

# ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq<sup>1</sup>

S-JO-100-18-CA-004

July 2018 Monthly Appendices

Michael D. Danti, Marina Gabriel, Susan Penacho, Darren Ashby, Kyra Kaercher, Gwendolyn Kristy

## **Table of Contents:**

Executive Summary	2
Key Points	2
Report	2

---

<sup>1</sup> This report is based on research conducted by the American Schools of Oriental Research Cultural Heritage Initiatives. Monthly reports reflect reporting from a variety of sources and may contain unverified material. As such, they should be treated as preliminary and subject to change.

## Executive Summary

During the reporting period, pro-regime forces recaptured all remaining Syrian opposition-held areas of Daraa and Quneitra Governorate following reconciliation deals mediated by Jordan and Russia.<sup>2</sup> Syrian opposition fighters were relocated to Idlib Governorate along with their families. In a unique event, 422 volunteer White Helmets members and their families were evacuated to Jordan. Pro-regime forces also completed an offensive against ISIS in Daraa Governorate. By the end of the reporting period, the Syrian regime had full control over the Yarmouk Basin.<sup>3</sup>

ISIS carried out a large-scale attack in Suwayda Governorate, targeting several majority-Druze villages and killing more than 200 civilians.<sup>4</sup> An estimated 30 civilians were also kidnapped by the militants. The attack led to an outcry by the Druze community against the Syrian regime, who they blamed for not protecting them. In two smaller attacks, ISIS targeted an HTS-held checkpoint in the city of Saraqib, Idlib Governorate and detonated an IED near the town of Hazra.<sup>5</sup> These were the first ISIS attacks in the governorate since February.

In Idlib Governorate, HTS and Iran agreed upon a deal that allowed around 7,000 pro-regime fighters and residents of Fuah and Kefraya, two majority-Shia towns, in exchange for a reported 1,500 detainees held by the Syrian regime. It was unclear at the time of publication whether all detainees had been released.

The US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by Coalition airstrikes, completed clearing operations of remaining ISIS-held positions in Hasakah and Deir ez-Zor Governorates as part of operations against the militant group in Syria.<sup>6</sup>

## Key Points

- Syrian regime warplanes reportedly fired missiles on the Roman Theater in Bosra, Daraa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0160**
- The Idlib Antiquities Center carried out reconstruction at Deir Sobat in Bara, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0162**

## Report

ASOR CHI recorded three incident reports and one heritage response report during the July 2018 reporting period.

In Aleppo Governorate, a team from the Idlib Antiquities Center visited the site of Cyrrhus to document the site's condition (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0161**). The group noted four types of damage from the conflict: the construction of military fortifications, illegal excavations, non-military construction, and theft/vandalism.

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/07/syria-situation-report-june-29-july-12.html> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/07/syria-situation-report-july-12-july-27.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/08/syria-situation-report-july-28-august-5.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/07/syria-situation-report-july-12-july-27.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/07/syria-situation-report-june-29-july-12.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/08/syria-situation-report-july-28-august-5.html>

In Daraa Governorate, SARG airstrikes reportedly fired on the Roman Theater in Bosra, resulting in damage to the site (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0160**). The Roman Theater has been damaged and repaired on several occasions throughout the conflict. SARG artillery forces reportedly fired on al-Imam al-Nawawi Mosque, causing heavy damage (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0163**).

In Idlib Governorate, a team from the Idlib Antiquities Center carried out reconstruction work at the ancient site of Deir Sobat following damage to the site as a result of looting/vandalism and light gunfire (**ASOR CHI Heritage Response Report SHI 18-0162**).