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A Joint Report

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A Special Report on the Chemical Attack in Khan Sheikhoun - Idlib

About JFL

Justice for Life Observatory in Deir Ezzor is a Syrian independent non-governmental non-profit organization that includes human rights Syrian activists regardless of their affiliations and ideologies. It works on documenting the violations of human rights in order to be used in the phase after war; where the collected and checked proofs will be used in the process of reconciliation and transitional justice. The observatory works constantly on the campaigns of advocacy of human rights in order to reach the desired peace.

منظمة العدالة من أجل الحياة
Justice for life Organization

JFL

About STJ

“Syrians for Truth and Justice” (STJ) is an independent, non-governmental non-profit Syrian organization. It involves a number of Syrian human rights defenders, both men and women, from different backgrounds and affiliations. The founding team also includes academics from different nationalities.

STJ works for Syria where all citizens, males and females, enjoy dignity, justice and equal human rights.

سوريون
من أجل
الحقيقة
والعدالة
Syrians
For Truth
& Justice

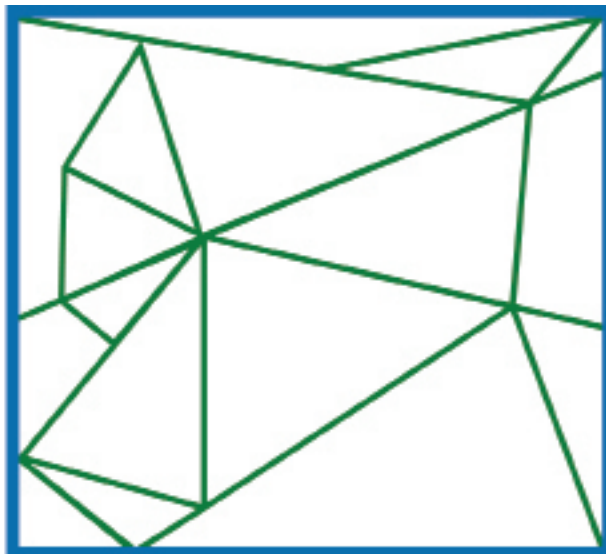


Table of Contents

The Legal Framework for the Prohibition of the Chemical Weapons in Armed Conflicts	4
Prohibition of Applying Chemical Weapons and the Syrian Conflict	5
Methodology	6
Challenges	7
Preface	7
Section 1: The Locations of the Rockets Loaded with Toxic Substances	9
Section 2: The Details of the Attack	21
Section 3: The Symptoms	22
Section 4: Journalists and Medics Affected by the Gas	24
Section 5: Displacement in the Wake of Khan Sheikhoun Attack	26
Section 6: The Victims' Accounts	27
Section 7: The Casualties List	36

The Legal Framework for the Prohibition of the Chemical Weapons in Armed Conflicts

Syria became a member of the **Chemical Weapons Convention(CWC)** on October 14, 2013, after the Eastern Ghouta chemical attack on August 21, 2013, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians with hundreds more being exposed to the gas. As such, Syria is bound by the convention that stipulates that all states shall refrain from:

- A) Developing, producing, acquiring, and stockpiling any chemical weapons or transporting them-directly or indirectly- to any state or organization.
- B) Using the chemical weapons.
- C) Conducting any military preparation with the aim to use the chemical weapons.
- D) Assisting or encouraging any parties to conduct prohibited activities under this convention. " ¹

The CWC also requires the creation of an independent and technical Inspection Committee in the Technical Secretariat with a mandate to investigate allegations concerning the use of chemical weapons. Once the Committee finds out that a State Party has violated the CWC, the Inspection Committee has the right, among other things, to "Restrict or suspend the rights and privileges of the State Party, on the recommendation of the Executive Council, until the necessary procedures are carried out to make it adhere to its commitment ². In addition, when dangerous situations occur: "To refer the case, including the findings and information, to the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council." ³

Additionally, the prohibition of the chemical weapons in international and non-international armed conflicts has become a customary rule under the International Humanitarian Law ⁴. For example, the **Rome Statute** establishing the International Criminal Court stipulates that use of chemical weapons, the "employing asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and all analogous liquid, materials or devices ⁵", amounts to a war crime.

Based on the above, using chemical weapons amounts to war crime and those responsible can be held accountable, in such courts or tribunals. For this reason, those responsible for such crimes being committed within Syria must be held accountable.

¹ Article 1 of the chemical weapons convention:

<https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/articles/article-i-general-obligations/>

² Article 12 of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

³ Article 12 of the Chemical Weapons Convention .

⁴ See rule 74 of the Customary International Humanitarian Law, the International Committee of the Red Cross on <https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/customary-international-humanitarian-law-i-icrc-eng.pdf>

⁵ Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court Applicable in Rome on July 17, 1998

Prohibition of Applying Chemical Weapons and the Syrian Conflict

The **International Independent Investigation Commission** about Syria (COI), which was established by the Human Rights Law Committee (HRLC) on August 22, 2011, pursuant to resolution **S-17/1** which was adopted at the seventh exceptional session- stated in Article 128 of its seventh report released on February 12, 2014, that “the perpetrators have an accession to the chemical weapons stockpiles operated by the Syrian military.”⁶ Referring to the chemical attacks that happened in some East Ghouta towns and al-Mo’adamyia on August 21, 2013.

The UN Security Council, on September 27, 2013, passed **Resolution 2118** in favor of the **Executive Council’s resolution** of the Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which includes special measures to accelerate the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons program and subject it to a strict investigation. The Resolution 2118, stated measures to be imposed, under the Seventh Chapter of the United Nations Charter, in the situation that Syria does not comply with this resolution (No.21). In addition, the resolution required that Syria would not to use, develop, manufacture, acquire, stockpile, or possess any chemical weapons (No. 4). The resolution also declared no party within Syria should use chemical weapons (No. 5). Most importantly, the resolution also stipulated the need to hold accountable those responsible for applying chemical weapons in Syria (No. 15).

The “Joint Inquiry” by the Organization for the Prohibition of the Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations **released the fourth report** on October 21, 2016, which stated that the Syrian government forces and the Islamic State, also known as ISIS, had used chemical substances as weapons. The joint inquiry had been conducting investigations concerning nine different occasions in Syria, and found out the use of chemical weapons in four incidents: Talmanas on April 21, 2014; Sarmin on March 16, 2015; Qamin on March 16, 2015, and (Mare’ on August 21, 2015. The report stated that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, ISIS, was involved in using Mustard gas in **Mare’** city, in the north countryside of Aleppo, while the Syrian government used poisonous chemical substances as weapons in Talamans on April 21, 2014; Sarmin on March 16, 2015; and Qamin on March 16, 2015.

The UN Security Council, in the **Resolution 2209** in 2015, condemned in the strongest terms the use of chemical poisonous substances like chlorine gas as a weapon, and stressed that all responsible individuals must be held accountable, as well as threatened to impose measures in case the Syrian government increased the use of chemical substances. Fourteen council members voted in favor of the resolution, including Russia, while Venezuela abstained.

