

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

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Michael D. Danti, Allison Cuneo, Susan Penacho, Amr Al-Azm,  
Bijan Rouhani, Marina Gabriel, Kyra Kaercher, Jamie O'Connell

## Executive Summary

DigitalGlobe satellite imagery revealed ongoing extensive development within the site of Nineveh. Since August 2015, ASOR CHI has monitored the construction of a large multi-lane road that bisects the archaeological site. The road appears to have been completed in June 2016 imagery, with an added irrigation trench passing underneath this new road. Furthermore, multiple new tunnels, likely for looting, are visible in the recent imagery. Some in-country sources have interpreted these tunnels as military in character and designed to facilitate ISIL's defense on the eastern frontlines. ASOR CHI will continue to investigate tunnel construction at Nineveh and other archaeological sites in Iraq and Syria.

Also in Iraq, ASOR CHI continues to investigate damage to cultural sites in Fallujah. This weekly report assesses the damage inflicted on the city while under ISIL occupation.

In Syria, opposition forces attempt to break the SARG-imposed siege in Aleppo, characterized by intense human suffering, heated combat, tunnel bombing, and airstrikes. The Aleppo Museum was once again struck during combat, while multiple mosques in Aleppo and nearby Manbij were also damaged. Multiple heritage sites were damaged during clashes in central Damascus, Idlib and Raqqa Governorates, and the city of Daraa. Notably, the Byzantine site of Shinsharah in Idlib Governorate was hit by an airstrike and seven mosques in city of Idlib were damaged by airstrikes. Additionally, an ISIL suicide bombing targeted a mosque in al-Hasakah Governorate.

## Key Points

- Construction of a multi-lane road and irrigation trench through a section of the ancient site of Nineveh in ISIL-occupied Mosul was completed in June 2016 (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0097 UPDATE**).
- New looting tunnels have been identified at the site of Nineveh using DigitalGlobe satellite imagery (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0010 UPDATE**).
- Iraqi Government airstrikes reportedly damaged several mosques in Fallujah, al-Anbar Governorate between 2014 and 2016, before the start of the campaign to retake the city from ISIL militants in May 2016 (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0024**).

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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.

- Iraqi Government airstrikes allegedly destroyed al-Habib Muhammad Mosque in Hit District, al-Anbar Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0025**).
- Local activist groups published new photographs of damage to al-Fatah Mosque in Manbij, Aleppo (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0104 UPDATE**).
- Local activist published new videos of damage to a cemetery and mosque in Kafr Hamra, Aleppo Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0108 UPDATE**).
- An ARA News article provided more details of the July 17-18, 2016 attack on Mar Sharbel Syrian Orthodox Church in the village of al-Witwitiyah, al-Hasakah Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0108 UPDATE**).
- A Russian airstrike allegedly damaged Musaib bin Umeer Mosque in al-Tabqa, Raqqa Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0111**).
- SARG and Russian airstrikes allegedly damaged seven mosques in the city of Idlib on July 22, 2016 (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0112**).
- A SARG helicopter allegedly dropped a barrel bomb on a mosque and rocket-propelled grenades damaged a second mosque in the city of Aleppo (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0113**).
- The DGAM reported severe damage to the entrance of the Aleppo Museum in the city of Aleppo (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0114**).
- A SARG airstrike allegedly damaged Aqil ibn Abi Talib Mosque in the suburbs of Damascus (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0115**).
- Mortar fire allegedly originating from opposition territory struck and damaged a restaurant located in an historic building in the Old City of Damascus (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0116**).
- Two ISIL suicide bombings damaged Qasemo Mosque in al-Qamishli, al-Hasakah Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0117**).
- A SARG airstrike allegedly damaged al-Sheikh Khalil Mosque in the city of Daraa (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0118**).
- SARG airstrikes reportedly hit the Byzantine site of Shinsharah in Idlib Governorate, causing unknown damage (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0119**).

## Heritage Timeline

August 1, 2016

*Voices* published an article titled “**Why protecting the world's cultural heritage concerns us all**” (by Stephen Stenning). Stephen Stenning of the British Council is interviewed regarding the importance of cultural heritage, including that of Syria and Iraq, and why the UK has decided to adopt the 1954 Hague Convention. <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/why-protecting-worlds-cultural-heritage-concerns-us-all>

July 31, 2016

**Syrian Press Center** published an article titled “**مسجدا تعرضا لـ 18 للقصف في المناطق المحررة خلال شهر تموز الفائت** (18 Mosques were bombed in liberated areas in the month of July),” which discusses the damage as a result of alleged Russian and SARG forces during July 2016 in Aleppo and Idlib Governorates. <https://syriancpc.com/18-مسجدا-تعرض-للقصف-في-المناطق-المحررة-خ-18/>

- July 30, 2016 *Rudaw* published an article titled “**US: In post-ISIS Iraq religious, ethnic minorities must feel safe and secure.**” At a conference in Washington, D.C. on July 30, 2016 US Deputy Secretary of State Anthony Blinken spoke about threats to religious and ethnic minorities under ISIL.  
<http://rudaw.net/english/world/30072016>
- July 29, 2016 **SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Al Sheikh Khalil Mosque in Al Yarmouk neighborhood in Daraa city in July 28.**” An airstrike severely damaged a mosque in Daraa. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0118.**  
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/29/government-forces-targeted-al-sheikh-khalil-mosque-al-yarmouk-neighborhood-daraa-city-july-28/>
- *RT* published an article titled “**Aleppo before & after: Shocking images underscore war devastation of ancient Syrian city.**” *RT* published before and after photos of several heavily damaged areas of Aleppo.  
<https://www.rt.com/viral/353894-aleppo-before-after-war/>
  - *Voice of America* published an article titled “**Online Archive Documents Destruction of Ancient Sites.**” This article discusses ASOR CHI’s use of Arches, a crowd-sharing system that uses satellite imagery, photographs, technical data, and eyewitness descriptions to monitor and record cultural heritage damage.  
<http://www.voanews.com/content/online-archive-documents-destruction-of-ancient-sites/3439799.html>
- July 28, 2016 *The International Affairs Review* at George Washington University published an article abstract titled “**ISIL and the Illicit Antiquities Trade**” (by John Pipkins). This article examines several aspects of the illegal antiquities trade including some of the primary drivers of the illicit trade, the most significant being licit actors such as museums, auction houses, and private collectors.  
<http://www.iar-gwu.org/content/isil-and-illicit-antiquities-trade-0>
- *BBC News* published an article titled “**Syria’s secret library**” (by Mike Thomson). An ad-hoc library has been created in the basement of a bombed-out building in the besieged Damascus suburb of Darayya.  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-36893303>
- July 27, 2016 *Orient News* published an article titled “**To the residents of Mars: Aleppo is Besieged**” (by Yasser Ashkar). The author derides a group of academics who attended a seminar on July 12, 2016 on documentation and reconstruction of archaeological and historical sites at the University of Aleppo.  
[http://www.orient-news.net/en/news\\_show/118705/0/To-the-residents-of-Mars-Aleppo-is-besieged](http://www.orient-news.net/en/news_show/118705/0/To-the-residents-of-Mars-Aleppo-is-besieged)

- *Syria Direct* published an article titled “**Mortars fall on Damascus Old City**” (by Mohammad Abdulsattar Ibrahim; trans. Jessica Page). Opposition shelling on Old Damascus is discussed.  
<http://syriadirect.org/news/mortars-fall-on-damascus-old-city/>
  - *Market of Mass Destruction* published a blog post titled “**Trafficking out of Syria**” (by Neil Brodie). The author argues that crime control policy and its practical implementation need to be more sensitive to the organization of the illegal trade of Syrian and Iraqi antiquities they are intending to prevent. For example, current efforts to disrupt the antiquities trade have been relatively unsuccessful in stopping the theft and sale of small items like coins.  
<http://www.marketmassdestruction.com/trafficking-out-of-syria/>
- July 25, 2016
- Al Monitor* published an article titled “**Iraq’s ancient city of Babylon eyes World Heritage list**” (by Adnan Abu Zeed). Hussein Fleih, Babylon’s director of antiquities, hopes to nominate Babylon as an addition to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2017.  
<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/07/babylon-unesco-iraq.html>
- *Elaph* published an article titled “الموصل بين الماضي والحاضر (Mosul between past and present)” (by Muayid Rashid). This article gives a short history of the city of Mosul, from ancient to modern times.  
<http://elaph.com/Web/opinion/2016/7/1100263.html>
- July 24, 2016
- DGAM** published an article titled “**New damage at the National Museum of Aleppo.**” Recent shelling damaged the entrance of the National Museum of Aleppo. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0114.**  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=2012>
- **Sketch For Syria** is a project launched by **Università Iuav di Venezia** in collaboration with **UN ESCWA**, the **National Agenda for the Future of Syria** and the **Aga Khan Award for Architecture**. The project is a global call to architects, artists and innovative thinkers to imagine postwar reconstruction in Syria.  
<http://sketchforsyria.iuav.it/>
- July 23, 2016
- BBC* published a video titled “**Baghdad’s oldest street a reminder of Iraq’s diversity**” (by Basheer Zaidi & Dina Demrdash). Rasheed Street, the oldest street in Baghdad, is celebrating its centenary.  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-36870792>

July 22, 2016

**SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Aqeel Mosque in Harasta city in Damascus suburbs in July 22.**” Alleged SARG airstrikes damaged a mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0115.**

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/22/government-forces-targeted-aqeel-mosque-harasta-city-damascus-suburbs-july-22/>

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**SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Al Hejaz Mosque in Idlib city in July 21.**” Alleged SARG airstrikes damaged a mosque in Idlib. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0112.**

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/22/government-forces-targeted-al-hejaz-mosque-idlib-city-july-21/>

June 21, 2016

*Reuters* published an article titled “**Russia says new materials needed to rebuild monuments in Syria's Palmyra**” (by Maria Tsvetkova). According to Russia’s Culture Ministry, the cella of the Temple of Bel and the Triumphal Arch at Palmyra are too damaged to reconstruct using original material and must be rebuilt using a significant amount of new material.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-palmyra-idUSKCN1012NU?il=0>

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*World Policy* published an article titled “**Cultural Rubble**” (by pJakob Sergei Weitz). “The Destruction of Memory,” a film by documentarian Tim Slade, was screened at the Anthology Film Archive in New York City. The film centers on the idea and practice of cultural genocide of the type committed by ISIL in Iraq and Syria.

<http://www.worldpolicy.org/blog/2016/07/21/cultural-rubble>

June 20, 2016

*Creative Review* published an article titled “**Should museums be recreating the past?**” (by Mark Sinclair). This article examines the debate over whether cultural heritage damaged or destroyed during conflict should be rebuilt or repaired.

<https://www.creativereview.co.uk/cr-blog/2016/july/should-museums-be-recreating-the-past/>

July 19, 2016

*Artsy* published an article titled “**This Organization Is Rescuing Artists and Scholars from Syria and Iraq**” (by Anna Wallace-Thompson). The Institute of International Education’s Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF) aims to enable Iraqi and Syrian refugee artists and scholars to continue their work, seeing them as key assets to the future rebuilding of their respective homelands.

<https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-this-organization-is-rescuing-artists-and-scholars-from-the-middle-east>

- United States Press Agency* published an article titled “**US Dept Preserves Cultural Heritage from Middle East Including Syria**” (by Rahma Sophia Rachdi). The U.S. Department of State is hosting fifteen officials from the Middle East and North Africa region as part of the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) to explore strategies that prevent the destruction, looting, and trafficking of cultural heritage.  
<http://www.uspa24.com/bericht-8663/us-dept-preserves-cultural-heritage-from-middle-east-including-syria.html>
- July 18, 2016

*Deutschland* published an article titled “**Syria’s cultural heritage.**” Friederike Fless, President of the **German Archaeological Institute (DAI)** is interviewed regarding the organization’s work in Syria. A new DAI project sponsored by the Archaeological Heritage Network entitled “Zero Hour – A future for the time after the crisis” aims to plan for possible reconstruction work in Syria and areas of Iraq that have been affected by ISIL destruction.  
<https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/culture/arts-architecture/syrias-cultural-heritage>
- July 16, 2016

*Business Recorder* published an article titled “**Saving Palmyra: Archaeologists contend with peril, politics, printers**” (by Jan Kuhlmann). This article discusses debates over restoration and reconstruction efforts at Palmyra.  
<http://www.brecorder.com/weekend-magazine/0:/65863:saving-palmyra-archaeologists-contend-with-peril-politics-printers/?date=2016-07-16>

## Military and Political Context

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

1. Aleppo Governorate:
  - During the reporting period the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) continued their offensive against the ISIL-held town of Manbij. As of July 31, the SDF controlled nearly 70 percent of the city.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/07/syrian-democratic-forces-kill-over-100-isis-jihadis-in-fresh-offensive/>; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/syria-war-isil-48-hours-leave-manbij-160721100242517.html>; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/led-air-strikes-kill-21-civilians-syria-160719045329897.html>; <http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/07/21/486931387/reports-dozens-of-civilians-killed-in-u-s-led-coalition-strike-in-syria>; <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2016/Jul-25/363894-us-backed-fighters-renew-offer-for-is-to-leave-syrian-town.ashx>; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/syria-clashes-manbij-isil-refuses-rebel-offer-160723034926368.html>; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-manbij-idUSKCN10B0TG>



