

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

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<sup>1</sup> This report is based on research conducted by the “Cultural Preservation Initiative: Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq.” Weekly 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.

## Other Key Points

### Syria

- Aleppo Governorate
  - Military construction encroached on the archaeological site of Tekla in Jebel Semaan, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0212 UPDATE**
  - Al-Kabir Mosque in Anadan, Aleppo Governorate collapsed due to previously sustained damage. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0037**
  - Turkish shelling damaged Martyr Seydo Cemetery in Kafr Safra, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0042**
  - Reported Turkish shelling damaged Bint Hamid Agha Mosque in Jalame, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0054**
- Daraa Governorate
  - Reported illegal excavation damaged Mzairib Mill in Mzairib, Daraa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0059**
- Deir ez-Zor Governorate
  - A religious organization reportedly changed the name of al-Omari Mosque in Deir ez-Zor, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0043**
- Idlib Governorate
  - New video footage reveals the extent of the damage to al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque in Kafr Amim, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036 UPDATE**
  - A reported Russian airstrike damaged Bilal Mosque in Saraqib, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0038**
  - A reported IED damaged al-Sarouji Mosque in Ma'arat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0039**
  - Reported SARG airstrikes damaged al-Kabir Mosque in al-Ghadafa, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0040**
  - Reported Russian shelling damaged Osama bin Zaid Mosque in al-Ghadafa, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0044**
  - Heavy shelling damaged the Salamin Village Mosque in Salamin, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0045**
  - Satellite imagery revealed damage to Tell Sheikh Mansour in Saraqib, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0046**
  - Reported SARG shelling damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Hass, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0051**
  - A reported SARG airstrike damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Kafr Sajna, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0052**
  - A reported Russian airstrike damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Hazano, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0055**
- Rif Dimashq Governorate
  - A reported SARG airstrike damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Misraba, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0041**
  - A reported SARG airstrike damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Zamalka, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0047**
  - Reported SARG shelling damaged St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Irbeen, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0048**

- Reported SARG shelling damaged al-Nur Mosque in Saqba, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0049**
- Reported SARG shelling damaged Ahmad bin Hanbal Mosque in Jisreen, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0050**
- A reported SARG airstrike damaged Hawa Mosque in Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0053**
- SARG forces reportedly damaged the Church of the Prophet Elias in Harasta, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0056**
- Reported SARG barrel bombs severely damaged al-Nur Mosque in Eastern Ghouta, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0057**
- A reported SARG or Russian airstrike damaged Duma Cultural Center in Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0058**
- A reported SARG airstrike damaged the Umm Habiba Mosque in Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0060**

## Iraq

- Ninawa Governorate
  - New video footage shows the condition of Bashtabia Palace in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0078 UPDATE**
  - New photographs show the condition of Mar Thomas Syrian Orthodox Church in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0047 UPDATE**
  - Heavy machinery destroyed Khan Hamu al-Qadu during reconstruction efforts in Mosul. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 18-0003**
- Salah ad Din Governorate
  - New photographs show illegal excavation at Tell Huwaish near Jirnaf, Salah ad Din Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 18-0004**

## Libya

- Cyrenaica
  - An IED damaged Saad bin Obadah Mosque in Benghazi, Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0007**
  - An anonymous citizen returned three artifacts recovered in illicit excavations from Cyrene to the Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) office in Shahat, Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0008**
  - A landowner used heavy machinery to clear land for building, heavily damaging Balagrae Necropolis in Si Abd al-Wahad, al-Bayda, Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0009**
  - Members of the Tobruk office of the Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) repaired the Justinian Wall in Tobruk, Cyrenaica. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0010**
  - The site of al-Hamamah in Cyrenaica was damaged by urban encroachment. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0013**
- Tripolitania
  - Reported armed extremists destroyed the Mosque of Sheikh Ahmed Barakat al-Ansari in Ajaylat, Tripolitania. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0006**
  - Unknown perpetrators destroyed the Tomb of Omar al-Faqi in Sabratha, Tripolitania. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0011**
  - Unknown armed extremists destroyed the Tomb of Aisha bin Niran near Sirte, Tripolitania. **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0012**
  - A carved capital from Sabratha, Tripolitania was recovered by authorities and returned to the Sabratha office of the Department of Antiquities (DoA). **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0014**

## Military and Political Context

The main theaters of military operations during the reporting period in Syria were:

1. Rif Dimashq Governorate:
  - On February 5, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that SARG airstrikes killed 23 people in the opposition-held area of Eastern Ghouta. According to SOHR, SARG airstrikes targeted the Eastern Ghouta towns of Zamalka, Irbeen, Hazza and Beitu Soua. According to Syrian state TV, opposition shelling killed a woman and injured three civilians in Damascus.<sup>2</sup>
  - On February 6, SOHR reported that SARG aerial bombardment and ground-to-ground missile strikes on the towns of Duma and Harasta in the Eastern Ghouta area killed at least 47 people.<sup>3</sup>
  - On February 8, rescue workers and SOHR reported that SARG airstrikes targeted several towns in Eastern Ghouta, killing at least 18 people. According to SOHR, between February 4–8, more than 200 people were killed in Eastern Ghouta.<sup>4</sup>
  - On February 19–20, SOHR reported that aerial bombardment over Eastern Ghouta killed at least 310 people and injured more than 1,550. Aerial bombardment continued, killing at least two dozen people, on February 21.<sup>5</sup>
  - On February 21, Russian TASS news agency reported that Syrian opposition shelling struck and damaged the Russian “ceasefire monitoring center,” Damascus hotels and residential areas. TASS also reported civilian casualties as a result of the shelling.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/air-strikes-kill-more-than-20-in-syrias-ghouta-idUSKBN1FP1QM> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/air-strikes-pound-syrias-last-rebel-strongholds-gas-chokes-civilians-idUSKBN1FP23M>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42962988> ; [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/a-dramatic-deterioration-in-syria-as-the-war-intensifies-and-suffering-spikes/2018/02/06/78cc660a-0b4b-11e8-998c-96deb18cca19\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/a-dramatic-deterioration-in-syria-as-the-war-intensifies-and-suffering-spikes/2018/02/06/78cc660a-0b4b-11e8-998c-96deb18cca19_story.html) ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42994235> ; <https://www.yahoo.com/news/death-toll-soars-syria-regime-pounds-rebel-enclave-105354815.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42974746> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42996453> ; <https://www.yahoo.com/news/death-toll-tops-200-four-day-regime-assault-180207145.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/syrias-ghouta-residents-wait-to-die-as-more-bombs-fall-idUSKCN1G50S2> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/more-bombs-hit-syrias-ghouta-death-toll-highest-since-2013-idUSKCN1G40N8> ; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/21/syrian-death-toll-rises-as-bombing-of-rebel-enclave-continues> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria/air-strikes-hammer-syrias-ghouta-for-fifth-day-u-n-mulling-ceasefire-resolution-idUSKCN1G60ZS>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-shelling/russia-says-syrian-ceasefire-monitoring-center-hit-in-shelling-tass-idUSKCN1G50JE>

- During the reporting period (19-24), SARG forces launched intensive aerial bombardment over Eastern Ghouta, killing at least 500 and wounding more than one thousand more. The uptick in violence led to the UN calling for a 30-day ceasefire covering the entirety of Syria. A reported 393,000 Syrians remain in Eastern Ghouta, and according to the UN at least 272,500 inhabitants are in need of humanitarian assistance.<sup>7</sup>
- On February 24, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) unanimously approved a resolution “demanding” a 30-day ceasefire across all of Syria.<sup>8</sup>
- On February 24–26, despite a reported drop in frequency, ongoing shelling and bombardment in Damascus and Eastern Ghouta killed at least 30 people. Syrian state TV reported that the Syrian army had captured several buildings in Harasta, and had captured the southeastern towns of Nashabiyeh, Hazrama and Housh al-Salihyah. Opposition shelling continued to strike Damascus.<sup>9</sup>
- On February 25–28, SARG forces launched a ground assault on Eastern Ghouta targeting the Hawsh al-Dawahra area at the eastern edge of the area.<sup>10</sup>
- On February 26, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a “daily humanitarian pause” and the creation of a “humanitarian corridor” in Eastern Ghouta. The ceasefire will reportedly begin on Tuesday and would run during the hours of 9:00–14:00 local time.<sup>11</sup>
- On February 27–28, SARG air and artillery strikes continued over Eastern Ghouta, including in the towns of Shifouniyeh and Aftaris. Russia accused Syrian opposition forces of shelling the so-called humanitarian corridor ordered by Putin, while the UN accused the Syrian regime of targeting the humanitarian corridor.<sup>12</sup>

## 2. Aleppo Governorate:

- On February 4, Turkey reported the deaths of seven soldiers in the YPG-held region of Afrin after a reported YPG attack.<sup>13</sup>
- On February 5, Turkey established an observation post in al-Eis.<sup>14</sup>
- On February 9, Turkey and Turkish-backed Syrian opposition forces launched a “cross-border” military operation to capture the town of Jindires.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/more-bombs-fall-on-syrias-eastern-ghouta-before-u-n-vote-idUSKCN1G70XH> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43182854> ; <https://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2018/02/23/understanding-eastern-ghouta-syria> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43208705>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2018/02/25/truce-vote-slows-violence-damascus-area/GclTWxMyGhsrunFyQmaBiL/story.html>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2018/02/25/truce-vote-slows-violence-damascus-area/GclTWxMyGhsrunFyQmaBiL/story.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43187888> ; [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/violence-rages-unabated-in-ghouta-as-syria-defies-un-ceasefire-resolution/2018/02/25/9a4fc244-1a51-11e8-98f5-ceecfa8741b6\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/violence-rages-unabated-in-ghouta-as-syria-defies-un-ceasefire-resolution/2018/02/25/9a4fc244-1a51-11e8-98f5-ceecfa8741b6_story.html) ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-politics/china-pushes-back-against-criticism-of-plan-for-xi-to-stay-in-power-idUSKCN1GA040>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/syrian-government-ground-forces-attack-ghouta-despite-russian-truce-plan-idUSKCN1GC0VV>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43200956>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43208705> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta-strikes/syrian-observatory-says-strikes-hit-two-ghouta-towns-military-source-denies-idUSKCN1GB12G>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42934041>

<sup>14</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

<sup>15</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/the-al-qaeda-blind-spot-for-us-approach.html>

- On February 10, Syrian Kurdish YPG forces downed a Turkish helicopter gunship near Rajo, killing both pilots. Clashes between armed groups killed nine other Turkish soldiers.<sup>16</sup>
- On February 14, Russian Armed Forces deployed a “contingent of military police” to the SARG-held town of Al-Eis.<sup>17</sup>
- On February 16, the YPG and SOHR accused Turkey of using chemical weapons against YPG forces in a village near the city of Afrin.<sup>18</sup>
- On February 18, YPG forces and the Assad regime reported that they had reached an agreement for the Syrian army to enter the region of Afrin in support of YPG forces currently under bombardment by the Turkish Army and Turkish-backed FSA forces.<sup>19</sup>
- On February 19–20, pro-regime forces entered the city of Afrin. According to Syrian state media, the pro-regime forces came under Turkish artillery fire. Turkey has warned against any involvement by pro-regime forces.<sup>20</sup>
- On February 22, a YPG commander in Aleppo stated that the Syrian regime had taken control of a Kurdish-held district in Aleppo as a result of the YPG moving to the Afrin region to repel ongoing Turkish military operations in the area.<sup>21</sup>
- On February 26, Turkish and Turkish-backed forces captured the “final stretch” of the Syria-Turkish border in Afrin from the YPG. Turkey deployed additional forces, including members of the Police Special Forces and the Turkish Gendarmerie, to Syria.<sup>22</sup>
- On February 28, Amnesty International reported that indiscriminate shelling by Turkish forces killed dozens of civilians in northern Syria.<sup>23</sup>

### 3. Damascus Governorate:

- On February 1, Syrian opposition forces shelled the SARG-held Ash al-Warour district, killing seven people and wounding 13 more.<sup>24</sup>
- On February 6, Syrian state TV (SANA) reported that opposition shelling struck the neighborhood of Bab Tuma, killing five civilians. The same day, SANA reported that opposition forces fired mortars at “Russia’s commercial Mission” in Damascus, damaging the building.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>16</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

<sup>17</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-afrin/turkey-denies-allegation-of-chemical-attack-in-syria-idUSKCN1G20NB>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/syrian-kurdish-official-deal-for-syrian-army-to-enter-afrin-idUSKCN1G20QB>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-afrin/syria-pro-government-forces-enter-afrin-to-aid-kurds-against-turkey-idUSKCN1G41WG> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-afrin/stakes-rise-in-turkeys-afrin-assault-as-pro-assad-militia-arrive-idUSKCN1G500N> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-afrin/syria-pro-government-forces-enter-afrin-to-aid-kurds-against-turkey-idUSKCN1G41WG> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-militia/syrian-ypg-militia-government-has-taken-control-of-aleppo-district-idUSKCN1G62K9>

<sup>22</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/turkey-clears-first-hurdle-in-northern.html> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/turkey-gains-control-of-border-strip-inside-syrias-afrin-sends-special-forces-idUSKCN1GA14E>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43228472>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria/syrian-army-air-attacks-kill-28-in-northwest-monitor-idUSKBN1FL64W>

<sup>25</sup> <https://sana.sy/en/?p=126505> ; <https://sana.sy/en/?p=126565>

- On February 7, Syria state TV reported that Israeli warplanes fired missiles on a Syrian military position in Jamraya. According to SOHR, Israeli warplanes struck an ammunition depot, suspected to be the site of chemical weapons production.<sup>26</sup>
4. Idlib Governorate:
- On February 3, Syrian opposition force Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) reportedly downed a Russian aircraft in the city of Saraqib as the aircraft carried out strikes over the city. According to the Russian Defense Ministry, the pilot of the downed Sukhoi SU-25 fighter jet “blew himself up with a grenade” as members of HTS advanced on him. Russia reportedly ordered its pilots to fly at higher altitudes following the incident. Russia claimed that one of its strikes killed more than 30 militants in the area where the plane was downed.<sup>27</sup>
  - On February 3, reported SARG or Russian airstrikes struck a convoy of civilians as they were traveling on the Damascus-Aleppo highway, killing at least seven people. The civilians were likely fleeing pro-regime advancement in Idlib Governorate.<sup>28</sup>
  - On February 3–11, Russian aerial bombardment increased over Idlib Governorate, reportedly in support of SARG advances against Syrian opposition-held territory. Residents and activists reported the use of chlorine gas and strikes on hospitals.<sup>29</sup>
  - On February 9–15, Turkish Armed Forces established two observation points near the towns of Tal Tuqan and Surman.<sup>30</sup>
  - On February 12, HTS and the “Repel the Invaders” Operation Room, backed by Turkey, reported the “complete surrender” of at least 350 ISIS fighters in the town of Khuwayn.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42973662>

<sup>27</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/syrias-idlib-province-pounded-by-russian-airstrikes-activists-say/2018/02/05/32b3f429-bae3-4d4b-ba12-df9a6181e64a\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/syrias-idlib-province-pounded-by-russian-airstrikes-activists-say/2018/02/05/32b3f429-bae3-4d4b-ba12-df9a6181e64a_story.html) ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42944357> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42932616> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-airplane-russia/russia-orders-warplanes-in-syria-to-fly-higher-after-jet-shot-down-idUSKBN1FP145> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-airplane/russia-says-kills-more-than-30-militants-in-syria-tass-idUSKBN1FN0M7>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-highway/aircraft-attack-civilian-convoy-on-syrian-highway-at-least-seven-killed-rescuers-idUSKBN1FN0DQ>

