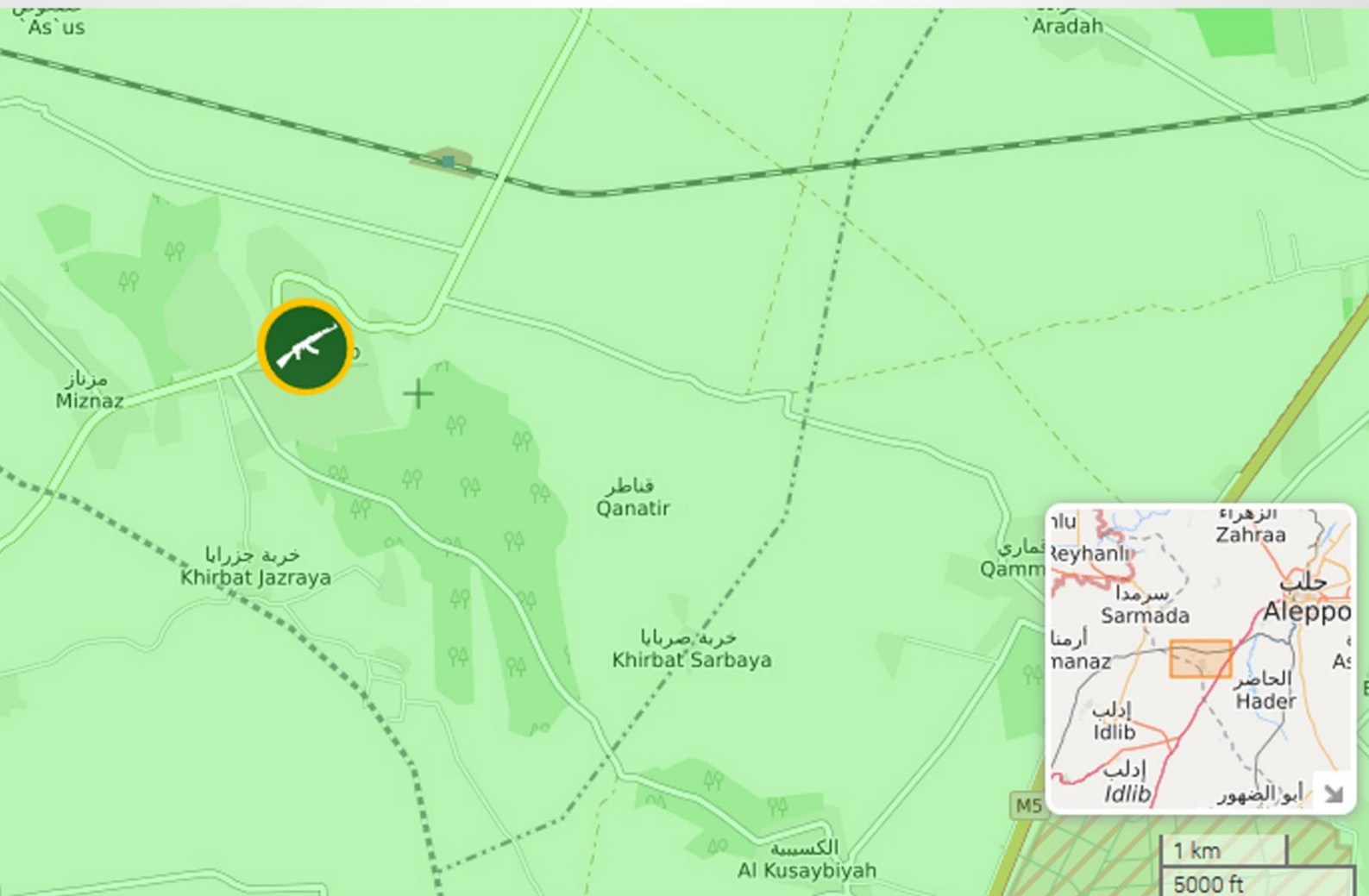


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سوريون  
من أجل  
الحقيقة  
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## Two Children and Young Man Dead, Others Injured, in Hayat Tahrir al-Sham Shooting in Kafr Halab Town

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On October 5, 2018, two children and a young man died in a Hayat Tahrir al-Sham/HTS shooting, which followed its incursion of the town of [Kafr Halab](#), western rural Aleppo. HTS also arrested 11 civilians and two militants of the armed opposition groups during the raid, while it forced about 50 persons, both civilians and militants, out of the town, threatening them with arrest in case they returned, according to a testimony obtained by Syrians for Truth and Justice/STJ.

On the condition of anonymity, an eyewitness in the town of Kafr Halab, informed STJ of the incident's details:

**“On October 5, 2018, around 4 o'clock at dawn, we heard the sound of a massive and rapid shooting. We were surprised at seeing the columns of military elements and cars, with HTS and black flags that stormed the town of Kafr Halab without prior notice. None of the town's people had an idea about the reason of the columns' incursion. A number of the residents approached the elements and asked them about the causes of entering the town. The elements responded in an abusive manner and refused to give them further information about their presence causes. Later on, it appeared that the column has arrived in the town from an HTS post near the adjacent town of [Miznaz](#). And then, the elements of HTS headed to the house of the commander of the Syrian Liberation Front/ Nour al-Din al-Zenki Movement, called Raed al-Abdou. They tried to break in into the house and started shooting on it and the neighboring ones, triggering the commander and the other houses' owners to retaliate. This resulted in an exchanged shooting for about two hours.”**

The news of the death of the little girl Reem/Ella Assaf due to the HTS shooting which targeted the houses in the quarter, the same one where the exchanged shooting took place, reached the town's people. Driven by the news, the witness added, the people started a demonstration in the morning, which to disband HTS elements fired shots in the air. When the people did not respond, the elements put the rifles to the demonstrators' heads, and an element shot one of them, the young man Mu'taz Fahed Ibrahim. Though the people rushed him to a nearby hospital, the young man died after about an hour, while HTS elements, for hours, prevented his family from burying his body.

