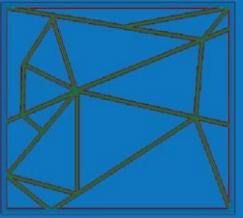


May 2018

سوريون
من أجل
الحقيقة
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Syrians
For Truth
& Justice



A Bomb Car Kills 14 and Injures Up To 30 in Idlib City

The Explosion Occurred on May 12, 2018 in front of the Palace of Justice of the Salvation Government and Caused the Central Hospital of Idlib to be out of Service

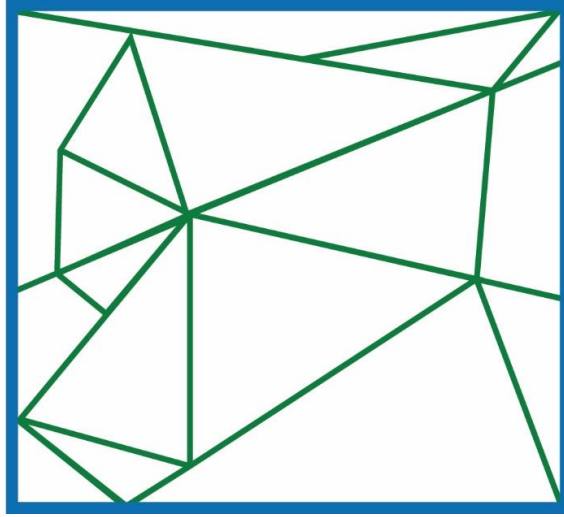
About Syrians for Truth and Justice

[Syrians for Truth and Justice \(STJ\)](#) is an independent, non-governmental and non-profit organization whose members include Syrian human rights defenders, advocates and academics of different backgrounds and nationalities. It also includes members of other nationalities.

The initiative strives for SYRIA, where all Syrian citizens (males and females) have dignity, equality, justice and equal human rights.

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Introduction

Up to 14 persons and more than 30 were injured due to an explosion of a car bomb in the middle of [Idlib](#) city¹- center of the province- on May 12, 2018. According to many testimonies obtained by STJ, the explosion occurred in front of the Palace of Justice, where the ministries of Salvation Government² affiliated to Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)³ take as headquarter. The explosion also affected another headquarter, adjacent to the Palace of Justice, where it contains a temporary prison of HTS. In addition, the Central Hospital of Idlib was exposed to significant material damage because it was very close to the impact site and so it became out of service.

According to STJ's field researcher, the party who committed the explosion has not been identified and after the blast, the region witnessed armed clashes between fighters of HTS and unidentified masked fighters who attempted to advance towards HTS's headquarter, which contains an temporary prison. Following the clashes, another blast occurred as a result of a suicide bomb carried out by a person from inside the headquarter, thus numbers of the casualties increased.

Earlier before, Idlib had been exposed to an immense explosion that claimed lives of 29 persons and wounded up to 150 on April 9, 2018, so STJ had prepared a detailed report concerning this incident, the report was entitled "[A Huge Blast Kills 29 People and Injures more than 150 in Idlib, Preliminary reports suggest the cause of the explosion to be a long-range missile](#)"

¹ Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)/ formerly al-Nusra Front controls Idlib city.

² On September 17, 2017, the Syrian General Conference was held in Idlib province, and ended with the formation of a constituent council/constituent body to nominate a new head of government. In its final statement, it formed what they called the "Salvation Government" in order to regulate the liberated areas in the north of the war-torn country of Syria. The "Salvation Government" was de-facto formed on November 2, 2017, as it announced the nomination of its ministers at its founding conference, which was led by "Mohammed Sheikh", who said that the formation of this government came after an initiative to form a civil administration by a group of academics, events, and entities in Idlib province. The government has faced accusations of subordination to Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)/ formerly al-Nusra Front because it utilized elements of HTS in implementing several decisions.

³ On January 28, 2017, several jihadi factions in northern Syria announced the merger under the name "Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)" and the factions that declared the merger under the new name are, Jabhat Fateh al-Sham – formerly al- Nusra Front, Nour al-Din al-Zenki Movement, Liwaa al-Haq, Jabhat Ansar al-Din, Jaysh as-Sunnah and Ansar al-Sham al-Islamiyya Movement. However, against the backdrop of the recent clashes between Ahrar al-Sham Movement and Hayat Tahrir al- Sham in the north of the Syria on July 15, 2017, Nour-Din al-Zenki Movement announced its separation from HTS on July 20, 2017.