On February 28, 2017, Russia, China, and Bolivia voted against any resolution imposing sanctions on the Syrian government for using chemical weapons. Egypt, Kazakhstan, and Ethiopia abstained. However, nine UN council members voted in favor of the resolution. Despite the failure of the resolutions to impose UN sanctions, the Joint Inquiry reports and the UN Security Council resolutions encouraged some countries to use their local laws and impose sanctions unilaterally. For example, the U.S. blacklisted 18 senior officials connected to the country’s chemical weapons program .⁷

⁶ The International Independent Investigation Commission about Syria, February 12, 2014. It covers the period from July 15, 2013 to January 20, 2017

⁷ Reuters, U.S. sanctions Syrian officials for chemical weapons attack on January 12, 2017:
<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-usa-idUSKBN14W28W>

Several Syrian organizations on April 7, 2017, **released a press statement** in which they strongly condemned the developments in the Syrian armed conflict and the aerial attacks on Khan Sheikhoun, located in the south countryside of Idlib, on Tuesday April 4, 2017, when the Syrian regime used indistinctive weapons that amount to weapons of genocide. The organizations called for activation of provisions of the CWC, and for the UN to begin work under Resolution 2118 and Article 7 to intervene to protect civilians and prevent the recurrence of internationally banned weapons.

The Executive Council of the Organization for the prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) met on April 13, 2017 to address the Khan Sheikhoun chemical attacks and expressed its concerns about the charges of using chemical weapons. It stated that the Inspection Committee is collecting information and evidence for analysis. The Committee agreed to reconvene April 20, 2017 to address the findings.⁸

Methodology

Following the **Khan Sheikhoun** attack in Idlib province on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, **Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ)** along with the **Justice for Life Organization** established a field research team⁹ tasked with entering the city and inspecting the impact sites. In addition, they were tasked with collecting material evidence and accounts of the survivors, such as the injured and their families, as well as the accounts of eyewitnesses, such as medical staff and Civil Defense team members.

Given the intensive airstrikes the days after the attack, the field research team was obliged to enter the city on Sunday, April 9, 2017, according to a plan developed based on who was to be interviewed and how to gain as much information as possible about the attack. Beyond face-to-face interviews, additional individuals were also interviewed on-line. (The date and the method of each interview will be mentioned throughout this report.)

The research team also analyzed dozens of video tapes and images, especially those of images of the casualties and the injured, to verify the credibility of the materials as well as to check the symptoms that appeared on the wounded or the dead. Finally, the research team reviewed the forecast for the day of the attack in order to determine the wind patterns and the areas that might have consequently been affected by the chemical gases.

The following report is based on this methodology and includes over fifteen (15) accounts from survivors, surviving family members, eyewitnesses, as well as local experts.

⁸ Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Executive Council, a joint statement in the meeting for the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria, April 13, 2017, on: <https://www.opcw.org/news/article/opcw-executive-council-meets-to-address-alleged-use-of-chemical-weapons-in-the-syrian-arab-republic/>

⁹ The actual identities of the research team members are withheld in this report for security purposes and are replaced with the titles (Abo Hassan and Abo Mahmoud)

Challenges

The research team faced severe challenges in completing its tasks. There was intensive airstrike on Khan Sheikhoun following on the initial attack on Tuesday, April 4, 2017. The different military-controlled zones, and the logistic and security challenges each posed, also made progress difficult. In addition, efforts at collecting testimonies and identifying the dead and injured took place in the midst of the terrible psychological situation facing the survivors and victim's families, many of whom were still coming to terms with the catastrophe and the extensive number of victims.

Another challenge was determining the correct number of victims, dead or injured, due to:

- the number of displaced people from other areas of the country that were also killed or wounded, making it difficult to check the identity of all casualties.
- the documented cases where people treated their relatives without transferring them to medical centers or the Civil Defense Centers, leaving these centers unable to count all of the victims.
- the close to thirty critically injured individuals that were transferred to Turkey, producing conflicting news reports concerning the actual number of the casualties.
- the significant number of victims, dead or wounded, coupled with the city's medical centers inability to receive such large numbers of patients, resulted in victims being transferred to other towns and cities, making it very difficult to make direct contact with them.

Finally, the research team found it difficult to confirm the hypothesis that other rockets may have contained poisonous chemicals and not just the first rocket that fell near the grain silos. This hypothesis was based on testimonies of residents who were near the strike locations as well as the relatively light scale of the destruction compared to other thermobaric weapons. Yet, the blowing of the north-south wind supported the hypothesis that only the first rocket contained poisonous chemicals as people were affected hundreds of meters away. Further study will have to be done to determine what actually occurred.

Preface

The Khan Sheikhoun attack on Tuesday, April 4, 2017, was second in scale to only the chemical attack on Eastern Ghouta in the Damascus countryside and al-M'adamya on August 21, 2013.

"Khan Sheikhoun is a town and a sub-district of Maarat al-Nu'man district in Idlib province. It is 37 km away from Hama province, 110 km away from Aleppo province and 70 km away from Idlib province. Khan Sheikhoun is located on the main highway between Aleppo and Damascus, and on a strategic road near other Syrian cities. As of 2004, it had a population of (52,972) according to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)."

After repeated waves of displaced individuals from other towns and cities, due to the ongoing war, Khan Sheikhoun's population grew to 63,000. It declined to 45,000 after the chemical attack on April 4th, 2017. The number of the internally displaced individuals (IDPs) reached 12,500 prior to the attack, whereas 7,400 were displaced after the attack to the north another areas across Syria, according to sources such as the local City Council.



The blue square refers to the location of [Khan Sheikhoun](#)

Section 1: The Locations of the Rockets Loaded with Toxic Substances

Based on the research team's inspection of the area, as well as testimonies of residents from the northern neighborhood, it is clear that in the first attack, the rocket likely loaded with the greatest amount of toxic chemicals fell in the al-Sawam'e neighborhood that contains warehouses for storing grain. The projectile fell in the middle of the highway that separates the grain silos from a residential area full of stores. This rebuts the theory and allegations of media outlets close to the Russian and Syrian government that the rockets were targeting "chemical laboratories." The other four other rockets fell hundreds of meters away from the first one.

According to testimonies from individuals in the southern neighborhoods where the second attack took place, these rockets also appeared to residents to have also had poisonous substances. After reviewing the weather forecast that day, however, the research team concluded that the wind's north-south direction supported the hypothesis of the toxic gas dispersing mainly to the southern neighborhoods, causing many people to be injured. Given this conflicting account, there must be an international, independent, impartial, and transparent investigation to completely determine the facts of the attack and to determine the model of the rockets loaded with toxic chemicals, the number of rockets carrying toxic chemicals, as well as the type of the gas used that day.

