looted the house and subjected the couple to beatings with their hands and guns. The man died while being assaulted and his wife suffered serious injuries, resulting in her death on 6 September.
- On 30 August, between 2300 and 2330 hours, the al-Iman maternity and children’s hospital sustained significant damage as a result of what were alleged to be several air strikes that hit the areas around the hospital in the town of Urum al-Kubra in western rural Aleppo. As a result of the strikes, six civilians accompanying patients were injured.

- On 30 August, between 1500 and 1600 hours, one boy was killed as a result of what was alleged to be an air strike that hit the town of Zarbah in southern rural Aleppo. Another air strike on the town also occurred near a medical centre and caused significant infrastructure damage.
- On 3 September, at about 1130 hours, one civilian man was killed and 11 other civilians were injured as a result of what was alleged to be an improvised explosive device attached to a motorcycle that detonated inside a busy local market, known as the al-Turki bazaar, in the city of I‘zaz in northern rural Aleppo. On the same day, at about 1345 hours another explosion of what was alleged to be an improvised explosive device attached to a motorcycle occurred near the al-Maytam mosque and an orphanage in the city of I‘zaz. As a result of the second explosion, five civilians were injured and the external wall of the orphanage was damaged.
- On 13 September, at least 11 civilians were injured as a result of what was alleged to be a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device that detonated inside a busy local market in the city of Afrin in north-western Aleppo. The explosion was reportedly followed by two mortars that hit a residential area in the vicinity of the al-Urubah high school in the city of Afrin.
- On 15 September, an explosion of what was alleged to be a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device occurred in the vicinity of a residential area in the town of Ra‘i in northern rural Aleppo. As a result of the explosion, 12 civilians, including two women, were killed and 15 other civilians were injured. The explosion also caused partial infrastructure damage to the Ra‘i hospital building and other houses in the area.

Hasakah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates

- On 3 August, two attacks with improvised explosive devices attached to motorcycles occurred in two different neighbourhoods in the city of Hasakah. No civilian casualties were reported but both attacks caused significant damage to civilian objects in both the Ghuwayran and Mushayrifah neighbourhoods near a busy marketplace.
- On 3 August, one boy was killed and four other civilians were injured as a result of what was alleged to be an improvised explosive device attached to a motorcycle that detonated in a livestock market in the neighbourhood of Nashwah in the city of Hasakah.
- On 7 August, three children were killed and at least two other civilians were injured as a result of what was alleged to be a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device that detonated in the town of Qahtaniyah in Hasakah Governorate. Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) claimed responsibility for the attack and alleged that it had targeted a vehicle belonging to the Syrian Democratic Forces in the area.
- On 11 August, one boy was killed and three other civilians were injured as a result of crossfire between the Syrian Democratic Forces and unidentified armed men in the town of Sha‘fah in eastern rural Dayr al-Zawr. On the same day, one girl was killed and two other civilians were injured as a result of crossfire between the Syrian Democratic Forces and unidentified gunmen in the town of Busayrah in eastern rural Dayr al-Zawr.
- On 18 August, two civilians were injured as a result of what was alleged to be a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device that detonated in the vicinity of a high school in the neighbourhood of Abawiyah in the city of Qamishli in Hasakah.

- In September, OHCHR documented at least seven incidents of arbitrary arrests or enforced disappearances that targeted civilians, including media and human rights activists, who had been perceived as critical of the Syrian Democratic Forces in areas under its control. In one example that occurred on 15 September, two civilian men were arrested by members of the Syrian Democratic Forces at one of the group's checkpoints in the village of Jurdi in eastern rural Dayr al-Zawr. The fate and whereabouts of the two men remain unknown to their families, who were denied information when they approached local authorities in the area.

Raqqah Governorate

- On 6 August, two attacks with improvised explosive devices occurred in the city of Raqqah. One of the devices detonated in the vicinity of the national hospital, with no civilian casualties reported, and the other device killed a civilian man, the community leader (mukhtar) of the Jami'a al-Nour neighbourhood, when it detonated near his house.
- On 16 August, the Syrian Democratic Forces arrested a media activist at his home in the city of Tabaqah, reportedly on the basis of accusations from unidentified sources. OHCHR received reports that the Syrian Democratic Forces raided his house at approximately 1800 hours and took him to an unidentified location. His fate and whereabouts remain unknown to his family despite them approaching local authorities to obtain further information.
- On 16 August, the Syrian Democratic Forces arrested the head of a non-governmental organization at his home in the city of Karamah in Raqqah for unknown reasons. His fate and whereabouts remain unknown to his family despite them approaching the local authorities to obtain further information.
- On 26 August, two civilians (one man and one boy) were killed and three civilians, including a woman, were injured as a result of what was alleged to be a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device that detonated in the middle of Falastin street in the city of Tabaqah.
- On 13 September, the Syrian Democratic Forces arrested a media activist at his home in the city of Tabaqah in western rural Raqqah Governorate. The perpetrators raided his house at dawn, arrested him and took away his laptop and cellular phone. The fate and whereabouts of the activist remain unknown to his family, who have been denied information by the Syrian Democratic Forces.

Ladhiqiyah Governorate

- On 2 August, one civilian man was killed as a result of what were alleged to be ground-based strikes that hit the government-controlled village of Bshalama in eastern rural Ladhiqiyah.

Dar'a Governorate

- On 12 August, 10 young men, including 3 under the age of 18, were arrested and detained by government air force security officers in Dar'a. The 10 individuals were arrested at different times at checkpoints and were all from the Tafas and Shaykh Sa'd areas in western Dar'a. On 27 August, and following the intervention of the Russian military police, all men were released and returned to their homes, with no clarification given to their families or the community regarding the reasons for their arrest.

- In Dar‘a Governorate, OHCHR recorded an increase in the number of incidents that appeared to involve the targeted killings of civilians who had reconciled themselves with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and had been employed in government civilian institutions, such as local councils. In August, OHCHR recorded a total of 27 incidents in which 17 men were killed. In one example, on 24 August, the chief of the local council in the town of Muzayrib was killed by unidentified gunmen in a drive-by shooting in the town.
-