<sup>29</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/syrias-idlib-province-pounded-by-russian-airstrikes-activists-say/2018/02/05/32b3f429-bae3-4d4b-ba12-df9a6181e64a\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/syrias-idlib-province-pounded-by-russian-airstrikes-activists-say/2018/02/05/32b3f429-bae3-4d4b-ba12-df9a6181e64a_story.html) ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42944033> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey/air-strikes-pound-syrias-last-rebel-strongholds-gas-chokes-civilians-idUSKBN1FP23M> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria/syrian-army-air-attacks-kill-28-in-northwest-monitor-idUSKBN1FL64W> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/russian-air-power-shapes-strategic.html>

<sup>30</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

<sup>31</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

5. Deir ez Zor Governorate:

- On February 7, US forces carried out airstrikes against pro-regime fighters following an attempt by the fighters to capture territory east of the Euphrates River, now under the control of the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). According to US officials, an estimated 100 pro-regime forces were killed in the airstrike. Syrian state media reported that the incident left “dozens” dead or wounded. SOHR identified the pro-regime fighters killed as local tribesman loyal to the regime, and Afghan Shia militiamen. However, later reports stated that as many as 200 Russian mercenaries were killed or wounded in the attack. The Syrian regime accused the US of aggression and attempting to steal Syria’s oil, after US airstrikes killed 100 pro-regime fighters in Deir ez Zor Governorate. The Syrian foreign ministry reported that it had filed a complaint with the UN “demanding international condemnation.”<sup>32</sup>
- On February 10, the US-led Coalition conducted an airstrike that targeted a pro-regime tank after the tank fired on SDF and US Special Operations Forces near the town of Khusham.<sup>33</sup>

6. Homs Governorate:

- On February 10, Israeli forces carried out extensive airstrikes in Syria that targeted, according to a military statement, “air defense batteries and army bases as well as Iranian positions.” The attack came after an Israeli 5-16 jet crashed under Syrian anti-aircraft fire. Israel has been concerned about what they see as a “build-up” of Hezbollah forces in the area between Palmyra and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.<sup>34</sup>

7. Hama Governorate:

- On February 1, the Union of Medical Care and Relief Organizations (UOSSM) reported that unidentified airstrikes struck al-Maghara cave hospital in the town of Kafr Zita, previously believed to be the most secure hospital in Syria. According to UOSSM, the hospital, which was serving a population of 50,000 and performing 150 major surgeries per month, was hit by five strikes causing major damage.<sup>35</sup>
- On February 13, HTS withdrew from the key town of Rastan following “mass protests calling for its departure from the opposition-held town,” that occurred after HTS was blamed for the assassination of a local committee negotiating member. FSA-affiliate Liwa Rijal Allah claimed to have detained the HTS fighters responsible for the assassination.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42986089> ; <http://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/NEWS-ARTICLES/News-Article-View/Article/1435218/unprovoked-attack-by-syrian-pro-regime-forces-prompts-coalition-defensive-strike/> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42994235> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42994235> ; [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/syria-accuses-us-of-aggression-after-its-warplanes-strike-pro-government-forces/2018/02/08/bab1502a-0cb4-11e8-8890-372e2047c935\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/syria-accuses-us-of-aggression-after-its-warplanes-strike-pro-government-forces/2018/02/08/bab1502a-0cb4-11e8-8890-372e2047c935_story.html) ; <https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/18/middleeast/us-airstrike-killed-dozens-of-russians-in-syria-intl/index.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43051333> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/weak-us-response-to-russian-proxies.html>

<sup>33</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/israel-carries-out-large-scale-attack-in-syria-after-israeli-jet-crashes-under-anti-aircraft-fire/2018/02/10/89e0ca2c-0e33-11e8-95a5-c396801049ef\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/israel-carries-out-large-scale-attack-in-syria-after-israeli-jet-crashes-under-anti-aircraft-fire/2018/02/10/89e0ca2c-0e33-11e8-95a5-c396801049ef_story.html) ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42908711>

<sup>36</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

8. Hassakah Governorate:
  - On February 18, a car bomb exploded in the city of Qamishli, killing five people and injuring seven. ISIS was suspected in the attack.<sup>37</sup>
9. Raqqa Governorate:
  - During the reporting period, UN humanitarian coordinator for the Syria crisis Panos Moutzidis reported that between 50–70 returnees to Raqqa were being killed by unexploded ordnance every week.<sup>38</sup>
10. Tartus Governorate:
  - On February 17, the “Special Forces Company” of the Abu Amara Brigades—an opposition group affiliated with Ahrar al-Sham and HTS—detonated an IED on the Tartus-Damascus Highway, killing Deir ez Zor Governorate SARG Military Security Director Brig. Gen. Jamal Razouk.<sup>39</sup>

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the area of al-Bukamal (Abu Kamal).<sup>40</sup>
- On February 6, the United Nations appealed for an immediate ceasefire in Syria citing a dramatic deterioration in the humanitarian situation.<sup>41</sup>
- On February 18, Ahrar al-Sham and Harakat Nour al-Din al-Zenki merged to form the Syrian Liberation Front (aka Jabhat Tahrir Souria).<sup>42</sup>
- On February 20, the Russian Foreign Ministry reported that up to 300 Russian and “former Soviet space” citizens had been wounded in recent clashes in Syria, and were being treated in Russian hospitals. According to Reuters, the men being treated were working for a “Kremlin-linked private military contractor,” and many had been either injured or killed in early February in a clash with the US-led Coalition.<sup>43</sup>
- On February 23, a US military official reported to CNN that Russia had sent its most sophisticated military jet, with stealth capability, to Syria. This move appears to be in direct contrast to President Putin’s December 2017 announcement that Russia would begin a “drawdown” of its military presence in Syria.<sup>44</sup>
- On February 27, a UN report alleged that North Korea had been sending materials used to make chemical weapons to the Syrian regime.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-bombing/car-bomb-in-syrias-qamishli-kills-five-people-state-media-idUSKCN1G20TK> ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/28/world/middleeast/syrian-kurds-isis-american-offensive.html>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-aid/u-n-syria-aid-chief-says-security-council-must-see-need-for-ceasefire-idUSKCN1G62BQ>

<sup>39</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

<sup>40</sup> See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIS in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1448664](https://www.military.com/2018/02/23/us-dod-news-release-military-strikes-hit-isis-in-syria-iraq)

<sup>41</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/a-dramatic-deterioration-in-syria-as-the-war-intensifies-and-suffering-spikes/2018/02/06/78cc660a-0b4b-11e8-998c-96deb18cca19\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/a-dramatic-deterioration-in-syria-as-the-war-intensifies-and-suffering-spikes/2018/02/06/78cc660a-0b4b-11e8-998c-96deb18cca19_story.html)

<sup>42</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2018/02/syria-situation-report-february-7-21.html>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia/several-dozen-russian-ex-soviet-fighters-wounded-in-syria-clash-russia-idUSKCN1G41M0>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/23/politics/russia-su-57-advanced-fighter-jet-syria/index.html>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43219614> ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/27/world/asia/north-korea-syria-chemical-weapons-sanctions.html>

### **The main theaters of military operations during the reporting period in Iraq were:**

1. Kirkuk Governorate:
  - On February 5, Iraqi officials stated that Iraqi forces were planning an operation to consolidate control of the area between Kirkuk oil fields and the town of Khanaqin, located on the Iraq-Iran border, in order to use the area for transit of Iraqi oil.<sup>46</sup>
  - On February 19, ISIS militants attacked a convoy of government-backed Shia militia fighters near the city of Kirkuk, killing at least 27.<sup>47</sup>
2. Ninawa Governorate:
  - On February 20, the Iraqi oil ministry invited foreign companies and investors to “bid for the construction and operation” of a new oil refinery near the city of Mosul.<sup>48</sup>

### **Other Key Points:**

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the area of Laker Hamrin, Kirkuk, and Rutbah.<sup>49</sup>
- During the reporting period, the ban on international flights to the Kurdistan Regions’ Erbil and Suli airports, which has been ongoing since late September 2017, was extended another three months on February 28.
- On February 5, an Iraqi government spokesman stated that US forces had begun reducing the number of forces in Iraq.<sup>50</sup>

### **The main theaters of military operations during the reporting period in Libya were:**

1. Cyrenaica Governorate:
  - On February 1, residents of the now-deserted town of Tawergha reported being prevented from beginning a long-planned return to the area by Misratan armed groups who blocked the road.<sup>51</sup>
  - On February 3, Libyan soldiers clashed with suspected ISIS fighters near the Dhahra oilfield.<sup>52</sup>
  - On February 7, Libyan National Army (LNA) commander Mahmoud al-Werfalli turned himself in to military police. The ICC issued a warrant for al-Werfalli’s arrest in August 2017, following reports of summary executions. In January 2018, al-Werfalli was suspected of summarily executing 10 people outside of a mosque in Benghazi (**ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0008 in January 2018 Monthly Report**).<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-oil/iraq-plans-military-operation-to-secure-oil-route-to-iran-security-sources-idUSKBN1FP1Q2>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-attack/islamic-state-kills-27-iraqi-militiamen-near-kirkuk-idUSKCN1G30YH>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-oil/iraq-invites-bids-for-construction-of-mosul-oil-refinery-ministry-idUSKCN1G419W>

<sup>49</sup> See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIS in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1448664](#), [1450759](#)

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-usa/u-s-forces-begin-reducing-numbers-in-iraq-iraqi-spokesman-idUSKBN1FP1CH>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-tawergha/residents-halted-from-returning-to-libyan-ghost-town-idUSKBN1FL6HQ> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-benghazi/east-libyan-groups-targeting-displaced-families-preventing-returns-hrw-idUSKBN1FL5XN>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/at-least-five-killed-in-clashes-near-libyan-oilfield-local-official-idUSKBN1FN0HJ>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/libyan-commander-wanted-by-icc-hands-himself-in-to-military-police-source-idUSKBN1FR28J>

## 2. Fezzan Governorate:

- On February 25, a Government of National Accord (GNA) military zone in the city of Sabha came under attack by “foreign armed groups.” According to the mayor of Sabha, the foreign fighters are Chadian, Sudanese and from other African countries who are loyal to the leader of the LNA, Khalifa Haftar.<sup>54</sup>
- On February 28, a medical official in Sabha reported that fighting between the LNA-affiliated Sixth Division and the Tebu ethnic group killed at least six civilians and wounded more. Sporadic fighting between the two groups has been ongoing since approximately February 4.<sup>55</sup>

### **Other significant political and military events during the reporting period:**

- On February 1, an explosion struck a tax office in the Turkish capital Ankara. The following day, Turkish authorities reported that they had detained eight people in connection with the attack. Another suspect was killed.<sup>56</sup>
- On February 5, Lebanese military forces raided a suspected Islamist militant hideout in the northern Lebanese city of Tripoli, resulting in the death of one soldier and one suspected militant.<sup>57</sup>
- On February 5, the Turkish government stated that it had detained 573 people for protesting and for posting social media messages critical of the ongoing Turkish military operation in Syria.<sup>58</sup>
- On February 21, Lebanese intelligence arrested a suspected former ISIS-financial official in the northern Lebanese city of Tripoli. According to a security source, the Syrian man was “responsible for collecting money” for ISIS in al-Bukamal (Abu Kamal). Pro-regime forces recaptured al-Bukamal in November 2017.<sup>59</sup>
- On February 25, Czech authorities arrested a former co-chair of the “main Syrian-Kurdish movement, the Democratic Union Party (PYD),” in Prague after Turkey issued a warrant for his arrest. Czech authorities later released Mr. Muslim on the condition that he would not leave the European Union and would report to court on request.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180226-libya-official-foreign-armed-groups-attack-military-area-in-sabha/>; <https://www.libyaobserver.ly/news/revealed-foreign-occupation-libyas-main-southern-city-sabha-mayor-discloses>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/civilians-killed-as-armed-groups-clash-in-libyan-south-idUSKCN1GC2T0>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-blast/blast-in-turkish-capital-was-bomb-eight-detained-governors-office-idUSKBN1FM29I>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-security/lebanese-soldier-militant-die-in-army-raid-statement-idUSKBN1FP0U1>

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-security/turkey-detains-nearly-600-for-opposing-syrian-offensive-idUSKBN1FP109>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-lebanon-islamic-state/lebanon-arrests-former-is-financial-official-operative-source-idUSKCN1G51C1>

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43212481>

## Incident Reports: Syria

### SHI 17-0212 UPDATE

**Report Date:** February 10, 2018

**Site Name:** Tekla (تكلا)

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing

**Location:** Jebel Semaan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Tekla, one of the Byzantine Dead Cities, has not been formally excavated. However, identified buildings at the site include the remains of several villas, olive presses, cisterns and stables. A basilica-style church at the site was built in the mid-5th century CE and expanded in the 6th century. Though only the western wall of the church still stands, the remains of reliquaries and sarcophagi can be seen within.<sup>61</sup>

**Site Date:** ca. 5th–8th century CE

**Incident Summary:** Military construction encroached on the archaeological site of Tekla.

**Incident Source and Description:** On November 19, 2017 SMART News Agency reported that Turkish forces had established an outpost in Aleppo Governorate at the village of Deir Semaan.<sup>62</sup> A video published by al-Dahar al-Shamiya on October 24, 2017 purportedly shows the construction of the Turkish military outpost near Deir Semaan.<sup>63</sup> In the video, heavy machinery is seen being used on or near the western facade of a church at the Byzantine site of Tekla, located approximately one kilometer east of Deir Semaan.

As seen in DigitalGlobe satellite imagery, the Turkish outpost's initial construction began between September 29, 2017 and November 9, 2017 and is located directly west of the archaeological site of Tekla. Between November 9, 2017 and January 22, 2018 there was significant bulldozing along the modern road near the site, damaging the western features of the archaeological area. There is visible construction and activity on the base in the most recently available imagery from February 10, 2018. Recent construction appears to have affected an ancient olive press, as well as several unidentified ancient structures along the western edge of the site.

For more information on military construction at Tekla, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0212** in **November 2017 Monthly Report**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0037**, **SHI 18-0042**, and **SHI 17-0058**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: construction, earthworks/roadwork.

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<sup>61</sup> Tchalenko 1958: 200–4.

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYloOgvP-d0>

<sup>63</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBdafxg\\_8gc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBdafxg_8gc)

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Tekla, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

al-Dahar al-Shamiya: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBdafxg\\_8gc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBdafxg_8gc)

SMART News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYloOgvP-d0>

Scholarly:

G. Tchalenko (1958) *Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord: le massif du Bélus à l'époque romaine*. Vol. I. Paris: P. Geuthner. 200–4.



The location of Tekla is shown within the red rectangle, prior to damage from a Turkish base (DigitalGlobe NextView License; September 29, 2017)



The construction of a Turkish base at Tekla is visible within the red rectangle. It is visibly encroaching upon the southwestern part of the site (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 9, 2017)



Red arrows indicate bulldozer scars that damaged the archaeological site of Tekla (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 10, 2018)

## SHI 18-0036 UPDATE

**Report Date:** February 22, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد العمري الكبير)

**Date of Incident:** January 31, 2018

**Location:** Kafr Amim, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** New video footage shows the extent of the damage to a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 31, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG helicopters dropped barrel bombs near al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque, damaging the building and its furniture.<sup>64</sup> New video footage published by Baladi News Network and Step News Agency show extensive damage to the interior and exterior of the mosque.<sup>65</sup> There is a great deal of debris in the interior from a large hole in the wall. A section of the exterior at the northwestern corner of the appears to have completely collapsed.

