



[Russian-Backed Forces in Syria Carry Out Aerial Attacks on Displacement Camps in Idlib Killing at Least 10 Civilians and Wounding Dozens of Others](#)

Earlier this week, Russian-backed forces in Syria carried out aerial attacks on displacement camps in Idlib, killing at least 10 civilians and wounding dozens of others. Rights groups have denounced the deplorable strikes for targeting vulnerable families and civilians, including children. Regrettably, this behavior is part of a disturbing longstanding trend of Russian and Syrian government forces engaging in deadly assaults against civilians. Observers have documented how over the past year alone, these types of attacks in northern Syria have killed more than 50 civilians, including an alarming 22 children. While Russia often claims that it is solely targeting the hideouts of combatant groups in Idlib, humanitarian workers refute this and condemn the far too commonplace strikes against civilian sites and facilities – particularly in cases like this involving displacement camps with at-risk citizens.

Humanitarian agencies have expressed that at least seven camps were hit in this latest aerial attack, which not only killed and injured civilians, but also further displaced hundreds as well and caused extensive destruction. The strikes also mark the most recent in an array of many violations of the March 2020 truce in Syria. The Idlib province is frequently cited as the last rebel-held stronghold in Syria, and as such, vulnerable civilians in the northern parts of the country are often unfortunately subjected to attacks at the hands of Russian and Syrian government forces. The strikes this week targeted tent settlements of displaced families in Idlib, with opposition activists reporting that government forces fired a cluster of bombs shooting about 30 rockets. The area around the camps was targeted by four Russian air strikes after the initial attack as well. The strikes came a day after the Russian Ministry of Defense claimed that opposition forces were preparing a drone attack on a Russian military air base. Rights groups and activists have strongly condemned the use of these deadly air assaults against civilian-populated areas in the Idlib province.

Volunteer humanitarian organizations like The White Helmets in Syria are often left to try and aid civilians in need as a result of these types of attacks. The group consists of trained plumbers, postmen, teachers, and other civilians who join the force to become part of the medical and rescue team. The organization of several thousand Syrian men and women pull survivors and bodies from the rubble of bombed-out buildings in rebel-held areas. In doing so, they aim to at least provide some relief to those who suffer from these attacks. The group has condemned assaults like these on civilian displacement camps, also pointing out how they sometimes lead to further issues as they can cause fires to erupt and destroy the homes of displaced civilians. Workers with the organization have accused Russia of media disinformation over the aerial strikes by claiming that they only target combatant sites, which has been shown to be untrue.

The longstanding Syrian conflict has had devastating consequences on the country's civilian population. It has resulted in a vast refugee crisis which has displaced an estimated half of the country's pre-war population, killed thousands, destroyed large parts of Syria, and seen a slew of human rights violations committed against civilians. This week's incident is just the latest example of this, and demonstrates how it is Syria's civilian population that has sadly borne the brunt of the conflict.