





Attacks on Health Care in Syria

01 January-09 October 2023



Reported incidents of violence against or obstruction of health care in Syria, 01 January-09 October 2023

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|--|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| 32 | 14 | 4 | 4 |
| REPORTED INCIDENTS | INCIDENTS WHERE HEALTH FACILITIES WERE DAMAGED ¹ | HEALTH TRANSPORT DAMAGED | HEALTH WORKER KILLED ² |
| Download data on HDX . Explore the incidents in this interactive map . | | | |

Overview

Insecurity Insight has identified 18 incidents of violence against or obstruction of access to health care in Syria between 04-09 October 2023. All these reported events involved explosive weapon use by Syrian regime and Turkish forces which damaged health facilities and transport and killed a health worker. This intensive use of explosive weapons affecting health care is a marked escalation in the observed patterns of continued violence against health care in Syria.

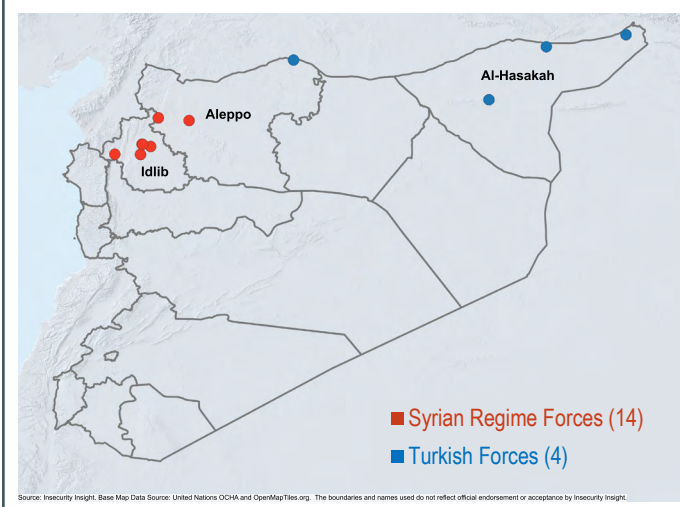
Over the past nine months of 2023, 14 incidents affecting health care were recorded (thus a total of 32 in 2023). Over the past nine months these mostly involved health worker killings, injuries, kidnappings and arrests by Syrian regime, Turkish forces, and unnamed non-state actor groups armed with firearms. The exception was one incident where Syrian regime forces conducted a double-tap guided missile strike leading to the death of a LNGO health volunteer in July 2023 in Aleppo governorate.

Syrian Regime Forces

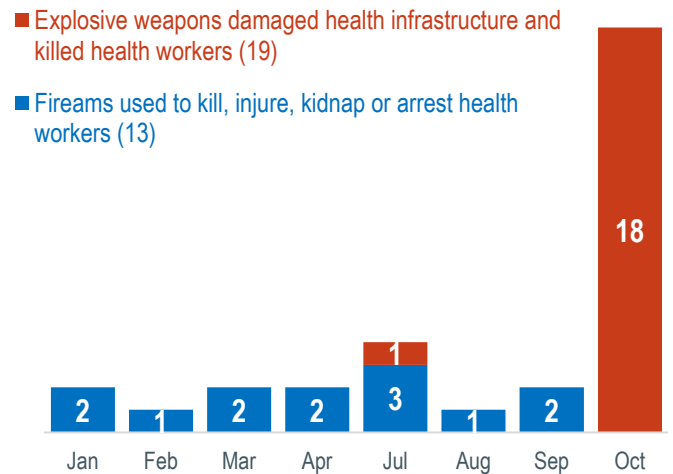
Over three-quarter of the 18 incidents reported between 04-09 October 2023 were attributed to Syrian regime forces and involved the use of artillery, shelling or missiles which damaged health facilities and vehicles. Over the previous ten months Syrian forces were reported to have detained six health workers for unspecified reasons.

Most incidents took place in Idlib and Ariha city in Idlib governorate with two in Aleppo. Health facilities including a dialysis hospital were damaged at least ten times, three health vehicles were damaged and a health worker and other civilians were killed. In addition, 19 hospitals in Idlib governorate suspended services after Syrian regime ground forces fired over 150 artillery shells and missiles on the area.

Locations of explosive weapon incidents affecting health infrastructure and health workers in Syria, 04-09 October 2023



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Turkish Forces

Four of the 18 incidents reported between 04-09 October 2023 were attributed to Turkish forces. Three took place in Al-Hasakah governorate and recorded drones being used to drop explosives which destroyed a COVID-19 hospital, and a pharmacy in Qamishli district and killed a doctor in an unspecified location within Al-Hasakah. These three incidents are the first that have been recorded in Al-Hasakah governorate in 2023. Similarly, only one incident has previously been attributed to Turkish forces in 2023 and involved a cardiologist who was reportedly detained at his home by Turkish intelligence members. The remaining incident occurred in Idlib where a COVID-19 hospital in Ain Al-Arab/Kobani was hit by airstrikes.

Conclusion

There is not enough verified information to know the intended target of these strikes. Detailed investigations are required to determine this.

The available information, however, indicates a clear pattern of significant direct and indirect civilian harm from the use of these explosive weapons with a wide impact in the vicinity of health facilities. IHL prohibits indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks.

1 Health facility: Refers to any facility that provides direct health-related support to patients, including clinics, hospitals, laboratories, makeshift hospitals, medical education facilities, mobile clinics, pharmacies, warehouses, or any other health facility not named here.

2 Health worker: Refers to any person working in a professional or voluntary capacity in the provision of health services or who provides direct support to patients, including administrators, ambulance personnel, community health workers, dentists, doctors, government health officials, hospital staff, medical education staff, nurses, midwives, paramedics, physiotherapists, surgeons, vaccination workers, volunteers, or any other health-related personnel not named here.

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