Health workers and the weaponisation of health care in Syria: a preliminary inquiry for The Lancet–American University of Beirut Commission on Syria

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The Lancet
Volume 390, Issue 10111, Pages 2516-2526 (December 2017)
DOI: 10.1016/S0140-6736(17)30741-9
SNHR: regime helicopters dropped several barrel bombs on Al Radwan Hospital in Jasem city in Daraa governorate, destroying it partially and turned it out of service, December 6, 2015
TARGETED BY GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA AIRFORCE ON
Russian Ministry of Defense: Bombing of Water Treatment Plant
SNHR: regime warplanes fired missiles near a water purification plant in Al Khafsa town in Aleppo governorate, causing damages, November 26, 2015.
SNHR: regime helicopters dropped several barrel bombs on Al Radwan Hospital in Jasem city in Daraa governorate, destroying it partially and turned it out of service, December 6, 2015
Doctors, dentists, pharmacists, paramedics & medical students continue to work despite the daily dangers. Over 900 verified medical personnel have been killed.
U.N. adviser Egeland says 'tremendous battles' still loom in Syria

To stem one of the worst effects of the fighting - air strikes on medical facilities - Egeland said a new notification system for the coordinates of more than a dozen hospitals had gone into effect in the last few days.

“We have delivered coordinates on hospitals both in eastern Ghouta and in Idlib to the United States and to Russia, and Russia will not only guarantee that they will not attack, we’re asking them also to make sure that Syrian armed forces, the air force, is not targeting the hospitals,” Egeland said.

Published by Reuters, March 14, 2018:
INTENTIONALITY OF HEALTH CARE ATTACKS IS CLEARER NOW, THAN EVER BEFORE:

GPS SHARING, INTRODUCED TO PROTECT HEALTHCARE, IS INSTEAD ASSISTING IN KILLING.

THIS PATIENT KILLED IN HIS HOSPITAL BED IN ARBEEN (EASTERN GHOUTA) AFTER THE CLINIC’S GPS COORDINATES WERE PROVIDED TO UN.
Figure 2

The line graph shows the number of attacks per year from 2012 to 2016. The data points are as follows:

- 2012: 91
- 2013: 66
- 2014: 86
- 2015: 122
- 2016: 199

The trend indicates a significant increase in attacks over the years.
Findings- 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital</th>
<th>Out Patient</th>
<th>Other Facility</th>
<th>Transports</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33 facilities attacked more than once.
Two health facilities attacked more than 10 times, both in Aleppo
Casualties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Patient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injuries</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Region

Table 1. Geographical distribution (%) of incidents by governorate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governorate</th>
<th>Incidents</th>
<th>Casualties (deaths + injuries)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hama</td>
<td>12 (6%)</td>
<td>12 (1.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homs</td>
<td>17 (8.5%)</td>
<td>45 (6.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aleppo</td>
<td>122 (61%)</td>
<td>428 (63.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idleb</td>
<td>49 (24.5%)</td>
<td>189 (28.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extent of Damage

- Minimum: 35%
- Major: 38%
- Moderate: 27%
Incidents and Casualties

- Incidents
- Casualties

Months:
- Jan: 8
- Feb: 7
- Mar: 0
- Apr: 5
- May: 13
- Jun: 22
- Jul: 39
- Aug: 39
- Sep: 18
- Oct: 15
- Nov: 32
- Dec: 2

Number of Incidents

Number of Casualties
## Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care (SSA)

### Search

- **Country**: Syrian Arab Republic
- **Type**:
- **Date range**:

