

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

NEA-PSHSS-14-001

Weekly Report 105–106 — August 3 - 18, 2016

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## Executive Summary

During the reporting period, the northern wall of the Aleppo Citadel was struck and severely damaged, and airstrikes also hit a cultural center and mosque in the city. Fighting in Aleppo escalated following Eid al-Fitr, resulting in heightened suffering for the city's trapped inhabitants and significant damage to the Old City of Aleppo and the Aleppo Citadel. Armed opposition groups detonated multiple tunnel bombs in the area, and Syrian Regime and Russian forces have responded with airstrikes. Nearly all factions in the conflict have poured reinforcements into the embattled city — the regime and the opposition view control of Aleppo as crucial to military success. As the conflict in Aleppo intensifies, undoubtedly more damage will be inflicted upon the city's already fragile and threatened critical services, infrastructure, and cultural heritage. Airstrikes and artillery bombardments on hospitals, schools, residential areas, and houses of worship are daily occurrences. Critical shortages of water, food, and medical supplies/treatment threaten hundreds of thousands of civilians, with no end in sight, and vast swathes of the city lie in ruin.

The situation throughout the rest of Syria is equally worrying. Fighting has damaged active places of worship across the country, including mosques in Hreitan, Adnan, Daraya, Teir Ma'ala, as well as a church in Idlib. Multiple historic sites have been damaged, including a bath complex and mosque in Manbij and a 12th-century CE mosque in Ma'arat al-Numan. IDPs are allegedly living in Byzantine buildings in Bariqa, Quneitra Governorate.

Iraqi security and Peshmerga continue to advance in the areas to the north and south of the city of Mosul, conducting clearing operations in the recaptured areas. The offensive against ISIL has unfortunately resulted in collateral damage to Mosul University, one of Iraq's most esteemed higher education establishments. ISIL has seized and repurposed university buildings, including laboratories that have been reportedly used by ISIL to build explosives.

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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.

## Key Points

- US-led coalition airstrikes have destroyed or damaged many buildings on the Mosul University campus, some of which were reportedly being used by ISIL militants (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0026**).
- ISIL militants reportedly destroyed a 10th-century CE Syrian Orthodox Church in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate in order to expand a nearby mosque (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0027**).
- New video footage shows damage to a mosque in Hreitan, Aleppo Governorate, reportedly the result of a SARG airstrike earlier in 2016 (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0120**).
- Video footage shows the current status of a historic bath complex and mosque in Manbij, Aleppo Governorate following the expulsion of ISIL militants from the city (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0121**).
- Video footage shows mortar fire striking the minarets of two mosques in Daraya, Rif Dimashq Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0122**).
- A SARG airstrike reportedly damaged a 12th-century CE mosque in Ma'arat al-Numan, Idlib Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0123**).
- SARG forces allegedly detonated explosives on the Citadel of Aleppo, damaging fortification walls and the Citadel Museum (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0124**).
- DGAM reports looting at several archaeological sites in the al-Hawl region of al-Hasakah Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0125**).
- Alleged Russian airstrike damaged a church in the city of Idlib (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0126**).
- A SARG airstrike allegedly damaged a mosque in Teir Ma'ala, Homs Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0127**).
- Reported SARG airstrikes damaged two mosques in the city of Idlib (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0128**).
- A Russian airstrike allegedly damaged a mosque in Anadan, Aleppo Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0129**).
- Video footage shows IDPs living in the ruins of Byzantine buildings in Bariqa, Quneitra Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0130**).
- SARG or Russian airstrikes allegedly destroyed a cultural center and a mosque in the city of Aleppo (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0131**).

## Heritage Timeline

August 16, 2016

**DGAM** published an article titled “الوضع الراهن للمواقع الأثرية في ريف إدلب” (The current status of archaeological sites in rural Idlib).” The DGAM provided a short update on several of the Dead Cities sites in Idlib. Most are in good or unchanged condition.

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=239&id=2030>

- Several media outlets published articles discussing the **Government Accountability Office** report “**Cultural Property: Protection of Iraqi and Syrian Antiquities.**”  
<http://www.courthousenews.com/2016/08/16/art-experts-worry-about-islamic-state-looting.htm>  
<http://artforum.com/news/id=62931>
  - *Curbed* published an article titled “**Syria's destroyed Palmyra Arch will be re-created in New York City this fall**” (by Rachel Sugar). A replica of Palmyra’s Triumphal Arch will be displayed in New York this September.  
<http://ny.curbed.com/2016/8/16/12505710/syria-palmyra-arch-3d-printed-sculpture>
  - **SNHR** published a post titled “**Gov forces targeted mosque in Aleppo city, Aug 15-SNHR.**” An airstrike damaged al-Hassan Mosque in Aleppo. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0131.**  
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/16/gov-forces-targeted-mosque-aleppo-city-aug-15-snhr/>
- August 15, 2016
- **DGAM** published an article titled “**Updating report on the status of conservation of Syrian world heritage sites.**” The DGAM has provided a short update on the six Syrian cultural heritage sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2029>
  - **The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO)** published a report titled “**Cultural Property: Protection of Iraqi and Syrian Antiquities.**” GAO was asked to examine current measures to protect Iraqi and Syrian cultural property.  
<http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/679061.pdf>
  - *The Hill* published an article titled “**GAO: Art world wants US to better protect artifacts in Iraq, Syria**” (by Rebecca Kheel). According to a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, art-market experts want the US Defense Department to become more involved in preventing the destruction and looting of cultural artifacts in Iraq and Syria. Experts gave the GAO seven suggestions for ways the U.S. government can better protect artifacts from ISIL and other groups.  
<http://thehill.com/policy/defense/291502-gao-art-world-wants-us-government-to-better-protect-art-in-iraq-syria>