- During the reporting period, SARG forces completed their encirclement of Aleppo city, effectively placing opposition-held areas under siege. In response, opposition forces launched a new offensive aimed at breaking through the southern lines of the city. Airstrikes and clashes have been extensive and constant throughout the city with opposition forces blowing up at least two tunnels near the old city. Residents of opposition-held neighborhoods began burning tires and other objects in an effort to create a smokescreen to protect themselves from aerial bombardments. Airstrikes by both SARG and suspected Russian forces have also damaged at least four hospitals in the city.<sup>3</sup>
- On July 25, airstrikes and SARG barrel bombings struck the opposition-held town of Atareb, killing at least 42 civilians.<sup>4</sup>
- On July 26, reported Russian airstrikes struck the town of Atareb, killing at least 12 people and damaging the main hospital.<sup>5</sup>
- On July 28, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu announced that four humanitarian corridors would be opened in the city of Aleppo. The first three corridors would be for fleeing civilians and ‘unarmed rebels’, and the fourth for ‘armed rebels’. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad also offered amnesty for any rebels who surrender within three months.<sup>6</sup>
- On July 28-29, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that two US-led coalition airstrikes on the village of al-Ghandour, near Manbij, killed at least 28 civilians.<sup>7</sup>
- On July 28, ISIL militants began an assault in areas northwest of Manbij, capturing several villages from the SDF.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> <http://en.eldorar.com/node/2790> ; <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2016/Jul-22/363413-aleppo-rebel-tunnel-blast-killed-38-government-forces-activists.ashx> ; <http://www.cnn.com/2016/08/02/middleeast/syria-aleppo/> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/air-strikes-pound-aleppo-eyes-syria-talks-160726132856836.html> ; <http://www.france24.com/en/20160726-syria-regime-advances-rebels-aleppo> ; <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-aleppo-idUKKCN1061AR> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36912718> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/07/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-june-29.html> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-july-22-29-2016> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36938258> ; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/01/syrian-rebels-launch-operation-to-break-aleppo-siege> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-aleppo-idUSKCN10B0ZU> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/08/aleppo-witnessing-increasing-tension-between-kurds-and-syrian-regime/> ; <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/c2baed6b2fec48cf8ff3dd0f092f8b9/syrian-media-say-9-killed-rebels-attack-divided-aleppo> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36961184> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-aleppo-idUSKCN10E26I>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2016/Jul-25/363841-airstrikes-rebel-fire-kill-19-in-syrias-aleppo-activists.ashx> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/syria-civil-war-air-raids-kill-civilians-aleppo-160725140914109.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://syrianobserver.com/EN/News/31394/Aleppo-Russian-Air-Strikes-Kill-People-Atareb/> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/air-strikes-pound-aleppo-eyes-syria-talks-160726132856836.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36912718> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/07/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-june-29.html> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-july-22-29-2016>

<sup>7</sup> <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/2c77da25685b4f8a8b830f826ec07cd3/syrian-activists-us-led-coalition-strikes-kill-28-civilians>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/syria-war-civilians-die-russia-plan-falters-160729052348064.html>

- On July 29, ISIL militants reportedly executed at least 24 civilians after capturing the village of Buyir, six miles northwest of Manbij from the SDF.<sup>10</sup>
  - On July 30, Syrian state media and the Russian military reported that dozens of families, constituting at least 169 civilians, had left the besieged opposition-held eastern areas of Aleppo. The report also claimed that some rebels had surrendered to SARG forces in the city.<sup>11</sup>
2. Idlib Governorate:
- On July 20-22, airstrikes targeted opposition-held areas across Idlib governorate including Idlib City, Maaret al-Numan, and Sarmada, causing dozens of casualties, including at least 76 victims in the city of Idlib.<sup>12</sup>
  - On August 1, unknown opposition forces shot down a Russian military helicopter in Idlib Governorate, killing five Russian soldiers. According to Russian officials, the helicopter was returning from delivering humanitarian aid to Aleppo.<sup>13</sup>
  - On August 2, airstrikes over the town of Saraqib reportedly dropped “containers of toxic gas” thought to be chlorine. The Syrian opposition group known as the Syrian National Coalition (SNC) accused SARG forces of carrying out the airstrikes.<sup>14</sup>
3. Homs Governorate:
- During the reporting period clashes continued between pro-regime forces and ISIL militants around Palmyra.<sup>15</sup>
  - During the reporting period, Russia allegedly increased its frequency of airstrikes over Homs Governorate.<sup>16</sup>
  - On July 25, the Syrian regime deployed “over 1,000 Iranian backed Iraqi and Afghan (Shia) militia fighters” to Palmyra in order to “reinforce the defenses of the city.” An additional news article on the matter stated that the forces would also attempt to secure the supply route between Damascus and Baghdad.<sup>17</sup>
4. Hasakah Governorate:
- On July 26, Kurdish and pro-regime forces clashed in the city of Hasakah.<sup>18</sup>
  - On July 27, an ISIL truck bomb and motorcycle packed with explosives detonated outside of a local Kurdish police center and government building, killing at least 50 people and wounding over 100 more.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.yahoo.com/news/executes-24-civilians-seizing-syria-village-092854674.html>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.yahoo.com/news/executes-24-civilians-seizing-syria-village-092854674.html>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36932694> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36934821> ; <http://www.cnn.com/2016/08/02/middleeast/syria-aleppo/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://en.eldorar.com/node/2778> ; <http://en.eldorar.com/node/2787> ; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=48441> ; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/21/victims-died-government-forces-shelling-idlib-city-july-21/> ; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/21/victims-died-government-forces-shelling-sarmada-city-idlib-governorate-july-21/> ; <http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/russian-strikes-kill-18-in-syria-s-idlib-local-sources/613516> ; <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/22/طيران-النظام-الحر-ي-يستهدف-المدنيين-ف/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36939137>

<sup>14</sup> <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-idlib-idUKKCN10D0NS> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36951783> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/08/syria-civil-war-chlorine-gas-dropped-idlib-town-160802083551947.html>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=48774>

<sup>16</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/07/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-june-29.html>

<sup>17</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/07/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-june-29.html> ; <http://www.all4syria.info/Archive/330715>

<sup>18</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/07/syrian-kurds-clash-pro-assad-troops-hasakah/> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-july-22-29-2016>

<sup>19</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/07/syrian-kurds-clash-pro-assad-troops-hasakah/> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-july-22-29-2016>



- On August 1, a motorcycle bombing killed at least 4 civilians in the town of Shaddadi. No group has yet taken responsibility for the attack.<sup>20</sup>
- 5. Damascus Governorate:
  - On July 24, a mortar attack struck a restaurant in the Damascus district of al-Bab, killing several people.<sup>21</sup>
  - On July 25, an opposition group known as the 'Damascus League for Special Operations' allegedly detonated a car bomb near a headquarters for Iranian-backed fighters in the district of Kafar Souseh, killing at least two people.<sup>22</sup>
- 6. Daraa Governorate:
  - On July 24, ISIL took responsibility for the assassination of Shaki Nabbut al-Rashwani, commander of the opposition group Homs al-Waleed, who died when an explosive attached to his car detonated in the al-Balad district of Daraa city.<sup>23</sup>
  - On July 27, Syrian activists reported that Al Nusra Front had withdrawn from the fight against ISIL-affiliate Jiash Khalid bin al-Waleed in Daraa Governorate.<sup>24</sup>
- 7. Rif Dimashq Governorate:
  - On July 21-22, pro-regime forces, including members of Hezbollah, captured the village of Hurayrah in Wadi Barada. Al Nusra Front reportedly executed 14 captive pro-regime fighters "in response to initial attempts [by pro-regime forces] to storm the village."<sup>25</sup>
- 8. Latakia Governorate:
  - During the reporting period, opposition and SARG forces clashed over control of the strategic village of Salma.<sup>26</sup>
- 9. Quneitra Governorate:
  - On July 20, two explosions struck the SARG-held town of Baath City, near the Golan Heights. The cause of the explosions were unknown with various officials pointing the blame at either Israeli airstrikes or opposition rocket fire.<sup>27</sup>

#### Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Abu Kamal, Ayn Isa, Deir ez Zor, Manbij, Mara, Palmyra, Raqqa, Rutbah, and Shaddadi.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36902604> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/syria-civilwar-50-killed-isil-attack-qamishli-160727092723452.html> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-july-22-29-2016>

<sup>20</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/08/explosion-hit-oil-rich-syrian-town-shaddadi-civilian-casualties-reported/>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2016/Jul-24/363740-dozens-injured-in-mortar-attack-near-restaurant-in-government-held-old-quarter-of-syrian-capital.ashx>

<sup>22</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-july-22-29-2016> ; <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=48770> ; <https://www.facebook.com/YomyatKzefeh/posts/920895961371206> ; <http://www.shaam.org/news/syria-news/مفخخة-تضرب-ب-المدرسة-الايروانية-في-دمشق-و-عصائب-دمشق-تؤكد-انفجار-سيارة-مفخخة-وسط-العاصمة-السورية-دمشق/32626.html> ; <http://qasioun.net/ar/news/show/32626/مقتل-العشرات-بينهم-ضباط>

<sup>23</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/07/islamic-state-claims-responsibility-assassination-syrian-rebel-leader/>

<sup>24</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-july-22-29-2016>

<sup>25</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-july-16-22-2016>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.newsdeeply.com/syria/articles/2016/07/28/forces-battle-over-strategic-coastal-town-of-salma>

<sup>27</sup> <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-syria-israel-idUKKCN100120>

<sup>28</sup> See: "US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq". *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [851606](#), [853003](#), [854149](#), [854238](#), [854467](#), [856938](#), [872651](#), [878278](#), [880210](#), [881179](#), [881251](#), [881701](#), [883041](#), [901235](#)

- During the reporting period, Russian forces allegedly conducted extensive airstrikes over Homs, Idlib, and Aleppo Governorate.<sup>29</sup>
- On July 23, the Syrian regime announced via the state agency SANA news that they were “ready to continue the Syrian-Syrian dialogue without any preconditions....and without foreign interference, with the support of the United Nations.”<sup>30</sup>
- On July 28, Syrian jihadist opposition group Al Nusra Front announced that it had split from al-Qaeda, changing its name to ‘Jabhat Fatah al Sham’. The group reportedly initiated the split in an attempt to change the US-led coalition policy to target Al Nusra Front.<sup>31</sup>

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

1. Ninawa Governorate:
  - On July 21, local activists in Mosul reported clashes at an ISIL training camp in Mosul between foreign and Iraqi members of the group.<sup>32</sup>
  - On July 22, the spokesman for the US-led coalition against ISIL Colonel Christopher Garver reported that Iraqi forces had cleared the town of Aswaja Gharbi.<sup>33</sup>
  - On July 24, local sources and activists reported that ISIL has relocated its Sharia Court, weapons storage facilities, security headquarters, and al-Hisba police headquarters from Mosul to Raqqa in an attempt to avoid airstrikes.<sup>34</sup>
  - On July 27, a small group of US troops assisted Iraqi forces in building a floating bridge across the Tigris River near Qayyarah that will assist in the upcoming campaign to capture Mosul.<sup>35</sup>
  - On August 1, US-led coalition airstrikes, including British RAF aircraft, struck the former palace of Saddam Hussein in Mosul, suspected of being a “major” ISIL headquarters and training center for foreign militants.<sup>36</sup>
2. Baghdad Governorate:
  - On July 24, an ISIL suicide bombing struck a security checkpoint to the entrance of the majority-Shia district of Kadhimiya, killing more than 20 people and wounding at least 25 more.<sup>37</sup>
  - On July 27, a suicide bomber targeted a police checkpoint in the majority-Shia neighborhood of Shula, killing six people and wounding at least 15 more. No group has yet to claim to responsibility for the attack.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>29</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/07/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-june-29.html>

<sup>30</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/07/syrian-regime-ready-fresh-peace-talks/> ; <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/2c77da25685b4f8a8b830f826ec07cd3/syrian-activists-us-led-coalition-strikes-kill-28-civilians>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36916606> ; <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/avoiding-al-qaedas-syria-trap-jabhat-al-nusras-rebranding> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-july-22-29-2016>

<sup>32</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/07/internal-clashes-hit-isis-ranks-mosul-local-militants-protest-foreign-jihadis/>

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.defense.gov/News/News-Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/853864/departments-of-defense-press-briefing-by-colonel-garver-via-teleconference-from>

<sup>34</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/07/isis-relocates-its-strongholds-in-mosul-to-avoid-airstrikes/>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-usa-islamicstate-idUSKCN10722Q> ; <http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/885558/iraqi-military-demonstrates-new-skills-in-mosul-campaign/source/GovDelivery>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/update-air-strikes-against-daesh> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-36960197> ; <http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/902274/oir-spokesman-details-progress-degrading-isis-in-syria-iraq/source/GovDelivery>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36878320>

- On August 1, Iraqi Defense Minister Khalid al-Obeidi accused the speaker of parliament and several other lawmakers of “corruption and blackmail.” Salim al-Jubouri, the speaker of parliament, denied the accusations. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi ordered an investigation of the accusations.<sup>39</sup>
  - On August 2, Haider al-Abadi issued a travel ban against “some sitting lawmakers and politicians” amid accusations of corruption.<sup>40</sup>
3. Al Anbar Governorate:
    - On July 22, Colonel Christopher Garver reported that Iraqi forces had secured the Dulab peninsula, 15 miles north of the city of Hit.<sup>41</sup>
    - On July 31, Iraqi security forces along with Shia Popular Mobilization Front militias recaptured the area of the Khalidiya desert between Abu Obeid and Abu Shajal, north of Ramadi.<sup>42</sup>
  4. Diyala Governorate:
    - On July 24, an ISIL suicide car bombing struck a checkpoint outside the town of Khalis, killing sixteen people.<sup>43</sup>
  5. Kirkuk Governorate:
    - On July 31, ISIL militants attacked three oil facilities in a Kurdish-controlled area of Kirk Governorate.<sup>44</sup>
  6. Salah ad Din Governorate:
    - During the reporting period, Shia militias that form the Popular Mobilization Front reported “activity” in the areas leading to the ISIL-held town of Shirqat, one of the last major areas slated by the US-led coalition and Iraqi government to be captured prior to the operations to retake Mosul.<sup>45</sup>

#### Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Albu Hayat, Baghdadi, Fallujah, Habbaniyah, Haditha, Hit, Huwayjah, Kisik, Mosul, Qaim, Qayyarah, Ramadi, Rawah, al-Rutbah, Sinjar, Sultan Abdullah, Tal Afar, and Tuz.<sup>46</sup>
- During the reporting period, it was revealed that the Iraqi government had established the Shia Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) as a “permanent and separate security entity.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/2d5677e356e146a9a7064e7bf5ab6667/iraqi-council-votes-demolish-homes-convicted-militants>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.yahoo.com/news/iraq-minister-accuses-parliament-speaker-corruption-173534694.html> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/iraq-situation-report-july-26-august-2.html>

<sup>40</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/iraq-prime-minister-issues-travel-ban-for-some-lawmakers/2016/08/02/7aad8fbe-589e-11e6-8b48-0cb344221131\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/iraq-prime-minister-issues-travel-ban-for-some-lawmakers/2016/08/02/7aad8fbe-589e-11e6-8b48-0cb344221131_story.html) ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-politics-idUSKCN10C2KJ>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.defense.gov/News/News-Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/853864/departments-of-defense-press-briefing-by-colonel-garver-via-teleconference-from>

<sup>42</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/iraq-situation-report-july-26-august-2.html>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-idUSKCN10501G>

<sup>44</sup> <http://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/attacks-iraq-gas-facility-oil-field-kill-five> ; <http://www.cnn.com/2016/07/31/middleeast/iraq-isis-oil-field-attack/> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/iraq-situation-report-july-26-august-2.html>

<sup>45</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/07/iraq-situation-report-july-19-25-2016.html>

<sup>46</sup> See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [851606](#), [853003](#), [854149](#), [854238](#), [854467](#), [856938](#), [872651](#), [878278](#), [880210](#), [881179](#), [881251](#), [881701](#), [883041](#), [901235](#)

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2016/07/iraqs-prime-minister-establishes-popular-mobilization-front-as-a-permanent-independent-military-formation.php> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/iraq-situation-report-july-26-august-2.html>

- On July 23, the Peshmerga Ministry of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) stated that Peshmerga forces will not withdraw from areas captured from ISIL with the exception of Mosul.<sup>48</sup>

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

- On July 20-21, dozens of allied defense foreign ministers met in Washington DC to plan the next steps in the battle against ISIL.<sup>49</sup>
- On July 23, ISIL took responsibility for two suicide bombings in Kabul that killed at least 80 people and wounded more than 230. The attack targeted the Shia Hazara minority in Afghanistan.<sup>50</sup>
- On July 24, ISIL took credit for an attack in Ansbach, Germany in which a young Syrian asylum seeker, who pledged allegiance to the group online, blew himself up outside of a music festival, wounding 15 people.<sup>51</sup>
- On July 26, ISIL took credit for an attack in Rouen, France in which two armed men attacked a church, taking hostages, and killing a priest.<sup>52</sup>
- On July 29, thousands of Turkish protesters gathered outside the US military base at Incirlik, Turkey. The protesters burned American flags and demanded that the base, used to target ISIL in both Syria and Iraq, be closed.<sup>53</sup>
- On August 1, US airstrikes targeted ISIL militants in Sirte, Libya in coordination with Libya's western-backed 'unity government,' marking the "first direct" military involvement in the fight against the group in Libya and allowing Libyan forces to advance against the group.<sup>54</sup>

## **Satellite Imagery and Geospatial Analysis**

For more information on illegal excavations at Nineveh, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0010 UPDATE** in this Weekly Report. For an update on road construction across the southern half of Nineveh, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0097 UPDATE** in this Weekly Report.

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<sup>48</sup> <http://rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/230720169>

<sup>49</sup> <http://mobile.reuters.com/article/idUSKCN0ZZ2KG> ; [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/pentagon-assembles-allied-nations-to-plot-out-next-stage-of-islamic-state-fight/2016/07/19/5adf337c-4da9-11e6-aa14-e0c1087f7583\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/pentagon-assembles-allied-nations-to-plot-out-next-stage-of-islamic-state-fight/2016/07/19/5adf337c-4da9-11e6-aa14-e0c1087f7583_story.html) ; <http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/852243/carter-praises-momentum-in-the-counter-isil-fight-results-on-the-ground> ; <http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/851226/carter-defense-ministers-agree-on-next-steps-in-counter-isil-fight>

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-protests-idUSKCN1030GB>

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36882831> ; [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/islamic-state-publishes-video-of-suicide-bomber-in-germany/2016/07/26/ba38ec41-f5df-4701-8a77-48f58fb62116\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/islamic-state-publishes-video-of-suicide-bomber-in-germany/2016/07/26/ba38ec41-f5df-4701-8a77-48f58fb62116_story.html)

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36892785>

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.militarytimes.com/story/military/2016/07/28/thousands-protest-outside-us-base-incirlik-turkey/87665750/>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2016/08/01/united-states-strikes-islamic-state-stronghold-in-libya-expands-campaign-against-militant-group/> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/02/us/politics/us-conducts-airstrikes-against-isis-in-libya.html> ; <https://www.yahoo.com/news/libya-government-forces-advance-bastion-083850281.html> ; <http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/881815/us-conducts-airstrikes-against-isil-in-sirte-libya/source/GovDelivery>

## Incident Reports: Syria

### SHI 16-0104 UPDATE

**Report Date:** July 25, 2016

**Site Name:** al-Fatah Mosque (مسجد الفتح)

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

**Location:** Manbij, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** New photograph and satellite imagery of mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 25, 2016 Youth Lens Manbij released a new photograph via Facebook of al-Fatah Mosque as it appears today, after the recapture of that area of the city from ISIL militants. Al-Fatah Mosque is located near a former ISIL headquarters located in the National Hospital.<sup>55</sup> Extensive fighting was reported in the areas around the mosque during efforts by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) to recapture the city from ISIL. Several mosques throughout the city have been damaged, some severely, during the fight to recapture the city. For more information on previous damage to al-Fatah Mosque, as well as other mosques in Manbij, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0104** in **Weekly Report 101-102**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives, light weaponry.

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

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Youth Lens Manbij/Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/lensyoungmanbej/posts/1090283391065046:0>

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<sup>55</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/manbej.mubashar/posts/852877708177283> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-headquarters-idUSKCN0ZZ1D9>





al-Fatah Mosque and the surrounding areas with no visible damage (DigitalGlobe; July 6, 2016)



al-Fatah Mosque and the surrounding areas with visible damage to the western buildings (DigitalGlobe; July 26, 2016)





A current photograph of al-Fatah Mosque (Youth Lens Manbij; July 25, 2016)



Photograph taken from another angle showing damage surrounding al-Fatah Mosque (Youth Lens Manbij; July 26, 2016)

## SHI 16-0108 UPDATE

**Report Date:** July 25, 2016

**Site Name:** Kafr Hamra Cemetery (مقبرة كفر حمرة); Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque (مسجد أبو بكر الصديق)

**Date of Incident:** July 9, 2016; July 14, 2016

**Location:** Kafr Hamra, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Cemetery and mosque in Kafr Hamra.

**Site Date:** Unknown.

**Incident Summary:** New video footage and photographs of damage to mosque and cemetery.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 25, 2016 Anadan Media Center released video footage of airstrike damage in Kafr Hamra.<sup>56</sup> The video includes new footage of damage to Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque and the village cemetery. The damage to both these sites is allegedly the result of Russian airstrikes that occurred in mid-July 2016. The cemetery has been damaged twice since July 9th. A DigitalGlobe satellite image from July 19, 2016 shows damage to the interior of the cemetery, as well as to buildings on the western side. In another image from July 23, 2016 further damage is visible inside the cemetery and to buildings located just east of the cemetery. Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque has damage on its northern side and roof in a satellite image from July 19, 2016. For more information on previous airstrike damage to the two sites please see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0108** in **Weekly Report 101-102**.

On July 15, 2016 additional photographs were shared by Anadan Media Center via Facebook showing interior damage to Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque.<sup>57</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of the cemetery in Kafr Hamra and Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Anadan Media Center/Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1xFKrqfyWs>

Anadan Media Center/Facebook:

July 15, 2016: <https://www.facebook.com/Anadan.Media.Center3/posts/1314953255186300>

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<sup>56</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1xFKrqfyWs> ; <https://www.facebook.com/Anadan.Media.Center3/videos/1322056717809287/>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Anadan.Media.Center3/photos/a.971700816178214.1073741829.918169998197963/1314953198519639/>

July 25, 2016:

<https://www.facebook.com/Anadan.Media.Center3/videos/1322056717809287/>



The cemetery prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; July 7, 2016)





The cemetery with visible damage to graves (DigitalGlobe; July 9, 2016)



The cemetery with damage to graves, the cemetery wall, and associated buildings on the west side (DigitalGlobe; July 19, 2016)





The cemetery with damage to graves, the cemetery wall, and buildings to the east (DigitalGlobe; July 23, 2016)



Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; July 13, 2016)



Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque with damage to the northern side and roof (DigitalGlobe; July 19, 2016)





Video still of damage to Kafr Hamra Cemetery (Anadan Media Center/Youtube; July 25, 2016)



Video still of damage to Kafr Hamra Cemetery (Anadan Media Center/Youtube; July 25, 2016)



Video still of damage to Abu Bakr al Sidiq Mosque (Anadan Media Center/Youtube; July 25, 2016)



Damage to Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque (Anadan Media Center/Facebook; July 15, 2016)





Interior damage to Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque (Anadan Media Center/Facebook; July 15, 2016)



Interior damage to Abu Bakr al-Sidiq Mosque (Anadan Media Center/Facebook; July 15, 2016)

## SHI 16-0110 UPDATE

**Report Date:** July 19, 2016

**Site Name:** Mar Sharbel Church (كنيسة القديس مار شربل; Mar Gergis, Mar Bar Had Bshabo)

**Date of Incident:** July 17-18, 2016

**Location:** al-Witwitiyah Village (قرية الوطوية), Hasakah Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mar Sharbel Church is a Syrian Orthodox Church that was originally built in 1969 CE using bricks from a nearby hill that overlooks the village. The church was originally named after Saint George (Mar Gergis). The church was rebuilt in 1996 on the same location and named after the saints Mar Sharbel, Mar Gergis, and Mar Bar Had Bshabo. The new church was consecrated in 2002.<sup>58</sup>

**Site Date:** est. 1969 CE, rebuilt 1996 CE

**Incident Summary:** New article details extensive damage to church.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 19, 2016 ARA News published an article providing further detail on the July 17-18, 2016 attack on Mar Sharbel Church, including eyewitness accounts. The attack reportedly began with “anonymous gunmen” entering the church around midnight on July 18, 2016. The gunmen then stole the donation box before detonating explosives that caused extensive damage to the building. According to an eyewitness, several explosions were heard inside of the church and a large fire erupted. The same eyewitness stated that the church was “completely destroyed”, however photographs from previous reports show the building as still standing.<sup>59</sup> For previous reports on the July 18, 2016 attack on Mar Sharbel Church see, **ASOR CHI Incident Report 16-0110** in **Weekly Report 101-102**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives; Vandalism; Theft.

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

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

ARA News: <http://aranews.net/2016/07/gunmen-storm-assyrian-church-syrias-qamishli/>

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<sup>58</sup> <http://aranews.org/2016/07/مجهولون-يقتدون-على-كنيسة-مار-شربل-يريف/>

<sup>59</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/07/gunmen-storm-assyrian-church-syrias-qamishli/>



**SHI 16-0111**

**Report Date:** July 28, 2016

**Site Name:** Musaib bin Umeer Mosque (مسجد مصعب بن عمير)

**Date of Incident:** July 19, 2016

**Location:** al-Tabqah, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** ca. early 2000s CE

**Incident Summary:** Alleged Russian airstrikes damage mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 19, 2016 the activist group Raqqa Is Being Slaughtered Silently (RIBSS) reported that Russian airstrikes damaged Musaib bin Umeer Mosque in the city of al-Tabqah, as well as a nearby park and a Syrian Air Force building. The strike resulted in minor material damage to the mosque, including broken windows. Several civilians were injured by falling glass.<sup>60</sup> ISIL militants have controlled al-Tabqah and a nearby SARG airbase since August 2014. No photographs of the damage to Musaib bin Umeer Mosque were available at the time of publication.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

RIBSS:

<https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1249227488421833>

al-Taqba Media Office:

<https://ar-ar.facebook.com/Maktb.Altbqa.Alalamy/posts/1192406184125162>

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<sup>60</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/posts/1249227488421833> ; <https://ar-ar.facebook.com/Maktb.Altbqa.Alalamy/posts/1192406184125162>

SHI 16-0112

Report Date: July 24, 2016

**Site Name:**

- al-Rawda Mosque (مسجد الروضة)
- al-Abrar Mosque (جامع الأبرار)
- Shoaib Mosque (مسجد شعيب)
- Bilal Mosque (جامع بلال)
- Saad bin Abi Waqas Mosque (مسجد سعد بين أبي وقاص; Saad Mosque)
- al-Omari Mosque (مسجد العمري)
- al-Tawhid Mosque (جامع التوحيد)
- al-Hijazi Mosque (مسجد الحجازي; al-Saha Mosque; مسجد الساحة)
- al-Kabir Mosque (الجامع الكبير)
- Omar bin Al Khattab Mosque (جامع عمر بن الخطاب)

**Date of Incident:** July 19, 2016; July 20, 2016

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

**Site Description:** Mosques in the city of Idlib.

**Site Date:** Various.

**Incident Summary:** Airstrikes damage ten mosques in the city of Idlib.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 22, 2016 several media sources reported that SARG and suspected Russian airstrikes damaged seven mosques in the city of Idlib.<sup>61</sup>

- al-Rawda Mosque (مسجد الروضة) - On July 19, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG airstrikes struck al-Rawda Mosque, causing partial damage.<sup>62</sup> On May 31, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG airstrikes “fired missiles” near al-Rawda Mosque in Idlib, causing damage to the building.<sup>63</sup> For more information on this attack see, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0073** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.
- al-Abrar Mosque (جامع الأبرار) - On July 20, 2016 local news sources reported that Russian airstrikes struck al-Abrar Mosque, causing casualties.<sup>64</sup> Some local sources stated via Twitter that a car bombing struck just outside of the mosque.<sup>65</sup> No photographs were available at the time of publication and ASOR CHI has thus far been unable to corroborate the damage using photographs or satellite imagery. For more information on previous damage to al-Abrar Mosque see, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0073** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.

