



[Syrian Regime Shelling Kills at Least 8 Civilians Including Children](#)

This past week, Syrian regime airstrikes and shelling killed at least 8 civilians including children in Idlib. Government forces have continued to bombard the area, even after the arranged ceasefire last year between the Assad regime and rebel groups. The truce was facilitated by Turkey, which supports the Syrian opposition, and Russia, the Syrian regime's main backer. This recent attack left 8 dead, of which 6 were children, and also wounded 16 others. The shelling destroyed a water station and civil defense center, and the casualties involved a local health administrator, a volunteer for the White Helmets – a civil group which aids civilians affected by the conflict's violence, and the aforementioned children. The attacks were followed by airstrikes from suspected Russian warplanes. Observers are troubled by the fact that violence has escalated in the preceding weeks, and violations of the ceasefire have become commonplace. Idlib in particular, as the last opposition stronghold, has been subjected to instances of Syrian regime attacks and violence. The conflict in Syria has continued despite the ceasefire, resulting in disturbing numbers of children and civilian deaths.

The Syrian regime under despot Bashar al-Assad rules with an iron fist and has little regard for civilians during warfare. They have been credibly accused and found to have utilized chemical weapons on multiple occasions, and the ongoing conflict has resulted in over 200,000 civilian deaths and 25,000 deaths of children. The United Nations has been unable to emphatically condemn the Assad regime for its actions because the leaders in Russia and China have vetoed those votes. Many of the displaced and negatively impacted civilians in Syria have either been forced to flee the nation to countries in Europe and the Americas as refugees or become dependent upon international humanitarian aid efforts. The authorization by the United Nations to allow humanitarian support to cross into Syria is set to expire on July 10th, and global relief groups fear the possibility that Russia will refuse to renew the mechanism.

The conflict in Syria has been taking place since the Arab Spring uprisings of 2011. The Assad regime responded to the peaceful pro-democracy and reform protests in cities across Syria with brutal force and mass arrests. When cities were deemed to be hubs for protestors or rebels, the Syrian military would surround them with tanks and heavy weaponry. This eventually devolved the protests into armed rebellions, as they began to fight back against the ruthless Syrian regime, and prolonged fighting emerged between the Assad government and the various opposition forces. In its desperate attempts to hold on to power, the regime turned to the use of chemical warfare against its own citizens, for which it received widespread international condemnation. Russia, however, continued to back the Assad government even in the face of this and deployed devastating airstrikes to aid their ally in its efforts. To the present day, ongoing and persistent violations of last year's ceasefire mean that civilians are constantly under threat of Assad regime violence against them.