### Recently Reported Attacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attack ID</th>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SYR000984</td>
<td>12/12/18, 12:15:00</td>
<td>SYR</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
<td>Violence with heavy weapons (requires more than one person to use such as firearms, tanks, missiles, bombs, mortars)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYR000965</td>
<td>29/11/18, 16:10:30</td>
<td>SYR</td>
<td>Probable</td>
<td>Violence with heavy weapons (requires more than one person to use such as firearms, tanks, missiles, bombs, mortars)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYR000827</td>
<td>28/10/18, 17:30:00</td>
<td>SYR</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
<td>Psychological violence/threat of violence/intimidation, Violence with individual weapons (knives, bricks, clubs, guns, grenades and improvised explosive devices (IED))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYR000825</td>
<td>20/10/18, 11:30:00</td>
<td>SYR</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
<td>Assault (without weapons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYR000775</td>
<td>02/10/18, 09:45:00</td>
<td>SYR</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
<td>Violence with individual weapons (knives, bricks, clubs, guns, grenades and improvised explosive devices (IED))</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Comparative data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Attacks</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Injuries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>1 2019  18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>0 2017  3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>143 2018 843</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Types
- Removal personnel
- Removal assets
- Assault
- Individual Weapons
- Heavy Weapons
- Setting fire
- Militarization
- Violent search
- Obstruction
- Psychological violence
- Other
Preventing Medicine: A New Weapon of Mass Destruction

Last week, New York Times columnist Nick Kristof nominated Syria as the world capital of human suffering. It’s not just the direct consequences of war: the bombs, rockets, artillery, bullets and now gas rained down upon the civilian population.

Crisis Action needed one of the Open Letter doctors to clarify the Assad regime as violators of medical neutrality.
Over the last few weeks, the growing plight of Syria’s civilian population has drawn
Doctors on the frontline: we are targets in Syria’s civil war

The victims of civil war doctors are trying to help. Manu Brabo/AP

We don’t know the exact details of why Abbas Khan, the British surgeon who died while in custody, was arrested last November at a regime checkpoint in Syria and imprisoned and
AL-KINDI HOSPITAL: BEFORE AND AFTER
GOT AID?

#BREAK_SIEGE

Loaf of bread: Assad regime way to break resilience
Syrian people by preventing entering bread to cities and rural areas.

Starvation policy
Assad policy in Syria

Syrian child risking his life to buy loaf of bread for his family

طفل سوري يخاطر بحياته لشراء رغيف الخبز لعائلته

رغب خبز: أحد وسائل نظام الأسد لكسر صمود الشعوب من خلال منع دخوله للمدن والأرياف

Policy-Starvation assad syria
WAR GAMES
DR. HO SAM JAR OUD
MOHAMED KHALIJ I
THE WEAPONIZATION OF CHLORINE

ASSAD’S TRANSFORMATION OF THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH INTO A TOOL OF BIOLOGICAL WARFARE AND TERROR

DR. ANNIE SPARROW, MBBS MD MRCP FRACP MPH

BY SYRIANS, WITH SYRIANS, FOR SYRIANS.
WATER PURIFICATION

• 90% WATER SOURCES IN US AND EUROPE DEPEND ON CHLORINE. IT KILLS ALL LIVING SPECIES

• CHOLERA AND TYPHOID WERE BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL MID 20TH CENTURY ONLY BY CHLORINE
Cholera in East Africa

AIDS

Epidemics: Ebola in West Africa

Hospitals - ORS, ERS,

Wards

Clothing, Toilets

Drinking Water - Laundry

Beyond Safe
MODERN
MEDICINES

ANTIBIOTICS
ANALGESICS (TYLENOL) & ANXIOLYTICS (XANAX)
ANESTHETIC AGENTS
SURGICAL SCRUBS
CHEMOTHERAPY DRUGS
ANTIHISTAMINES
ASTHMA DRUGS
ANTI-MALARIALS
STERILE GLOVES, GLASSES, DIALYSIS TUBING, URINARY CATHETERS, IV FLUID BAGS, XRs...
WITHHOLDING OF
CHLORINE:
BIOLOGICAL WARFARE