<sup>61</sup> <http://aranews.org/2016/07/07/طيران-النظام-يستهدف-المساجد-وصلاة-الحج-2016/07/07/>; <https://www.alsouria.net/content/القصف-العنيف-يجبر-أهالي-إدلب-على-تعليق-صلاة-الجمعة-اليوم>

<sup>62</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/19/government-forces-targeted-al-rawda-mosque-idlib-city-july-19/>

<sup>63</sup> <https://twitter.com/snhr/status/737652550221070336>

<sup>64</sup> <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/20/غارات-جوية-للطائرات-الروسية-توقع-شهداء/>

<sup>65</sup> [https://twitter.com/News\\_Media\\_Net/status/755537912331141121](https://twitter.com/News_Media_Net/status/755537912331141121)

- Shoaib Mosque (مسجد شعيب) - On July 20, 2016 the Local Coordination Committee for Syria (LCCSY) reported that SARG airstrikes struck the west side of Shoaib Mosque.<sup>66</sup> On July 22, 2016 Mada Syria reported that SARG airstrikes struck Shoaib Mosque, causing damage to the mosque and inflicting casualties.<sup>67</sup> The extent of the damage was not immediately known. ASOR CHI has thus far been unable to corroborate the damage using photographs or satellite imagery. For information on previous damage to Shoaib Mosque see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0073** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.
- Bilal Mosque (جامع بلال) - On July 22, 2016 Mada Syria reported that SARG airstrikes struck Bilal Mosque, causing damage to the mosque and inflicting casualties.<sup>68</sup>
- Saad bin Abi Waqas Mosque (مسجد سعد بين أبي وقاص; Saad Mosque) - On July 22, 2016 Mada Syria reported that SARG airstrikes struck Saad Mosque, causing damage to the mosque and inflicting casualties.<sup>69</sup> On July 23, 2016 Radio al-Shaam reported via Twitter that a fire had broken out in the mosque.<sup>70</sup> ASOR CHI has thus far been unable to corroborate the damage using photographs or satellite imagery from August 2016. For more information on previous damage to Saad bin Abi Waqas Mosque see, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0073** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.
- al-Omari Mosque (مسجد العمري) - On July 22, 2016 Mada Syria reported that SARG airstrikes struck al-Omari Mosque, causing damage to the mosque and inflicting casualties.<sup>71</sup> For more information on previous damage to al-Omari Mosque see, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0062** in **Weekly Report 91-92**.
- al-Tawhid Mosque (جامع التوحيد) - On July 22, 2016 Mada Syria reported that SARG airstrikes struck al-Tawhid Mosque, causing damage to the mosque and inflicting casualties.<sup>72</sup> Satellite imagery indicates that al-Tawhid Mosque has been damaged at least once before, however the exact date of that damage is unknown.
- al-Hijazi Mosque (المسجد الحجازي) - On July 22, 2016 Mada Syria reported that SARG airstrikes struck al-Hijazi Mosque, causing damage to the mosque and inflicting casualties.<sup>73</sup> Video footage and photographs shared of al-Hijazi Mosque showed extensive damage.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1442401532453645>

<sup>67</sup> <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/22/طيران-النظام-الحربي-يستهدف-المدنيين-ف/>

<sup>68</sup> <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/22/طيران-النظام-الحربي-يستهدف-المدنيين-ف/>

<sup>69</sup> <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/22/طيران-النظام-الحربي-يستهدف-المدنيين-ف/>

<sup>70</sup> <https://twitter.com/radioalsham/status/756804789485314048>

<sup>71</sup> <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/22/طيران-النظام-الحربي-يستهدف-المدنيين-ف/>

<sup>72</sup> <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/22/طيران-النظام-الحربي-يستهدف-المدنيين-ف/>

<sup>73</sup> <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/22/طيران-النظام-الحربي-يستهدف-المدنيين-ف/>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QY5puChlUk> ; <https://www.facebook.com/ShaaNetwork.Arabic/posts/1226988010685104> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNzdS7KEmDQ>

- al-Kabir Mosque - On July 22, 2016 LCCSy reported that SARG airstrikes struck al-Kabir Mosque.<sup>75</sup> The extent of the damage was not immediately known. In a list published on July 31, 2016 by the Center for Syrian Journalists (SPC) al-Kabir Mosque was also reported as being damaged by Russian airstrikes. ASOR CHI has thus far been unable to corroborate the damage using photographs or satellite imagery. Current satellite imagery shows no obvious to the mosque.<sup>76</sup>
- Omar Bin al-Khattab Mosque - On July 20, 2016 Orient News reported that SARG airstrikes struck Omar Bin al-Khattab Mosque.<sup>77</sup> The extent of the damage is unknown. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

Following the airstrikes, the local religious authority cancelled Friday prayers across the city.<sup>78</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to the mosques in Idlib city, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

#### Sources:

##### Online Reporting:

ARA News: <http://aranews.org/2016/07/طيران-النظام-يستهدف-المساجد-وصلاة-الحج/>

Committee for Preaching and Endowment:

July 20, 2016:

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1708333966086582&id=1620887431497903](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1708333966086582&id=1620887431497903)

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1708333866086592&id=1620887431497903](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1708333866086592&id=1620887431497903)

Edlib Media-Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNzdS7KEmDQ>

LCCSy:

July 19, 2016: <https://twitter.com/LccSy/status/755522124970885120>

July 20, 2016: <https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1442401532453645>

July 22, 2016: <https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1443878192305979>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/19/government-forces-targeted-al-rawda-mosque-idlib-city-july-19/>

al-Souria: <https://www.alsouria.net/content/القصف-العنيف-يجبر-أهالي-إدلب-على-تعليق-صلاة-الجمعة-اليوم/>

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1443878192305979>

<sup>76</sup> <https://syrianpc.com/18-مسجدا-تعرض-للقصف-في-المناطق-المحررة-خ-18/>

<sup>77</sup> [http://www.orient-news.net/en/news\\_show/118013/0/Assad-perpetrates-a-new-massacre-in-Idlib](http://www.orient-news.net/en/news_show/118013/0/Assad-perpetrates-a-new-massacre-in-Idlib)

<sup>78</sup> <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/22/طيران-النظام-الحربي-يستهدف-المدنيين-/->  
<http://www.alsiasi.com/سورية/288057-تعليق-صلاة-الجمعة-في-إدلب/>

Edlib Media Center:

July 19, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnV7YVU1dek> (RAWDA Mosque)

July 22, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNzdS7KEmDQ>

Mada Syria:

July 20, 2016: <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/20/غازات-جوية-للطائرات-الروسية-توقع-شهيدا/>

July 22, 2016: <http://madasyria.com/2016/07/22/طيران-النظام-الحربي-يستهدف-المدنيين-ف/>

News Media Net/Twitter: [https://twitter.com/News\\_Media\\_Net/status/755537912331141121](https://twitter.com/News_Media_Net/status/755537912331141121)

Qasioun News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QY5puChlUk>

Radio al-Shaam/Twitter: <https://twitter.com/radioalsham/status/756804789485314048>

al-Siasi: <http://www.alsiasi.com/سورية/288057-تعليق-صلاة-الجمعة-في-ادلب.html>

SPC: <https://syrianpc.com/مسجدا-تعرض-للقصف-في-المناطق-المحررة-خ-18/>

Step News Agency: [https://twitter.com/Step\\_Agency/status/755441126144876544](https://twitter.com/Step_Agency/status/755441126144876544)

Shaam News Network (S.N.N):

<http://www.shaam.org/news/syria-news/إيقاف-الحياة-على-وقع-الموت-المزدوج-روسيا-الأسد-...-ادلب-من-جديد-جمعة-و-امتحانات.html>

<https://www.facebook.com/ShaamNetwork.Arabic/posts/1226988010685104>

The White Helmets: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnzn41K9KpY>

**al-Rawda Mosque (مسجد الروضة)**



Damage to the interior of al-Rawda Mosque (SNHR; July 19, 2016)





Holes in the dome and walls of al-Rawda Mosque (Committee for Preaching and Endowment; July 19, 2016)



Interior damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Committee for Preaching and Endowment; July 19, 2016)



Interior damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Committee for Preaching and Endowment; July 19, 2016)



Interior and material damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Committee for Preaching and Endowment; July 19, 2016)





A man displays a damaged Koran inside al-Rawda Mosque (Twitter; July 26, 2016)



Exterior damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Step News Agency; July 19, 2016)



Interior damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Twitter ; July 21, 2016)





al-Rawda Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; June 19, 2016)



al-Rawda Mosque with damage to the roof and debris seen on the south side (DigitalGlobe; August 1, 2016)





Previous damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Committee for Preaching and Endowment; June 7, 2016)



Previous damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Committee for Preaching and Endowment; June 7, 2016)





وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَىٰ فِي خَرَابِهَا أُولَٰئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا خَائِفِينَ [البقرة 114]

Previous damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Committee for Preaching and Endowment; June 7, 2016)



وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَىٰ فِي خَرَابِهَا أُولَٰئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا خَائِفِينَ [البقرة 114]

Previous damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Committee for Preaching and Endowment; June 7, 2016)



**Shoab Mosque (مسجد شعيب)**



Shoab Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; August 19, 2015)



Shoab Mosque with visible damage to the northwest corner (DigitalGlobe; August 1, 2016)

**Bilal Mosque (جامع بلال)**



Bilal Mosque with no visible damage (DigitalGlobe; June 19, 2016)



Bilal Mosque with possible damage visible on the western side (DigitalGlobe; August 1, 2016)



**Saad bin Abi Waqas Mosque** (مسجد سعد بين أبي وقاص; Saad Mosque)



Saad bin Abi Waqas Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; June 19, 2016)



Saad bin Abi Waqas Mosque with no visible damage (DigitalGlobe; August 1, 2016)



**al-Omari Mosque (مسجد العمري)**



al-Omari Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; June 19, 2016)



No visible damage to al-Omari Mosque though some damage is visible on the buildings to the west (DigitalGlobe; August 1, 2016)

**al-Tawhid Mosque (جامع التوحيد)**



al-Tawhid Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; August 19, 2015)



al-Tawhid Mosque with discoloration on the roof (DigitalGlobe; June 19, 2016)



al-Tawhid Mosque with minor damage (DigitalGlobe; August 1, 2016)

**al-Hijazi Mosque** ( المسجد الحجازي )



al-Hijazi Mosque with no visible damage (DigitalGlobe; June 19, 2016)



al-Hijazi Mosque with damage on the western and northern sides. Visible damage to the buildings on the west as well (DigitalGlobe; August 1, 2016)





Video still of damage to al-Hijazi Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; July 22, 2016)



Video still of damage to al-Hijazi Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; July 22, 2016)



Video still of material damage to al-Hijazi Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; July 22, 2016)



Damage to al-Hijazi Mosque (S.N.N; July 22, 2016)





Damage to al-Hijazi Mosque (S.N.N; July 22, 2016)



Damage to al-Hijazi Mosque (S.N.N; July 22, 2016)



Video still of damage to the ceiling fan and interior of al-Hijazi Mosque (Edlib Media-Center; July 22, 2016)



Video still of a collapsed wall at al-Hijazi Mosque (Edlib Media-Center; July 22, 2016)





Video still of material damage inside al-Hijazi Mosque (Edlib Media-Center; July 22, 2016)



Video still of damage to the mihrab and interior of al-Hijazi Mosque (Edlib Media-Center; July 22, 2016)

**al-Kabir Mosque** (جامع الكبير)



al-Kabir Mosque with no visible damage (DigitalGlobe; June 19, 2016)



al-Kabir Mosque with no visible damage even after reports of airstrikes (DigitalGlobe; August 1, 2016)



**SHI 16-0113**

**Report Date:** July 27, 2016

**Site Name:** Abdul Qadir Gilani Mosque (مسجد عبد القادر الجيلاني حلب) ;  
al-Shami Mosque (جامع الشامي)

**Date of Incident:** July 21, 2016; July 26, 2016

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

**Site Description:** Mosques in the city of Aleppo.

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** SARG helicopters allegedly damage a mosque in Aleppo; rocket-propelled grenades damage mosque in Aleppo.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 21, 2016 Step News Agency reported that SARG helicopters dropped barrel bombs on Abdul Qadir Gilani Mosque in Aleppo.<sup>79</sup> The bombing killed at least 15 civilians. The extent of the damage to the mosque is unclear, though the sidewalk in front of the mosque is filled with rubble.<sup>80</sup> There appears to be minor damage to the building's facade. DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from July 23, 2016 shows debris on the sidewalk and around the southern side of the mosque.