For more information on previous damage to al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque see, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036** in **ASOR CHI January 2018 Monthly Report**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0038, SHI 18-0039, SHI 18-0040, SHI 18-0044, SHI 18-0045, SHI 18-0046, SHI 18-0051, SHI 18-0052, and SHI 18-0055.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Baladi News Network: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uup8zrzlkwI>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/01/31/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-kafr-amim-village-idlib-s-uburbs-january-31/>

Step News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GeEuHFnARDE>

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<sup>64</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/01/31/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-kafr-amim-village-idlib-s-uburbs-january-31/>

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uup8zrzlkwI> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GeEuHFnARDE>



Damage to the interior of al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque (Baladi News Network; February 4, 2018)



Debris in the interior of al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque(Baladi News Network; February 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque (Baladi News Network; February 4, 2018)



Damage to the interior of al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque (STEP News Agency; February 4, 2018)



Damage to the exterior of al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque (Baladi News Network; February 4, 2018)



Damage to the exterior of al-Omari al-Kabir Mosque (Baladi News Network; February 4, 2018)

**SHI 18-0037**

**Report Date:** February 5, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque

**Date of Incident:** On or before January 29, 2018

**Location:** Anadan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** ca. 1965 CE

**Incident Summary:** A mosque collapsed due to previously sustained damage.

**Incident Source and Description:** According to SY 24, much of al-Kabir Mosque collapsed in late January 2018.<sup>66</sup> DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates this occurred on or before January 29, 2018. The collapse appears to be the result of damaged sustained in August and September 2016. Since the collapse, the debris has been removed from inside the intact exterior walls as visible in DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from February 10, 2018.

On August 14, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a Russian airstrike severely damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Anadan on August 13, 2016. A photograph accompanying the report shows that sections of the ceiling in the mosque had partially collapsed. On September 6, 2016 SNHR reported that alleged Russian airstrikes struck and severely damaged al-Kabir Mosque. The strike rendered the mosque inoperable.

For information on previous damage to al-Kabir Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0129** in **Weekly Report 105–106** and **SHI 16-0144** in **Weekly Report 109–110**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0212 UPDATE**, **SHI 18-0042**, and **SHI 17-0058**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike; Site management: clean-up.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Kabir Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SY 24: <https://www.sy-24.com/news/انهار-مسجد-أثرى-نتيجة-قصف-سابق-على-عند/>

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<sup>66</sup> <https://www.sy-24.com/news/انهار-مسجد-أثرى-نتيجة-قصف-سابق-على-عند/>



Al-Kabir Mosque with a red arrow indicating initial damage to the northwest corner (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 19, 2016)



Damage to several parts of al-Kabir mosque, each indicated by an arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; September 18, 2016)



Collapse of much of al-Kabir Mosque within the red rectangle (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 29, 2018)



Debris has been removed from within the interior of the standing walls, as indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 10, 2018)

**SHI 18-0038**

**Report Date:** February 2, 2018

**Site Name:** Bilal Mosque (جامع بلال)

**Date of Incident:** February 1, 2018

**Location:** Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A reported Russian airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 2, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a Russian warplane fired a missile at Bilal Mosque in Saraqib, severely damaging the mosque and rendering it inoperable.<sup>67</sup> A photograph accompanying the report shows that one wall of the mosque has been destroyed.

An analysis of DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates that between June 30, 2016 and December 8, 2016, the northern section of the roof of the mosque was damaged and partially collapsed, possibly due to an explosion or heavy shelling. Recently released DigitalGlobe imagery confirms that the mosque was further damaged between February 21, 2017 and February 7, 2018.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036 UPDATE, SHI 18-0039, SHI 18-0040, SHI 18-0044, SHI 18-0045, SHI 18-0046, SHI 18-0051, SHI 18-0052, and SHI 18-0055.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Bilal Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/02/russian-forces-shelled-bilal-mosque-saraqeb-city-idlib-suburbs-february-1/>

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<sup>67</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/02/russian-forces-shelled-bilal-mosque-saraqeb-city-idlib-suburbs-february-1/>



Severe damage to Bilal Mosque, with collapse of wall visible (SNHR; February 2, 2018)



Bilal Mosque (shown within red rectangle) with visible damage, particularly to the northern section of the roof (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 21, 2017)



Increased damage to the central and southern portions of the roof of Bilal Mosque as indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 7, 2018)

**SHI 18-0039**

**Report Date:** February 3, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Sarouji Mosque (مسجد السروجي)

**Date of Incident:** February 2, 2018

**Location:** Ma'arat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A reported IED damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 3, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that an IED exploded near al-Sarouji Mosque in Ma'arat al-Numan, causing moderate damage to the building.<sup>68</sup> No group took responsibility for the attack. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

Ma'arat al-Numan is currently controlled by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). In June 2017, HTS militants allegedly detained locals in al-Sarouji Mosque to prevent them from joining protests against the group.<sup>69</sup>

Al-Sarouji Mosque has been damaged on at least one prior occasion. Video footage published in November 2012 shows damage to the mosque's minaret, as well as to the surrounding area.<sup>70</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036 UPDATE, SHI 18-0038, SHI 18-0040, SHI 18-0044, SHI 18-0045, SHI 18-0046, SHI 18-0051, SHI 18-0052, and SHI 18-0055.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Sarouji Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Enab Baladi: <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/154863>

Revolution of Maara al-Numan: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DbUs4pYi\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DbUs4pYi_w)

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<sup>68</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/03/explosion-ied-near-al-srouji-mosque-maaret-al-numan-city-idlib-governorate-february-2/>

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/154863>

<sup>70</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DbUs4pYi\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DbUs4pYi_w)

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/03/explosion-ied-near-al-srouji-mosque-maaret-al-numan-city-idlib-governorate-february-2/>



A video still shows damage to al-Sarouji Mosque's minaret (Revolution of Maara al-Numan; November 17, 2012)

**SHI 18-0040**

**Report Date:** February 4, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد الكبير)

**Date of Incident:** February 2–3, 2018

**Location:** al-Ghadafa, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrikes damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 2, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG helicopters dropped barrel bombs near al-Kabir Mosque in the village of al-Ghadafa, damaging the building and its furniture.<sup>71</sup> A photograph accompanying the report shows debris and glass from broken windows in the interior of the mosque. On February 3, 2018 SNHR reported that al-Kabir Mosque was damaged again when it was struck by a missile fired from a SARG warplane.<sup>72</sup> A photograph shows a large hole in the mosque's ceiling.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036 UPDATE, SHI 18-0038, SHI 18-0039, SHI 18-0044, SHI 18-0045, SHI 18-0046, SHI 18-0051, SHI 18-0052, and SHI 18-0055.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Kabir Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

February 2, 2018: <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/02/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-al-ghadafa-village-idlib-suburbs-february-2/>

February 3, 2018: <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/03/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-al-ghadafa-village-idlib-suburbs-second-day-row-february-3/>

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<sup>71</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/02/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-al-ghadafa-village-idlib-suburbs-february-2/>

<sup>72</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/03/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-al-ghadafa-village-idlib-suburbs-second-day-row-february-3/>



Debris in the interior of al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; February 2, 2018)



A large hole in the roof of al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; February 3, 2018)

**SHI 18-0041**

**Report Date:** February 5, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque

**Date of Incident:** February 4–5, 2018

**Location:** Misraba, Rif Dimashq, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A SARG airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 5, 2018 Msraba Coordinating reported that an airstrike had damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Misraba during the previous night.<sup>73</sup> The group reported that this was the third time that the mosque had been targeted. Photographs show that the interior of the mosque has been heavily damaged, with furniture and debris strewn across the floor. The exterior of the mosque also shows signs of damage characteristic of shrapnel around the main entrance to the building and on the lower portion of the minaret. Recent DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from February 6, 2018 shows the debris in the area near the minaret due to damage to buildings across the street.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0047, SHI 18-0048, SHI 18-0049, SHI 18-0050, SHI 18-0053, SHI 18-0056, SHI 18-0057, SHI 18-0058, and SHI 18-0060.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives – barrel bomb.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Kabir Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Msraba Coordinating:

<https://www.facebook.com/MSRAABA1/photos/pcb.1779480725435318/1779444815438909/>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/05/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-misraba-town-damascus-suburbs-february-5/>

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<sup>73</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/MSRAABA1/photos/pcb.1779480725435318/1779444815438909/>



The entrance to al-Kabir Mosque, seen from the east (Msraba Coordinating; February 5, 2018)

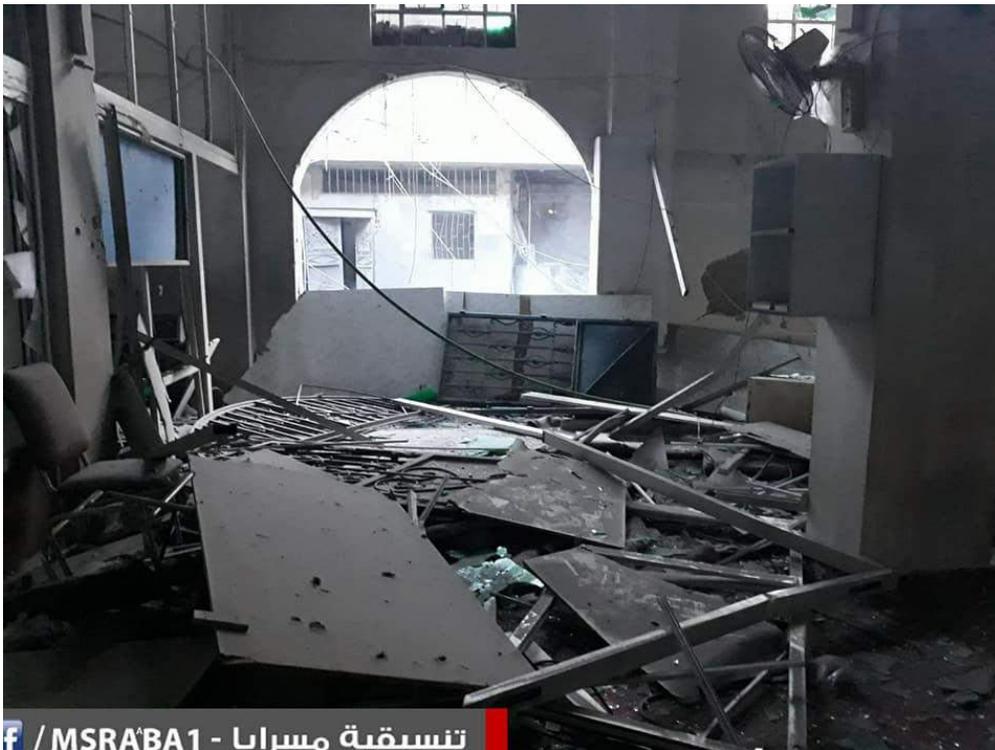


The street along the eastern side of the mosque, seen from the south (Msraba Coordinating; February 5, 2018)



f /MSRABA1 - تنسيقية مسرابا

The interior of the mosque, seen from the northwest (Msraba Coordinating; February 5, 2018)



f /MSRABA1 - تنسيقية مسرابا

The main entrance to the mosque, seen from the west (Msraba Coordinating; February 5, 2018)



f /MSRABA1 - تنسيقية مسرابا

The street along the eastern side of the mosque, seen from the southwest (Msraba Coordinating; February 5, 2018)



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al-Kabir Mosque prior to recent damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 8, 2018)



al-Kabir Mosque with debris and damage to the adjacent building noted with red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 6, 2018)

**SHI 18-0042**

**Report Date:** February 7, 2018

**Site Name:** Martyr Seydo Cemetery

**Date of Incident:** February 5, 2018

**Location:** Kafr Safra, Afrin District, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Cemetery

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Turkish shelling damaged a cemetery.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 5, 2018 social media and news sources reported that Turkish shelling had damaged Martyr Seydo Cemetery in Kafr Safra.<sup>74</sup> Photographs show that at least one of the graves was damaged.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0212 UPDATE, SHI 18-0037, and SHI 17-0058.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Martyr Seydo Cemetery, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

ANF News: <https://anfenglish.com/rojava/turkish-army-attacks-a-cemetery-in-jindires-24754>

ANHA: <http://en.hawarnews.com/barbaric-shelling-and-strong-clashes-in-janders/>

Private Twitter Account=

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<sup>74</sup> Private Twitter Account; <https://anfenglish.com/rojava/turkish-army-attacks-a-cemetery-in-jindires-24754>; <http://en.hawarnews.com/barbaric-shelling-and-strong-clashes-in-janders/>



Damage to one of the graves in Martyr Seydo Cemetery (Private Twitter Account; February 5, 2018)



A view of damage to Martyr Seydo Cemetery (Private Twitter Account; February 5, 2018)

**SHI 18-0043**

**Report Date:** February 6, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Omari Mosque (جامع العمري)

**Date of Incident:** On or before February 6, 2018

**Location:** Deir ez-Zor, Deir ez-Zor Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A religious organization changed the name of a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 6, 2018 a Twitter account claimed that the Iranian-led Directorate of Endowments in Deir ez-Zor changed the name of al-Omari Mosque to al-Radwan Mosque after the completion of its restoration.<sup>75</sup> ASOR CHI has been unable to confirm this claim.

**Pattern:** Site management.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Omari Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Iranian\_Militia#Violations: [https://twitter.com/iranian\\_militia/status/961019199383654401](https://twitter.com/iranian_militia/status/961019199383654401)

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<sup>75</sup> [https://twitter.com/iranian\\_militia/status/961019199383654401](https://twitter.com/iranian_militia/status/961019199383654401)

**SHI 18-0044**

**Report Date:** February 6, 2018

**Site Name:** Osama bin Zaid Mosque (مسجد أسامة بن زيد)

**Date of Incident:** February 6, 2018

**Location:** al-Ghadafa, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported Russian shelling damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 6, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a Russian warplane fired a missile near Osama bin Zaid Mosque in the village of al-Ghadafa, partially destroying the mosque and its furniture.<sup>76</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036 UPDATE, SHI 18-0038, SHI 18-0039, SHI 18-0040, SHI 18-0045, SHI 18-0046, SHI 18-0051, SHI 18-0052, and SHI 18-0055.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Osama bin Zaid Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/06/russian-forces-shelled-osama-bin-zaid-mosque-al-ghadafa-village-idlib-suburbs-february-6/>

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<sup>76</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/06/russian-forces-shelled-osama-bin-zaid-mosque-al-ghadafa-village-idlib-suburbs-february-6/>



Debris in the interior of Osama bin Zaid Mosque (SNHR; February 6, 2018)

**SHI 18-0045**

**Report Date:** February 7, 2018

**Site Name:** Salamin Village Mosque

**Date of Incident:** Between January 29–February 7, 2018

**Location:** Salamin, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Heavy shelling damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** Recently released DigitalGlobe imagery, show damage to the southern section of an unnamed mosque in the village of Salamin, Idlib Governorate. Damage occurred between January 29, 2018 and February 7, 2018 and is likely the result of heavy shelling.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036 UPDATE, SHI 18-0038, SHI 18-0039, SHI 18-0040, SHI 18-0044, SHI 18-0046, SHI 18-0051, SHI 18-0052, and SHI 18-0055.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Salamin Village Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.