Past Weather in Idlib — Graph

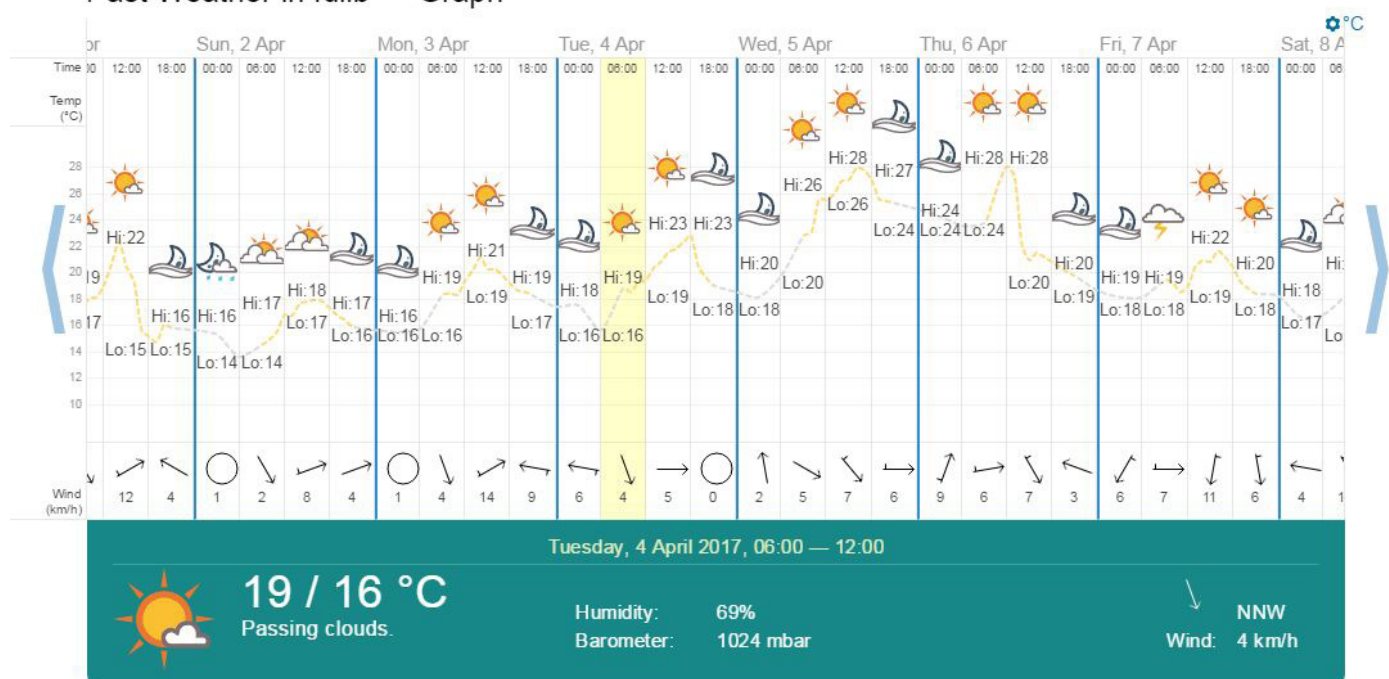


Image illustrating the weather forecast and the movement of the wind on Tuesday morning, April 4, 2017 in the targeted area. The north-south wind explains why civilian were injured in the southern neighborhoods as well helping to explain why some individuals alleged that the later rocket strikes also contained toxic substances.

The first rocket that hit the al-Sawam'e neighborhood created a crater of 85cm deep and 160cm in diameter. It landed only 16m away from the residential houses and 18m away from grain silos. Whereas, the second projectile fell about 250m away from a residential house belong to (Ali Omar) and appeared to be a thermobaric weapon, according to the research team. Yet, no final conclusion has been made about whether the rocket contained chemicals.



The blue square refers to the strike location of the first rocket loaded with toxic chemicals north of Khan Sheikhoun.



The blue square indicates the location of the specific coordinates of the first rocket.
Latitude: 35°26'59.71"N Longitude: 36°38'56.01"E

Othman al-Khder, born in 1983, a lawyer from Idlib province and a field researcher at **Syrian Institute for Justice**, testified ¹⁰ to the research team:

“The targeted locations included many places, not only one. There were many strikes and the distance among them was triangular, between 400 to 500m. One of the strikes was on the main highway opposite to the grain center, the second strike on the highway leading to the center of the city, and the third strike was in “Jadat al- Khamael” and caused a great destruction. However, it did not cause the same destruction thermobaric weapons usually cause.”

He added,

“The projectile that slammed on the highway- opposite to the grain center- was not the only projectile loaded with chemicals, the other three rockets in the first attack also had chemicals and slammed on the highway opposite to the grain center, the main street leading to the middle of the city, and on “Jadat al=Khamael.” This is according to the residents’ testimonies. We talk about several rockets loaded with toxic gases. Having examining the second strike’s location, a house in Jadat al-Khmael, pigeons were found choked without any trace of blood. People in the vicinity confirmed that as well. Even the next attack that followed the “Jadat al-Khamael” also contained chemicals.”

¹⁰ The interview was via WhatsApp, April 13, 2017

A [video tape](#) published by the Syrian Institute for Justice showed the first strike location as well as the geographical area that surrounds it. The video also showed a field researcher collecting samples of the soil.

Another video tape published by the Syrian Institute for Justice showed the poultry deaths due to April 4 attacks. It should be mentioned that this area is 200m away from the first strike location.



Image taken from the previously mentioned video tape.

One hour after the chemical attack, Syrian aircraft targeted the al-Rahma hospital that received the injured. According to Othman al-Kheder, the hospital contained the Civil Defense center.



Image showing dead birds due to the spread of toxic substances.

Photo credit: [Activist Video](#)

The Syrians for Truth and Justice and Justice for Life Organization in Syria field research team created a [video](#) showing part of the geographical area surrounding the first strike location. However, it could not film the entire location with great accuracy given the dangerous security situation and the density of warplanes.



Image representing the first strike location with close-up images of specific effected areas.

Mohamed al-Saloum Al Abed ¹¹, the activist who **videotaped** the moments immediately after the attack, stated he woke up that morning when he heard military aircraft hovering over the north-east side of Khan Sheikhoun. He saw it fly over the north-west part of the area, back again to the north, and then pass over to the south. As it passed, the aircraft fired four successive bombs; three of them fell on the north side while the fourth one fell on the west part in the city center.

He added,

“At first, I did not realize that it was a chemical attack, until one of the Civil Defense members went there and told us via a portable wireless set that he was falling asleep, feeling drowsy. Then, we lost contact with him. After that, we launched a warning call to civilians to tell them it was a chemical attack. Soon, we received names of scores of victims, being dead or injured, who suffered from asphyxiation and foam out of the mouth.”

Concerning the nature of explosions, al-Abd stated that the explosion, which contained a substance like oil, hit the northern neighborhood. He headed to the impact site after three hours had passed and, even then, he started to manifest symptoms of headache, cough and nasal irritation.



An image of the first strike location in the northern neighborhood where the rocket slammed in the middle of the highway that separates the grain silos and the residential areas. This first rocket, as cited by eyewitnesses and accounts of people interviewed, contained the largest amount of gas, resulting in symptoms that match the effects of Sarin toxic gas.