CHOLERA: WHO alert Feb 24, 2015
LACK OF SURVEILLANCE

NO LABORATORIES, RDTs

PREVIOUS COVER-UPS OF CHOLERA IN
THE RETURN OF POLIO & THE RISE OF WATER-BORNE DISEASE

Hepatitis A: 10,000 cases in 2014
Typhoid: endemic in Mayadeen
Hand, foot and mouth disease in Dara’a
DESTRUCTION OF PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY IN ALEPPO

Wound infections → gangrene + amputations. Maternal sepsis
FROM LEGITIMATE DUAL-USE COMPOUND TO ILLEGAL WEAPON

Cost-effective
Cheap
Locally made
CHEMICAL VS CONVENTIONAL

Kids matter: Key to engaging public + political action
CHLORINE AND BARREL BOMBS SHARE SAME DELIVERY MECHANISM

By highlighting chlorine attacks, we focus attention on barrel bombs too—the big killers.
248,000 DOSES POLIO VACCINE PROCURED BY WHO & UNICEF EXPIRED DUE TO INCOMPETENT STORAGE BY SAVE THE CHILDREN
EXPIRED, SOLD OR WASTED: UN AID IN SYRIA

FOOD, MEDICINE, AND OTHER ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES ARE OFTEN DAMAGED, EXPIRED, AND FOUND IN COMMERCIAL MARKETS
WFP AID SOLD IN DAMASCUS CITY MARKET, AUGUST
EXPIRED POLIO VACCINES IN GOVERNMENT HEALTH FACILITY, IDLEB CITY 2015
Syrian military forces stockpiles of UNHCR, WFP and ICRC food and other relief items were found in a military base in Idleb, May 2015.
UNICEF FAMILY HYGIENE KITS IN AL MASTON MILITARY BASE MAY 2015.
(AL MASTON WAS THE LAST MAJOR SYRIAN ARMY MILITARY BASE BEFORE THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT LOST CONTROL OF IDLEB GOVERNORATE)

The convoy to the civilian town of Mudaya, contained expired high energy biscuits. (320/650 boxes). This was discovered 3 days later after over 200 children subsequently developed food poisoning.
FOOD ITEM WITHIN EXPIRY DATE CONTAMINATED BY COCKROACHES
U.N. Agency Hires Wife of Top Figure in Syrian War to Assist the Displaced

By SOMINI SENGUPTA  FEB. 24, 2016

UNITED NATIONS — When the World Health Organization wanted to know how the war in Syria was affecting the mental health of those forced to flee their homes, the agency hired someone known less for her expertise than for her connections: The consultant, Shukria Mekdad, is the wife of Faisal Mekdad, the deputy foreign minister of Syria and a powerful defender of the government’s war effort.

Her appointment has led critics to question the aid agency’s impartiality.
Blood and war: How a UN agency cooperates with Assad
Ministry of foreign affairs deliberately delayed the issuing of passports to the twins and their mother.
Dr. Al Hajjaj al-Sharaa’s primary responsibility is to delete life-saving supplies from convoys to Eastern Ghouta & other besieged areas. Facilitation letters allowing medical and surgical supplies must be approved by the Department of Preparedness before convoys are loaded.

Dr. Al Hajjaj al-Sharaa
Director,
Department of Preparedness,
Ministry of Health,
Syrian Arab Republic
Dr. Al Hajjaj also heads up Al Sham, an Assad-approved local NGO that is in partnership with @WHO, @UNICEF and @UNHCR. He uses his position at the Ministry of Health to facilitate approvals for funding of his humanitarian projects at Al Sham.
MOH STAFF MEMBERS THEN CHECK OFF CONVOY ITEMS BEFORE SENDING - ITEMS WHICH ARE NOT APPROVED BY DR. AL HAJJAJ ARE REMOVED.
After loading or convoy trucks, Airforce and military security officers seal the trucks with the Higher Relief Committee lead seal.
AFTER THE LIMITED CONVOY ARRIVES TO BESIEGED AREAS; OFFLOADING AREAS ARE SYSTEMATICALLY TARGETED BY THE REGIME.