The Salamin Village Mosque prior to any visible damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; October 23, 2017)



Visible damage to the southern facade of the Salamin Village Mosque as a result of heavy shelling, indicated by a red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 7, 2018)

**SHI 18-0046****Report Date:** February 7, 2018**Site Name:** Tell Sheikh Mansour (تل شيخ منصور)**Date of Incident:** Ongoing**Location:** Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Tell Sheikh Mansour is an unexcavated hill in Idlib Governorate. It was the location of a small Muslim shrine dedicated to Sheikh Mansour.**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** Satellite imagery indicates damage to a tell in Idlib Governorate.**Incident Source and Description:** DigitalGlobe satellite imagery has provided evidence that Tell Sheikh Mansour was militarized between December 17, 2017 and February 7, 2018. As seen in the satellite imagery, there is visible military trenching and earthworks construction on top of the mound. Additionally, along the northeastern edge of the mound, there is visible digging and soil piles.

Imagery from March 4, 2012 and August 17, 2012 indicates that a shrine located on the tell and dedicated to Sheikh Mansour, an Islamic saint, was destroyed. Illegal excavations are also visible in an image from March 4, 2012. Illegal excavations at the site were previously reported by the DGAM in 2012 and 2014.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036 UPDATE, SHI 18-0038, SHI 18-0039, SHI 18-0040, SHI 18-0044, SHI 18-0045, SHI 18-0051, SHI 18-0052, and SHI 18-0055.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: earthworks/roadwork, occupation/militarization; Illegal excavation.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Tell Sheikh Mansour, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:

## DGAM:

December 2, 2012: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=239&id=638>March 1, 2014: [http://dgam.gov.sy/archive/docs/File/damages\\_table\\_en.pdf](http://dgam.gov.sy/archive/docs/File/damages_table_en.pdf)Undated: <http://dgam.gov.sy/damages/eplace.php?placeid=633#>Zaiton Mag: <http://www.zaitonmag.com/?p=30404>



Tell Sheikh Mansour prior to the destruction of the Sheikh Mansour Shrine, shown within the red box. Illegal excavation pits are indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 4, 2012)



The destroyed Sheikh Mansour Shrine indicated by a red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; August 17, 2012)



Tell Sheikh Mansour prior to militarization. One new illegal excavation pit is indicated by a red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; December 17, 2017)



Trenches along northeastern edge of Tell Sheikh Mansour are indicated by red arrows, as well as visible substantial military earthworks on top of the site (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 7, 2018)

**SHI 18-0047**

**Report Date:** February 7, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque

**Date of Incident:** February 7, 2018

**Location:** Zamalka, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A SARG airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 7, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a SARG airstrike damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Zamalka.<sup>77</sup> A photograph of the mosque shows that many of the windows have been blown out and debris covers the mosque's floor. An area of plaster has fallen from the mosque's ceiling. It is unclear how much of this damage is attributable to the reported strike. Recent DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from March 1, 2018 shows the removal of auxiliary buildings on the mosque's western side since February 6, 2018 possibly due to damage.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0041, SHI 18-0048, SHI 18-0049, SHI 18-0050, SHI 18-0053, SHI 18-0056, SHI 18-0057, SHI 18-0058, and SHI 18-0060.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Kabir Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Damascus Media Center:

<https://www.facebook.com/Dmc.Press/photos/a.395806764138014.1073741829.392919311093426/519106691808020>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/07/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-zamalka-town-damascus-suburbs-february-7/>

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<sup>77</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/07/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-zamalka-town-damascus-suburbs-february-7/>; <https://www.facebook.com/Dmc.Press/photos/a.395806764138014.1073741829.392919311093426/519106691808020>



Debris and damaged windows in the interior of al-Kabir Mosque (Damascus Media Center; February 7, 2018)



al-Kabir Mosque prior to recent damage with auxiliary buildings noted with the red rectangle (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 6, 2018)



The auxiliary buildings removed (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 1, 2018)

**SHI 18-0048**

**Report Date:** February 8, 2018

**Site Name:** St. George Greek Orthodox Church (كنيسة القديس جارجيوس)

**Date of Incident:** February 8, 2018

**Location:** Irbeen, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Greek Orthodox Church

**Site Date:** 1873 CE<sup>78</sup>

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrikes damaged a church.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 8, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles on St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Irbeen, damaging the building and its furniture.<sup>79</sup> A photograph accompanying the report shows debris outside the entrance to the church, as well as broken windows on the church facade. DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from March 1, 2018 shows debris in the area outside the church due to the adjacent building being destroyed.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0041, SHI 18-0048, SHI 18-0049, SHI 18-0050, SHI 18-0053, SHI 18-0056, SHI 18-0057, SHI 18-0058, and SHI 18-0060.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of St. George Greek Orthodox Church, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Qenshrin: <http://qenshrin.com/church/church.php?id=189#.Wn3JgYnwbow>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/09/syrian-regime-forces-saint-gorgeous-orthodox-church-irbeen-city-damascus-suburbs-february-8/>

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<sup>78</sup> <http://qenshrin.com/church/church.php?id=189#.Wn3JgYnwbow>

<sup>79</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/09/syrian-regime-forces-saint-gorgeous-orthodox-church-irbeen-city-damascus-suburbs-february-8/>



Damage to exterior of St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Irbeen (SNHR; February 8, 2018)



St. George Church outlined in red (DigitalGlobe NextView License; December 3, 2017)



Debris in the area outside St. George Church and the adjacent building destroyed (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 1, 2018)

**SHI 18-0049**

**Report Date:** February 8, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Nur Mosque (مسجد النور)

**Date of Incident:** February 8, 2018

**Location:** Saqba (سقبا), Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG shelling damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 8, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes shelled al-Nur Mosque in Saqba, damaging the building and its furniture, and rendering it inoperable.<sup>80</sup> Photographs published by Damascus Media Center show debris and broken windows in the interior of the mosque, as well as a large hole in the mosque ceiling.<sup>81</sup> DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from March 1, 2018 confirms the damage to the roof.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0041, SHI 18-0047, SHI 18-0048, SHI 18-0050, SHI 18-0053, SHI 18-0056, SHI 18-0057, SHI 18-0058, and SHI 18-0060.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Nur Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Damascus Media Center: <https://www.facebook.com/Dmc.Press/posts/519519908433365>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/08/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-nour-mosque-saqba-city-damascus-suburbs-february-8/>

STEP News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNwBXpMUCwI>

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<sup>80</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/08/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-nour-mosque-saqba-city-damascus-suburbs-february-8/>

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Dmc.Press/posts/519519908433365>



Debris in the interior of al-Nur Mosque (Damascus Media Center; February 8, 2018)



Debris in the interior of al-Nur Mosque (Damascus Media Center; February 8, 2018)



Debris in the interior of al-Nur Mosque (Damascus Media Center; February 8, 2018)



Large hole in the ceiling of al-Nur Mosque (Damascus Media Center; February 8, 2018)



Al-Nur Mosque prior to recent damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 6, 2018)



A hole in the roof of al-Nur Mosque (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 1, 2018)

## SHI 18-0050

**Report Date:** February 9, 2018

**Site Name:** Ahmad bin Hanbal Mosque (مسجد أحمد بن حنبل; al-Kabir Mosque)

**Date of Incident:** February 8, 2018

**Location:** Jisreen, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG shelling damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 9, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes shelled Ahmad bin Hanbal Mosque, damaging the mosque and its furniture.<sup>82</sup> Baladi News Network published a video showing members of the White Helmets arriving on the scene to search for people wounded in the attack, which appears to have occurred in the road along the south side of the mosque and to have damage the mosque's facade.<sup>83</sup>

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that there was damage to the southern facade of the mosque between February 6, 2018 and March 1, 2018.

For more information on previous damage to Ahmad bin Hanbal Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0171** in **Weekly Report 119-120**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0041, SHI 18-0047, SHI 18-0048, SHI 18-0049, SHI 18-0053, SHI 18-0056, SHI 18-0057, SHI 18-0058, and SHI 18-0060**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Ahmad bin Hanbal Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Baladi News Network: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8TKfDDRSrU>

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<sup>82</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/09/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-ahmad-bin-hanbal-mosque-jisreen-town-damascus-suburbs-february-8/>

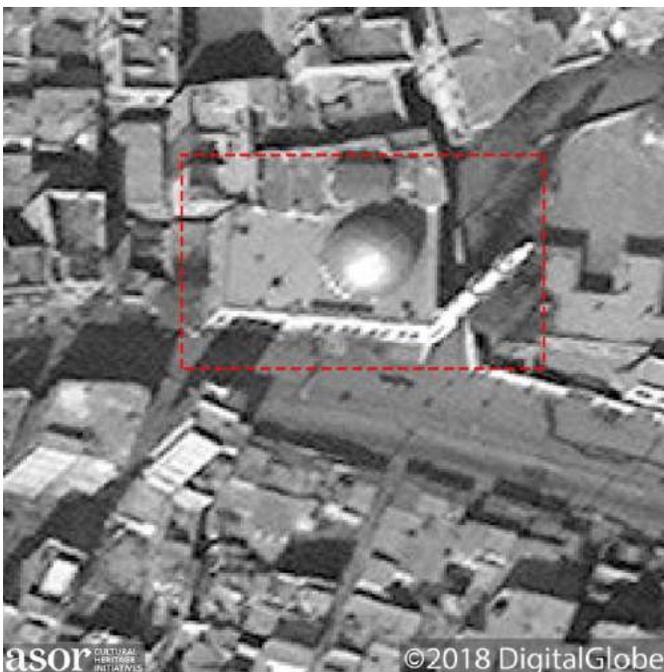
<sup>83</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezUQdOiot1I>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/09/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-ahmad-bin-hanbal-mosque-jisreen-town-damascus-suburbs-february-8/>



Video still of the south side of al-Kabir Mosque (Baladi News Network; February 8, 2018)



Ahmad bin Hanbal mosque, shown in red rectangle, prior to any damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 6, 2018)



Red arrow indicates scorched area on southern facade of mosque from explosion (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 1, 2018)

**SHI 18-0051****Report Date:** February 9, 2018**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد الكبي)**Date of Incident:** February 9, 2018**Location:** Hass, Idlib Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG shelling damaged a mosque.**Incident Source and Description:** On February 9, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles on al-Kabir Mosque in Hass, damaging the mosque's building and furniture.<sup>84</sup> No photographs of damage to the mosque were available at the time of publication.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036 UPDATE, SHI 18-0038, SHI 18-0039, SHI 18-0040, SHI 18-0044, SHI 18-0045, SHI 18-0046, SHI 18-0052, and SHI 18-0055.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Kabir Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.**Sources:**Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/09/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-hass-town-idlib-suburbs-february-9/>

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<sup>84</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/09/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-hass-town-idlib-suburbs-february-9/>

**SHI 18-0052**

**Report Date:** February 9, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque

**Date of Incident:** February 9, 2018

**Location:** Kafr Sajna (كفر سجنة), Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A reported SARG airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 9, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a SARG warplane fired a missile near al-Kabir Mosque in Kafr Sajna, partially damaging its building.<sup>85</sup> No photographs of the damage to the mosque were available at the time of publication.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036 UPDATE, SHI 18-0038, SHI 18-0039, SHI 18-0040, SHI 18-0044, SHI 18-0045, SHI 18-0046, SHI 18-0051, and SHI 18-0055.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Kabir Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/09/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-kafr-sajna-village-idlib-suburbs-february-9/>

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<sup>85</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/09/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-kafr-sajna-village-idlib-suburbs-february-9/>

**SHI 18-0053**

**Report Date:** February 9, 2018

**Site Name:** Hawa Mosque (مسجد حوا; al-Taqwa Mosque; مسجد الاتقياء)

**Date of Incident:** February 9, 2018

**Location:** Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A reported SARG airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 9, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles on Hawa Mosque in Duma, partially destroying the building, damaging its furniture, and rendering it inoperable.<sup>86</sup> No photographs of damage to the mosque were available at the time of publication. ASOR CHI was unable to corroborate the damage using DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from March 1, 2018.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0041, SHI 18-0047, SHI 18-0048, SHI 18-0049, SHI 18-0050, SHI 18-0056, SHI 18-0057, SHI 18-0058, and SHI 18-0060.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Hawa Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/09/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-hawa-mosque-douma-city-damascus-suburbs-february-9/>

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<sup>86</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/09/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-hawa-mosque-douma-city-damascus-suburbs-february-9/>

**SHI 18-0054**

**Report Date:** February 11, 2018

**Site Name:** Bint Hamid Agha Mosque (جامع بنت حميد أغا)

**Date of Incident:** Between January 29, 2018 to February 11, 2018

**Location:** Jalame (Celeme; جلمة), Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** 1958 CE<sup>87</sup>

**Incident Summary:** Reported Turkish shelling damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 11, 2018 Hawar News reported that Turkish shelling on the town of Jalame damaged a number of buildings, including the Bint Hamid Agha Mosque.<sup>88</sup> A video accompanying the report shows significant damage to the mosque ceiling.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Aleppo Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0212 UPDATE, SHI 18-0037, and SHI 17-0058.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Jalame mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

ATPA:

<http://desteya-shunwaran.com/ar/continued-targeting-of-heritage-sites-in-afrin-by-the-turkish-state/>

Hawar News: <http://en.hawarnews.com/how-does-jalama-town-survive-despite-fierce-attack/>

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<sup>87</sup> <http://en.hawarnews.com/how-does-jalama-town-survive-despite-fierce-attack/>

<sup>88</sup> <http://en.hawarnews.com/how-does-jalama-town-survive-despite-fierce-attack/>



Video still of partially destroyed Bint Hamid Agha Mosque (Hawar News; February 10, 2018)



Video still of partially destroyed Bint Hamid Agha Mosque (Hawar News; February 10, 2018)

**SHI 18-0055**

**Report Date:** February 17, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque (Abu Bakr al-Siddiq Mosque; جامع أبو بكر الصديق)

**Date of Incident:** February 17, 2018

**Location:** Hazano, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A reported Russian airstrike damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 17, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that suspected Russian warplanes fired a missile near al-Kabir Mosque in Hazano, damaging the mosque building and its furniture.<sup>89</sup> A photograph accompanying the report shows damage to the exterior of the mosque, including blown-out windows, damage to the mosque's facade, and a pile of rubble on the northern side of the mosque from damage to the stairs leading to the mosque entrance.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Idlib Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0036 UPDATE, SHI 18-0038, SHI 18-0039, SHI 18-0040, SHI 18-0044, SHI 18-0045, SHI 18-0046, SHI 18-0051, and SHI 18-0052.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Kabir Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/17/russian-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-hazano-village-idlib-suburbs-february-17/>

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<sup>89</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/17/russian-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-hazano-village-idlib-suburbs-february-17/>



A photograph of damage to al-Kabir Mosque, seen from the north (SNHR; February 17, 2018)

**SHI 18-0056**

**Report Date:** February 22, 2018

**Site Name:** Church of the Prophet Elias (كنيسة النبي الياس الغيور)

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

**Location:** Harasta, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Greek Orthodox church

**Site Date:** 1990 CE<sup>90</sup>

**Incident Summary:** Alleged SARG forces damaged a church.

**Incident Source and Description:** New video footage published by SMART News Agency shows damage to the Church of the Prophet Elias in Harasta.<sup>91</sup> According to Al Araby, SARG forces stationed in Harasta until early January looted the church and graves in nearby Christian cemetery, allegedly in the search for gold.<sup>92</sup> Video footage and photographs of the church show icons surrounding the altar have been destroyed or stolen, chandeliers have been damaged and windows have been blown out.