On July 26, 2016 the News Network of al-Zahra Neighborhood reported that rocket-propelled grenades of unknown origin struck in the vicinity of al-Shami Mosque located in al-Zahra neighborhood.<sup>81</sup> The extent of the damage to the mosque remains unknown. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication. DigitalGlobe imagery from August 3, 2016 shows no clear damage or visible debris around the mosque.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to Abdul Qadir Gilani Mosque and al-Shami Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

News Network al-Zahra Neighborhood:

[https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1142822545776784&id=617319418327102](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1142822545776784&id=617319418327102)

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<sup>79</sup> <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/99271>

<sup>80</sup> [https://twitter.com/Step\\_Agency/status/756106836080721920](https://twitter.com/Step_Agency/status/756106836080721920)

<sup>81</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=1142822545776784&id=617319418327102](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1142822545776784&id=617319418327102)

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Halab Today:

<https://www.facebook.com/HalabTodayTV/photos/a.422583204425790.121836.353338088016969/1439985452685555/>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/22/government-forces-targeted-abdul-qader-al-jaylani-mosque-al-saleheen-neighbourhood-aleppo-city-july-21/>

**Abdul Qadir Gilani Mosque (مسجد عبد القادر الجيلاني حلب)**



Abdul Qadir Gilani Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; July 19, 2016)



Abdul Qadir Gilani Mosque with arrow pointing to debris visible on sidewalk in front of mosque (DigitalGlobe; July 23, 2016)





Abdul Qadir Gilani Mosque is seen behind a destroyed car (Halab TV Today/Facebook; July 21, 2016)



Abdul Qadir Gilani Mosque is seen behind a destroyed car (Step News Agency/Twitter; July 21, 2016)





Damage to the exterior of Abdul Qadir Gilani Mosque showing large piles of rubble outside the building (Step News Agency/Twitter; July 21, 2016)



Damage to the exterior of Abdul Qadir Gilani Mosque (Step News Agency/Twitter; July 21, 2016)

**al-Shami Mosque (جامع الشامي)**



al-Shami Mosque showing previous damage on the south side (DigitalGlobe; July 19, 2016)



al-Shami Mosque showing no visible new damage to the mosque (DigitalGlobe; August 3, 2016)

**SHI 16-0115**

**Report Date:** August 2, 2016

**Site Name:** National Museum of Aleppo (متحف حلب الوطني)

**Date of Incident:** July 24, 2016

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

**Site Description:** The National Museum building consists of two storeys arranged around a central courtyard. To the right of the entrance to the main building is the administration annex.<sup>82</sup> The first floor contains a number of exhibits showing objects from al-Jazeera Hills, Mari, the Hama region, Ugarit, Tell Halaf, Arslan Tash, Tell Ahmar, Ebla, and an exhibit on ancient statues and cuneiform scripts. The second floor contains Greco-Roman and Islamic era artifacts, and modern art. The internal courtyard of the museum is home to Roman and Hittite statuary and a large 3rd-century CE mosaic. The exterior courtyard contains large artifacts from Assyrian, Aramaean, Byzantine, and Arabic civilizations.<sup>83</sup>

**Site Date:** 1966

**Incident Summary:** The National Museum of Aleppo suffers severe damage from shelling.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 24, 2016 the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM) reported that the National Museum of Aleppo had been damaged by recent shelling “fired by armed extremist gangs.”<sup>84</sup> The damage was focused on the facade at the entrance to the museum. The entrance facade was a replica of a temple gateway from Tell Halaf including statues of a “goddess, a ‘younger scorpion-man’, a smaller seated tomb sculpture, and an assortment of big and small orthostats and plaster replicas.”<sup>85</sup> The originals of these sculptures as well as many other statues were sent to Berlin, and made up the collections of the new Tell Halaf Museum in 1930. A few original statues resided in the Aleppo Museum, and were moved for safekeeping. The larger pieces were sandbagged, encased with concrete blocks, and boarded up to prevent damage.<sup>86</sup> The photograph released by the DGAM shows slight damage to the facade structure, but the replicas seem to be intact.

For more information on damage to the National Museum of Aleppo see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0105** in **Weekly Report 101–102** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0077** in **Weekly Report 15**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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<sup>82</sup> Burns 2009: 50

<sup>83</sup> [http://www.aleppo.us/news/view/30/ar/%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%AD%D9%81\\_%D8%AD%D9%84%D8%A8\\_%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A.html](http://www.aleppo.us/news/view/30/ar/%D9%85%D8%AA%D8%AD%D9%81_%D8%AD%D9%84%D8%A8_%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A.html)

<sup>84</sup> <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2012>

<sup>85</sup> [http://www.tell-halaf-projekt.de/en/max\\_von\\_oppenheim/oppenheim\\_en.htm](http://www.tell-halaf-projekt.de/en/max_von_oppenheim/oppenheim_en.htm)

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304626304579507231417505084>



**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the status of the National Museum of Aleppo and other museums in Syria, many of which have been damaged throughout the course of the current conflict.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Aleppo.us: <http://www.aleppo.us/news/view/30/ar/متحف حلب الوطني.html>

APSA: <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/report-on-syrian-museums-2011-2012/>

DGAM: <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2012>

UNESCO:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/unesco-director-general-deplores-heavy-damages-at-the-nation#.V4eoODkrI1j>

Scholarly:

Tell Halaf Project: [http://www.tell-halaf-projekt.de/en/max-von-oppenheim/oppenheim\\_en.htm](http://www.tell-halaf-projekt.de/en/max-von-oppenheim/oppenheim_en.htm)



Entrance to Aleppo Museum after damage. (DGAM; July 24, 2016)



Entrance to the National Museum of Aleppo. (Wikimedia Commons; 2005)<sup>87</sup>



Entrance to the National Museum of Aleppo showing protection measures (Sam Dagher; 2014)<sup>88</sup>

<sup>87</sup> [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Entrance\\_of\\_the\\_National\\_Museum\\_Aleppo\\_Syria.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Entrance_of_the_National_Museum_Aleppo_Syria.jpg)

**SHI 16-0115**

**Report Date:** July 22, 2016

**Site Name:** Aqil ibn Abi Talib Mosque (مسجد عقيل بن أبي طالب)

**Date of Incident:** July 22, 2016

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

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** An alleged SARG airstrike damages a mosque in Harasta.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 22, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a SARG airstrike damaged Aqil ibn Abi Talib Mosque in Harasta, a suburb of Damascus.<sup>89</sup> A photograph released by SNHR showed extensive damage to the mosque, both interior and exterior. At least one minaret has crumbled at the top, its pieces falling outward. Large piles of rubble are present surrounding the mosque.

Alleged SARG airstrikes have struck Aqil ibn Abi Talib Mosque on at least one prior occasion, causing damage to the mosque. For more information on this incident, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0045** in **Weekly Report 87-88**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to Aqil ibn Abi Talib Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/22/government-forces-targeted-aeel-mosque-harasta-city-damascus-suburbs-july-22/>

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<sup>88</sup> <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304626304579507231417505084>

<sup>89</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/22/government-forces-targeted-aeel-mosque-harasta-city-damascus-suburbs-july-22/>





Extensive damage to Aqil ibn Abi Talib Mosque (SNHR; July 22, 2016)

**SHI 16-0116**

**Report Date:** July 24, 2016

**Site Name:** Qamar al-Sham Restaurant (مطعم قمر الشام)

**Date of Incident:** July 24, 2016

**Location:** Bab Touma district, Damascus Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Restaurant in historic building in old quarter of Damascus.

**Site Date:** 19th-century CE or earlier

**Incident Summary:** Mortar fire strikes historic restaurant.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 24, 2016 a “mortar bomb” struck the Qamar al-Sham restaurant, located in a historic building, in the SARG-held ancient quarter of Damascus.<sup>90</sup> The attack killed at least six people and wounded dozens.<sup>91</sup> No group took responsibility for the mortar attack, though opposition groups often fire mortars into SARG-held areas of Damascus.<sup>92</sup> Photographs of the restaurant after the mortar strike show damage to the interior of the building including broken glass.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to Qamar al-Sham Restaurant, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

L'Orient Le Jour:

<http://www.lorientlejour.com/article/998159/syrie-au-moins-huit-morts-dans-des-tirs-de-roquettes-sur-damas.html>

Qamar al-Sham Restaurant: <https://www.facebook.com/مطعم-قمر-الشام-308631405933552>

Reuters: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-damascus-idUSKCN1040TB>

Shaam Network:

<http://www.shaam.org/news/syria-news/ضحايا-وتوقع-دمشق-تستهدف-المصدر-مجهولة-قذائف.html>

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<sup>90</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-damascus-idUSKCN1040TB>

<sup>91</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-damascus-idUSKCN1040TB>

<sup>92</sup> <http://www.lorientlejour.com/article/998159/syrie-au-moins-huit-morts-dans-des-tirs-de-roquettes-sur-damas.html>

Yomet Kzefeh Hawen: <https://www.facebook.com/YomyatKzefeh/posts/919841241476678>



Damage to the interior of Qamar al-Sham Restaurant (Yomet Kzefeh Hawen; July 24, 2016)





Damage to the interior of Qamar al-Sham Restaurant (Yomet Kzefeh Hawen; July 24, 2016)



# يوميات قذيفة هاون في دمشق

Damage to the interior of Qamar al-Sham Restaurant (Yomet Kzefeh Hawen; July 24, 2016)





Clean up inside Qamar al-Sham Restaurant (Yomet Kzefeh Hawen; July 24, 2016)



**SHI 16-0117**

**Report Date:** July 28, 2016

**Site Name:** Qasemo Mosque (مسجد قاسمو)

**Date of Incident:** July 27, 2016

**Location:** al-Qamishli, al-Hasakah Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Two ISIL suicide bombings in al-Qamishli damage a mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 27, 2016 the Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) reported that dozens of people were killed and wounded in an explosion in western Qamishli.<sup>93</sup> According to Al Jazeera, the attack consisted of two separate explosions, minutes apart, involving a truck filled with explosives and later a motorcycle also laden with explosives.<sup>94</sup> The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that 57 people were killed in the attack, for which ISIL claimed responsibility. The explosions targeted YPG and Asayish offices.<sup>95</sup> According to El Bashayer, the blast radius was around 500 meters, and caused unspecified damage to the nearby Qasemo Mosque and other buildings.<sup>96</sup> No photographs of the damage to the mosque were available at the time of publication.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to the mosques in Idlib city, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Al Jazeera:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/syria-civilwar-50-killed-isil-attack-qamishli-160727092723452.html>

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2016/07/syria-civil-war-twin-blasts-rip-qamishli-160727132841541.html>

El Bashayer: <http://elbashayeronline.com/news-684818.html>

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<sup>93</sup> <http://sana.sy/en/?p=83691>

<sup>94</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/syria-civilwar-50-killed-isil-attack-qamishli-160727092723452.html>

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=48850>

<sup>96</sup> <http://elbashayeronline.com/news-684818.html>

Orient News: [http://www.orient-news.net/en/news\\_show/118647/0/Car-bomb-explodes-in-YPG-military-stronghold-in-Qamishli](http://www.orient-news.net/en/news_show/118647/0/Car-bomb-explodes-in-YPG-military-stronghold-in-Qamishli)

SANA: <http://sana.sy/en/?p=83691>

SOHR: <http://www.syriahr.com/en/?p=48850>

**SHI 16-0118**

**Report Date:** July 29, 2016

**Site Name:** al-Sheikh Khalil Mosque (مسجد الشيخ خليل)

**Date of Incident:** July 28, 2016

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

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A SARG airstrike allegedly damages a mosque in Daraa.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 29, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a SARG airstrike had severely damaged al-Sheikh Khalil Mosque in the city of Daraa on July 28, 2016.<sup>97</sup> The extent of the damage is unknown. No photographs were available at the time of publication.

Al-Sheikh Khalil Mosque was damaged at least twice by mortar fire and shelling in 2014. Daraa Media Union published a video on May 7, 2014 that shows the collapse of the mosque's minaret as a result of this damage.<sup>98</sup> SNHR published a video taken on January 18, 2014 showing the moment the mosque and the surrounding area was hit by an airstrike.<sup>99</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to Sheikh Khalil Mosque, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Daraa Media Union: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtmlCSRQGmI>

SNHR:

July 29, 2016: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/29/government-forces-targeted-al-sheikh-khalil-mosque-al-yarmouk-neighborhood-daraa-city-july-28/>

April 22, 2016 (published)/ January 18, 2014 (filmed):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9IHj3sZhXg>

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<sup>97</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/29/government-forces-targeted-al-sheikh-khalil-mosque-al-yarmouk-neighborhood-daraa-city-july-28/>

<sup>98</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NI62UeTnEwQ>

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtmlCSRQGmI>



**SHI 16-0119**

**Report Date:** July 30, 2016

**Site Name:** Shinsharah (شنشراح; Khirbet Hass; خربة حاس)

**Date of Incident:** July 30, 2016

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

**Site Description:** According to Daniel Demeter, "Shinsharah (شنشراح), also known as Khirbet Has (خربة حاس), is one the largest Byzantine settlements in the limestone massif. With the remains of dozens of large villas and several churches on a hilltop plateau, Shinsharah is one of the most impressive sites in the region."