- Counter Punch* published an article titled “**As Our Cultural Heritage in Syria Hemorrhages, Villagers Work to Restore It**” (by Franklin Lamb). The author discusses recent damage to cultural heritage sites in Syria and recent restoration and repair efforts by civilians in the Qalamoun region.  
<http://www.counterpunch.org/2016/08/15/as-our-cultural-heritage-in-syria-hemorrhages-villagers-work-to-restore-it/>
  - Federal Register* published a statement titled “**Import Restrictions Imposed on Archaeological and Ethnological Material of Syria.**” This document amends the U.S. Customs and Border Protection regulations to reflect the imposition of import restrictions on archaeological and ethnological material of Syria pursuant to the recent Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act.  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2016/08/15/2016-19491/import-restrictions-imposed-on-archaeological-and-ethnological-material-of-syria>
- August 14, 2016
- SNHR** published a post titled “**Alleged Russian forces targeted Al Kabir Mosque in Anadan city in Aleppo governorate in August 3.**” An airstrike severely damaged a mosque in Anadan. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0129.**  
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/14/alleged-russian-forces-targeted-al-kabir-mosque-anadan-city-aleppo-governorate-august-13/>
- August 13, 2016
- SNHR** published a post titled “**Victims died in government forces shelling on Shu’ayb Mosque in Idlib city in August 13.**” Shelling damaged a mosque in Idlib. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0128.**  
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/13/victims-died-government-forces-shelling-shuayb-mosque-idlib-city-august-13/>
- August 12, 2016
- ISNA* published an article titled “میخواستند آثار تاریخی عراق را به ایران بفرستند (Artifacts sent from Iraq to Iran).” Iran's Deputy Director of Cultural Heritage, Mohammad Hassan Talebian, reports a number of Iraqi antiquities were seized at the country's border with Iran, and are returned being to Iraq.  
<http://www.isna.ir/news/95050112921/>
- SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Abu Bakr Al Sedeiq Mosque in Teir Ma’ala town in Homs governorate in August 12.**” An airstrike reportedly damaged a mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0127.**  
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/12/government-forces-targeted-abu-bakr-al-sedeiq-mosque-teir-maala-town-homs-governorate-august-12/>

August 11, 2016

*Thiqa News* published a video titled “قوات الأسد تقوم بتفجير سور قلعة حلب” (Assad’s forces blew up the wall of the ancient Citadel of Aleppo out of fear of rebel advancement).” SARG forces allegedly detonated a section of the Citadel of Aleppo in order to deter opposition advancement on the area. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0124.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khh1-e5SMYc>

- **DGAM** published an article titled “**UNESCO Decision on the Syrian World Heritage properties.**” The UNESCO World Heritage Committee adopted the Declaration on the Protection of the Syrian World Heritage during the 40th Session of the committee in July 2016 in Istanbul.  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2027>
- **DGAM** published an article titled “**Commencement of a project to documenting the old city of Damascus using a drone.**” DGAM has partnered with Khani Media Company to document the sites of Old Damascus using a drone.  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2025>
- **DGAM** published an article titled “**A Field Visit to The Archeological Sites and Hills South of Al\_Hasakeh.**” DGAM officials discovered several sites in al-Hasakah Governorate had been affected by looting or otherwise damaged by ISIL militants and “antiquities gangs.” **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0125.**  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2024>
- **SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Al Sheikh Fatouh Mosque in Idlib city in August 11.**” An airstrike damaged a mosque in the city of Idlib. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0128.**  
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/11/government-forces-targeted-al-sheikh-fatouh-mosque-idlib-city-august-11/>

August 10, 2016

**DGAM** published an article titled “**The Statue of Al-Lat transferred to Damascus National Museum from Palmyra.**” The Lion of al-Lat statue, damaged by ISIL militants during their occupation of Palmyra, was transferred to Damascus for repair.

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2020>

August 9, 2016

**DGAM** published an article titled “**Prof. Dr. Balaz Major was honoured with the DGAM Shield.**” A member of the Syro-Hungarian Archaeological Mission (SHAM) at Qalaat Marqab received a DGAM Shield award for his work at the site.

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2015>

- **DGAM** published an article titled “**Eng. Yves Ublemann was honoured with the DGAM Shield.**” The director and founder of ICONEM was awarded a DGAM Shield in recognition of his efforts to support the DGAM through documenting archaeological sites and the training DGAM employees.

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2018>

August 8, 2016

**SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Grand Umayyad Mosque in Ma’aret An-Nu’mān city in Idlib governorate in August 8.**” A SARG airstrike allegedly damaged a 12th-century CE mosque in Maaret al-Numan. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0123.**

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/08/government-forces-targeted-grand-umayyad-mosque-maaret-numan-city-idlib-governorate-august-8/>

- *The Guardian* published an article titled “**Lost cities #1: Babylon – how war almost erased ‘mankind’s greatest heritage site’**” (by Justin Marozzi). The history of Babylon, including modern damage to the site caused by war and neglect, is discussed.

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/aug/08/lost-cities-1-babylon-iraq-war-history-mankind-greatest-heritage-site>

- *The Art Newspaper* published an article titled “**Syria before the war: nomads and foundry workers in Berlin photo exhibition**” (by Catherine Hickley). “Contrast Syria,” a new exhibition by Mohamad Al Roumi at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, combines old photographs of the nomadic tribes of the northeastern Syrian steppes with images of workers in Damascus and Aleppo in the years before the civil war.