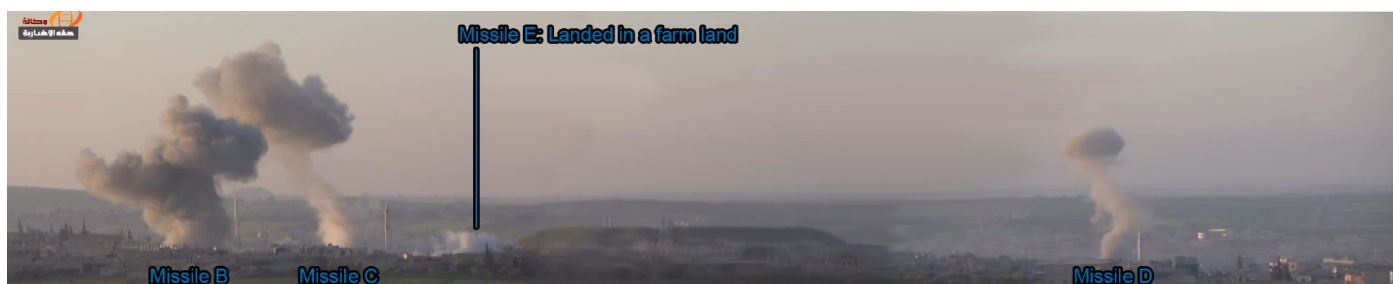
Photo credit: Mohamed al-Sloum al-Abd

¹¹ The interview was via WhatsApp, April 14, 2017



Image showing where the first strike, loaded with poisonous substances, occurred. As clearly shown, the grain silos are located on the right, whereas the residential areas are on the left.

Photo credit: Syrian Archive.

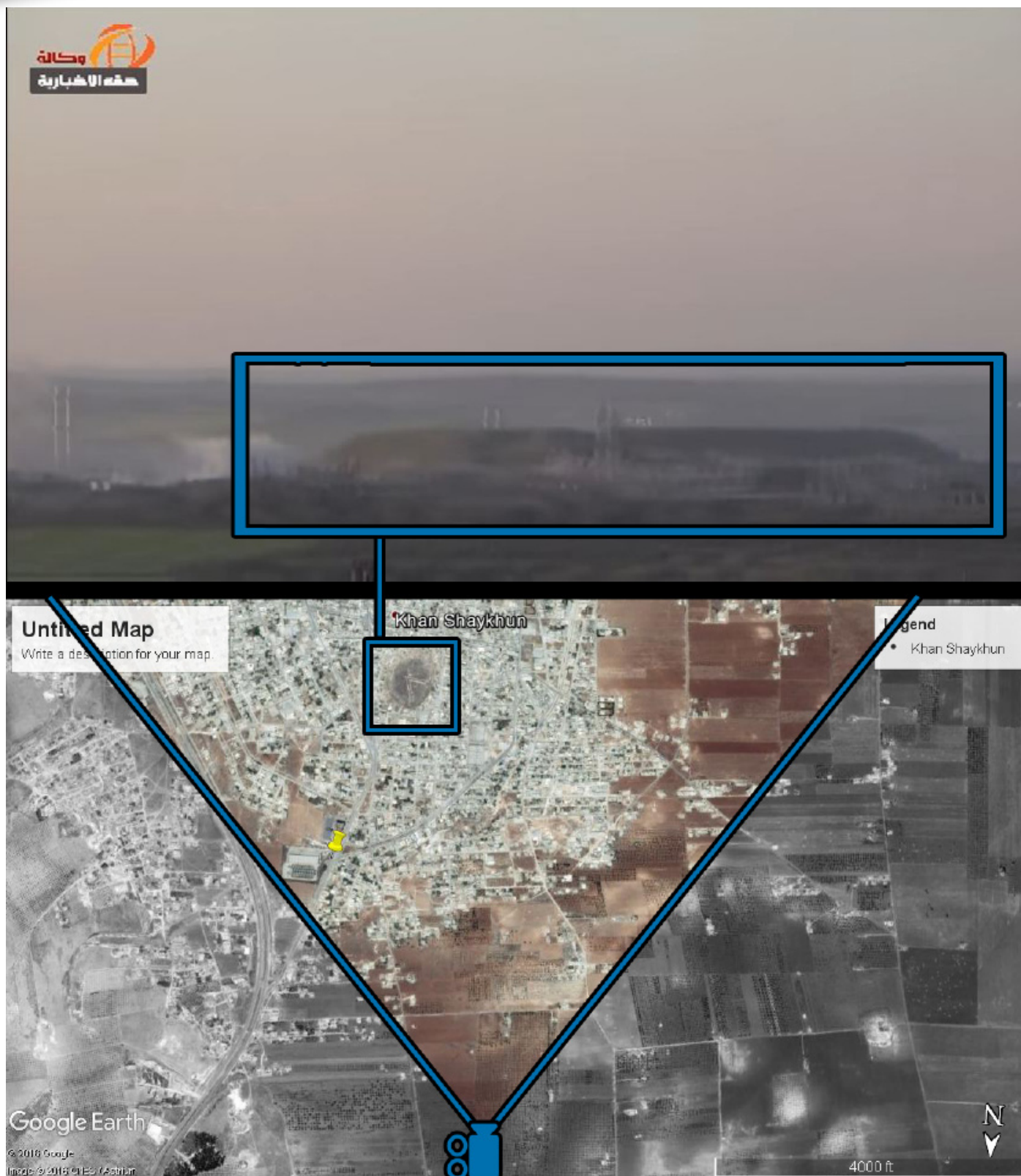


A panoramic image showing the site of the four rockets launched in the second attack. It should be recalled that news coverage did not claim the second attack contained chemical substances.

Image credit: Mohamed al-Saloum al-Abd

(This image represents an integration of three separate images.)





The hill in the middle of Khan Sheikhoun



Image illustrating the impact sites on April 4, 2017.

Image A shows the first rocket location suspected to contain the largest amount of chemicals. Images B, C and D show the impact sites of the second missile attack.



Image A showing the first rocket strike location near the grain silos



Image B showing the impact site of the second attack.



Image C showing another view of the second strike's impact.

Section 2: The Details of the Attack

Every person interviewed by the field research team stressed that a military aircraft suspected to be a Syrian Sukhoi 22 (Su-22) conducted the attack. Neither the locals nor the activists realized that some rockets were loaded with chemicals until they received calls from individuals in the vicinity of the strike. As a consequence, the numbers of casualties and wounded were increased. The attacks occurred at 6:40 am, while most of the people were sleeping. The north-south wind likely moved the gas to other neighborhoods.

Mr. Rdwan al-Atrash, the Head of the Political Organization in Idlib province, stressed that targeted sites did not contain any military zones and stated that a Sukhoi 22 conducted the attack.

He added:

“April 4, 2017, and at 6:30 am, the densely-populated neighborhood of al-Sawam’e, located in the north part of Khan Sheikhoun, was bombarded with Sarin gas. Then successive raids hit the city, caused scores of casualties, and wounded many more because of a lack of experience in dealing with cases like this. Locals thought that it was a thermobaric weapon or something else, but did not realize it was a chemical attack.”

The incorrect understanding of the nature of the bomb, and the use of incorrect medications, led to even greater casualties. In addition, local medics hurried to save the injured. Yet once they touched the patients, the medics were injured as well. They thought it was a thermobaric weapon attack.

He added:

“Many injured people were transferred to field hospitals and medical centers in nearby towns as the city’s medical center (the cave center operated by the Civil Defense) was targeted directly and went out of service. Some of the injured were transferred to Turkey. The number of casualties was 90, and 550 injured.”