Shinsharah contains the scattered ruins of six Roman and Byzantine-era churches and a large municipal hall with a rectangular courtyard with borders made of Doric columns. Among the churches, is one that measured 65 ft by 43.5 ft (its nave making up nearly half of the width). The church floor was marked by a mosaic depicting peacocks.<sup>100</sup>

**Site Date:** Roman, Byzantine

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrikes hit site, causing unknown damage.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 30, 2016 the activist and monitoring group Local Coordination Committees of Syria (LCCSy) reported on its Facebook page that a SARG airstrike hit the archaeological site of Shinsharah.<sup>101</sup> The post included two photos showing a landscape with an explosion in the distance, presumably at or near Shinsharah. None of the site's monuments are visible in these photos. The group later reported on Twitter seeing plumes of smoke around the site.<sup>102</sup>

Shinsharah has been damaged twice before by unidentified bombardment and reported Russian airstrikes. For more information on damage to the site, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0068** in **Weekly Report 37** and **SHI 15-0137** in **Weekly Report 61-62**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will attempt to gather further information and on the ground observations of the damage evidenced in DigitalGlobe satellite imagery as it becomes available. ASOR CHI is directing critical attention to the condition of the remains in Jebel Zawiya Archaeological Park given the high visibility and ongoing significance of the area and its status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

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<sup>100</sup> Boulanger 1966: 413

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1450433801650418>

<sup>102</sup> <https://twitter.com/LccSy/status/759336527780470784>

Activist Abu Yaman Hamwi/Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGdNu5mvtRQ>

LCCSy:

<https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1450433801650418>

<https://twitter.com/LccSy/status/759336527780470784>

Syria Photo Guide: <http://www.syriaphotoguide.com/home/shinshirah-ح-شششراح/>

Scholarly:

Boulanger, Robert (1966). *The Middle East: Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Iran*. Hachette. p. 413



Explosion at or near Shinsharah (LCCSy; July 30, 2016)



Explosion at or near Shinsharah (LCCSy; July 30, 2016)



## Incident Reports: Iraq

### IHI 15-0097 UPDATE

**Report Date:** July 26, 2016

**Site Name:** Nineveh (نينوى)

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing since Summer 2015

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

**Site Description:** Nineveh was the capital of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. The area was settled about 6000 BCE. The ancient site is located on the eastern bank of the Tigris River inside the city of Mosul. By 3000 BCE Nineveh had become an important religious center for the worship of the god Ishtar. During the Neo-Assyrian period (900-600 BCE), Nineveh was the capital of the vast Neo-Assyrian empire until it was sacked by a coalition of Babylonians, Medes, Persians, Chaldeans, Scythians, and Cimmerians in 612 BCE. Nineveh was abandoned after this destruction.

Nineveh is made up of two mounds, Kuyunjik and Tell Nebi Yunus. Kuyunjik rises about 20 meters above the surrounding plain of the ancient city. It measures 800 by 500 meters. Its layers contain several Neo-Assyrian palaces and temples, as well as habitation from as early as 6000 BCE. Nebi Yunus is the smaller mound with a palace built by Esarhaddon and a later church and mosque constructed on top. The ruins of Nineveh are surrounded by a massive stone and mudbrick city wall dating to about 700 BCE. This wall was fitted with 15 monumental gateways.

**Site Date:** 6000 BCE at the earliest occupation levels with largest architectural expansion beginning 700 BCE.

**Incident Summary:** ISIL completion of a multi-lane road and irrigation trench across the ancient site.

**Incident Source and Description:** ASOR CHI has been monitoring the construction of a large multi-lane road between August 2015 and June 2016 at the ancient site of Nineveh. This road was constructed across the center of the southern half of the site, bisecting the ancient fortification walls from east to west. In conjunction with the road construction, a large irrigation trench was also dug from north to south along the southern half of the site, passing underneath the new road. This irrigation channel runs from outside the ancient city wall to the southern end of the settlement inside the site of Nineveh. For previous reports on the construction of a multi-lane road at the ancient site of Nineveh, See [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0097](#) in [Weekly Report 67-68](#) and [ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0097 UPDATE](#) in [Weekly Report 79-80](#).

ASOR CHI first learned about the beginning of road construction from on the ground sources. ASOR CHI sources stated that ISIL continued its activities throughout the summer of 2015, laying the foundation for two new roads, including a road linking the southern bridge (4th bridge across the Tigris River) with the Erbil highway, that cut through Nineveh. The sources claimed that the road, located approximately 150 to 200 meters north of the Ashur Gate, ran across the southern portion of Nineveh, cutting the walls on the east and west sides. ISIL leveled the ground and laid a substrate of small stones and is preparing to lay asphalt, or may have completed laying the asphalt. This was

corroborated with the DigitalGlobe satellite image from August 29, 2015, where grading for the road could be seen.

Over the next year, the road was slowly constructed, with the southern lane partially paved between February and April 2016. Work then ceased between May 15, 2016 and May 25, 2016 when the pavement had only been partially completed in the southern lane. Paving of the road continued until the road was completed between June 16, 2016 and July 17, 2016. The road now has four lanes separated by a barrier between the eastern and western lanes.

**Pattern:** Development disturbances.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor construction on and near the site of Nineveh using DigitalGlobe satellite imagery and anecdotal reports. ASOR CHI will attempt to determine the extent to which this construction activity is affecting exposed and subsurface archaeological remains.

**Sources:**

Scholarly:

Layard, A. H. (1894) *Nineveh and Its Remains*. John Murray Publishing.

Madhloom, T. (1969) "Excavations at Nineveh: The 1968-69 Campaign," *Sumer*, Vol. 25. pp. 43-49.

Thompson, R. C. & M. E. L. Mallowan (1933) "The British Museum excavations at Nineveh 1931-32," *Liverpool Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, Vol. 20. pp. 71-186.



Nineveh with expanded dirt road (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; February 2, 2016)



Completed paved road and new irrigation channel within the southern portion of Nineveh (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; July 18, 2016)



## **IHI 16-0010 UPDATE**

**Report Date:** July 20, 2016

**Site Name:** Nineveh (نينوى)

**Date of Incident:** April 1, 2016 to July 17, 2016 and ongoing

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

**Site Description:** Nineveh was the capital of the Neo-Assyrian Empire and the area was settled about 6000 BCE. The mound is located on the eastern bank of the Tigris River inside the city of Mosul. By 3000 BCE Nineveh had become an important religious center for the worship of the god Ishtar, and during the Neo-Assyrian period (900-600 BCE), Nineveh was the capital of the vast Neo-Assyrian empire until it was sacked by a coalition of Babylonians, Medes, Persians, Chaldeans, Scythians, and Cimmerians in 612 BCE. Nineveh was abandoned after this destruction.

Nineveh is made up of two mounds, Kuyunjik and Tell Nebi Yunus. Kuyunjik rises about 20 meters above the surrounding plain of the ancient city. It measures 800 by 500 meters. Its layers contain several Neo-Assyrian palaces and temples, as well as habitation from as early as stretching to 6000 BCE. Nebi Yunus is the smaller mound with a palace built by Esarhaddon and a later church and mosque constructed on top. The ruins of Nineveh are surrounded by a massive stone and mudbrick city wall dating to about 700 BCE. This city wall was fitted with 15 monumental gateways.

**Site Date:** 6000 BCE at the earliest occupation levels, with largest architectural expansion beginning 700 BCE.

**Incident Summary:** Ongoing illegal excavations identified around the ancient city wall and mound of Kuyunjik.

**Incident Source and Description:** New looting tunnels have been identified at the site of Nineveh using DigitalGlobe satellite imagery. These illegal excavations are focused on the raised city walls and the mound of Kuyunjik. Since May 2016 an additional 21 looting tunnels have been identified at Nineveh using satellite imagery. 13 tunnels were dug into the side of the ancient fortification wall and the mound of Kuyunjik between April 1, 2016 and May 9, 2016. Some of these tunnels had not been previously identified as their construction was in its early stages. By the next image on May 15, 2016, these tunnels had expanded, with visible spoil heaps marking their locations on the satellite imagery. Between May 9, 2016 and June 16, 2016 only five new looting tunnels were identified, primarily located along the eastern city wall. Another 11 looting tunnels appeared between June 16, 2016 and July 17, 2016, many of which were dotting the eastern city wall on both the northern and southern portions of Nineveh and one on the mound of Kuyunjik.

The tunnels are spread around the ancient site, often close to locations of ancient gates on the eastern side of the site. Clusters of tunnels are also visible, indicating that looters are moving to new tunnels within the same area once they've exhausted one location. This is best seen on the eastern side of Nineveh, close to the ancient Musalau Gate, just north of the River Khosr. One large looting tunnel and spoil heap began after May 16, 2016 and continued to grow over time. Four smaller pits or tunnels were started after June 16, 2016. These have no visible spoil heaps indicating they likely were started close to July 17, 2016, when the satellite image was taken.

The purpose for these tunnels is still under investigation, and it is possible that not all of the tunnels have the same purpose. Some could be for looting, especially those around the mound of Kuyunjik, while others could be for the storage of ammunitions and other military equipment.

ASOR CHI has previously reported on looting taking place within the ancient site of Nineveh. In **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0010 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 91-92**, Sputnik Arabic and Russia Today also reported that ISIL militants were digging tunnels within the archaeological boundaries at Nineveh and provided a video of the activity. In-country sources later reported that looting was indeed occurring at Nineveh. Using DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from May 9, 2016 ASOR CHI located eight looting pits around the city walls and near the mound of Kuyunjik. These looting incidents take the form of tunnels dug into the side of the former city wall and the sides of the ancient mound.

**Pattern:** Illegal excavation.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the situation using DigitalGlobe satellite imagery.

**Sources:**

Scholarly:

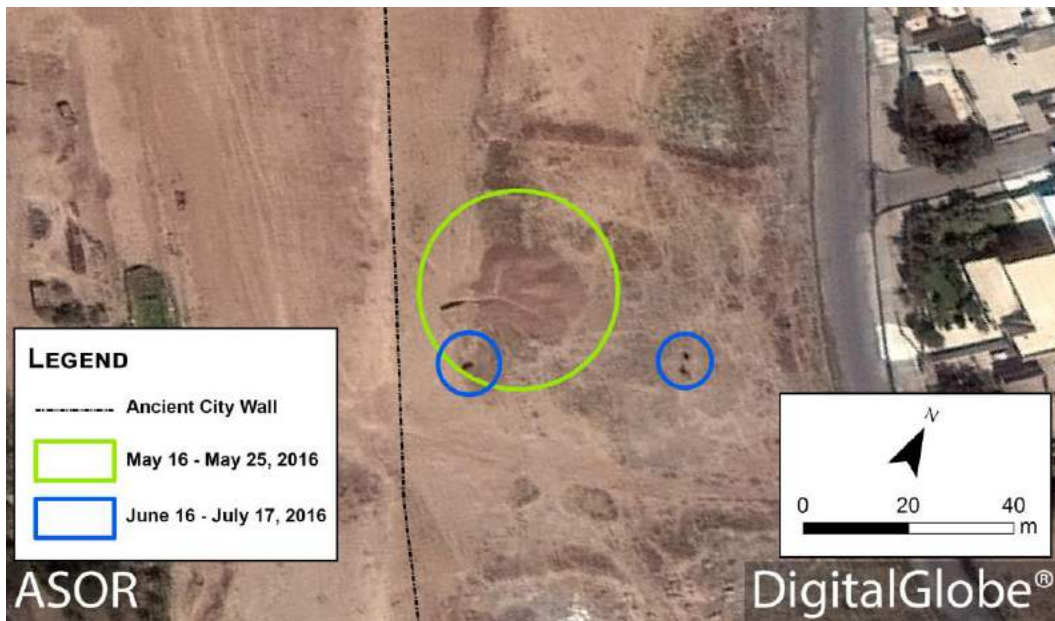
Layard, A. H. (1894) *Nineveh and Its Remains*. John Murray Publishing.

Madhloom, T. (1969) "Excavations at Nineveh: The 1968-69 Campaign," *Sumer*, Vol. 25. pp. 43-49.

Thompson, R. C. & M. E. L. Mallowan (1933) "The British Museum excavations at Nineveh 1931-32," *Liverpool Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, Vol. 20. pp. 71-186.