<http://theartnewspaper.com/news/news/syria-before-the-war-nomads-and-foundry-workers-in-berlin-photo-exhibition/>

August 7, 2016

*AFP News Agency* published a video report titled “**At ancient Syria site, IS discovers then destroys treasures.**” According to Khaled Ahmo of the Hasakah Governorate Antiquities Department, ISIL militants looted and destroyed at least 40 percent of the site of Tell Ajaja before being driven from the area in February 2016.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCzc0uJElGs>

- Multiple news outlets published articles discussing the **destruction of much of Tell Ajaja** by ISIL militants before it was captured by Kurdish fighters earlier this year.

<http://aawsat.com/home/article/708516/-تل-عجاجة-موقع-أثرى-آشوري-في-سوريا-خربة-المتظرفون>

<http://www.lefigaro.fr/culture/2016/08/08/03004-20160808ARTFIG00095-syrie-le-site-archeologique-de-tell-ajaja-vandalise-par-daech.php>

<http://internacional.estadao.com.br/noticias/geral,estado-islamico-destruiu-estatuas-do-sitio-de-tell-ajaja-na-siria,10000067666>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/08/09/isis-destroyed-almost-half-of-an-ancient-city-in-syria/>
  - Voice of Iraq* published an article titled “ ندوة ثقافية بصرية ابتهاجاً بإدراج الاهوار على لائحة التراث العالمي (Visual cultural symposium to celebrate the inclusion of the marshes on the World Heritage List).” A symposium was held at the Culture and Arts Palace in Basra to celebrate the recent addition of several new Iraqi archaeological and natural sites to the UNESCO World Heritage List.

<http://www.sotaliraq.com/newsitem.php?id=343636>
  - NDTV* published an article titled “**Climate change can destroy world heritage sites.**” Cultural heritage sites all over the world are at risk from both terrorism and climate change.

<http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/climate-change-can-destroy-world-heritage-sites-1441248>
  - Art Lyst* published an article titled “**Syria Explored In A Living History At The Aga Khan Museum Toronto.**” A new exhibition “Syria: A Living History” will open at The Aga Khan Museum Toronto on October 15, 2016. The exhibition, which represents collaboration between eight international museums and private collections and covers 5000 years of Syrian history, will run through February 27, 2017.

<http://www.artlyst.com/articles/syria-explored-in-a-living-history-at-the-aga-khan-museum-toronto>
- August 4, 2016
- Syria Direct* published an article titled “**80% of Aleppo Old City square destroyed, residents lack tools to rebuild**” (by Justin Schuster et al.). A Russian airstrike on July 11, 2016 allegedly caused severe damage to Bizzeh Square and nearby historic buildings in the Bab al-Maqam neighborhood of Aleppo.
- <http://syriadirect.org/news/in-old-city-of-aleppo-unesco-world-heritage-site-bears-the-scars-of-war/>

- *Al Watan* published an article titled “جرائم الحرب الأثرية” **(Archaeological war crimes)** (by Ali al-Qim). Damage to archaeological sites across Syria by all parties in the Syrian civil war is discussed.  
<http://alwatan.sy/archives/64592>

August 2, 2016

*The Algemeiner* published an article titled “**Prophet Nahum Tomb in Iraqi Kurdistan Falling Into Disrepair.**” The tomb of the Prophet Nahum, located in the town of al-Qosh, suffers from neglect and has fallen into disrepair.  
<http://www.algemeiner.com/2016/08/02/prophet-nahum-tomb-in-iraqi-kurdistan-falling-into-disrepair/#>



## Military and Political Context

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

1. Aleppo Governorate:
  - During the reporting period, intense clashes continued in the city of Aleppo as a coalition of opposition forces tried to break the SARG encirclement of the eastern-held opposition area of the city. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime has sent a reported 3,000 reinforcements, including members of Iranian Shia militias and Hezbollah, to the city. Meanwhile, SARG and Russian airstrikes have engaged in a constant bombardment of the city.<sup>2</sup>
  - On August 4, the Russian military and Syrian state media accused Syrian opposition forces of deploying "toxic substances" against SARG-held neighborhoods in Aleppo. The attack, Syria and Russia claim, took place on August 3, 2016 and killed seven people.<sup>3</sup>
  - On August 4, suspected Russian airstrikes struck two IDP camps near the opposition-held town of Atareb, killing at least two civilians and wounding 30 more.<sup>4</sup>
  - On August 6, opposition groups in Aleppo pushed out SARG forces from the southern Ramouseh district of the city, capturing the artillery school. This action effectively 'broke the siege' on Aleppo.<sup>5</sup>
  - On August 11, UN officials announced that they were investigating evidence of a chemical gas attack by SARG forces against opposition-held areas of Aleppo.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36961184> ; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/03/syrian-rebels-advance-on-assad-forces-aleppo-siege> ; <https://www.yahoo.com/news/syrian-regime-forces-roll-back-rebel-gains-aleppo-090429891.html> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/opposition-forces-launch-offensive-to.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37006859> ; <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/syria-situation-report-july-30-august-5-2016> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-aleppo-idUSKCN10J149> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/08/aleppo-battle-assad-sends-thousands-reinforcements-160809045231375.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-un-idUSKCN10J22Y> ; [http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/opposition-forces-break-siege-of-aleppo\\_19.html](http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/opposition-forces-break-siege-of-aleppo_19.html) ; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/08/battles-rage-across-aleppo-as-assad-regime-syria-fights-to-quash-rebels> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-aleppo-idUSKCN10K10D> ; <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/germany-urges-supervised-access-syrian-city-aleppo-41323197> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37083029> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-july-14.html> ; <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/syria-situation-report-august-12-18-2016>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36970220>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-aleppo-idUSKCN10F23H>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.rferl.org/content/syria-aleppo-clashes-reported-siege/27905941.html> ; <http://www.france24.com/en/20160806-syrian-islamist-rebels-storm-key-aleppo-artillery-base-siege> ; [http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/opposition-forces-break-siege-of-aleppo\\_19.html](http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/opposition-forces-break-siege-of-aleppo_19.html) ; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/08/battles-rage-across-aleppo-as-assad-regime-syria-fights-to-quash-rebels> ; <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21704640-first-good-news-many-months-syrias-suffering-city-rebels-break>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37049555>