The activist Anas Thyab, the media official for the Civil Defense, stated that the first strike was near the grain silos. It did not cause an explosive sound like the others. In the second attack, which featured four exploded missiles, two of them fell on the northern part of the city, the third fell in the market, and the fourth fell in agricultural land south of the city.

He added,

“I am sure the first rocket which fell on the highway in al-Swam’e neighborhood contained toxic chemicals, but I am not sure that the rockets in the second shooting also contained chemicals. I was injured in the first attack. Before the aircraft hovered to conduct the second attack, most of the people were injured and called for rescue operations. Some locals confirmed they were injured in the other attacks, too.”

Section 3: The Symptoms

Several symptoms manifested on the victims according to testimonies of the doctors and the injured, as well as being represented on videos and images from the strike. For example, one of the injured individuals demonstrated symptoms of headache, cough, and nasal irritation four hours after the attack. Other individuals showed intense respiratory distress, pin-eye pupils, convulsions, skin eruptions, and foam coming out of their mouths.

Dr. Hazim Najam, the Director of the Medical Center in Khan Sheikhoun, stated in his testimony:

“Following the attack, at about 6:50am, I headed to the impact site and was shocked at seeing a Civil Defense member showing symptoms of intensive respiratory distress. As he was calling the ambulance, I asked him about what happened and he replied that it was a chemical substance.

Then, I went to a hospital near the targeted site and found dozens of injuries with symptoms of exposure to chemicals, such as very intensive respiratory distress, respiratory detachments, pin-eye pupils, convulsions. Other cases showed complete lack of consciousness and died. One-hundred and three casualties and approximately four to five-hundred injured were documented in hospitals that received the victims up to this moment. It should be mentioned that the numbers of victims could not be documented. Khan Sheikhoun is medically considered a blight, as there were no hospitals equipped to receive such a great number, so victims were treated with the possibilities available.”

Concerning the nature of gas used, Dr. Hazim added:

“The next day, April 5, 2017, a committee, including me, from Khan Sheikhoun, with a committee from the province, went to the site where the rocket landed, samples for analysis were taken and sent to laboratories in Turkey. They informed us that it was Sarin gas, with cyanide and intensive chlorine. We still have parts of the samples and we are ready to receive any inquiry committee.”

According to the [Syrian American Medical Society \(SAMS\)](#), the hospitals in the surrounding area, including the Khan Sheikhoun Hospital, received patients who suffered symptoms indicative of an organo-phosphorus compounds agent, a category of toxic gases which includes sarin. This includes, according to doctors of the nearby Maaret Misreen Hospital, bradycardia, constricted (pinpoint) pupils, foaming at the mouth, and the loss of consciousness.



Images illustrating victims with foaming
at the mouth after the attack.

Photo credit: SAMS

The **Turkish Minister of Health, Receb Akdag, declared** on April 11, 2017, that the Ministry was analyzing samples taken from an injured man, Ahmad al-Salih, who is still being treated in Hatay Province on the Syrian border, as well as samples taken from victims, Saed Hussein, Mohamed Awad, and Asmaa al-Hassan. The Ministry then reported that “the result of blood and urine analysis confirmed that the chemical substance used was Sarin gas”.

Dr. Hazim, while talking about the most age categories influenced on that day, said:

“The injuries in the 100 m diameter were the deadliest, whole families of fathers, mothers and children, all were dead. Kids, women, and those with weak bodies were the most impacted. Young people were also among the dead due to exposure to the gas, but they were not from the same neighborhood, but rather some of these young people had come to rescue the injured. The young man identified as Molhem Jihad al-Yousef, whose house is 500m away from the site, died of chemicals as he came to rescue the people. Another young man identified as Bashar ad-Dado also died after he came to help in the medical operations.”

Dr. Hazim stated that his wife’s aunt, identified as Yousra Ahmed al-Yousef, was also injured. After been questioned, al Yousef stated:

“The attack occurred along the west part of our house, we immediately went out to see the site of the strike, but another strong strike with a very huge sound occurred. I saw a yellow-orange cloud. Immediately, my daughter, 13, fainted as she inhaled the gas and died on the spot. My daughter already had fever, when her uncle came to rescue her; he was also affected by the gas and died, as well.”

Section 4: Journalists and Medics Affected by the Gas

At first, the Civil Defense staff, the activists, the medics, and even the locals failed to realize that the city was exposed to a poisonous chemical attack. This increased the number of dead and injured people, either because these individuals hurried to rescue the injured not knowing the risks of exposure to chemicals or did not know how to deal with the injured who had been exposed to poisonous substances, especially nerve gas agents.

Anas Thyab, a media activist who works with the Civil Defense, was interviewed by field research team. He spoke as someone who had been injured, just like others who had hurried to rescue people.

He stated:

“Many journalists- including me -went to the impact site. Abdulkadir Bakri, Qassion News Agency reporter, along with Abd Kuntar, Anadola Agency reporter, Mohammed Hassan Aldghaim, Aleppo Today reporter, and I, all went back to center after filming the site. We all started to show symptoms, except Mohammed Hassan Aldghaim who didn’t need external help. We were all transferred to Idlib hospital, where we were given atropine and a spray, which was pure oxygen. Only I was released from the hospital, whereas the others stayed until the evening. As for Abdul Kuntar, he was transferred to Turkey as he showed symptoms of shiver bouts almost every hour, in addition to cyanosis of the lips.”

Later speaking as a member of the Syrian Civil Defense, Thyab stated:

“We were informed by observatories that a Syrian Sukhoi struck Khan Sheikhoun at 6:30am. I was awake before the air raid. However, after the attack, we did not hear the usual sound of the explosion, so we thought that the missile did not explode. A minute later, one of the Civil Defense volunteers contacted us from the Al-Tamanoua center, he was there at the targeted site and asked for medical help, but we did not understand the type of medical help needed. Four minutes later, the warplanes came back to strike again after encircling Khan Sheikhoun.”

He added that the warplane conducted four raids in different areas that day, including one in the northern neighborhood, one in al-Souk neighborhood, and another in the agricultural lands outside the city. All of the attacks were normal except the one in the northern neighborhood. He stated:

“Ambulances were directed towards the targeted areas and immediately transferred four persons who inhaled the gas, some of whom were swaying abnormally. Just a minute later, after dropping off the patients the medics themselves, in the center, started to show the same symptoms of drowsiness and nerve paralysis. We suspected that missiles contained chlorine agent, but did not expect it to be so strong. Approximately 450 individuals were injured, with many of them suffering from shivers and foam out of the mouth, as well as, a state of panic and fear.”

Anas added that medics informed him that most of the injured were sleeping as the strike occurred in the early morning. Other victims were pulled out of shelters and basements. The day before the attack, April 3, 2017, the warplanes conducted an intensive bombardment with up to 20 raids. Many people were obliged to go down to the shelters, but they were not safe as they did not expect a chemical attack.

As a member of the Civil Defense, Anas stated that 87 casualties had been documented. City activists documented 93. The local council documented 103 victims. The number may increase as 30 victims were transferred to Turkey, who were in critical condition and suffering asphyxiation, which might result in more casualties.