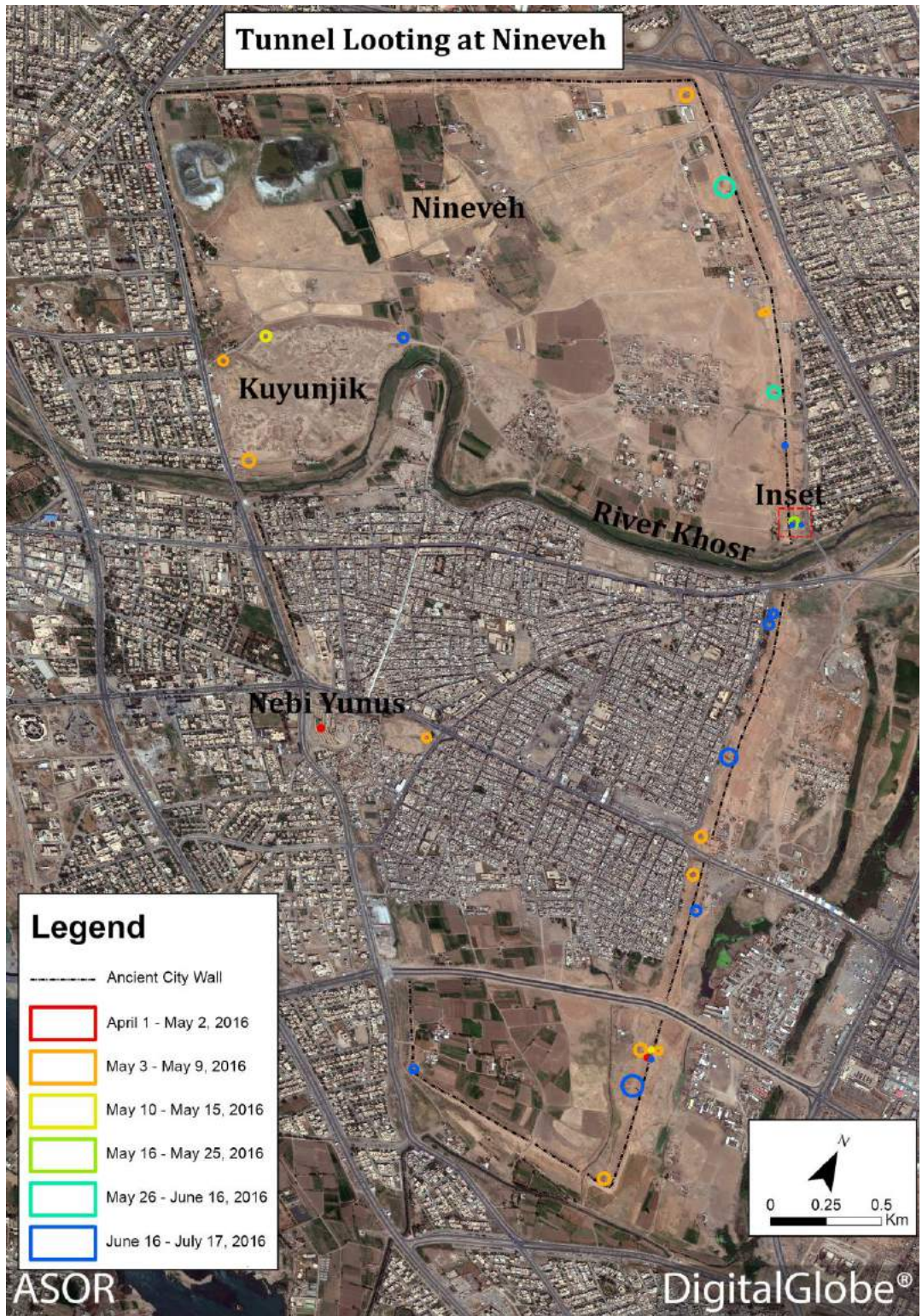


Example of tunnel looting located within the site of Nineveh. (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; May 2,2016)



Inset map of clustered looting areas, expanding over time into multiple pits (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; July 18, 2016)





Illegal excavations at Nineveh from April 1, 2016 through July 17, 2016 (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; July 18, 2016)

**IHI 16-0024**

**Report Date:** July 12, 2016

**Site Name:**

1. al-Farouk Mosque (جامع الفاروق)
2. al-Hassan bin Ali Mosque (جامع الحسن بن علي)
3. al-Kabir Mosque (جامع الكبير)
4. Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (جامع اويس القرني)
5. al-Shamari Mosque (جامع الشمري)
6. al-Tawfiq Mosque (جامع التوفيق)
7. al-Hidaya Mosque (جامع الهداية)
8. Shaker al Dahi Mosque (جامع شاكر الضاحي)
9. al-Mujahirin Mosque (جامع المهاجرين)
10. Abu Ayyub al-Ansari Mosque (جامع أبي أيوب الأنصاري)
11. al-Badawi Mosque (جامع البدوي)
12. al-Hussein bin Ali Mosque (جامع الحسين بن علي)
13. al-Mursalin Mosque (جامع المرسلين)
14. Prophet Saad bin Waqas Mosque (جامع سيدنا سعد بن ابي وقاص)
15. al-Mukarim Mosque (جامع المكرمين)
16. Yusuf al-Sidiq Mosque (جامع يوسف الصديق)
17. Hamoud Mahmoud Mosque (جامع حمود المحمود)
18. al-Fayad Mosque (جامع الفياض)
19. Hamza Abbas Mosque (جامع حمزة عباس)
20. al-Bara bin Ezib Mosque (جامع البراء بن عازب)

**Date of Incident:** January 2014 - May 21, 2016

**Location:** Fallujah, al-Anbar Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Mosques in Fallujah.

**Site Date:** Various. Late 19th-century to early 21st-century CE.

**Incident Summary:** Iraqi Government airstrikes reportedly damaged a great number of mosques in Fallujah between 2014 and 2016.

**Incident Source and Description:** Fallujah was the first city to fall to ISIL in January 2014.<sup>103</sup> In response the Iraqi Army began shelling ISIL targets in the city from a nearby air base while the Iraqi Air Force began airstrikes, in attempts to force ISIL out. The subsequent bombardments damaged many mosques in the city. This damage occurred prior to the damage sustained by mosques during the operations to recapture Fallujah. Detail of the damage was predominantly reported via local media and social media accounts, and is compiled below.

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<sup>103</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4I-vPCCBoU>



- al-Farouk Mosque (جامع الفاروق) - On March 9, 2016 Fallujah TV reported that US-led coalition airstrikes struck al-Farouk Mosque, resulting in casualties.<sup>104</sup> Damage to al-Farouk Mosque has been reported since 2014. On May 13, 2014 al-Farouk Mosque was included in a list of damaged mosques in Fallujah as a result of Iraqi Security Forces.<sup>105</sup> On July 28, 2014 photographs shared on twitter showed damage to the interior of the mosque, including broken glass and a fallen fan. On August 5, 2014 Iraqi Spring Media released video footage of damage to al-Farouk mosque as a result of what was reportedly the third airstrike on that mosque.<sup>106</sup> Photographs of the damage were also released.<sup>107</sup> On February 8, 2015 photographs of damage to the mosque were published on a Twitter account that reportedly belonged to the imam of the mosque.<sup>108</sup> No description was given as to whether or not the damage was recent.
- al-Hassan bin Ali Mosque (جامع الحسن بن علي) - On January 28, 2016 several Twitter users posted photographs of damage to Hassan bin Ali Mosque, reportedly struck that day by an Iraqi Special Forces airstrike.<sup>109</sup> The damage to the mosque is severe. While the minaret appears intact, part of the mosque building has been completely destroyed.
- al-Kabir Mosque (جامع الكبير) - On September 1, 2015 a Twitter account called Sunni Voice of Iraq released three photographs showing exterior damage to al-Kabir Mosque. At least one of the photographs appears to show fire damage.<sup>110</sup> It is unclear when the damage occurred.
- Uwais al-Qarni Mosque (جامع اويس القرني) - On September 27, 2015 Twitter user Mosque Anbar reported that Uwais al-Qarni Mosque in Fallujah had been bombed the previous day.<sup>111</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.
- al-Shamari Mosque (جامع الشمري) - On August 10, 2015 Twitter user posted photographs of damage to al-Shamari Mosque, stating that it had been bombed the previous day, injuring worshippers at the mosque. On September 21, 2015, Fajr al-Iraq News reported on Twitter that al-Shamari Mosque had been hit by an Iraqi Government airstrike, damaging the mosque and its library.<sup>112</sup> It is unclear if this damage was the result of the August 10, 2015 airstrike or a more recent incident. Photographs published by and Fajr al-Iraq News show minor damage to one of the domes on the entrance gate of the mosque complex, structural damage to the mosque ceiling and floor, damage to the exterior courtyard of the complex, and debris in the mosque library. On May 14, 2014 Herak Media Network reported that al-Shamari Mosque had suffered unspecified damage due to shelling.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>104</sup> <https://twitter.com/fallujahtv/status/707505257622933504>

<sup>105</sup> <http://www.herak.info/3958>

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ib6nkztjZfI>

<sup>107</sup> [https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq\\_News/status/496504713156624384](https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq_News/status/496504713156624384)

<sup>108</sup> <https://twitter.com/Aa83aa83aa/status/564374164430016512>

<sup>109</sup> <https://twitter.com/AyoobAlalawo/status/692698114260615168> ;

[https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq\\_News/status/692717691547684864](https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq_News/status/692717691547684864)

<sup>110</sup> <https://twitter.com/asas78asas/status/638698182004752384>

<sup>111</sup> <https://twitter.com/Mosqueanbar/status/648204529469661184>

<sup>112</sup> [https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq\\_News/status/646042605046730752](https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq_News/status/646042605046730752)

<sup>113</sup> <https://twitter.com/Herakiq/status/471656702262009856>



- al-Tawfiq Mosque (جامع التوفيق) - Social media accounts described explosives damage to the mosque as early as May 2014. On May 9, 2014 a Facebook account attributed to al-Tawfiq Mosque uploaded three photographs showing some damage to the minaret of the mosque, possibly as a result of shelling damage.<sup>114</sup> On August 14, 2014 another Twitter account shared photographs of damage to the mosque, reportedly after it was bombed by unknown forces. The photos show at least one hole in the mosque's ceiling.<sup>115</sup>
- al-Hidaya Mosque (جامع الهداية) - On July 21, 2015 Agency Certain News reported on Twitter that an Iraqi Government airstrike had caused unspecified damage to al-Hidaya Mosque.<sup>116</sup> On July 23, 2015 it was reported on the Iraqi National Army Twitter page that a government airstrike on the mosque had killed 20 ISIL militants who had been holding a meeting in the mosque.<sup>117</sup> It is unclear if this referred to the July 21, 2015 airstrike or a subsequent event. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.
- Shaker al Dahi Mosque (جامع شاکر الضاحي) - On May 31, 2015 a Twitter account of an imam shared photographs of damage to Shaker al Dahi Mosque.<sup>118</sup> On the same date another Twitter account shared additional photographs of exterior damage to the mosque as a result of airstrikes. For information on previous damage to this mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0083** in **Weekly Report 42-43**.
- al-Mujahirin Mosque (جامع المهاجرين) - Social media accounts have reported several incidents of damage to the mosque, including an airstrike damage on May 9, 2014 and shelling damage on June 27, 2015.<sup>119</sup>
- Abu Ayyub al-Ansari Mosque (جامع أبي أيوب الأنصاري) - Several videos have been released online showing damage to Ayyub al Ansari mosque after airstrikes. On February 1, 2016 Iraq News Center reported the first airstrikes on the mosque, allegedly carried out by the Iraqi Air Force and causing damage.<sup>120</sup> On February 2, 2014 News of Iraq released a video showing damage to the mosque.<sup>121</sup> On February 11, 2014 a photograph was shared on Twitter showing damage to the mosque, possibly as a result of the February 2, 2014 airstrike. On April 9, 2014 a video released online showed damage from aerial bombardments reportedly carried out by the Iraqi Air Force.<sup>122</sup> A similar video was released on July 23, 2015 showing damage from a "bombing", possibly an airstrike.<sup>123</sup> Abu Ayyub al-Ansari Mosque was also apparently used as a prison. On April 25, 2014 Chahed News reported that ISIL militants were holding 70 members of the Iraqi military inside the mosque.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/www.tawfeeqface.net/photos/a.574397915969743.1073741836.505661436176725/630807563662111/> ; <https://www.facebook.com/www.tawfeeqface.net/photos/a.574397915969743.1073741836.505661436176725/630807586995442/> ; <https://www.facebook.com/www.tawfeeqface.net/photos/a.574397915969743.1073741836.505661436176725/630807573662110/>

<sup>115</sup> <https://twitter.com/alamer124meme/status/632163615106166788>

<sup>116</sup> <https://twitter.com/editoryaqin/status/623557560193449985>

<sup>117</sup> [https://twitter.com/ArmY\\_Iq/status/624149173621764096](https://twitter.com/ArmY_Iq/status/624149173621764096)

<sup>118</sup> <https://twitter.com/alduferi1969/status/605037295780175872>

<sup>119</sup> [https://twitter.com/iraq\\_volcano/status/464804924992126976](https://twitter.com/iraq_volcano/status/464804924992126976)

<sup>120</sup> <https://twitter.com/NewsOfIraq/status/429493352451813376>

<sup>121</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHuKm76D1sQ>

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2BKHgV8IHF0>

<sup>123</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qml34wcp0qA>

<sup>124</sup> <https://twitter.com/chahednews01/status/459721563990798336>

- al-Badawi Mosque (جامع البديوي) - On July 30, 2014 a local Twitter account reported shelling near al-Badawi Mosque.<sup>125</sup> Al-Badawi Mosque had previously been included in a list of damaged mosques in Fallujah as a result of Iraqi Security Forces.<sup>126</sup> In early May 2014 two social media accounts documented damage to al-Badawi Mosque as a result of Iraqi Army shelling.<sup>127</sup>
- al-Hussein bin Ali Mosque (جامع الحسين بن علي) - Al-Hussein bin Ali Mosque was included in lists of damaged mosques in Fallujah published on May 13, 2014 and June 18, 2016.<sup>128</sup> The extent of the damage to the mosque was unspecified and no photographs were available at the time of publication.
- al-Mursalin Mosque (جامع المرسلين) - On February 24, 2014 Herak News published a video of minor damage to the exterior of al-Mursalin Mosque, allegedly a result of Iraqi government bombardment.<sup>129</sup>
- Prophet Saad bin Waqas Mosque (جامع سيدنا سعد بن ابي وقاص) - On April 4, 2014 the Youtube channel Ahl Sunnah published a video showing damage to the interior of Prophet Saad bin Waqas Mosque.<sup>130</sup> The mosque's minbar and mihrab have partially collapsed. On September 12, 2014 Baghdad Satellite Channel reported on Twitter that the mosque had been seriously damaged in an Iraqi government airstrike.<sup>131</sup>
- al-Mukarim Mosque (جامع المكرمين) - On August 10, 2014 Iraqi Spring published a video on Youtube showing damage to al-Mukarim Mosque, allegedly the result of an Iraqi government airstrike.<sup>132</sup> The airstrike appears to have caused the collapse of an exterior metal overhang and other minor damage in the mosque's courtyard.
- Yusuf al-Sidiq Mosque (جامع يوسف الصديق) - On January 2, 2014 Fallujah Channel reported on Twitter that an Iraqi government airstrike damaged Yusuf al-Sidiq Mosque.<sup>133</sup> On January 6, 2014 Thwar Aleashair published a Youtube video showing the damage, which includes minor damage to the mosque's minaret and debris in the exterior courtyard.<sup>134</sup>
- Hamoud al-Mahmound Mosque (جامع حمود المحمود) - On January 2, 2014 Fallujah Channel reported on Twitter that an Iraqi government airstrike caused serious damage to Hamoud al-Mahmound Mosque. On July 13, 2014 Bawabat Fajr al-Iraq reported on Twitter that another Iraqi government airstrike had hit Hamoud al-Mahmound Mosque.<sup>135</sup> In both instances the type of the damage was unspecified. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