- On August 12, the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) announced their final assault against ISIL in Manbij, finally recapturing the city after an offensive lasting 73 days. SDF fighters are now in control of Manbij and are conducting clearing operations in the city.<sup>7</sup>
  - On August 14, the SDF announced the creation of the al-Bab Military Council to be tasked with liberating the city of al-Bab.<sup>8</sup>
2. Idlib Governorate:
- During the reporting period, SARG and suspected Russian airstrikes targeted opposition-held areas across Idlib Governorate including Idlib city, Areeha, Ma'arat al-Numan, and Saraqib. The use of incendiary bombs was reported.<sup>9</sup>
  - On August 4, a group calling itself the 'General Foundation for Prisoners' Affairs' demanded the release of prisoners from Syrian jails in exchange for the bodies of five Russian military personnel, killed when their helicopter was shot down on August 1, 2016.<sup>10</sup>
  - On August 15, an ISIL suicide bomber targeted a bus of Syrian opposition fighters at the entrance to an IDP camp located near the Atmeh border crossing, killing more than 30 people.<sup>11</sup>
3. Homs Governorate:
- On August 7, ISIL militants attacked a military base housing US-backed fighters near the al-Tanf border crossing. The militants were unable to breach the defenses of the camp.<sup>12</sup>
  - On August 8, the Russian Defense Ministry reported that they had launched six long-range missiles on ISIL targets northeast of the city of Palmyra.<sup>13</sup>
4. Raqqa Governorate:
- On August 5, Denmark began carrying out airstrikes on ISIL targets in Syria beginning with strikes against ISIL targets in the city of Raqqa.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-islamic-state-idUSKCN10N178> ; <http://www.anfenglish.com/kurdistan/manbij-military-council-we-will-launch-the-final-offensive-on-isis> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37066304> ; <https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2016/08/13/backed-syrian-force-captures-key-islamic-state-stronghold-manbij/642khBgTh4bJMLrxC3KEXN/story.html> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/08/western-backed-sdf-forces-make-advances-isis-syria-turkey-border/> ; <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounders/syria-situation-report-july-30-august-5-2016> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/08/syrian-army-repel-armed-oppositions-advance-aleppo/> ; <https://www.yahoo.com/news/us-backed-fighters-savour-victory-over-manbij-152624964.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-manbij-idUSKCN10H079> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/08/islamic-state-strives-keep-final-position-manbij-sdf-gets-closer-liberating-city/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/08/syrian-democratic-forces-aim-capture-al-bab-call-coalition-support/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/08082016> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/08/syria-war-deaths-air-strikes-hit-idlib-hospital-160807095413025.html> ; <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/mena/2016/08/08/new-incendiary-attacks-in-syria-linked-to-russian-bombs/> ; <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/08/08/russian-jets-drop-thermite-bombs-on-syrian-city/> ; <http://uk.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-idUKKCN10L1WL> ; <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/germany-urges-supervised-access-syrian-city-aleppo-41323197>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-helicopte-idUSKCN10F2FD>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37083029> ; <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounders/syria-situation-report-august-12-18-2016>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-border-idUSKCN10I0J4>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37006859>

- On August 11, ISIL media Amaq News Agency accused Russia of conducting airstrikes that cut-off the water supply to the city of Raqqa. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that at least 30 people were killed and 70 wounded in the strike. The Russian defense ministry confirmed the airstrikes, but stated that their aircraft had targeted a training camp and chemical weapons factory.<sup>15</sup>
- 5. Deir ez Zor Governorate:
  - On August 6-7, US-led coalition airstrikes targeted and destroyed “an estimated \$11 million worth of oil and trucks” in a single large airstrike.<sup>16</sup>
  - On August 14, ISIL militants launched an attack against a SARG security checkpoint in the village of Tharda. SARG forces launched an attack against the ISIL-held district of Hamidiya.<sup>17</sup>
- 6. Rif Dimashq Governorate:
  - On August 3, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) conducted an airstrike against a Hezbollah convoy near the village of Maarba.<sup>18</sup>
  - On August 8-10, clashes erupted between Jaish al-Islami and SARG forces in Eastern Ghouta.<sup>19</sup>
- 7. Latakia Governorate:
  - On August 7-10, SARG forces captured the town of Kinsaba after clashes with Jaish al-Fatah.<sup>20</sup>
- 8. Al-Hasakah Syria:
  - On August 16, ISIL militants launched a mortar attack against a YPG headquarters in the village of Azawi.<sup>21</sup>
- 9. Suwayda Governorate:
  - On August 3-5, prison riots erupted in the Suwayda Central Prison, leading to the capture of sections of the prison by hundreds of detainees. SARG forces later recaptured the prison, killing at least eight detainees.<sup>22</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, al-Tanf, and Tal Abyad.<sup>23</sup>
- During the reporting period, SARG and Russian airstrikes were constant over the governorates of Idlib, Aleppo, as well as reported over Homs, Deir ez-Zor, and Latakia.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounders/syria-situation-report-august-3-11-2016>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37043068> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37044615> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/08/raffa-30-killed-50-injured-russian-strikes/>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2016/08/09/islamic-state-oil-trucks-destroyed-massive-strike/88459864/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/08/islamic-state-militants-attack-regime-forces-eastern-syria/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounders/syria-situation-report-august-3-11-2016>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounders/syria-situation-report-august-3-11-2016>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounders/syria-situation-report-august-3-11-2016>