Mazen As-Said, a worker in the Civil Defense, said in his testimony to the field team:

“As members of the Civil Defense, we hurried to the impact site to conduct rescue operations. I was among those who directed our members to the site. Where I lived, my family was among the injured. First, I rescued my sister, then my brother’s wife, not realizing that all my relatives were injured. We transferred some of my relatives to a medical center, then I went back to search for the rest. I was shocked at seeing some my family members on the ground, including my two kids, two nephews, my brother’s wife, my mother, and two of my brothers. Four of them died, while others were rescued. Our house is 5m away from where the rocket struck. In this attack, I lost my brother and his wife, my second brother’s wife, and my sisters, as well as several of my relatives, including my uncle and his family, suffering injuries”

Ziad Bkour, one of those who hurried to the impact site in order to rescue the injured, spoke separately about that day:

“On April 4, 2017, we heard explosion sounds, as usual, and we are used to hurrying to the targeted area immediately in order to rescue the injured. On that day, in the very early morning at about 6:20 am, after the dawn prayer, I got out of my house and then I heard the sound of an aircraft. As usual, I took precautions. After that, the aircraft carried out the strike. I opened observatory grip (Hoky Talky - Radio communications), and one of them immediately alerted me that it was poisonous gas attack. I got prepared. I put on the medical mask, then I went to the targeted site. I transferred four men with my car to the medical center where I saw children with symptoms of foam coming out of the mouth, runny eyes, nerve shivers. I myself saw many people die.”

“It is worth mentioning that the targeted area did not contain military headquarters, only civilians. I especially want to highlight the chemist Imad al-Qadah and his brother Terki al-Qadah, an electrical generator worker, who were killed; Terki distributed electricity to the neighbourhood houses. I also mention the martyr Yasser al-Yousef with his family, a civilian who used to work at a supermarket, and Mu’ath al-Yousef, a teacher, who also died in that attack.”

Ziad Bakour, in the wake of rescuing the injured, manifested symptoms from the long hours of terrible psychological experiences, such as shortness of breath, according to the field team.

Section 5: Displacement in the Wake of Khan Sheikhoun Attack

Ziad Bakour, deputy director of the local council in Khan Sheikhoun, stated to the field team that the percentage of the displacement of residents was about 70% out of the total population who lived in the city, whether indigenous and non-indigenous (internally displaced). This percentage is a result of the attack and the days that followed, given Syrian warplanes continued bombing the district intensively for several days following the initial attack.

He stated:

“Khan Sheikhoun, is a city of 70km to the south of Idlib province, 40km north of Hama. The population topped 63,000 in addition to 12,500 displaced people from northern countryside of Hama and other areas. The population declined after chemical attack on April 4, 2017, when large numbers of neighborhoods close to the strike location were displaced. The raids carried out by the regime after April 4, with machine guns, thermobaric weapons, and concussion bombs was another reason for the displacement.”

Faisal al-Ilka, from Has village, stated to the research team that of the approximately 80 injured people who inhaled the gas that were transferred to Has, 20 of them died including 12 children. The next day, Faisal visited some camps in northern Syria, especially those who received displaced individuals from Khan Sheikhoun, where he was informed that up to 1,200 displaced people live in only one camp.

Section 6: The Victims' Accounts

Osama Mostafa al-Khalid, 33, a chemistry teacher, lost his brother and his brother's family in the attack. He told the research team ¹² about what he witnessed during the rescue operations:

“While we were sleeping at about 6:40am, we heard an explosion. Soon I got up and went to the top of my house to see where the explosion was, as it was not in my neighborhood. I was shocked when I realized that the explosion is in my brother’s neighborhood. Immediately I went there accompanied by my sister’s husband. On the way, we saw dead animals as well as a man’s body lying on the road. When we got there, we found the whole family lying on the ground in front of the house. My little niece was sitting still with her hands up and showed symptoms of her eyes bulging. She was not talking at all. Meanwhile, my sister’s husband went to call for a car and I went to the bathroom and to bring a glass of water. After noticing the symptoms of shortness of breath and wheezing, I told my sister’s husband that it was a chemical attack.”

It was obvious that my brother and his wife had tried doing something as I saw a wet cloth next to their bodies. Apparently, they had tried to protect themselves by the primitive ways, such as putting a wet cloth on your nose and mouth.

The two little girls were still alive, but could not talk. Their eyes were bulging. Being a chemical attack and my having little information about chemicals, I brought water trying to wash their bodies. Meanwhile I started to show the symptoms of dizziness, but I thought it was because of the trauma. I ran to the street and saw one of the medics. I asked for help, but he did not reply. Later, I learned that he was effected and died too.

After that, while trying to rescue the injured, I fainted. My sister's husband called another medical person to help my brother's family and me.

The most important thing is that when I fainted, it felt like drowsiness and a shiver in my limbs. The children's reply was nothing, although they were looking at me as if they do want to talk, but their limbs did not reply.

I was taken to a medical center out of Khan Sheikhoun and given atropine and oxygen. I remained unconscious until 6:00 pm, about 11 hours after being exposed to the gas. After I got up, I asked about my brother's family, and they told me that the whole family had died along with the whole neighborhood, including al-Qadah family and al-Yousef among others. Up until now, my nephew, Mostafa, who survived, and I still feel dizzy. The medics themselves were affected by the chemicals, including my other brother who was trying to give help."

12 He was interviewed via the Internet (WhatsApp) on April 13, 2017

Osama added,

“My brother, Anas, was an Arabic language teacher. He was very loyal and successful at work. His students and the people loved him. He taught many generations and had an impact in teaching in the city. His death is a great loss and cannot be paid back in any way. We were brothers and friends at school. He was everything to me. We expected the Syrian regime would hit us with chemicals as it bombarded the al-Habit region with chlorine gas a day before the Khan Sheikhoun attack, on April 3, 2017, but we never expected the attack would be Sarin gas and cause so many deaths.”

Names of Anas Mostafa al-Khalid family, Osama’s brother:

- 1-Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 40, the father, an Arabic language teacher.
- 2-Fatema Mohamed as-Sousi, 35, the mother, an Arabic language teacher, too.
- 3-Shahad Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 14, a student in elementary school, ninth grade.
- 4-Abdrahman Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, two years old.
- 5-Alaa Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 6, in a preparatory school, first grade.
- 6-Khadija Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 8, in a preparatory school, second grade



Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 40.
Photo credit: Osama al-Khalid.



Shahad Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 14, elementary school student, ninth grade.
Photo credit: Osama al-Khalid



Shahad Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 14, elementary school student, ninth grade.
Photo credit: Osama al-Khalid



Abdrahman Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 2 years old.
Photo credit: Osama al-Khalid



Alaa Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 6, in preparatory school, first grade.
Photo credit: Osama al-Khalid



Khadijah Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 8, in preparatory school, second grade.
Photo credit: Osama al-Khalid



Mostafa Anas Mostafa al-Khalid, 13, in elementary school, eighth grade.
He is the only surviving member of his family.
Photo credit: Osama al-Khalid



Osama Mostafa al-Khalid, 33, while suffering from injuries suffered in chemical attack.
 Photo credit: Osama al-Khalid.



Osama al-Khalid, survivor of chemical attack.