Details of the incident

At 9:30 pm, on May 12, 2018, a large explosion hit the middle of Idlib city, it was only 200 meters from the Central Hospital of Idlib, which is considered the most important medical point in Idlib city given it receives monthly around 5-7 thousand patients from all around the province. The blast caused significant material damage to the hospital, as reported by one of the medical personnel in the hospital who said,

"in the evening on that day, we heard an tremendous explosion near the hospital. The explosion cut off electricity from the Central Hospital completely and caused huge damage to its first and second floors, which contains a pediatric department and a maternity department. Moments later, we heard the sound of armed clashes in the area, then, ten minutes later, another explosion took place, but it was not as big as the first one. It was found out later that someone detonated himself after the clashes with unidentified elements near the Palace of Justice, that is 100 meters from the hospital. After that, ambulances and emergency vehicles started to evacuate the patients along with the medical personnel, but during the evacuation process, some of the personnel were injured."

The witness added that the Central Hospital transported 25 kids to nearby hospitals as the pediatric department got considerable damage along with the surgery ward, the operations ward, and the internal department, so the hospital went out of service. He indicated that the extent of the casualties as well as the material damage was very great in the impact site, as at least 14 persons were killed, including prisoners in the prison affiliated to HTS/ formerly al-Nusra Front because the blast was near it.



الجمعية الطبية السورية الأمريكية - سامز

May 13 at 12:59pm · 🌐

اضطرت كوادر #سامز في مشفى #ادلب المركزي، لإيقاف العمل بأقسام "الداخلية، الجراحة، الأطفال والعمليات"، بشكل مؤقت، بعد الانفجار الذي حدث قرب باب المشفى الرئيسي ليلة أمس. خلال عمليات الإنقاذ والاستجابة، تعرض بعض العاملين في المشفى لإصابات، ورغم شدة التفجير، استطاع أبطال سامز نقل 25 طفلاً من قسم الأطفال بمشفى #ادلب المركزي إلى مشافي أخرى، لحمايتهم واستكمال علاجهم. وأوقع الانفجار 9 ضحايا و28 إصابة بين المدنيين، ولم تعرف طبيعته حتى اللحظة. وتؤكد #سامز دوماً على تحييد المرافق الطبية والمدنية، عن أي صراع

Image of the release by the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) concerning the Central Hospital of Idlib and how it became out of service due to the blast that shook Idlib city on May 12, 2018. Photo credit: [the Syrian American Medical Society that Supports the Central Hospital of Idlib](#).

In another testimony obtained by a relative of one of the victims detained who died in the explosion near a prison affiliated to HTS, reported to STJ that his brother identified as Yahiya Hajjar, 63, who was arrested because of a simple breach, died in the prison. In this regard, he said,

"My brother used to live in a small stall to support his family and provides them a decent life. He was arrested not for long time because of an offence relating to the opening of his stall. If my brother was linked to any military faction or had any relations with the army, he would have been alive now within his family, but he was a victim of the explosion and left 6 children behind along with a wife. Now, his family became without any breadwinners as he passed away under the rubble of the hospital after the explosion of that car bomb. Seven other prisoners died along with him because they were in a basement in the prison that collapsed over them due to the intensity of the blast."



An image shows some of the devastation in the middle of Idlib city following the explosion on May 12, 2018. Photo credit: STJ

Mostafa Haj Youssef, director of the Civil Defense in Idlib city told STJ that the rescue teams had worked for consistent 24 hours in order to pull out the trapped from under the rubble, he added,

"we started work at 9:45 pm on that day, the rescue teams worked for consecutive hours to pull out the victims from under the rubble and aid the injured. The preliminary toll during the night was 9 deaths and about 30 injuries. The next day, the rescue teams continued work and more five persons were pulled out, so number of the dead became 14. It should be mentioned that this toll is not final and is expected to increase due to the seriousness of many injuries that were dispatched to the Turkish hospital."

STJ's field researcher could document names of the dead in the explosion in Idlib city on May 12, 2018. They are,



The civilian deaths:

1. Hajer Mohammed Othman (woman).
2. Hala Siba'ai (woman).
3. Omran Ayoub.
4. Ahmad Khalid Omar.
5. Yahiya Hajjar.
6. Mohammed Abdussalam.
7. Zoheir Haddad.
8. Bayan Haddad.
9. Salah as-Suweid.

Deaths of the combatants affiliated to HTS:

1. **Rajab Hussein Khalaf.**
2. **Abo Amer ash-Shami.**
3. **An unidentified person.**
4. **An unidentified person.**
5. **An unidentified person.**