Damage to the church was first reported in late 2013. According to report by Deutsche Welle, mortar shelling damaged the church.<sup>93</sup>

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0041, SHI 18-0047, SHI 18-0048, SHI 18-0049, SHI 18-0050, SHI 18-0053, SHI 18-0057, SHI 18-0058, and SHI 18-0060.**

**Pattern:** Vandalism; Intentional Destruction; Illegal excavation; Theft.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Church of the Prophet Elias, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

AFP: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEEvFZSfmlg>

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<sup>90</sup> [http://www.albishara.net/media\\_b/kan\\_show/111/](http://www.albishara.net/media_b/kan_show/111/)

<sup>91</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkuowJADY5w>

<sup>92</sup> <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2018/2/27/christian-graves-desecrated-as-syrian-troops-loot-corpses>

<sup>93</sup> <http://www.dw.com/ar/سوريا-نيران-الحرب-تطال-دور-العبادة/a-17219201>

Al Araby:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2018/2/27/christian-graves-desecrated-as-syrian-troops-loot-corpses>

Al-Bishara: [http://www.albishara.net/media\\_b/kan\\_show/111/?nav\\_show=](http://www.albishara.net/media_b/kan_show/111/?nav_show=)

Deutsche Welle: <http://www.dw.com/ar/سوريا-نيران-الحرب-تطال-دور-العبادة/a-17219201>

SMART News Agency:

February 7, 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkuowJADY5w> ; <https://smartnews-agency.com/ar/album/264495/-قوات-النظام-تنش-قبور-مسيحين-بمدينة-حريستا-بحثا-عن-الذهب-52277>



Damage to the interior of Church of the Prophet Elias (SMART News Agency; February 2, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Church of the Prophet Elias (SMART News Agency; February 2, 2018)



Damage to the exterior of Church of the Prophet Elias (SMART News Agency; February 2, 2018)

**SHI 18-0057**

**Report Date:** February 22, 2018

**Site Name:** al-Nur Mosque (مسجد النور)

**Date of Incident:** February 21, 2018

**Location:** Eastern Ghouta, Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG barrel bombs severely damaged a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 22, 2018 Anadolu Agency reported that SARG warplanes dropped barrel bombs on al-Nur Mosque in Duma, severely damaging the building.<sup>94</sup> Video footage published by Barada Center shows that the mosque is partially destroyed.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0041, SHI 18-0047, SHI 18-0048, SHI 18-0049, SHI 18-0050, SHI 18-0053, SHI 18-0056, SHI 18-0057, and SHI 18-0060.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Nur Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Anadolu Agency:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/in-3-days-regime-attacks-kill-250-in-syrias-e-ghouta/1070695>

Barada Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fogql5VpR1k>

Daily Sabah:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/syrian-crisis/2018/02/23/pressure-mounts-on-assad-to-end-massacre-in-eastern-ghouta>

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<sup>94</sup> <http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/in-3-days-regime-attacks-kill-250-in-syrias-e-ghouta/1070695>



Video still showing the destruction of a section of al-Nur Mosque across from the mihrab (Barada Center; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing the destruction of a section of al-Nur Mosque (Barada Center; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing destruction and debris in al-Nur Mosque (Barada Center; February 21, 2018)



al-Nur Mosque prior to recent damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 6, 2018)



asor CULTURAL HERITAGE INITIATIVES © 2018 DigitalGlobe

al-Nur Mosque with visible damage to the roof (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 1, 2018)

**SHI 18-0058**

**Report Date:** February 24, 2018

**Site Name:** Duma Cultural Center

**Date of Incident:** February 23, 2018

**Location:** Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Located near a roundabout in the western half of Duma, the Duma Cultural Center consists of a large central building surrounded by an enclosure fence. Two towers at the northwestern and northeastern corners of the building imitate towers present in medieval fortress architecture.

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A SARG-Russian airstrike damaged a cultural center.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 23, 2018 reports appeared on social media that a SARG-Russian airstrike had damaged the cultural center in Duma.<sup>95</sup> The airstrike caused a large fire, which heavily damaged the building. Photographs show flames in the front half of the building and smoke pouring out of windows throughout the structure. Based on DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from March 1, 2018, there is significant structural damage to the southern part of the building. The roof of the center also has clear smoke damage. The building had been previously damaged between November 6, 2012 and October 23, 2013.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0041, SHI 18-0047, SHI 18-0048, SHI 18-0049, SHI 18-0050, SHI 18-0053, SHI 18-0056, SHI 18-0057, and SHI 18-0060.**

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Duma Cultural Center, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Qalaat al-Mudiq: <https://twitter.com/QalaatAlMudiq/status/967111200801738752>

Shehab News Agency:

<https://www.facebook.com/ShehabAgency.MainPage/photos/pcb.2345722425470164/2345713852137688/>

Private Twitter Account

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<sup>95</sup> <https://twitter.com/QalaatAlMudiq/status/967111200801738752>; <https://www.facebook.com/ShehabAgency.MainPage/photos/pcb.2345722425470164/2345713852137688/>; Private Twitter Account



The entrance to the Duma Cultural Center, seen from the north (Private Twitter Account; February 24, 2018)



The entrance to the Duma Cultural Center, seen from the northeast (Qalaat al-Mudiq; February 23, 2018)



The Duma Cultural Center, seen from the northwest (Qalaat al-Mudiq; February 23, 2018)



The Duma Cultural Center, seen from the southeast (Shehab News Agency; February 24, 2018)



Duma Cultural Center prior to most recent damage, with arrow noting previous damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 6, 2018)



Duma Cultural Center with visible smoke damage, structural damage, and debris along the exterior of the building (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 1 2018)

**SHI 18-0059**

**Report Date:** February 25, 2018

**Site Name:** Mzairib Mill

**Date of Incident:** February 25, 2018

**Location:** Mzairib, Daraa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Ottoman-era mill situated on a small lake west of the town of Mzairib.<sup>96</sup>

**Site Date:** 18th century CE

**Incident Summary:** Reported illegal excavation damaged a site.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 25, 2018 the DGAM reported that illegal excavations in Old Mzairib caused the collapse of an Ottoman-era mill.<sup>97</sup> Photographs accompanying the report show that the mill's southeastern and northwestern walls, along with most of the remaining roof, have collapsed.

Damage to the mill was previously reported in June 2014. The DGAM published photographs of moderate damage to the mill, including a large hole in the southwest corner of the roof.<sup>98</sup>

**Pattern:** Illegal excavation.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Mzairib Mill, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM:

June 22, 2014: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1280>

February 25, 2018: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2378>

ESyria:

<http://www.esyria.sy/edaraa/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=200812251210024>

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<sup>96</sup> <http://www.esyria.sy/edaraa/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=200812251210024>

<sup>97</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2378>

<sup>98</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1280>



Pre-damage view of the southeastern corner of the mill (DGAM; undated)



Pre-damage view of the northwestern wall of the mill (DGAM; undated)



View of collapsed interior of mill, facing north (DGAM; February 25, 2018)



View of the collapsed interior of the mill, facing north (DGAM; February 25, 2018)



View of the collapsed the mill, facing west (DGAM; February 25, 2018)



View of northwestern corner of collapsed mill (DGAM; February 25, 2018)

**SHI 18-0060****Report Date:** February 27, 2018**Site Name:** Umm Habiba Mosque (مسجد أم حبيبة; Abu Raj Mosque)**Date of Incident:** February 27, 2018**Location:** Duma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria**Site Description:** Mosque**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** A reported SARG airstrike damaged a mosque in Duma.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 27, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a SARG airstrike damaged Umm Habiba Mosque in Douma, severely damaging the mosque and its furniture.<sup>99</sup> Photographs published by Duma Revolution show the mosque has suffered severe damage, with a large section having collapsed.<sup>100</sup> Based on DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from March 1, 2018 a large hole has opened on the southwestern corner of the mosque approximately 10 meters by 5 meters in size.

For information on previous damage to Umm Habiba Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0189** in **Weekly Report 123-124**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Rif Dimashq Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0041, SHI 18-0047, SHI 18-0048, SHI 18-0049, SHI 18-0050, SHI 18-0053, SHI 18-0056, SHI 18-0057, and SHI 18-0058**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives - airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Umm Habiba Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**Online Reporting:

Duma Revolution:

February 27, 2018: <https://www.facebook.com/Douma.Revolution/posts/745525228991404> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEFsYvfkeCQ>SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/27/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-douma-city-damascus-suburbs-february-27/>

<sup>99</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/sites/news/2018/02/27/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-douma-city-damascus-suburbs-february-27/>

<sup>100</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Douma.Revolution/posts/745525228991404>



Debris in the interior of Umm Habiba Mosque (Duma Revolution; February 27, 2018)



Debris in the interior of Umm Habiba Mosque (Duma Revolution; February 27, 2018)



Pile of rubble from the collapse of a section of Umm Habiba Mosque (Duma Revolution; February 27, 2018)



Pile of rubble from the collapse of a section of Umm Habiba Mosque (Duma Revolution; February 27, 2018)



Partial collapse of Umm Habiba Mosque seen from the interior (Duma Revolution; February 27, 2018)



Partial collapse of Umm Habiba Mosque seen from the interior (Duma Revolution; February 27, 2018)



Umm Habiba Mosque prior to recent damage (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 6, 2018)



Umm Habiba Mosque with a large hole visible in the roof (DigitalGlobe NextView License; March 1, 2018)

## Incident Reports: Iraq

### IHI 15-0078 UPDATE

**Report Date:** February 28, 2018

**Site Name:** Bashtabia Palace (قلعة باشطابيا)

**Date of Incident:** February 21, 2018

**Location:** Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Bashtapia Palace, one of the seven castles within Mosul's city walls, was constructed in the 12th century CE.<sup>101</sup> It was rebuilt during the Ottoman era.<sup>102</sup>

**Site Date:** 12th century CE, extensive renovations in the 1750s.

**Incident Summary:** New video footage shows the condition of a site in Mosul.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 21, 2018 Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadaiyya published a video showing the current state of Bashtabia Palace in Mosul.<sup>103</sup> The video footage shows the site to be in good condition, though there is some debris and garbage scattered around the site. DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates there is also evidence of erosion on the hillside below the main part of the palace.

This new imagery contradicts reporting from April 2015, when the Iraqi Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and multiple news outlets posted reports indicating that ISIS militants had demolished the palace.<sup>104</sup>

For more information on previous reports of damage to Bashtapia Palace, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0087** in **Weekly Report 36**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Ninawa Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0047 UPDATE** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 18-0003**.

**Pattern:** Natural impacts; Vandalism.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Bashtapia Palace, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to natural impacts.

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<sup>101</sup> [http://www.mosulbaladiya.gov.iq/en/mosul\\_history.php](http://www.mosulbaladiya.gov.iq/en/mosul_history.php)

<sup>102</sup> [http://www.mosulbaladiya.gov.iq/en/mosul\\_history.php](http://www.mosulbaladiya.gov.iq/en/mosul_history.php)

<sup>103</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=beJRpzTVUJI>

<sup>104</sup> <http://www.mta.gov.iq/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=53> ; <http://rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/08042015> ; <http://en.alforatnews.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=17930>

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadaiya: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=beJRpzTVUJI>

Al Forat: <http://en.alforatnews.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=17930>

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities:

<http://www.mta.gov.iq/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=53>

Rudaw: <http://rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/08042015>

Scholarly:

Republic of Iraq Municipality of Mosul. 2018. "Mosul History" Retrieved from: [http://www.mosulbaladiya.gov.iq/en/mosul\\_history.php](http://www.mosulbaladiya.gov.iq/en/mosul_history.php) on February 23, 2018.



Video still showing garbage dumped at Bashtapia Palace (Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadaiya; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing garbage dumped at Bashtapia Palace (Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadayiya; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing remains of a tower at Bashtapia Palace, with possible evidence of erosion in the background (Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadayiya; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing remains of Bashtapia Palace walls (Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadaiya; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing remains of Bashtapia Palace walls (Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadaiya; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing remains of the Bashtapia Palace tower (Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadayiya; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing debris and evidence of erosion at Bashtapia Palace (Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadayiya; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing Bashtapia Palace walls (Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadayiya; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing Bashtapia Palace walls (Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadayiya; February 21, 2018)



Video still showing debris on the grounds of Bashtapia Palace (Channel al-Mawsiliat al-Fadaiya; February 21, 2018)

## IHI 17-0047 UPDATE

**Report Date:** February 3, 2018

**Site Name:** Mar Thomas Syrian Orthodox Church

**Date of Incident:** February 3, 2018

**Location:** al-Kharaj neighborhood, Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** The Mar Thomas Church complex includes the Syrian Archdiocese, a cemetery and a museum. It is thought to be one of the oldest churches in Mosul, and the oldest still in use today. It is said to have been built over the site of the house occupied by St. Thomas the Apostle during his visit to Mosul.<sup>105</sup> The exact time of the church's foundation is unknown, but it may pre-date 770 CE, when the Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdi is mentioned as listening to a grievance concerning the church on his trip to Mosul in that year. Its present structure suggests a 13th century style.<sup>106</sup>

**Site Date:** Founded 8th century CE; renovated 13th century; renovated and additions built 1965.

**Incident Summary:** New photographs show the condition of a church in Mosul.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 3, 2018 the Twitter account Mosul Eye published photographs of the Church of Mar Thomas in the Old City of Mosul.<sup>107</sup> According to Mosul Eye, ISIS militants turned the church into a warehouse and a hideout during the battle to liberate Mosul. Based on the photographs, no efforts have been made to restore or clean up the church since photographs were first published in July 2017.<sup>108</sup>

For more information on damage to the Church of Mar Thomas, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0047** in the **June 2017 Monthly Report**.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Ninawa Governorate: **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0078 UPDATE** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 18-0003**.

**Pattern:** Site management: tourism/visitor activity.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Mar Thomas Church, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions that have been subject to intense military activity.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Archnet: <https://archnet.org/sites/15599>

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<sup>105</sup> <https://archnet.org/sites/15599>

<sup>106</sup> Hamm, G., K. Dabrowska, T. Townsend-Greaves. 2015. 237.

<sup>107</sup> <https://twitter.com/MosulEye/status/959737951990272000>

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1060064/leglise-saint-thomas-la-miraculee-de-mossoul.html>

L'Orient du Jour: <https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/1060064/leglise-saint-thomas-la-miraculee-de-mossoul.html>

Mosul Eye: <https://twitter.com/MosulEye/status/959737951990272000>

Scholarly:

Hamm, G., K. Dabrowska, & T. Townsend-Greaves (2015) *Iraq: The ancient sites and Iraqi Kurdistan*. Bucks: Bradt.



Rubble in front of the altar of Mar Thomas Church (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Rubble in front of the altar of Mar Thomas Church (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



An intentionally damaged inscription in Mar Thomas Church (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Rubble in the interior of Mar Thomas Church (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Rubble in the interior of Mar Thomas Church (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Rubble in front of the entrance to Mar Thomas Church and damage from an explosive (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Rubble in front of the entrance to Mar Thomas Church (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Damaged gravestones in the cemetery associated with the Mar Thomas Church, facing southwest (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Damaged gravestones in the cemetery associated with the Mar Thomas Church, facing northwest (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Damaged gravestones in the cemetery associated with the Mar Thomas Church, facing west (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Rubble in interior of Mar Thomas Church (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Rubble in interior of Mar Thomas Church (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)



Damage to the entrance gate of Mar Thomas Church (Mosul Eye/Twitter; February 3, 2018)

**IHI 18-0003****Report Date:** February 23, 2018**Site Name:** Khan Hamu al-Qadu (خان حمو القدو)**Date of Incident:** February 11, 2018**Location:** Old City Mosul, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq**Site Description:** An Ottoman-era khan converted into a warehouse.**Site Date:** 1850s CE**Incident Summary:** Heavy machinery destroyed a khan during Mosul reconstruction.**Incident Source and Description:** On February 11, 2018 Monuments of Mosul in Danger shared a photograph published by a private Facebook account showing heavy machinery destroying the Khan Hamu al-Qudu in the Old City of Mosul. It was reported the khan survived the ISIS occupation and military operations, but was being bulldozed as part of a rebuilding campaign.

