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سوريون  
من أجل  
الحقيقة  
والعدالة  
Syrians  
For Truth  
& Justice



## **Shooting Explosive Bullets Prevents Farmer from Extinguishing Huge Fires and Cause to Spread them-Hama**

**The Incident Took Place in Hayat Tahrir al-Sham-Held Atshan Village Near a Syrian Regular Forces-Operated Checkpoint**

## About Syrians for Truth and Justice

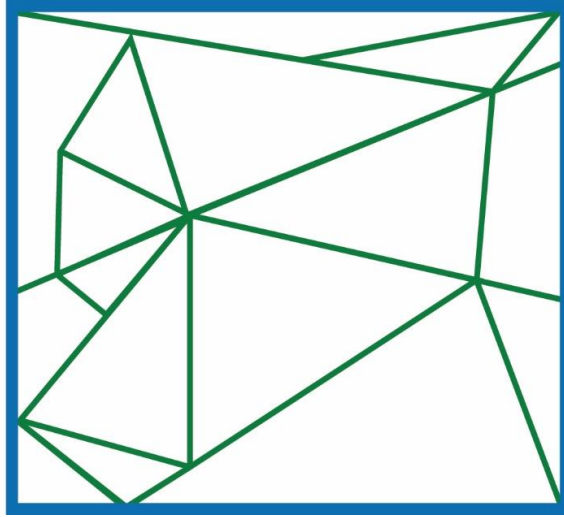
[Syrians for Truth and Justice \(STJ\)](#) is an independent, non-governmental and non-profit organization whose members include Syrian human rights defenders, advocates and academics of different backgrounds and nationalities. It also includes members of other nationalities.

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

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## **Shooting Explosive Bullets Prevents Farmer from Extinguishing Huge Fires and Cause to Spread them-Hama**

*The Incident Took Place in Hayat Tahrir al-Sham-Held Atshan Village  
Near a Syrian Regular Forces-Operated Checkpoint*



The Syrian regular forces denied farmers to extinguish fires and fired explosive bullets causing the spread of huge fires in agricultural lands south of [Atshan village](#), which is controlled by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS<sup>1</sup>) and is located in Hama province in the center of Syria. The Syrian regular forces fired bullets directly to deny owners of the agricultural lands from extinguishing fires broke out in their lands on July 6, 2018.

Ahmad al-Yaseen, a media activist who owns an agricultural land and lives in al-Tamanah village- south of Idlib, said in an interview with STJ on July 9, 2018, that a shepherd and his cattle were present in the agricultural lands that are 1km from a Syrian regular forces-operated checkpoint named al-Nadaf Checkpoint, south of Atshan village when the fires broke out. He added,

**"at first, we did not know the real reason for the fires, but remarkably, the regime forces stationed in the checkpoint had fired explosive bullets on the location causing the spread of fires. Some people attempted to deal with it and extinguish the fires but the elements in the checkpoint used heavy machine guns and prevented people from extinguishing the fires that could have been redressed."**

Fires spread along an area of 3000 donum<sup>2</sup>. 1000 donum was planted with 8-years-old pistachio trees, and 500 donum others were sowed with barley. These lands are owned by more than 30 farmers, according to al-Yaseen who also lost 30 donums of lands planted with pistachio trees.

A military faction in the area have arrested the shepherd following the incident but released him later, al-Yaseen said, indicating that the checkpoints installed by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) in the region came instead of checkpoints by the Syrian armed opposition factions "the Free Syrian Army".

**"The farmers asked the Turkish observation post in Morek city-adjacent to Hama to "practice pressure over the regime forces to allow them sow and harvest their lands in Atshan and not to expose them to any shelling or shooting fires, but the observation post afforded no response despite it had assisted farmers in another area to harvest their land 300m from the regime's checkpoint."** Al-Yaseen said.

In previous occasions, the Syrian regular forces had targeted the agricultural lands southwest of Atshan early June 2018. At the time, they targeted the farmers' harvesters with heavy machine gun and caused the burning of 200 donum of a land planted with pistachio trees, al-Yaseen reported.

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<sup>1</sup> January 28, 2017, Several jihadist factions in northern Syria announced the merger under the name "Hayat Tahrir al-Sham-HTS", they are: Fateh al-Sham Front- formerly al-Nusra Front, Nour al-Din al-Zenki Movement, Liwaa al-Haqq, Ansar al-Din Front, Jaysh al-Sunna and Ansar al-Sham al-Islamiyya. However, at the background of the recent outbreak of confrontations between HTS and Ahrar al-Sham al-Islamiyya in the north of Syria on July 15, 2017, Nour al-Din al-Zenki Movement announced its separation from HTS on July 20, 2017

<sup>2</sup> Each donum equivalent to 1000 square meter. It is a measurement unit.

On the same day of the fires, HTS declared in a statement released by Ibaa News Agency that the north countryside of Hama is a military zone, and gave the civilians 28 hours to evacuate it.

**تحرير الشام تعلن ريف حماة الشمالي منطقة عسكرية وتدعو للنفي وتلبية النداء**

شبكة إباء الإخبارية

أصدرت قيادة القطاع الجنوبي، في هيئة تحرير الشام، اليوم الجمعة بياناً رسمياً وجهت فيه رسالة إلى أهالي ريف حماة الشمالي، والقرى المأهولة المحاذية لمناطق قوات النظام جاء فيه: "أهلنا الكرام نحيطكم علماً إن إخوانكم في هيئة تحرير الشام قد قرروا فتح عمل عسكري كبير نصرة لإخواننا في درعا، وإن منطقتكم ستكون بناءً على ذلك منطقة عسكرية وقد يشكل بقاءكم فيها خطراً عليكم، لذا ندعوكم بأخذ التدابير اللازمة ونقل العائلات خارج القرى بمدّة أقصاها 48 ساعة من تاريخ نشر البيان"

وأكدت تحرير الشام أنها ستساعد الأهالي في إيوائهم ونقلهم قدر الاستطاعة، وليست مسؤولة بعد انقضاء المهلة عن أي ضرر قد يحدث.

وطالب القطاع الجنوبي كافة أهل المنطقة ممن يقدر على حمل السلاح إلى تلبية النداء ونصرة إخوانهم وتحرير أرضهم.

ويذكر أن هيئة تحرير الشام كانت قد أصدرت بياناً رسمياً يدعو كافة الفصائل والكوادر والطاقات في الشمال المحرر إلى التحرك ونصرة المجاهدين في درعا عبر فتح عمل عسكري ضد قوات النظام المجرم وحلفائه.

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Ibaa News ebaa.news

Copy of the HTS statement released by Ibaa News Agency loyal to HTS on July 6, 2018.

The Syrian regular forces had previously shelled many agricultural lands in towns and cities of [al-Ltamenah](#), [Kafr Zita](#), [Latmeen](#), and [Kafr Nabudah](#) during April and May 2018. The lands were targeted with various types of weapons notably incendiary substances. Besides, the shelling coincided with the time of the yearly harvesting period, causing harm and damage to lots of agricultural crops, according to several testimonies to STJ which came under the title "[Bombardment with Incendiary Substances Damages and Burns Agricultural Crops in Northern Hama Countryside](#)".