<sup>21</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/08/islamic-state-militants-attack-ygp-positions-hasakah/>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounders/syria-situation-report-august-3-11-2016>

<sup>23</sup> See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [903037](#), [905752](#), [906953](#), [907040](#), [907326](#), [908760](#), [909969](#), [911400](#), [913217](#), [914062](#), [914084](#), [914333](#), [915652](#)

<sup>24</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-july-14.html>

- On August 3-4, Syrian opposition Salafi-Jihadist group 'Jabhat Asala wa-Tanmiya' announced their split with the US-backed 'New Syrian Army.' The group continues to operate, fighting against ISIL in eastern areas Syria.<sup>25</sup>
- On August 8, the BBC released exclusive pictures from June 2016 showing the presence of British Special Forces thought to be securing the perimeter of the New Syrian Army al-Tanf Base, located on the Syria-Iraq border.<sup>26</sup>
- On August 11, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu discussed Turkey's intention to begin joint operations with Russia against ISIL in Syria. Cavusoglu stated that Turkish jets would soon participate in anti-ISIL airstrikes inside Syria.<sup>27</sup>
- On August 16, Russia conducted its first airstrikes from an Iranian air base against ISIL targets in Syria. Russia used the Hamadan air base located in northwestern Iran, flying over another country's airspace, possibly Iraq or Turkey, and conducting airstrikes on ISIL targets in Aleppo, Idlib, and Deir ez Zor Governorates. According to the Russian Defense Ministry, Russian fighter jets from Russia's Hmeimem air base, located in Latakia Governorate, escorted the planes en route from Iran.<sup>28</sup>
- On August 16, Human Rights Watch released a report accusing SARG and Russian forces of using incendiary weapons against opposition-held areas. HRW confirmed at least 18 incendiary weapons attacks in the last 9 weeks in the cities of Aleppo and Idlib.<sup>29</sup>

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

1. Ninawa Governorate:
  - During the reporting period, local activist groups reported US-led coalition airstrikes on ISIL targets in the city of Mosul, including at least one strike on Mosul University.<sup>30</sup>
  - On August 4, Kurdish Peshmerga forces launched an offensive against an ISIL headquarters in the village of Omar Qabisa, located in the Bashiqa District, north of the city of Mosul. The offensive killed at least 12 ISIL militants and wounded dozens more.<sup>31</sup>
  - On August 7, Iraqi security forces, backed by US-led coalition airstrikes, repelled an ISIL attack on the "western and eastern banks of the Tigris, south of Qayyarah and west of Makhmour," killing 104 militants.<sup>32</sup>
  - On August 11, repairs on the Khazir Bridge, spanning the Great Zab River, were reported to have begun in order to facilitate Peshmerga forces in their advance towards Mosul. The bridge had been previously blown up by ISIL.<sup>33</sup>
  - On August 14, Iraqi security and Kurdish Peshmerga forces captured four ISIL-held villages north of the city of Mosul.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>25</sup> <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-july-30-august-5-2016>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-37015915>

<sup>27</sup> <https://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/32305409/turkey-offers-russia-joint-operations-against-is-in-syria/>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-russia-iran-idUSKCN10R0PA> ; [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/russia-uses-iranian-air-base-to-bomb-syria/2016/08/16/6b2a30e2-6393-11e6-96c0-37533479f3f5\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/russia-uses-iranian-air-base-to-bomb-syria/2016/08/16/6b2a30e2-6393-11e6-96c0-37533479f3f5_story.html)

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/08/16/syria/russia-incendiary-weapons-burn-aleppo-idlib>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.mosulyoon.net/2016/08/07/ماذا-حدث-في-معمل-اسمنت-يادوش/> ; <https://www.facebook.com/MosulEyee/posts/975748499213319>

<sup>31</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/08/peshmerga-forces-bomb-isis-headquarters-north-mosul-killing-wounding-dozens-militants/>

<sup>32</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/iraq-situation-report-august-3-8-2016.html>

<sup>33</sup> <http://rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/110820164>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/08/iraq-troops-advance-isil-held-mosul-160814054001692.html>

- On August 15, Kurdish Peshmerga forces recaptured 12 ISIL-held villages in the Khazir district.<sup>35</sup>
- 2. Kirkuk Governorate:
  - On August 4, the UNHCR received reports that ISIL militants had captured “up to 3,000 IDPs...from villages in Hawija District.” The reports stated that ISIL militants had immediately executed 12 of the IDPs.<sup>36</sup>
- 3. Al Anbar Governorate:
  - On August 3, Iraqi security forces, including units from the federal police, the army, border guards, and tribal fighters along with US-led coalition airstrikes captured the al-Waleed border crossing, located at the Iraqi border with Syria, from ISIL.<sup>37</sup>
  - On August 11, the Kurdish Regional Security Council reported that their forces conducted a joint raid with US forces near al-Qaim. The raid killed ISIL financier Sami Jassem Mohammed al-Juburi.<sup>38</sup>