The condition of the khan following military operations to remove ISIS was previously unknown. The photograph shows fire damage and possible holes in the walls and roof. An ASOR CHI in-country source states that half of the khan was destroyed during the war, and the Mosque of Hamu al-Qadu was demolished by ISIS on March 6, 2015 (see [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0069](#) in [Weekly Report 31](#)). It is unclear who ordered the demolition of the remaining half of the khan.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Ninawa Governorate: [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0078 UPDATE](#) and [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0047](#).

**Pattern:** Development disturbances.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Khan Hamu al-Qadu, as well as the condition of other cultural sites located in regions subject to development.**Sources:**Online Reporting:

Private Facebook Account



Heavy machinery destroys Khan Hamu al-Qadu (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)

**IHI 18-0004**

**Report Date:** February 13, 2018

**Site Name:** Tell Huwaish

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

**Location:** Jirnaf, Salah ad Din Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Tell Huwaish has been tentatively identified as the ancient Assyrian administrative center of Ubashe.<sup>109</sup> According to David Oates:

“The site of Tell Huwaish...lies on a tongue of elevated land between the Tigris valley and the Wadi Jirnaf, overlooking the modern railway station of Jirnaf. It has no obvious citadel mound. A conglomerate bluff at the southern tip of the ridge may originally have served this purpose, but there seems to be no great accumulation of artificial debris on its summit, which is now heavily eroded. There is a considerable scatter of pottery, including post-assyrian types, on the slope of the bluff and on the low mounds on the undulating ground to the north. The most prominent feature of the site is the north wall, which runs across the neck of the promontory about 1 km from its southern end. This is still up to 8m high on the exterior face, with traces of a ditch. An opening near the middle of the wall seems to mark the site of a gate, and from this point the faint trace of an ancient road can be followed across country for some 18 km, running north-west in the direction of Tell Afar...Clearly, however an important north-west road has at some time gained the Tigris valley at Tell Huwaish, and the site itself was important enough to warrant the construction of an imposing rampart on the north, the only side without natural defences. Excavation would be necessary to determine when this took place.”<sup>110</sup>

**Site Date:** Neo-Assyrian to Post-Assyrian

**Incident Summary:** New photographs show illegal excavation at a site.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 11th, 2018 an ASOR CHI in-country source and Qais Rasheed, Deputy Minister and Head of the State Board Antiquities and Heritage, published photographs of the site of Tell Huwaish. The site has been damaged by erosion and illegal excavation. It is assumed that the excavations were performed under the direction of ISIS.

Based on the photographs, a large looting pit uncovered the tops of two walls and bricks. A possible arched tomb was opened and excavated. Photographs also show three smaller pits that seem to be older, as they bear evidence of erosion and have vegetation growing in them. Photographs also show the wall on the northern portion of the site as well as the possible gate, which have both been damaged by erosion.

**Pattern:** Illegal excavation; Natural impacts.

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<sup>109</sup> Oates, David 1968:62

<sup>110</sup> Oates, David 1968:59-60

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of Tell Huwaish, as well as the condition of other archaeological sites located in regions subject to illegal excavation and natural impacts.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Private Facebook Account

Scholarly:

Oates, David. 1968. *Studies in the Ancient History of Northern Iraq*. London: Oxford University Press.



The possible gate at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



The possible gate and north wall at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



The possible gate and north wall at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



Rubbish at the entrance of a tomb at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



Rubbish at the entrance of a tomb at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



Rubble inside a tomb at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



Side of a tunneled looting pit outside of a tomb at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



A tunneled looting pit outside of a tomb at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



A large looting pit showing the top of a wall with bricks in the rubble at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



A large looting pit showing the top of two walls with bricks in the rubble at Tell Huwaih (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



A large looting pit shows the top of two walls with bricks in the rubble at Tell Huwaih (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



A smaller looting pit with vegetation at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



A smaller looting pit with vegetation at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



A smaller looting pit or possible entrance to a rubbish-filled tunnel at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)



Assyrian artifacts on the ground at Tell Huwaish (Private Facebook Account; February 11, 2018)

## Incident Reports: Libya

LHI 18-0006

**Report Date:** February 26, 2018

**Site Name:** Mosque of Sheikh Amhamed Barakat al-Ansari ( مسجد الشيخ امحمد بركات الأنصاري (ابوعجيلة

**Date of Incident:** January 12, 2018

**Location:** al-Ajaylat (العجيلات), Tripolitania, Libya

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported armed extremists destroyed a mosque in Ajaylat.

**Incident Source and Description:** On January 14, 2018 Al Marsad reported that armed extremists used excavators and a crane to demolish sections of the Mosque of Sheikh Ahmed Barakat al-Ansari in Awjilat on January 12—ostensibly because of the presence of a tomb in the mosque.<sup>111</sup> Photographs show severe damage to several sections of the mosque, including one of its domes.

However, according to a local official, the tomb associated with the mosque had already been destroyed in 2012.<sup>112</sup> The remains were exhumed and reburied in an unknown location.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Tripolitania: **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0011** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0012**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: intentional destruction.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Mosque of Sheikh Ahmed Barakat al-Ansari, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Libya's Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mURLjZjBgbC>

Libya al-Mokhtar: <http://libyaalmokhtar.com/feature/هو-أكبر-ضريح-في-لسيا-هدم-ضريح-أبو-عجيل/>

Al Marsad: <https://almarsad.co/2018/01/14/بالفيديو-رئيس-شورى-وحكاماء-العجيلات-بك/>

<sup>111</sup> <https://almarsad.co/2018/01/14/بالفيديو-رئيس-شورى-وحكاماء-العجيلات-بك/>

<sup>112</sup> <http://libyaalmokhtar.com/feature/هو-أكبر-ضريح-في-لسيا-هدم-ضريح-أبو-عجيل/>



A video still shows a crane used to demolish the Mosque of Sheikh Ahmed Barakat al-Ansari (Twitter; January 21, 2018)



A video still shows a crane used to demolish the Mosque of Sheikh Ahmed Barakat al-Ansari (Twitter; January 21, 2018)



A video still shows a crane used to demolish the Mosque of Sheikh Ahmed Barakat al-Ansari (Twitter; January 21, 2018)



View of a severely damaged section of the Mosque of Sheikh Ahmed Barakat al-Ansari (Al Marsad; January 14, 2018)



View of rubble and empty tomb in the interior of Mosque of Sheikh Ahmed Barakat al-Ansari (Libya's Observer; January 12, 2018)



View of rubble and empty tomb in the interior of Mosque of Sheikh Ahmed Barakat al-Ansari (Libya's Observer; January 12, 2018)



View of a section of the damaged exterior of Mosque of Sheikh Ahmed Barakat al-Ansari (Libya's Observer; January 12, 2018)

**LHI 18-0007**

**Report Date:** February 9, 2018

**Site Name:** Saad bin Obadah Mosque (مسجد سعد بن عبادة)

**Date of Incident:** February 9, 2018

**Location:** Majouri neighborhood, Benghazi, Cyrenaica, Libya

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** An IED damaged a mosque in Benghazi.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 9, 2018 the Libya Observer and other news outlets reported that an IED of unknown origin exploded near the entrance of Saad bin Obadah Mosque in Benghazi during Friday prayers.<sup>113</sup> Photographs accompanying the report show significant damage to the interior of the mosque, including a large hole in the wall near the mosque's entrance. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Saad bin Obadah Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

I24 News:

<https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/middle-east/167283-180209-one-dead-62-wounded-in-mosque-attack-in-libya-s-benghazi>

Libya Observer: <https://www.libyaobserver.ly/news/ied-blast-rips-through-benghazi-mosque>

Reuters:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/bombing-at-mosque-in-libyas-benghazi-kills-two-wounds-75-medics-idUSKBN1FT1NX>

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<sup>113</sup> <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/middle-east/167283-180209-one-dead-62-wounded-in-mosque-attack-in-libya-s-benghazi> ; <https://www.libyaobserver.ly/news/ied-blast-rips-through-benghazi-mosque> ; <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/bombing-at-mosque-in-libyas-benghazi-kills-two-wounds-75-medics-idUSKBN1FT1NX>



Damage to the interior of Saad bin Obadah Mosque (The Libya Observer; February 9, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Saad bin Obadah Mosque (The Libya Observer; February 9, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Saad bin Obadah Mosque (The Libya Observer; February 9, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Saad bin Obadah Mosque (The Libya Observer; February 9, 2018)



Damage to the interior of Saad bin Obadah Mosque (The Libya Observer; February 9, 2018)

**LHI 18-0008**

**Report Date:** February 13, 2018

**Site Name:** Cyrene

**Date of Incident:** February 12, 2018

**Location:** Shahat, Cyrenaica, Libya

**Site Description:** These Roman-era strigils (bronze scraper implements used to remove dirt, residual sweat, and oil applied before bathing often found among grave goods) likely originate from the Cyrene necropolis and were recovered as part of illicit excavations in the rock-cut tombs.

**Site Date:** 7th century BCE–4th century CE

**Incident Summary:** An anonymous citizen returned three artifacts recovered in illicit excavations to the Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) office in Shahat.

**Incident Source and Description:** An anonymous citizen gave three strigils to Dr. Mohammed Mftah Fadil, a lecturer at the local University of Omar al-Mukhtar.<sup>114</sup> Fadil returned the strigilae to the DoA office in Shahat. While their precise provenance is unknown, they were likely recovered during illegal excavations that are ongoing in the necropolis of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Cyrene.

**Pattern:** Illegal excavation.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR-CHI will continue to monitor reports of looting in Libya, and encourage the efforts of DoA and university colleagues who conduct outreach campaigns that improve community relationships and occasionally result in the return of priceless artifacts.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DoA Shahat:

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1629849890438055&id=1252747658148282](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1629849890438055&id=1252747658148282)

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<sup>114</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1629849890438055&id=1252747658148282](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1629849890438055&id=1252747658148282)



Dr. Mohammed Mftah Fadil and Fadl Abd al Aziz, Controller of the Shahat Inspectorate of DoA, with the recovered artifacts (DoA Shahat; February 13, 2018)



A detailed view of the recovered strigils (DoA Shahat; February 13, 2018)



Another detailed view of the recovered strigils (DoA Shahat; February 13, 2018)

**LHI 18-0009**

**Report Date:** February 16, 2018

**Site Name:** Balagrae Necropolis

**Date of Incident:** February 16, 2018

**Location:** Si Abd al-Wahad, al-Bayda, Cyrenaica, Libya

**Site Date:** ca. 2nd century CE

**Incident Summary:** A landowner used heavy machinery to clear land for building, damaging an archaeological site.

**Incident Source and Description:** The al-Bayda Office of the Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) noticed that a landowner was clearing a zone that included an ancient fortified farm and a rock cut tomb, likely part of the Balagrae Necropolis, without permission. The DoA office notified the local civil authorities. The police responded to the site, where they found that heavy machinery was in operation in order to clear the site and wrote a report concerning the incident. The culpable party was arrested and brought into custody. The individual was later released to await trial and the imposition of a fine should he be found guilty.

See an associated incident report in this monthly report for another heritage site that was damaged in Cyrenaica: **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0013**.

**Pattern:** Development disturbances.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of urban encroachment at Balagrae, work to support DoA and other local authorities to document the damage and try to stop future damage from occurring.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DoA Shahat:

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1632660470156997&id=1252747658148282](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1632660470156997&id=1252747658148282)



View of one of the rock-cut tombs at Balagrae with debris from clearing on top (DoA Shahat; February 16, 2018)



Heavy machinery in operation at Balagrae to clear the site, with archaeological material (carved limestone blocks) evident in the debris pile (DoA Shahat; February 16, 2018)



Close-up of the debris pile containing archaeological material (carved limestone blocks and column drums) resulting from clearing operations at Balagrae (DoA Shahat; February 16, 2018)



The necropolis area prior to clearing (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 8, 2017)



The cleared area of the necropolis outlined in red (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 27, 2018)

**LHI 18-0010**

**Report Date:** February 17, 2018

**Site Name:** Justinian Wall

**Date of Incident:** February 17, 2018

**Location:** Tobruk, Cyrenaica, Libya

**Site Description:** This wall is one of the few remaining features of Fort Antipyrgon, built by the Byzantine Emperor Justinian to fortify the natural harbor at Tobruk.

**Site Date:** mid-6th century CE

**Incident Summary:** Members of the Tobruk office of the Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) repaired an ancient wall.

**Incident Source and Description:** According to Faraj Khalifa, a member of the DoA Tobruk office, a conservation team led by Khalifa Bu Shala undertook a pressing restoration campaign to restore a Justinian-era wall.<sup>115</sup> At a time when there is no dedicated budget on either a local or national level for conservation works, the team used their personal savings to repair sections of the wall that had partially collapsed and cleared debris from the base of the wall.

**Pattern:** Site management: reconstruction/clean-up.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR-CHI will continue to seek opportunities to support the activities of dedicated DoA colleagues who are well positioned to undertake urgent restoration campaigns around the country.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Faraj Khalifa: <https://www.facebook.com/marsalak/posts/1487022891423480>

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<sup>115</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/marsalak/posts/1487022891423480>



The Tobruk team works to stabilize a partially collapsed section of the Justinian wall (Faraj Khalifa/Facebook; February 17, 2018)



The Tobruk team cleans debris at a partially collapsed section of the Justinian wall (Faraj Khalifa/Facebook; February 17, 2018)



The Tobruk team works to stabilize a partially collapsed section of the Justinian wall (Faraj Khalifa/Facebook; February 17, 2018)

**LHI 18-0011****Report Date:** February 26, 2018**Site Name:** Tomb of Omar al-Faqi (ضريح عمر الفقي)**Date of Incident:** February 20, 2018**Location:** al-Wadi neighborhood, Sabratha, Tripolitania, Libya**Site Description:** Sufi Shrine**Site Date:** Unknown**Incident Summary:** Unknown perpetrators destroyed a shrine in Sabratha.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 20, 2018 the Facebook account Sabratah al-Fanar reported that the Tomb of Omar al-Faqi in Sabratha was demolished.<sup>116</sup> Photographs accompanying the post show an excavator being used to destroy the shrine. DigitalGlobe satellite imagery confirms that the tomb was destroyed between January 30, 2018 and February 23, 2018. Comments posted to this Facebook item expressed opinions that both supported and opposed this destruction.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Tripolitania: **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0006** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0012**.

**Pattern:** International Destruction.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Tomb of Omar al-Faqi, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intentional destruction.