Anas Mostafa al-Khalid with his son Abdrahman.
 Photo credit: Osama al-Khalid



Kjdija Anas al-Khalid (right) and Alaa Anas al-Khalid.
 Photo credit: Osama al-Khalid

Dr. Hazim Njem, the Director of the medical center in Khan Sheikhoun, provided the following testimony concerning the losses he and his family suffered after the attack.

“The day of the attack, I was sleeping but woke up when I heard the strike. I rushed to the veranda, it was near my uncle’s house, and being a doctor I headed immediately towards the targeted place but could not get closer as the gas dispersed the area. Soon, we started to receive the injured 300m away. After that, I headed to the hospital and received the injured. I was very worried about my uncle’s family and started searching for them among the injured with the hope of finding some of them. The gas affected the medical staff, including me, and we could not see properly. Later, I found my wife’s uncle, in spasm and skin eruptions. Then I found my cousin Amar, 5 years old, dead, but I transferred him to the hospital and hoped he would come back to life¹³. Then I found my wife’s cousin, who was a little child. My wife’s uncle was also injured. Having conducted ambulance operations, I went to my uncle’s house. It was empty, I asked about them but nobody gave an answer. An hour later, we heard that they were killed in the attack, my uncle, his wife and his other son.”

The research team met a lady next to a demolished building as a result of April 4, 2017 attacks, she said: ***“I am Ali Omar’s wife, a detainee at the regime prisons for four years. Ali left us this house which I rented to make a living to take care of my children, but the aircraft demolished it completely.”***

Questioned about the destiny of people who used to rent the house at the time of the attack, she said that the families were from al-Latamnah city located in Hamah province. The father was killed in the raids and two others from the same families were injured. There is no way to determine to where they have been displaced.

The research team documented this incident through the following image:



¹³ In the chemical massacre in 2013 and Khan Sheikhoun attack, a general belief prevailed of people come back to live as they lack consciousness, not dead.



Images of strike location (B) in the page (from this report).
Photo Credit: Research Team.

Section 7: The Casualties List

By reports of Syrians for Truth and Justice-STJ and Justice for Life Organization, the efforts of field research team, and of Mr. Zyad Bakour, a member of the Local Council, the research team cross referenced information and was able to document the following individuals listed below.

NOTE: Dr. Hazim Najem, the Director of the medical center pointed to an additional issue concerning the special statistics of the casualties at the conclusion of his interview with the research team. He stated that several dead women were in the late stages of their pregnancy and were registered as one victim, with the baby not being counted. He added that the full effects of the injuries on the babies could not yet be assessed.

NO.	Full name	Age	Gender	Mother's name	District/province	Notes
1	Mohamed Ahmed al-Salih	3 years	male	Abeer al-Salih		Four children from al-Salih family
2	Rouba Ahmed al-Salih	6 years	female	Abeer al-Salih		Four children from al-Salih family
3	Hadil Ahmed al-Salih	10 years	female	Abeer al-Salih		Four children from al-Salih family
4	Betoul Ahmed al-Salih	11 years	female	Abeer al-Salih		Four children from al-Salih family
5	Moulhim Jihad al-Yousef				Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
6	Yaser Ahmed al-Yousef				Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
7	Amar Yaser Al-Yousef	7 years	male		Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
8	Mohamed Yaser al-Yousef	10 years	male		Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
9	Sanaa Haj Ali		female			Yaser's wife
10	Sa'ed Husein					Died in Hatay hospitals, Turkey
11	Mohamed Awad					Died in Hatay hospitals, Turkey
12	Asmaa al-Husein					Died in Hatay hospitals, Turkey
13	Hassan Mohamed al-Yousef	40 years	male	A'esha Talawi	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	Died on April 15, 2017 in Turkey
14	Ibrahim Hasan Abo Di	30 years	male	Najya Abo Di	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	Died on April 10, 2017 in Turkey
15	Anas Moustafa al-Khalid	40 years	male	Khadija Ma'rati	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	Arabic language teacher, died along with his wife, Fatema Mohamed As-Sousi and his children: Shahad, Abdurahman, Alaa and Khadija

NO.	Full name	Age	Gender	Mother's name	District/prov- ince	Notes
16	Fatema Mohamed as- Sousi	35 years	female	Um Kalthum	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	Arabic language teacher. Died along with her husband, Anas Mostafa al-Khalid and her chil- dren: Arabic language teacher. Died along with her husband, Anas Mostafa al-Khalid and her children: Shahad, Abdurahman, Alaa and Khadija
17	Shahad Anas Moustafa al-Khalid	14 years	female	Fatema Mo- hamed as- Sousi	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	She died with her mothers and her father and three brothers
18	Abdurahman Anas Mostafa al-Khalid	2 years	male	Fatema Mo- hamed as- Sousi	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	He died along with his father, mother, and three brothers
19	Alaa Anas Moustafa al-Khalid	6 years	female	Fatema Mo- hamed as- Sousi	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	She died along with her father, mother and her three brothers. She was a pupil in the first grade (preparatory school)
20	Khadija Anas Moustafa al-Khalid	8 years	female	Fatema Mo- hamed as- Sousi	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	Died along with her father, mother and three brothers, she was a pupil in the second grade (preparatory school)
21	Molhem Jihad al- yousef	33 years		Rawda al- Yousef	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
22	Yaser Ahmad al-Yousef	44 years		Fatema Alwan	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
23	Amar Yaser al-Yousef	5 years		Sanaa Moham- ed Haj Ali	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
24	Mohamed Yaser al- Yousef	12 years		Sanaa Moham- ed Haj Ali	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
25	Sana Mohamed Haj Ali	40 years		Khaldya ar- Rashid	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
26	Abdulkarim Ahmed al- Yousef	30 years		Fatema Alwan	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
27	Ahmed Abdulhamid al-Yousef	9 months		Dalal Ahmed as- Sah	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
28	Aya Abdoulhamid al- Yousef	9 months		Dalal Ahmed as- Sah	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	

NO.	Full name	Age	Gender	Mother's name	District/prov- ince	Notes
29	Dalal Ahmed as-Sah	17 years	female	Doha Qadiha	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
30	Shaymaa Ibrahim al- Jawher	15 years		Yousra al- Yousef	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
31	Nihad Ahmed al- Yousef	55 years		Hndya al- Yousef	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
32	Nour Nihad al-Yousef	24 years		Malak al- Yousef	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
33	Malak Terki al-Yousef	50 years		Motia'a al- Rays	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
34	Ibrahim Mohamed Hasan al-Yousef	37 years		A'esha al- Ta- lawi	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
35	Mohamed Hasan al- Yousef	11 years		Rasha Talawi	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
36	Ahmad Ibrahim al- Yousef	29 years		Sara Jawish	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
37	Rahaf Souheil al- Yousef	17 years		Rawda al- Yousef	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
38	Hind Terki al-Yousef	58 years		Muti'a al- Rays	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
39	Imad Mohamed al- Qadah	54 years		Hind al- Yousef	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
40	Mohamed Imad al- Qadah	12 years		Kafa Latmini	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
41	Abdrahaman Imad al- Qadah	8 years		Kafa Latmini	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
42	Hind Imad al-Qadah	5 years		Kafa Latmini	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
43	Terki Mohamed al- Qadah	36 years		Hind al- Yousef	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
44	Mohamed Terki al- Qadah	5 years		Nour Jihad al- Azrak	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
45	Adnan Terki al-Qadah	4 years		Nour Jihad al- Azrak	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
46	Hind Terki al-Qadah	2 months		Nour Jihad al- Azrak	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
47	Nour Jihad al-Alzrak	25 years		Safaa al- Azrak	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
48	Abdlghafour Moustafa al-Ma'arati	35 years		Amna Bakri	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
49	Ahmed Khalid Halawa	45 years		Badi'a Sha'ban	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
50	Khitam AbdIhamid Halawa	30 years		Fatima Halawa	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	
51	Maram Hasan Halawa	10 years		Rasmya al- Hamadi	Khan Sheikhoun- Idlib	