**Other Key Points:**

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Albu Hayat, Baghdadi, Beiji, Haditha, Hit, Kisik, Mosul, Qaim, Qayyarah, Ramadi, Sinjar, Sultan Abdallah, and Tal Afar.<sup>39</sup>

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

- On August 4, the Egyptian army announced that a targeted airstrike against ISIL-affiliate ‘Sinai Peninsula’ killed the head of the organization, Abu Doaa al-Ansari, along with 45 other militants.<sup>40</sup>
- On August 8, ISIL took responsibility for a suicide attack that killed at least 70 people at a hospital in Quetta, Pakistan. A Pakistani faction of the Taliban also claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>41</sup>
- On August 12, the US Department of Defense reported that a July 26, 2016 airstrike had killed Hafiz Sayed Khan, the leader of ISIL-Khorasan in Afghanistan.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>35</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/08/kurdish-peshmerga-forces-expel-isis-12-villages-north-iraq-kill-160-jihadis/>

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-capture-idUSKCN10G0PT> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36988900> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/iraq-situation-report-august-3-8-2016.html>

<sup>37</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/08/iraq-situation-report-august-3-8-2016.html>

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.yahoo.com/news/iraq-kurds-financier-killed-joint-raid-us-163611972.html>

<sup>39</sup> See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [903037](#), [905752](#), [906953](#), [907040](#), [907326](#), [908760](#), [909969](#), [911400](#), [913217](#), [914062](#), [914084](#), [914333](#), [915652](#)

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.yahoo.com/news/egypt-air-strike-kills-head-sinai-army-181124953.html> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/08/egypt-army-isis-sinai-160804174637807.html>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/08/pakistan-blast-quetta-hospital-lawyer-killed-160808050839643.html>

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/913900/isis-leader-in-afghanistan-targeted-in-airstrike>

## Incident Reports: Syria

SHI 16-0120

**Report Date:** August 5, 2016

**Site Name:** al-Bara bin Malek Mosque ( جامع البراء بن مالك )

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

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

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** New video footage shows damage to mosque dome.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 5, 2016 Step News Agency released video footage of barrel bomb attacks occurring over Hreitan.<sup>43</sup> The video includes footage of al-Bara bin Malek Mosque, previously reported by the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) as having been damaged in a SARG airstrike. The video footage shows one large and two smaller holes present in the dome of the mosque. It is unclear if the damage occurred on August 5, 2016 or during previous airstrikes. On August 15, 2016 additional video footage of smoke rising near the mosque shows additional detail to the mosque's dome and minaret.<sup>44</sup> Al-Bara bin Malek Mosque has been previously reported by the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) as being damaged in a SARG airstrike. Analysis of DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows the damage occurred between July 26, 2016 and August 6, 2016. For more information on the previous damage caused to the mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0071** in **Weekly Report 93-94**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Bara bin Malek 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:

Step News Agency:

August 5, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFJt1q4q3as>

August 15, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sl-1upKOns4>

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<sup>43</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFJt1q4q3as>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sl-1upKOns4>



Video still of damage of the dome of al-Bara bin Malek Mosque (Step News Agency; August 5, 2016)



Video still of damage of the dome of al-Bara bin Malek Mosque (Step News Agency; August 15, 2016)



Video still of damage of the dome and minaret of al-Bara bin Malek Mosque (Step News Agency; August 15, 2016)



al-Bara bin Malek Mosque showing previous damage (DigitalGlobe; July 26, 2016)



al-Bara bin Malek Mosque with hole in the dome on the southwestern side (DigitalGlobe; August 6, 2016)



**SHI 16-0121**

**Report Date:** August 11, 2016

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque (جامع الكبير); Old Hammam (الحمام القديم)

**Date of Incident:** Post-June 2016

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

**Site Description:** al-Kabir Mosque: Large mosque in Manbij city center.

Old Hammam: Though the architecture of the Old Hammam is late Ottoman (ca. 1904 CE based on an Turkish inscription in the bath), artifacts found in a nearby excavation are Mamluk, possibly indicating the Ottoman bath was built on the ruins of an earlier Mamluk bath.<sup>45</sup>

**Site Date:** al-Kabir Mosque - Unknown; Old Hammam — ca. 1904 CE

**Incident Summary:** New video footage shows status of a mosque and a hammam in the city center.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 11, 2016 Ajansa Hawar (ANHA) released video footage from the city center of Manbij following its capture by Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).<sup>46</sup> In the video footage, al-Kabir Mosque appears to not have sustained any significant damage during the fighting to recapture the city. However, fire damage is apparent in the adjacent building. Video footage released by ANHA on August 10, 2016 shows an explosion occurring directly next to the mosque, in a market located along an alleyway.<sup>47</sup> The explosion was reportedly caused by an IED left by ISIL, that exploded as civilians tried to flee the area.<sup>48</sup> Al-Kabir Mosque was previously featured in a video released by ISIL's Amaq News Agency during the group's recruitment efforts. For more information on recruitment in al-Kabir Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0085** in **Weekly Report 97-98**.