**Sources:**Online Reporting:

Sabratah al-Fanar:

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=741135509412245&id=482302635295535](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=741135509412245&id=482302635295535)

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<sup>116</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=741135509412245&id=482302635295535](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=741135509412245&id=482302635295535)



An excavator is used to demolish the Tomb of Omar al-Faqi (Sabratah al-Fanar/Facebook; February 20, 2018)



An excavator is used to demolish the Tomb of Omar al-Faqi (Sabratah al-Fanar/Facebook; February 20, 2018)



The Tomb of Omar al-Faqi prior to its demolition (DigitalGlobe NextView License; January 30, 2018)



The Tomb of Omar al-Faqi is entirely destroyed by bulldozing, as indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 23, 2018)

**LHI 18-0012**

**Report Date:** February 26, 2018

**Site Name:** Tomb of Aisha bin Niran (ضريح عائشة بن نيران)

**Date of Incident:** February 6, 2018

**Location:** Wadi Jaref, Tripolitania, Libya

**Site Description:** Mausoleum of Aisha bin Niran, mother of the late ousted Libyan leader Muammar al-Gaddafi.

**Site Date:** 1978 CE

**Incident Summary:** Unknown armed extremists destroyed a mausoleum near Sirte.

**Incident Source and Description:** On February 6, 2018 Maratyah reported that unknown, armed perpetrators detonated explosives at the Tomb of Aisha bin Niran in the Wadi Jaref region.<sup>117</sup> The site was previously damaged in 2011, when the remains contained within the mausoleum were stolen.

See associated incident reports in this monthly report for other heritage sites that were damaged in Tripolitania: **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0006** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 17-0011**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the Tomb of Aisha bin Niran, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to intentional destruction.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

24 Media: <http://24.ae/article.aspx?ArticleId=418388>

Maratyah: <https://www.emaratyah.ae/837443.html>

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<sup>117</sup> <https://www.emaratyah.ae/837443.html>



Damage to the Tomb of Aisha bin Niran as a result of the explosion (24 Media; February 6, 2018)

**LHI 18-0013****Report Date:** February 28, 2018**Site Name:** al Hamamah**Date of Incident:** February 25, 2018**Location:** al Hamamah, Cyrenaica, Libya**Site Description:** This is a small archaeological site adjacent to the coast similar to a number of the Roman-era farmsteads documented in the Green Mountain region.**Site Date:** Roman, 1st century B.C.E.-2nd century C.E.**Incident Summary:** An archaeological site was damaged by urban encroachment.**Incident Source and Description:** On February 25, 2018 a concerned citizen contacted the director of the al Bayda office of the Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) explaining that a neighbor was damaging an archaeological site while clearing land to make way for a construction project. The director of the al Bayda office called the police in al Hamamah, who put a stop to the project. On February 28, the Inspector of DoA Shahat and the director of the Qasr Libya office of DoA visited the site. In their communication with local citizens, including the land owner, they learned that the project had started because the community wanted to take advantage of the presence of heavy machinery which had been dispatched to the area to pave a local road.

See an associated incident report in this monthly report for another heritage site that was damaged in Cyrenaica: **ASOR CHI Incident Report LHI 18-0019**.

**Pattern:** Development disturbance.**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of urban encroachment damaging archaeological sites and will seek ways to support the efforts of DoA employees and local authorities who work to stop this encroachment while maintaining a dialogue with local citizens.**Sources:**Online Reporting:

DoA Shahat:

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1645274188895625&id=1252747658148282](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1645274188895625&id=1252747658148282)



New track for heavy equipment to gain access to the site (DoA Shahat; February 28, 2018)



Debris from the land clearing operation adjacent to the archaeological site (DoA Shahat; February 28, 2018)



Portion of the Roman-era settlement remains intact (DoA Shahat; February 28, 2018)



A small dirt road approaching the archaeological site (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 8, 2017)



The increased dirt road cutting to the archaeological site (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 27, 2017)

**LHI 18-0014**

**Report Date:** February 28, 2018

**Site Name:** Sabratha

**Date of Incident:** February 28, 2018

**Location:** Sabratha, Tripolitania, Libya

**Site Description:** This carved marble column capital was recovered adjacent to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Sabratha.

**Site Date:** Phoenician/Roman/Byzantine, 5th century B.C.E.-5th century C.E.

**Incident Summary:** A carved capital was recovered by authorities and returned to the Sabratha office of the Department of Antiquities (DoA).

**Incident Source and Description:** In the course of their ongoing investigations, the Information Office of the Prevention of Organized Smuggling Department in Sabratha recovered this relatively crude column capital in the area of Tijan Sabratha adjacent to the UNESCO World Heritage site and returned it to the DoA office in Sabratha. The incident was reported by Abu Qasim Zouaghi, a member of DoA Sabratha via Facebook. The capital had likely been looted from the archaeological site of Sabratha.

**Pattern:** Illegal excavation.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR-CHI will continue to monitor reports of looting as well as work to encourage closer exchanges between DoA and

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Abu Qasim Zouaghi:

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1913883262256486&id=100009044920121](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1913883262256486&id=100009044920121)



A member of the Information Office with the recovered column capital (Abu Qasim Zouaghi, Feb. 28, 2018)



Close up of the recovered column capital (Abu Qasim Zouaghi, Feb. 28, 2018)

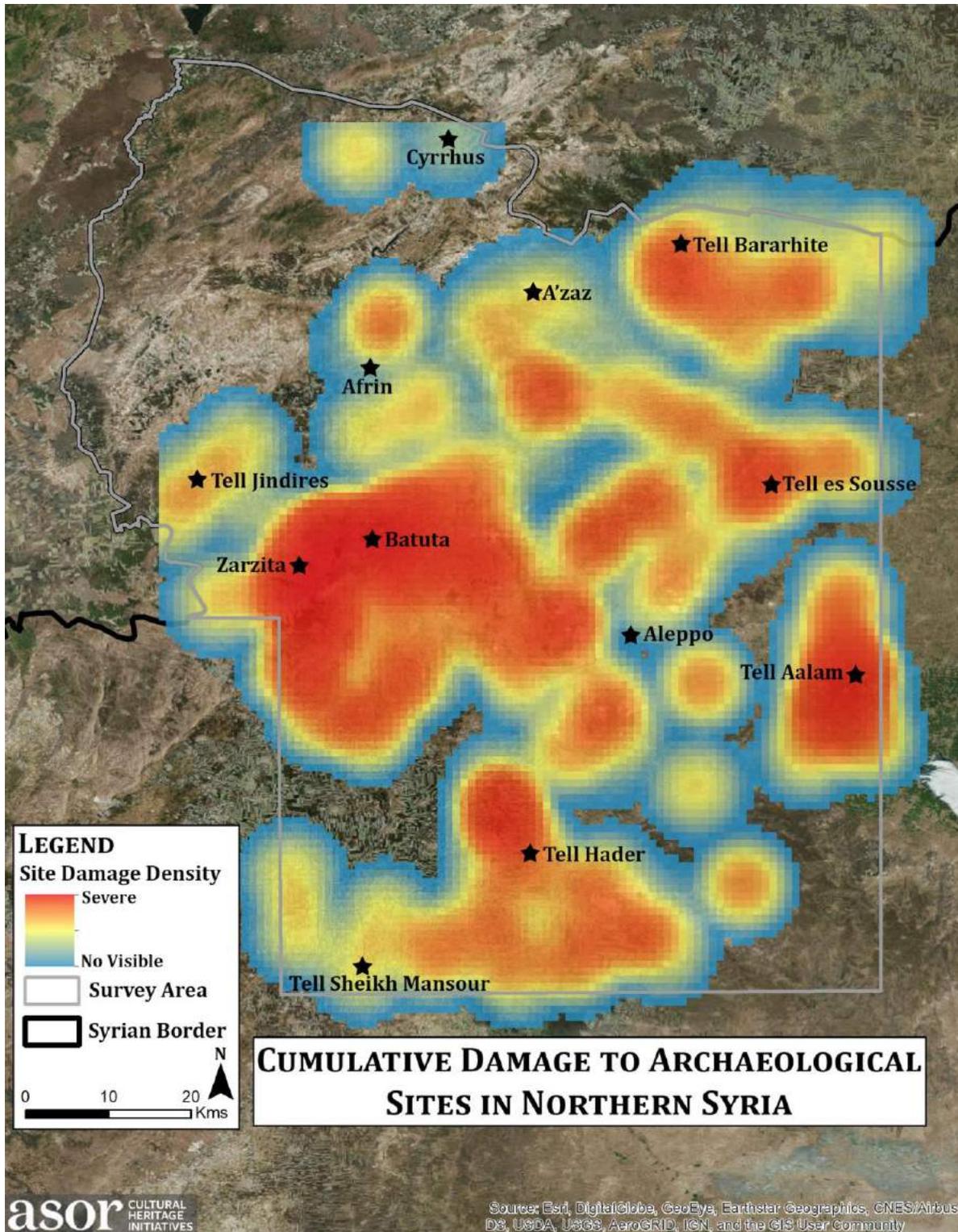
## Satellite Imagery and Geospatial Analysis

After the escalation in military operations in Northern Syria in late January 2018 and damage to Ain Dara Temple, the ASOR CHI Geospatial Team planned a survey to assess the state of the archaeological sites in the area. We hypothesized that due to the increase in military activity within the Afrin Canon, archaeological sites would be occupied as military outposts, with recent additions or new evidence of military occupation. We would measure this by identifying new damage from trenching, earthen embankments, and airstrikes. Our survey boundaries were set by the available DigitalGlobe satellite imagery postdating the start of this new military operation. We used the area of images primarily from February 7, 2018 and updated with additional images through February 23, 2018. Our remote survey included an assessment of all types of damage to 328 archaeological sites within an area of approximately 10,315 square kilometers. We did not assess sites within the city of Aleppo.

The results of our survey did not fit our hypothesis, with a total of 63 of the 328 sites (19%) having been militarized since the start of the conflict. 43 sites were militarized with earthworks, trenches, and military constructions prior to the DigitalGlobe image from March 9, 2016. Much of this damage occurred between June 9, 2013 and March 9, 2016; however, the available imagery did not allow for a more precise dating. Between March 9, 2016 and November 22, 2017, 11 sites were militarized while 14 sites showed additional militarization, e.g., new or expanded trenching or earthworks. Five sites showed continued militarization in February 2018 imagery, while 10 sites showed recent militarization since November 22, 2017. This recent militarization was likely in response to the start of military operations in the area. For example, the site of Tell Jindires was militarized between September 19, 2010 and March 17, 2016, when a wall with towers was built around the perimeter of the summit (See [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0168](#) in [Weekly Report 71-72](#)). This militarization of the site caused it to become a target for airstrikes, and it has been hit well over 25 times since January 29, 2018. Of the 63 sites noted with militarization, 10 have also been hit by airstrikes or shelled with large ammunition.

While the militarization of archaeological sites represents a smaller percentage of overall site damage than hypothesized in our sample, we also assessed other forms of damage. Of the 328 assessed archaeological sites, 30 showed severe damage, 103 had some damage, 66 had minor damage, 68 had no visible damage, and 61 were not located. The latter have possibly been built over by modern towns or were noted in ground survey but not visible in satellite imagery. Prominent forms of damage were from illegal excavations and the removal of archaeological materials for reuse. ASOR CHI noted a total of 71 sites (22%) with illegal excavations that have taken place since the start of the conflict in Syria. The scale of this damage varies, with 13 sites showing severe damage (60-100% damaged), 39 with some damage (10-60% damaged), and 19 with minor damage (1-10% damaged). In some cases, illegal excavation was accompanied by the reuse of ancient materials for modern construction, mostly occurring within the Dead Cities, such as Batuta. See [ASOR CHI Incident Reports SHI 14-0029](#) in [Weekly Report 6](#), [SHI 15-0162](#) in [Weekly Report 71-72](#), and [SHI 16-0160](#) in [Weekly Report 115-116](#) for more information on previously reported damage to Batuta.

During the course of the survey, ASOR CHI also identified 66 new archaeological sites within the survey area. These will be assessed for damage in the coming month. Many of these were not noted in previous surveys and ASOR CHI will work to locate more information about them. As the armed conflict continues in this area, ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to archaeological and historical sites in the area.



(ASOR CHI; Basemap Sources: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, USDA FSA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community)



Tell Jindires prior to militarization (DigitalGlobe NextView License; November 14, 2010)



Between September 19, 2010 and March 17, 2016 Tell Jindires was leveled using heavy machinery, a wall with towers was built around the perimeter of the summit, and an entrance was placed in the southwest corner, as indicated by red arrows (DigitalGlobe NextView License; July 4, 2017)



Between January 29, 2018 and February 5, 2018, the mound was targeted by over 20 airstrikes. Scorch marks were visible around some craters and there was an increase in bulldozing and military construction on the northern edge of the mound (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 6, 2018)



The number of airstrikes craters across the mound nearly doubled between February 6, 2018 and February 23, 2018. Additionally, military earthworks were constructed on the southwest edge of the site (DigitalGlobe NextView License; February 26, 2018)



The earliest available satellite imagery for Batuta, a Dead City, with a red arrow indicating minor damage from looting and the probable removal of stones for reuse (DigitalGlobe NextView License; September 19, 2010)



By September 18, 2016 the site was destroyed due to the removal of stones for re-use and a modern road was built east of the site, indicated by a red arrow (DigitalGlobe NextView License; September 18, 2016)

## SNHR Vital Facilities Report

On February 9, 2018 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) released a vital facilities report for January 2018. According to SNHR, there were 136 attacks against vital civilian facilities. The sites attacked include 11 mosques, a church and a museum.<sup>118</sup>

- On January 2, 2018 Russian warplanes reportedly fired missiles at Uwais al-Qarni Mosque in Maarat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate, severely damaging the mosque and rendering it out of commission. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0003**
- On January 2, 2018 Russian warplanes reportedly fired two missiles at al-Ma'ara Museum in Maarat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate, damaging the museum and some of its artifacts. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0002**
- On January 3, 2018 a Russian warplane reportedly fired a missile near al-Kabir Mosque in Tal al-Touqan, Idlib Governorate, partially destroying the mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0005**
- On January 6, 2018 SARG or Russian warplanes reportedly fired missiles at al-Tefahiya Village Mosque in Latakia Governorate, severely damaging the mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0008**
- On January 9, 2018 a rocket shell reportedly landed on Sayyida al-Nayyah Melkite Cathedral in the Bab Sharqi neighborhood of Damascus, moderately damaging the church building.
- On January 10, 2018 an IED reportedly exploded near al-Fateh Mosque in Manbij, Aleppo Governorate, damaging the mosque's facade. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0012**
- On January 12, 2018 Russian warplanes reportedly fired missiles at Aisha Um al-Mouminin Mosque in al-Hbit, Idlib Governorate, causing a fire that resulted in significant damage to the mosque and its contents. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0014**
- On January 17, 2018 SARG forces reportedly shelled al-Iman Mosque in Douma, Rif Dimashq Governorate, severely damaging the mosque and rendering it out of commission. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0021**
- On January 21, 2018 pro-regime militias reportedly attacked and looted Khalid ibn Walid Mosque in Buqrus Tahtani, Deir ez-Zor Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0027**
- On January 21, 2018 Russian warplanes reportedly carried out a "machine gun airstrike" on al-Huda Mosque in Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, destroying the mosque's minaret. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0022**
- On January 22, 2018 SARG warplanes reportedly fired a missile at al-Kabir Mosque in Arbin, Rif Dimashq Governorate, partially destroying the mosque and rendering it out of commission. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0023**
- On January 29, 2018 Russian warplanes reportedly fired missiles at al-Owda Mosque in Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, almost completely destroying the mosque and rendering it out of commission. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0034**
- On January 30, 2018 SARG warplanes reportedly fired a missile at Aisha Mosque in Saraqib, Idlib Governorate, damaging the mosque building and its furniture. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 18-0035**

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<sup>118</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/02/09/51567/>