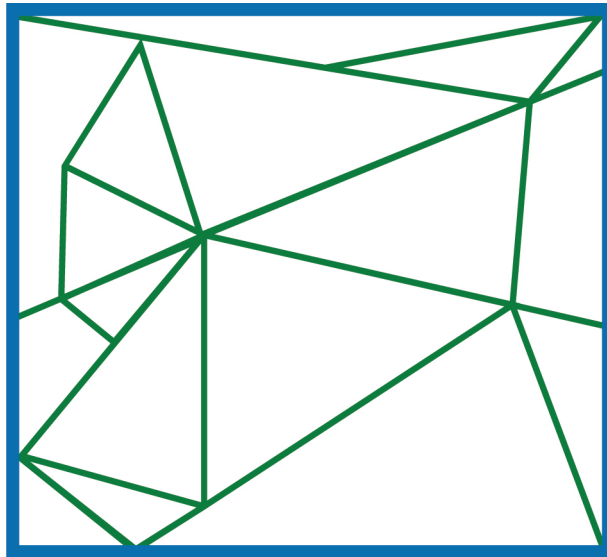
NO.	Full name	Age	Gender	Mother's name	District/prov- ince	Notes
52	Shrouk AbdIhamid Halawa	20 years		Somya ash-Shehna	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	She was pregnant, the wife of Khalid Mohamed Halawa
53	Khalid Mohamed Halawa	23 years		Samira	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	Shrouk AbdIhamid Halawa's husband
54	Mohammed Mehyadin Najm al-Sayed	25 years		Mary Ma'er Zitawi	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	Laila al-Hasan's Husband
55	Laila Modhy al-Husein	17 years		Fatema al- Abd		Nine month's pregnant
56	Siham Mehyadin Najm al-Sayed	40 years		Mary Ma'er Zitawi	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	single
57	Ahmad Ezo Najm al-Sayed	35 years		Khwat al-Jawher	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	Ula Makhzom's husband
58	Ala'a Mohand Makhzoum	20 years		Enas Harby	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
59	Najeeb Khero al-Jawher	62 years		Amsha Qadiha	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	Haj Yousef's husband
60	Safya Qasim Haj Yousef	55 years		Fatema al-Qadour	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	Najeeb Khero al-Jawher's wife
61	Mayar Mohamed al-Mare'ei	5 years		Hala al-Jawher	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
62	Ahmad Shahoud al-Rim	57 years		Khadija as-Sousi	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
63	Ryad Khalid Kerwan	46 years		Khaldya Ma'erzafi	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
64	Abdullah Ghasan al-Shahnaa	17 years		Wafaa al-Shohna	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
65	Mohamed Ahmed al-Salih	3 years		Abeer al- Salih	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
66	Ruba Ahmed al-Salih	6 years		Abeer al- Salih	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
67	Hadeel Ahmed al-Salih	10 years		Abeer al- Salih	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
68	Batoul Ahmed al-Salih	4 years		Abeer al- Salih	Khan Sheikhoun-Idlib	
69	Faisal Abdrazzaq Raslan	55 years		Zainab	al- Tmane'a-Idlib	
70	Bdran Abdrahman ar-Rahmoun	26 years		Siham Najm al- Din	al-Tmane'a- Idlib	
71	Ahmed Hism	27 years			Al-Rami- Idlib	
72	Amer Nayf al-Nayf				Ma'erzaf- Hama	
73	A'laa Nayf al-Nayf				Ma'erzaf- Hama	
74	Mohamed Nayf al-Nayf				Ma'erzaf- Hama	
75	Mohamed Nayf al-Nayf's wife				Ma'erzaf- Hama	

NO.	Full name	Age	Gender	Mother's name	District/prov- ince	Notes
76	Alaa Mohamed al-Nayf				Ma'erzaf- Hama	
77	Unidentified (A'laa Mo- hamed al-Nayf's wife				Ma'erzaf- Hama	
78	A'laa Mohamed al- Nayf's daughter				Ma'erzaf- Hama	
79	The sister of A'laa Mo- hamed al-Nayf's wife				Ma'erzaf- Hama	
80	Maher Moteb al-Hu- sein				Ma'erzaf- Hama	
81	Malik Izadin al-Husein				Ma'erzaf- Hama	
82	Dirar al-Ilewi				Al-Latamneh- Hama	
83	Ahmed Omar Al-Ram- adan				Al-Latamneh- Hama	
84	Jamila Hafez Qasim al-Hamoud	55 years			Mourek- Hama	
85	Mohamed Jamal Qasim al-Hamoud	30 years			Mourek-Hama	
86	Soha Mohamed Kheir al-Qasim	22 years			Mourek-Hama	
87	Faris Mohamed Sa'ed Barhoom	14 years		Khadija al- Ma'erati	Mourek-Hama	
88	Maher Mohamed Sa'ed Barhoom	12 years		Khadija al- Ma'erati	Mourek-Hama	
89	Fatema Jamal Qasim al-Hamoud	15 years			Mourek-Hama	
90	Hayan Abdllah al-Ali	40 years		Fatema	Mourek- Hama	Sarah Abdlmajeed Souleiman's husband
91	Sarah Abdlmajeed Souleiman	22 years			Mourek- Hama	
92	Ahmad Hayan Abdal- lah al-Ali	7 years		Sarah Abdlma- jeed Souleiman	Mourek-Hama	
93	Mohamed Hayan Ab- dallah al-Ali	9 months		Sarah Abdlma- jeed Souleiman	Mourek-Hama	
94	Yamen al-Shayeb	33 years		Sabah Dalli	Mourek-Hama	
95	Sarah al-Mansour	22 years		Rawda al- Mansour	Mourek- Hama	
96	Sham Yamen al- Shayeb	2 years		Sarah al-Man- sour	Mourek-Hama	
97	Jod Yamen al-Shayeb	2 years		Sarah al-Man- sour	Mourek-Hama	
98	Mohamed Samer al- Shayeb	3 years		Fatema al- Shayb	Mourek-Hama	
99	Mostafa A'zkour				Hasraya-Hama	

NO.	Full name	Age	Gender	Mother's name	District/prov- ince	Notes
100	Mohamed Nour Khalid al-Salih				Khatab-Hama	
101	Hind Nabhan al-Dehna				Khatab- Hama	
102	Mousa al-Husein					

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