Video footage from several sources shows the dome of the Old Hammam in the city center of Manbij. The dome of the building has been painted with the ISIL flag.<sup>49</sup> Satellite imagery shows that the dome was painted between April 4, 2014 and April 27, 2016. On August 14, 2016 ANHA released video of an explosion occurring next to the Old Mosque as demining operations continued in Manbij.<sup>50</sup> This video footage also shows additional views of damage to the exterior and a window of the bath. Video footage released by RT Arabic on August 16, 2016 details how ISIL militants repurposed the old baths into a prison that included a recruitment site for prisoners, as well as a media center, used to disseminate propaganda.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> <http://www.esyria.sy/ealeppo/index.php?p=stories&category=places&filename=200811111550011>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5h-mZNBf6Oo>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jQfpdd2hag> ; <https://twitter.com/yvanwilgenburg/status/763153571332448256> ; <https://www.facebook.com/MANBIJ.NEWS.PRESS/photos/a.898951036803308.107374182.8.898924766805935/1224329514265457/>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/08/16/isis-leaves-behind-booby-trapped-hospitals-in-liberated-town.html>

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5h-mZNBf6Oo>

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSWucdr8F0A>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa-j2EnhFLU>

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

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to heritage sites in the city of Manbij, 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:

ANHA:

- August 11, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5h-mZNBF6Oo>  
<http://www.hawarnews.com/أهالي-منبج-اوجلان-أوقد-نار-الحرية-التي/>  
August 14, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSWucdr8F0A>

ARA News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jQfpdd2hag>

ESyria:

<http://www.esyria.sy/ealeppo/index.php?p=stories&category=places&filename=200811111550011>

Hawar News: <http://www.hawarnews.com/تعليق-علم-مجلس-منبج-العسكري-فوق-مشفى-وس/>

Manbij News Press:

<https://www.facebook.com/MANBIJ.NEWS.PRESS/photos/a.898951036803308.1073741828.898924766805935/1224329514265457/>

RT Arabic:

- August 13, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?sns=fb&v=-0gHNc0rNNE>  
August 17, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa-j2EnhFLU>

Wladimir van Wilgenburg, Freelance Journalist:

<https://twitter.com/vvanwilgenburg/status/763153571332448256>



Video still of the minaret of al-Kabir Mosque showing no damage (ANHA; August 11, 2016)



Video still of the minaret of al-Kabir Mosque showing no damage (ANHA; August 11, 2016)



Video still of the minaret of al-Kabir Mosque showing no damage (ANHA; August 11, 2016)



Video still of the base of the minaret and dome of al-Kabir Mosque showing no damage (ANHA; August 11, 2016)



Video still of an IED explosion in an alley near al-Kabir Mosque (ANHA; August 10, 2016)



The site of the explosion at the market next to al-Kabir Mosque (Manbij News Press; August 9, 2016)



Video still of the dome of the Old Hammam, now painted with ISIL's flag (ANHA; August 11, 2016)



Video still of the dome of the Old Hammam, now painted with ISIL's flag (ANHA; August 11, 2016)



Video still of the ISIL flag on the dome of the Old Hammam (RT Arabic; August 13, 2016)



Video still of ISIL flag on the dome of the Old Hammam and damage to the exterior and windows of the mosque (ANHA; August 14, 2016)



Video still of a controlled detonation adjacent to the Old Hammam (ANHA; August 14, 2016)



Video still of a controlled adjacent to the Old Hammam (ANHA; August 14, 2016)





Another view of the Old Hammam following the recapture of the area (RT Arabic; August 17, 2016)



Old Hammam prior to painting of the dome (DigitalGlobe; April 4, 2014)



Old Hammam with painted dome (DigitalGlobe; July 26, 2016)



Video still of the an RT Arabic journalist inside the Old Hammam, after it was repurposed by ISIL as a prison (RT Arabic; August 16, 2016)



Video still of a placard inside the Old Hammam (RT Arabic; August 16, 2016)



Video still of a media center built by ISIL inside the Old Hammam (RT Arabic; August 16, 2016)

**SHI 16-0122**

**Report Date:** July 30, 2016

**Site Name:** al-Rahman Mosque (مسجد الرحمن); al-Mustafa Mosque

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

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

**Site Description:** Mosques in Darayya.

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Video shows mortar fire striking the minarets of two mosques.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 30, 2016 the Local Council of Darayya released a video of prolonged mortar fire striking the minarets of al-Rahman and al-Mustafa mosques.<sup>52</sup> The mortar fire was reportedly launched due to snipers positioned in the minarets. Video stills taken show the progression of the attack.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Rahman Mosque and al-Mustafa 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:

Local Council Darayya/Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ebcVHRwaoM>

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<sup>52</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ebcVHRwaoM>



Video still of a mortar round striking the minaret of al-Rahman Mosque (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)



Video still of the explosion caused by a mortar round striking the minaret of al-Rahman Mosque (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)



Video still of smoke billowing following a mortar strike on the minaret of al-Rahman Mosque (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)



Video still of the two minarets of al-Rahman (foreground) and al-Mustafa Mosques (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)



A mortar round strikes the minaret of al-Mustafa Mosque (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)



A mortar round strikes the minaret of al-Mustafa Mosque (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)



Video still of smoke at the minaret of al-Mustafa Mosque (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)



Video still of a mortar strike on al-Mustafa's Mosque's minaret (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)





Video still of smoke from a mortar strike on the minaret of al-Mustafa Mosque (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)



Video still of smoke from a mortar strike on the minaret of al-Mustafa Mosque (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)



Video still of mortar rounds striking the minaret of al-Rahman Mosque (Local Council of Darayya; July 30, 2016)