## Heritage Timeline

- February 26, 2018 *The New Yorker* published an article titled “**The daring plan to save a religious minority from ISIS**” (by Jenn Krajeski). In August 2014, three Yazidi immigrants in the US worked remotely to stop the genocide of Yazidis on Mt. Sinjar by ISIS militants.  
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/02/26/the-daring-plan-to-save-a-religious-minority-from-isis>
- February 25, 2018 *Xinhua* published an article titled “**Libyan experts discuss inclusion of Libya's intangible cultural heritage into UNESCO.**” A number of Libyan experts discussed the challenges of Libya's ratification of UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage during a workshop in Tripoli.  
[http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-02/25/c\\_136997537.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-02/25/c_136997537.htm)
- February 24, 2018 *The Jerusalem Post* published an article titled “**Progress Made on Saving Prophet Nahum's Tomb in Iraq**” (by Seth J. Frantzman). A team from the Alliance for the Restoration of Cultural Heritage has been leading efforts to restore and save the tomb of the Prophet Nahum in al-Qosh, Ninawa Governorate.  
<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Progress-made-on-saving-Prophet-Nahums-tomb-in-Iraq-543500>
- February 23, 2018 *The Times of Israel* published an article titled “**US accused of allowing Libya to keep seized Jewish property**” (by Josefin Dolsten). Jewish activist groups argue that the Memorandum of Understanding between the US and Libya will “legitimize Tripoli's confiscation of objects belonging to exiled Jews.”  
<https://www.timesofisrael.com/us-accused-of-allowing-libya-to-keep-seized-jewish-property/>
- **IEEE Spectrum** published an article titled “**Ancient Sculptures Return to Mosul as Digitally Reconstructed Replicas**” (by Michael Dumiak). Two 3D-printed facsimiles of Assyrian lamassu sculptures housed in the British Museum will be displayed in Mosul.  
<https://spectrum.ieee.org/computing/software/ancient-sculptures-return-to-mosul-as-digitally-reconstructed-replicas>
- February 21, 2018 *The Times* published an article titled “**Scot leads effort to save Iraqi castle**” (by Jeremy Watson). Claudia Glatz, a senior lecturer in archaeology at the University of Glasgow, is leading the Qala Shirwana Cultural Heritage Project to help stabilise and restore the Shirwana Castle, a 200-year-old castle located in Kalar, Sulaymaniyah Governorate.  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/scot-leads-effort-to-save-iraqi-castle-0pbhdk9ss>

- *Religion News Service* published an article titled “**The Green family’s other collection**” (by David Van Biema). The owners of Hobby Lobby have an extensive, private collection stored in Oklahoma that the author argues must be examined for looted artifacts. <https://religionnews.com/2018/02/21/the-green-family-s-other-collection/>
  - *Al Wasat* published an article titled “الولايات المتحدة وليبيا توقعان مذكرة تفاهم لحماية الممتلكات الثقافية والأثرية الجمعة (The United States and Libya signed a Memorandum of Understanding to protect cultural and archaeological property on Friday).” The US and Libya have agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding to protect Libyan antiquities. <http://alwasat.ly/news/libya/197137>
- February 20, 2018
- The Financial Times* published an article titled “**Unesco head Audrey Azoulay on protecting culture in conflict zones**” (by Harriet Agnew). The Director-General of UNESCO discusses initiatives to rebuild the heritage and revitalise the educational and cultural institutions of Mosul. <https://www.ft.com/content/5cb123bc-1252-11e8-8cb6-b9ccc4c4dbbb>
- February 19, 2018
- NPR* published an article titled “**ISIS' Parting Gift To Its Former Capital: Thousands Of Explosive Booby Traps**” (by Tom Bowman). US and Syrian trainers at a village on the outskirts of Raqqa are teaching young men how to dismantle bombs left behind by ISIS militants. <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2018/02/19/586582610/isis-parting-gift-to-its-former-capital-thousands-of-explosive-booby-traps>
- February 18, 2018
- Live Science* published an article titled “**Beneath Biblical Prophet’s Tomb, An Archaeological Surprise**” (by Owen Jarus). Iraqi archaeologists have translated seven cuneiform inscriptions discovered in tunnels created by ISIS militants under the ruins of the Nabi Yunus Mosque in Mosul. <https://www.livescience.com/61798-biblical-prophet-tomb-iraq.html>
- *The Arab Weekly* published an article titled “**Baghdadi Museum of Folklore celebrates the old ways of Iraq**” (by Oumayma Omar). The Museum of Folklore showcases more than 80 scenes featuring 450 wax statues representing different rituals, folk crafts, trades, professions, local customs and street life in Iraq. The building was erected under Ottoman rule in 1869 and initially used as a publishing house, before being converted into a museum in 1970. <https://the arabweekly.com/baghdadi-museum-folklore-celebrates-old-ways-iraq>

- *Al Monitor* published an article titled “**Will Great Mosque of Samarra and its minaret survive?**” (by Adnan Abu Zeed) The minaret of the Great Mosque of Samarra is in dire need of restoration, and suffers from neglect, weather effects, vandalism and residual damage from a 2005 terrorist attack.  
<https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/02/samarra-mosque-reconstruction-unesco-world-heritage.html>
- February 17, 2018
- RT* published an article titled “**Old Town Tripoli: Can snapshots save Libya’s ancient sites?**” A discussion of photographer Hiba Shalabi’s campaign to document how lawlessness has resulted in the damage to the Old City of Tripoli. Shalabi has launched a social media campaign, #SaveTheOldCityTripoli, in order to promote the city’s cultural heritage.  
<https://www.rt.com/news/419109-libya-tripoli-culture-campaign/>
- *Iraqi News* published an article titled “**Iraq foils smuggling of USD13 mn antiquities smuggling to Turkey**” (by Mohamed Mostafa). The Iraqi Interior Ministry reported that authorities have prevented the smuggling of a cache of antiquities and other objects to Turkey, including jewelry that belonged to the wife of Saddam Hussein.  
<https://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/iraq-foils-smuggling-usd13-mn-antiquities-smuggling-turkey/>
- February 15, 2018
- Heritage for Peace** published its bi-weekly newsletter titled “**Damage to Syria’s Heritage – 15 February 2018.**”  
<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-15-february-2018/>
- February 14, 2018
- UNESCO** published a press release titled “**UNESCO launches flagship initiative to revive the spirit of Mosul.**” UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay announced the launch of a flagship initiative to “revive the spirit of Mosul” at the International Conference on the Reconstruction of Iraq, held in Kuwait City. The objective is to “coordinate international efforts” in this direction.  
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1783>
- *Reuters* published an article titled “**U.N. says bombs will litter Mosul for more than a decade**” (by Tom Miles). According to the U.N. Mine Action Service (UNMAS), it will take more than 10 years to completely clear western Mosul of explosives.  
<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-iraq-bombs/u-n-says-bombs-will-litter-mosul-for-more-than-a-decade-idUKKCN1FY2LP>

- *Anadolu Agency* published an article titled “**Antiquities smuggling ring broken up in Iraq's Nineveh**” (by Serhad Shakir and Mohamed Waleed). According to a Mosul police lieutenant, authorities arrested six people involved in stealing and smuggling rare Islamic antiquities and manuscripts in al-Karama neighborhood of Mosul.  
<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/antiquities-smuggling-ring-broken-up-in-iraqs-nineveh/1063256>

- **United Nations Iraq** published an article titled “**UN Secretary-General António Guterres launches the Iraq Recovery and Resilience Programme.**” The Recovery and Resilience Programme is designed to “fast-track the social dimensions of reconstruction and help ensure that people see tangible improvements in their daily lives at the start of the reconstruction process, rather than waiting years to benefit from large-scale infrastructure projects and structural reforms.”  
[http://www.uniraq.org/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=8564:un-secretary-general-antonio-guterres-launches-the-iraq-recovery-and-resilience-programme](http://www.uniraq.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=8564:un-secretary-general-antonio-guterres-launches-the-iraq-recovery-and-resilience-programme)

February 13, 2018

*The Washington Post* published an article titled “**Tillerson says investment in Iraq is critical to avoid Islamic State’s return**” (by Carol Morello). U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson urged governments and investors at a conference in Kuwait to help rebuild the country or risk seeing a return of the Islamic State.  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/tillerson-says-the-fight-against-the-islamic-state-is-far-from-over/2018/02/13/63876bfe-ea12-4cf9-83e2-ccde2dee07a4\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/tillerson-says-the-fight-against-the-islamic-state-is-far-from-over/2018/02/13/63876bfe-ea12-4cf9-83e2-ccde2dee07a4_story.html)

- *The New York Times* published an article titled “**Iraq Wants \$88 Billion for Rebuilding. Allies Offer a Fraction of That**” (by Margaret Coker & Gardiner Harris). While Iraq estimated that it would need \$88 billion to pay for reconstruction, it was expected to receive only \$4 billion in pledges at a conference in Kuwait, the majority of which will come from Arab donors in the Persian Gulf.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/13/world/middleeast/iraqi-donor-conference-abadi-tillerson.html>

February 12, 2018

**UNESCO** published an article titled “**UNESCO Prioritizes Education and Culture in the Reconstruction of Iraq.**” The Director-General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay, will carry out her first visit to the Arab Region from February 13–14 during the International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq in Kuwait. Participants at the Conference will “take stock of Iraq’s needs and help mobilize civil society, the private sector and all international players around the country’s reconstruction.”  
<https://en.unesco.org/news/unesco-prioritizes-education-and-culture-reconstruction-iraq>

- *Iraqi News* published an article titled “**Int’l NGOs pledge USD 330.1 million in support of Iraq at Kuwait conf.**” (by Mohammad Ebraheem). A number of NGOs have pledged a total of \$330 million in support of the humanitarian situation in Iraq during a conference in Kuwait. The conference was attended by around 70 regional and international humanitarian organizations, 25 Iraqi institutions and 15 Kuwaiti organizations.  
<https://www.iraqinews.com/features/intl-ngos-pledge-usd-330-1-million-in-support-of-iraq-at-kuwait-conf/>
  
- February 9, 2018 *Phys.org* published an article titled “**Riddles in time and space**” (by Ludwig Maximilian). Excavations at the site of Gird i-Shamlu, inhabited in the 3rd–2nd millennium, in the Shahrizor Plain of Iraqi Kurdistan are discussed.  
<https://phys.org/news/2018-02-riddles-space.html>
  
- February 8, 2018 *Reuters* published an article titled “**Exclusive: U.S. not planning to contribute money at Iraq reconstruction conference - officials**” (by Yara Bayoumy & Jonathan Landay). According to “U.S. and Western officials,” the US does not plan to contribute any money at a conference in Kuwait in mid-February to fund Iraq’s reconstruction drive after the war against ISIS.  
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iraq-conference-exclusive/exclusive-u-s-not-planning-to-contribute-money-at-iraq-reconstruction-conference-officials-idUSKBN1FS30L>
  
- The **European Parliament** published a briefing titled “**Regulating Imports of Cultural Goods.**” This briefing consists of a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament on the import of cultural goods entering the European Union from non-EU countries.  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/614697/EPRS\\_BRI\(2018\)614697\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/614697/EPRS_BRI(2018)614697_EN.pdf)
  
- February 7, 2018 *Rudaw* published an article titled “**Baghdad mayor has ambitious plans for her city.**” Baghdad Mayor Thikra Alwash hopes to revive the city’s infrastructure and heritage within the next 10 years.  
<http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/07022018>
  
- February 5, 2018 *The LA Times* published an article titled “**Beyond Aleppo's bustling market, the cost of Syria's brutal civil war becomes clear**” (by Nabih Bulos). Customers have returned to markets like Suq al-Zarb in Aleppo, but much of the Old City is still in ruins.  
<http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-aleppo-revival-20180205-story.html>

- *Libya News* published an article titled “مسؤول تونسي: تواطؤ أوروبي في تهريب الآثار من ليبيا (Tunisian Official: European Complicity In The Smuggling Of Antiquities From Libya).” The head of the National Heritage Institute in Tunisia alleges that Tunisia has long been a transit area for antiquities smuggled out of Algeria and Libya to Europe. He blames European countries for encouraging international looting networks.  
<https://www.libya-news.com/libya-news/60297>
- *The National* published an article titled “Can technology help restore Syria's lost archaeological heritage?” (by James Langton) The French company Art Graphique & Patrimoine uses digital scanners to produce 3D reconstructions of destroyed or damaged historic buildings.  
<https://www.thenational.ae/uae/heritage/can-technology-help-restore-syria-s-lost-archaeological-heritage-1.701863>
- February 3, 2018 *Al Bawaba* published an article titled “Two Suspects Arrested for Smuggling Relics from Syria into Lebanon.” Lebanese State Security arrested two people smuggling artifacts from Syria into Lebanon in a shipment of food.  
<https://www.albawaba.com/news/two-suspects-arrested-for-smuggling-relics-from-syria-to-lebanon--1083626>
- February 2, 2018 *Reuters* published an article titled “Ancient statues return to Lebanon as war on smuggling intensifies” (by Angus McDowall). Five ancient sculptures stolen during Lebanon’s civil war will go on display in Beirut after they were recently returned to Lebanon. The artifacts were spotted in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (where they were on loan from a private collector) by a curator who identified them using the Art Loss Register, an online database of stolen artifacts.  
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-lebanon-antiquities/ancient-statues-return-to-lebanon-as-war-on-smuggling-intensifies-idUSKBN1FM220>
- *Clovekvtisni* published an article titled “Czech people have contributed around half a million Czech crowns intended for the renovation of a war-devastated university library in Mosul, Iraq.” The charitable fundraiser Let’s Help the Library! is a joint project between the library of the Faculty of Arts at Charles University in the Czech Republic and the organization People in Need. The fundraiser, completed on January 31, 2018, raised about \$25,000 USD for the restoration of the Central Library of Mosul University.  
<https://www.clovekvtisni.cz/en/what-we-do/humanitarian-aid-and-development/iraq/czech-people-contributed-half-million-Czech-crowns-4898gp>

- **Taq Kasra** published an article titled “**BBC: World Premiere of Taq Kasra documentary in London**” (by Nader Soltanpour). A new documentary about Taq-i Kasra was screened in London. Director Pejman Akbarzadeh discussed the significance of the site.  
<http://www.taqkasra.com/2018/02/06/bbc-world-premiere-of-taq-kasra-documentary-in-london/>

- **Atlantic Council** published an article titled “**The Destruction and Looting of Idlib's Ancient Heritage by Extremists**” (by Saleem al-Omar). A new report claims Hayat Tahrir al-Sham has embarked on a campaign of illegal excavation in Idlib Governorate, including at sites like al-Bara and the churches of al-Qaniya, and that Sarmada has become a hub for the sale of looted antiquities.  
<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/syriasource/the-destruction-and-looting-of-idlib-s-ancient-heritage-by-extremists>

January 31, 2018

*Cosmos Magazine* published an article titled “**Ancient societies deliberately cultivated weeds**” (by Andrew Masterson). Research by a team of archaeologists and archaeo-botanists at the Takarkori rock shelter in southwest Libya provides the first evidence of sophisticated plant management in the Saharan region from 7500–3500 BCE.  
<https://cosmosmagazine.com/archaeology/ancient-societies-deliberately-cultivated-weeds>

January 24, 2018

**The Victoria & Albert Museum** published a podcast titled “**The Architectural Impact of cities: Social Cohesion and Crisis in Syria.**” Syrian architect and author of “The Battle for Home” Marwa al Sabouni is joined by Lyse Doucet, Chief International Correspondent for the BBC, to discuss her experiences living and working in Homs during the Syrian conflict.  
<https://soundcloud.com/vamuseum/cic-podcast-1-marwa-al-sabouni-and-lyse-doucet>