<sup>125</sup> [https://twitter.com/3ajel\\_iraq/status/494339872509796353](https://twitter.com/3ajel_iraq/status/494339872509796353)

<sup>126</sup> <http://www.herak.info/3958>

<sup>127</sup> <https://twitter.com/asas78asas/status/464461370067812352> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-n50EwWmCWY>

<sup>128</sup> <http://www.herak.info/3958> ; <http://www.alkulasa.net/artical/1932/>

<sup>129</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQn3SFTztUk&feature=youtu.be>

<sup>130</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-G21E5NsR0>

<sup>131</sup> <https://twitter.com/tvbaghdad/status/510538038934384641>

<sup>132</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMSU4Ufqe6E>

<sup>133</sup> <https://twitter.com/fallujahtv/status/418733322622091264>

<sup>134</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAC9TwDfKBo>

<sup>135</sup> [https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq\\_News/status/488304996534861826](https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq_News/status/488304996534861826)

- al-Fayad Mosque (جامع الفياض) - On November 15, 2014 Twitter user published photographs of damage to al-Fayad Mosque. The damage was allegedly caused by an Iraqi government airstrike. The interior of the mosque is filled with debris and an exterior wall has been damaged. For more damage to this mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0019** in **Weekly Report 99-100**.
- Hamza Abbas Mosque (جامع حمزة عباس) - On August 17, 2014 Majlis Iraq published an article discussing damage to Hamza Abbas al-Issawi Mosque, allegedly the result of an Iraqi government airstrike.<sup>136</sup> According to the mosque's imam, this was the second strike on the mosque. This second strike consisted of nine rockets that caused serious damage to the mosque's exterior courtyard. Photographs show a two large holes in a wall next to the mosque's minbar. The interior floor is covered in debris from the wall and broken windows. Air conditioning units in the mosque courtyard were also seriously damaged.
- al-Bara bin Ezib Mosque (جامع البراء بن عازب) - On May 28, 2014 Herak News reported on Twitter that an Iraqi government airstrike hit al-Bara bin Ezib Mosque.<sup>137</sup> On August 26, 2014 Iraq News Center reported on Twitter that another Iraqi government airstrike had damaged the mosque.<sup>138</sup> In both instances the extent of the damage to the mosque was unspecified. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the status of mosques in Fallujah.

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Online Reporting:

AFP: <https://www.yahoo.com/news/despite-fears-iraq-militiamen-joined-battle-inside-fallujah-170114139.html>

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May 23, 2016: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/05/iraq-pm-declares-offensive-retake-fallujah-isil-160522220106703.html> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4I-vPCCBoU>

June 19, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfy4QGxv2oM>

June 21, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slQIlgQoPP4>

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<sup>136</sup> <http://www.majlis-iq.com/details-996.html>

<sup>137</sup> <https://twitter.com/Herakiq/status/471687149398392832>

<sup>138</sup> <https://twitter.com/Newsofireq/status/504298716271247360>



Al Kalusa: <http://www.alkulasa.net/artical/1932>

Al Rafidian Live: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GM9fv8qx3RI>

AP: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCSNSoIm3Hc>

Asharq Al-Awsat:

June 25, 2016: <http://english.aawsat.com/2016/06/article55353349/anbar-council-pmf-militants-stage-bigoted-crimes-fallujah>

June 29, 2015: <http://english.aawsat.com/2016/06/article55353572/al-hashd-al-shaabi-burns-homes-fallujah>

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Dunlap, W.G. (AFP Deputy Iraq Bureau Chief):

<https://twitter.com/wgdunlop/status/747738284843999232>

Fallujah TV:

August 5, 2014: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ib6nkztjZfl>

March 9, 2016: <https://twitter.com/fallujahtv/status/707505257622933504>

June 20, 2016: <https://twitter.com/fallujahtv/status/744906286383403008>

June 23, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BospOvDho1s>

June 28, 2016: <https://twitter.com/fallujahtv/status/747746381897433088>

Fajr al-Iraq:

July 28, 2014: [https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq\\_News/status/493652443389906945](https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq_News/status/493652443389906945)

August 5, 2014: [https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq\\_News/status/496504713156624384](https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq_News/status/496504713156624384)

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June 16, 2016: [https://twitter.com/pmu\\_english/status/743358164372885507](https://twitter.com/pmu_english/status/743358164372885507)

June 17, 2016: [https://twitter.com/pmu\\_english/status/743858075891699714](https://twitter.com/pmu_english/status/743858075891699714)

June 18, 2016: [https://twitter.com/pmu\\_english/status/744121620332175360](https://twitter.com/pmu_english/status/744121620332175360)

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Tawfiq Mosque:

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**al-Farouk Mosque (جامع الفاروق)**



al-Farouk Mosque prior to damage  
(DigitalGlobe; July 20, 2012)



al-Farouk Mosque with visible damage to the roof  
(DigitalGlobe; December 8, 2014)

**al-Hassan bin Ali Mosque (جامع الحسن بن علي)**



al-Hassan bin Ali Mosque prior to destruction  
(DigitalGlobe; July 20, 2012)



al-Hassan bin Ali Mosque after destruction  
(DigitalGlobe; January 29, 2016)

**al-Kabir Mosque (جامع الكبير)**



al-Kabir Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; July 20, 2012)



al-Kabir Mosque with damage with damage to the southern and exterior walls (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)





Minor damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (Twitter ; September 1, 2015)



Minor damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (Twitter; September 1, 2015)



Minor damage to the exterior al-Kabir Mosque (Twitter; September 1, 2015)



**al-Shamari Mosque (جامع الشمري)**



al-Shamari Mosque complex prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; November 30, 2014)



al-Shamari Mosque with a hole in the roof and in the courtyard (DigitalGlobe; March 5, 2016)



Minor damage to dome on entrance gate to al-Shamari Mosque complex (Twitter; August 10, 2015)





Damage and debris in interior of al-Shamari Mosque (Twitter; August 10, 2015)



Damage to al-Shamari Mosque courtyard (Fajr al-Iraq News/Twitter; September 21, 2015)



Debris in interior of al-Shamari Mosque (Twitter; August 10, 2015)



Damage and debris in al-Shamari Mosque library (Fajr al-Iraq News/Twitter; September 21, 2015)





Damage and debris in al-Shamari Mosque library (Fajr al-Iraq News/Twitter; September 21, 2015)

**al-Tawfiq Mosque (جامع التوفيق)**



al-Tawfiq Mosque prior to damage  
(DigitalGlobe; July 20, 2012)



al-Tawfiq Mosque with a hole in the roof  
(DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Photograph of Tawfiq Mosque showing damage to the minaret possibly as a result of shelling (Tawfiq Mosque; May 9, 2014)





A photograph reporting to show a hole through the ceiling of Tawfiq Mosque (Twitter; August 14, 2015)



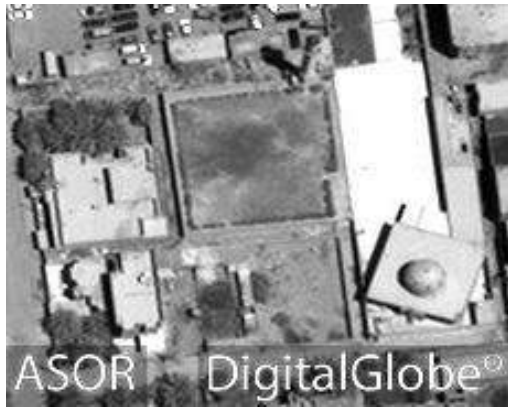
A photograph reporting to show a hole and damaged ceiling fan in Tawfiq Mosque (Twitter; August 14, 2015)



A photograph reporting to show unidentified material damage to Tawfiq Mosque (Twitter; August 14, 2015)



**al-Hidaya Mosque (جامع الهداية)**



al-Hidaya Mosque prior to damage  
(DigitalGlobe; July 20, 2012)



al-Hidaya Mosque with damage visible to the  
complex wall (DigitalGlobe; March 5, 2016)

**Shaker al Dahi Mosque (جامع شاکر الضاحي)**



Damage to the outside of Shaker al Dahi Mosque (Twitter; May 31, 2015)





Exterior damage to Shaker al Dahi Mosque (Twitter; May 31, 2015)



Exterior damage to Shaker al Dahi Mosque (Twitter; May 31, 2015)



**al-Mujahirin Mosque (جامع المهاجرين)**



al-Mujahirin Mosque with no visible damage (DigitalGlobe; March 5, 2016)



al-Mujahirin Mosque with damage to the mosque and exterior wall (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)

**Abu Ayyub al-Ansari Mosque (جامع أبي أيوب الأنصاري)**



Abu Ayyub al-Ansari Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; July 20, 2012)



Abu Ayyub al-Ansari Mosque with damage to roof (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Interior damage to Ayyub al Ansari Mosque (Twitter; February 11, 2014)



**al-Badawi Mosque (جامع البدوي)**



Damage to Badawi Mosque (Voice of Iraq's Sunnis/Twitter; May 8, 2014)

**al-Hussein bin Ali Mosque (جامع الحسين بن علي)**



al-Hussein bin Ali Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; July 20, 2012)



al-Hussein bin Ali Mosque with damage to associated buildings (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)

**al-Mursalin Mosque (جامع المرسلين)**



Video still of damage to al-Mursalin Mosque (Herak News/Youtube; February 24, 2014)

**Prophet Saad bin Waqas Mosque (جامع سيدنا سعد بن ابي وقاص)**



Video still of damage to Prophet Saad bin Waqas Mosque (Ahl Sunnah/Youtube; April 4, 2014)

**al-Mukarim Mosque (جامع المكرمين)**



al-Mukarim Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; July 20, 2012)



al-Mukarim Mosque with damage to the exterior (DigitalGlobe; December 8, 2014)





Damage to exterior of al-Mukarim Mosque (Iraqi Spring/Youtube; August 10, 2014)



Damage to exterior of al-Mukarim Mosque (Iraqi Spring/Youtube; August 10, 2014)

Yusuf al-Sidiq Mosque (جامع يوسف الصديق)



Yusuf al-Sidiq Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; July 20, 2012)



Yusuf al-Sidiq Mosque with debris visible near minaret (DigitalGlobe; March 5, 2016)



Debris in exterior courtyard of Yusuf al-Sidiq Mosque (Thwar Aleashair/Youtube; January 6, 2014)



Damage to minaret and wall of Yusuf al-Sidiq Mosque (Thwar Aleashair/Youtube; January 6, 2014)

**Hamoud Mahmoud Mosque (جامع حمود المحمود)**



Hamoud Mahmoud Mosque prior to damage (DigitalGlobe; July 20, 2012)



Hamoud Mahmoud Mosque with visible damage (DigitalGlobe; December 8, 2014)



**al-Fayad Mosque** (جامع الفياض)



Damage and debris in interior of al-Fayad Mosque (Twitter; November 15, 2014)



Damage to exterior wall of al-Fayad Mosque (Twitter; November 15, 2014)

**Hamza Abbas Mosque (جامع حمزة عباس)**



Damage and debris in interior of Hamza Abbas al-Isawi Mosque (Majlis Iraq; August 17, 2014)



Damage and debris in interior of Hamza Abbas al-Isawi Mosque (Majlis Iraq; August 17, 2014)





Damage and debris in interior of Hamza Abbas al-Isawi Mosque (Majlis Iraq; August 17, 2014)



Damage to entrance of Sheikh Hamza Abbas al-Isawi Mosque (Majlis Iraq; August 17, 2014)





Damage to exterior of Sheikh Hamza Abbas al-Isawi Mosque (Majlis Iraq; August 17, 2014)

**IHI 16-0025**

**Report Date:** July 20, 2016

**Site Name:** al-Habib Muhammad Mosque (مسجد الحبيب محمد)

**Date of Incident:** July 19, 2016

**Location:** Husayniyah (حسينية), Hit district, al-Anbar Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Alleged Iraqi government airstrike destroys mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 19, 2016 Urgent Iraq reported that Iraqi government warplanes bombed al-Habib Muhammad Mosque in the village of Husayniyah just north of Hit in al-Anbar Governorate.<sup>139</sup> The mosque appears to be completely destroyed, with the exception of its free-standing minaret and the gate to the complex. Airstrikes, carried out by the US-led coalition, have been frequent in and around Hit as Iraqi forces continue to advance north of the city and clear areas from ISIL militants.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:**

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Urgent Iraq: [https://twitter.com/iraqi\\_spring/status/755479752811638784](https://twitter.com/iraqi_spring/status/755479752811638784)

Network of Sunnis: <https://twitter.com/ahlalsunna2/status/755491586734260225>

Hit Love Unending: <https://www.facebook.com/هيت-عشق-لاينتهي-1003828659678541/>

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<sup>139</sup> [https://twitter.com/iraqi\\_spring/status/755479752811638784](https://twitter.com/iraqi_spring/status/755479752811638784)



Pre-damage photograph of al-Habib Muhammad Mosque (Urgent Iraq/Twitter; July 19, 2016)



Destruction of of al-Habib Muhammad Mosque (Urgent Iraq/Twitter; July 19, 2016)





Destruction of al-Habib Muhammad Mosque (Network of Sunnis/Twitter; July 19, 2016)



Destruction of al-Habib Muhammad Mosque (Hit Love Unending; July 19, 2016)