On social networking sites, activists posted a [video](#) of the town people's demonstration. In the recording, the sound of several gunshots can be heard, followed by the people's screams. However, it showed no casualties.

A displaced child, based in the town, also died in HTS indiscriminate shooting on the houses. Commenting on this, the witness said that so far they were not able to identify the child, as he does not belong to the town.

In addition to this, the shooting injured four men and a woman.



A photo published by local activists in the town of Kafr Halab, which they captioned as the little girl Ella/Reem Assaf on the right and the unidentified child, displaced to the town of Kafr Halab, who died in the HTS shooting on civilians' houses in the town on October 5, 2018.

After the incident, elements of HTS said that they were conducting a raid to arrest people on the charges of “belonging to Daesh and promoting for reconciliations with the Syrian government”,<sup>1</sup> the witness commented on the incursion's causes, adding that, later on, the elements changed their statements and said that the raid was to capture persons charged with robberies and criminal matters and that they already had a list with the target people's names.

According to the witness, the people prosecuted for the robberies were not present in the town at all, and HTS elements had not even raided their houses or questioned their relatives about their whereabouts.

**They, instead, stormed the house of Abdullah al-Shawaf, which they seized and turned into a post for the day. They also raided several houses and arrested 11 civilians and three militants, when one of the people tried to deter their incursion of the town.**

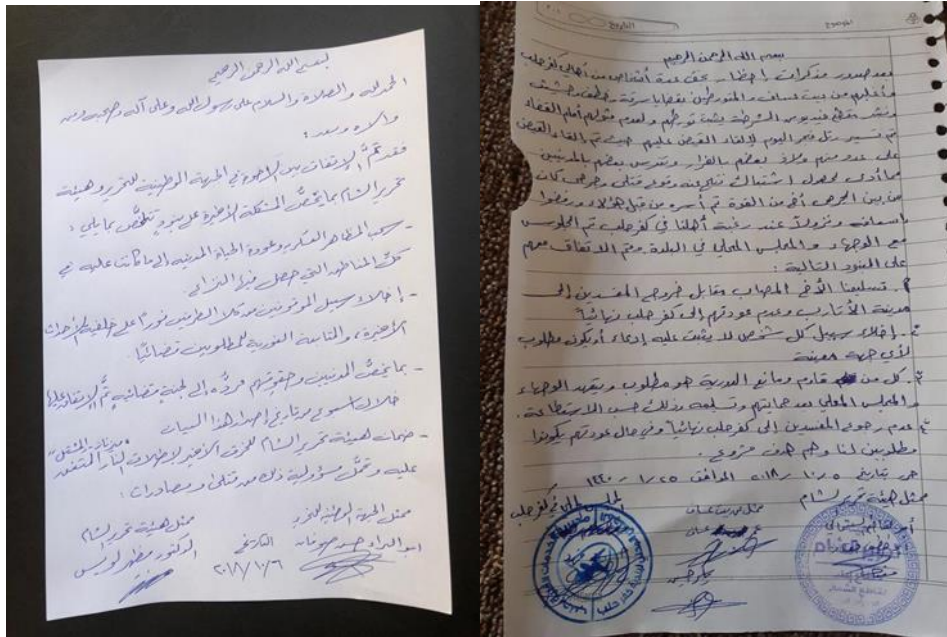
**The civilian captures are Mahmoud Obaid, assistant director of the Boys High School, Abdulhaq Hakem, Jamil Adnan Hakem, Omar Abdulahamid Zuraiq, Ahmad Abdulhamid Zuraiq, Hussein Khalid Najib, a grocery shop owner, Ahmad Soud Zuraiq, Mahmoud Assaf, Mohammad al-Issa, Abdullah Mohammad Fares and Mohammad Walid Abdulqader.**

**The armed opposition groups' arrested militants are Laith Abdulhaq Hakem, from the Syrian Liberation Front, Ahmad Jamal Yassin, from the Sham Legion, and Mohammad Khalid Najib, a former element of HTS.**

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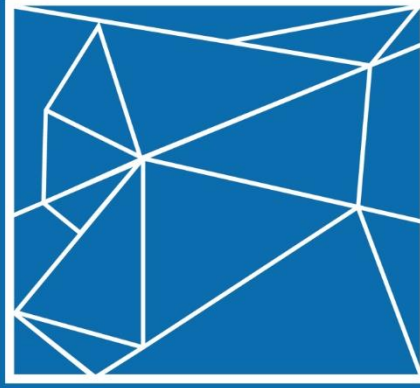
<sup>1</sup> The Arabic acronym for ISIS.

HTS withdrew from the town of Kafr Halab after it concluded an agreement with the town's local council, affiliated with the Salvation Government, providing for forcing about 50 anti-HTS young men to exit the town to the city of Atarib and that they pledge not to return to the town or they will be subjected to arrest. Furthermore, HTS conducted a deal with the Syrian Liberation Front as to end the dispute between them, triggered by the Kafr Halab confrontations and those in HTS post near the town of Miznaz.



A copy of the two deals which HTS conducted with the Kafr Halab local council on the one hand and with the Syrian Liberation front on the other. Photo credit: Local activists.

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## About Syrians for Truth and Justice:

**STJ** is an independent, nongovernmental organization whose members include Syrian human rights defenders, advocates and academics of different backgrounds and nationalities.

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

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