**SHI 16-0123**

**Report Date:** August 8, 2016

**Site Name:** Grand Umayyad Mosque (المسجد الأموي الكبير; al-Kabir Mosque; جامع معرة النعمان الكبير)

**Date of Incident:** August 8, 2016

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

**Site Description:** Located in the main square of Ma'arat al-Numan, al-Kabir Mosque was built on the site of an earlier temple, the remains of which were used in the construction of the mosque. For example, the two domed pavilions in the central courtyard are supported by Roman or Byzantine-era columns. The mosque's minaret was originally erected in the early 12th century CE, but was rebuilt after an earthquake in 1170. This rebuilding is attributed to the Kahir al-Sarmani, whose signature appears on the on the west face of the building and who sought to imitate the minaret of the Great Mosque of Aleppo.<sup>53</sup>

**Site Date:** 12th century CE

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrikes damage mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 8, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG airstrikes struck and damaged al-Kabir Mosque.<sup>54</sup> Photographs of the damage show extensive interior damage, including debris on the floor from broken windows and what appears to be the partial collapse or destruction of a wall.<sup>55</sup>

Al-Kabir Mosque has been previously damaged by explosives on at least two separate occasions. For more information on these attacks, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report 15-0147** in **Weekly Report 67-68** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report 16-0048** in **Weekly Report 87-88**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to al-Kabir 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:

Al Dorar Al Shamia: <https://twitter.com/DorarShami/status/762766656728956928>

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<sup>53</sup> Burns 2009: 194-195

<sup>54</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/08/government-forces-targeted-grand-umayyad-mosque-maaret-numan-city-idlib-governorate-august-8/>

<sup>55</sup> <https://twitter.com/DorarShami/status/762766656728956928> ; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/08/government-forces-targeted-grand-umayyad-mosque-maaret-numan-city-idlib-governorate-august-8/>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/08/government-forces-targeted-grand-umayyad-mosque-maaret-numan-city-idlib-governorate-august-8/>

Scholarly:

Burns, Ross (2009) *The Monuments of Syria: A Guide*. London: I.B. Tauris.

Rihawi, Abdul Qader (1979) *Arabic Islamic Architecture in Syria*. Damascus: Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.



Interior damage to al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; August 8, 2016)



Interior damage to al-Kabir Mosque (Al Dorar Al Shamia; August 8, 2016)



Interior damage to al-Kabir Mosque (Al Dorar Al Shamia; August 8, 2016)



Material damage in al-Kabir Mosque (Al Dorar Al Shamia; August 8, 2016)

## SHI 16-0124

**Report Date:** August 11, 2016

**Site Name:** Citadel of Aleppo (قلعة حلب); Aleppo Citadel Museum (متحف قلعة حلب)

**Date of Incident:** August 11, 2016

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

**Site Description:** Citadel of Aleppo:

From UNESCO:

“The monumental Citadel of Aleppo, rising above the suqs, mosques and madrasas of the old walled city, is testament to Arab military might from the 12th to the 14th centuries. With evidence of past occupation by civilizations dating back to the 10th century B.C., the citadel contains the remains of mosques, palace and bath buildings. The walled city that grew up around the citadel bears evidence of the early Graeco-Roman street layout and contains remnants of 6th century Christian buildings, medieval walls and gates, mosques and madrasas relating to the Ayyubid and Mameluke development of the city, and later mosques and palaces of the Ottoman period.

A ring of crenellated walls and towers rise 50m above the city from a steep glacis, encircling a mass of ruins of every period. The nail-heads on the doors themselves are beautifully worked, the lintels have comic or enigmatic carvings on them, and there are fine Kufic inscriptions calling upon the power and the mercy of Allah. The interior of the citadel shows all too clearly how it has been ravaged by enemies (the Mongols invaded it twice) and shattered by earthquakes (that of 1822 was particularly devastating).”<sup>56</sup>

**Aleppo Citadel Museum:** The Aleppo Citadel Museum is an archaeological museum located within the Citadel. It occupies the Ibrahim Pasha military barracks building, built in 1834 CE by the Egyptian governor Ibrahim Pasha. The barracks was converted into a museum in 1994. The museum consists of three halls, with artifacts from each stage of occupation of the Citadel including Hittite, Roman, and Islamic periods.<sup>57</sup>

**Site Date:** Citadel: Built ca. 3rd-millennium BCE - 12th-century CE; in use until 20th-century CE. Fortified walls are largely 12th-century CE.

Museum: Built 1834 CE, converted into museum in 1994 CE.

**Incident Summary:** SARG forces allegedly detonate a section of the fortification walls on the Citadel of Aleppo.

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<sup>56</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/21>

<sup>57</sup> <http://archnet.org/system/publications/contents/5216/original/DPC1953.pdf?1384788868>

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 11, 2016 Thiqa News Agency published a video showing the aftermath of an explosion on the northern side of the Citadel of Aleppo that destroyed a section of the fortification walls and damaged the western side of the Citadel Museum.<sup>58</sup> SARG forces reportedly set off the explosion in order to prevent rebel advancement through tunnels in the side of the citadel.<sup>59</sup>

Both the citadel and the museum have suffered damage numerous times during the Syrian conflict. The fortification walls specifically have been damaged several times. On May 19, 2015 APSA published video footage of interior of the southwest section of the citadel wall showing major impact damage to the towers and curtain walls, as well as widespread bullet damage (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0087** in **Weekly Report 41**). On July 11th, 2015 a tunnel bomb was detonated under the Citadel of Aleppo, causing a portion of the citadel wall to collapse. Nazeer al-Katib of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said about two meters of the northeastern fortification wall collapsed (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0110** in **Weekly Report 49**). Photographs published by the DGAM on June 2, 2015 show a large hole in the southwestern wall of the Museum (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0093** in **Weekly Report 42-43**). The August 11, 2016 explosion seems to have caused the collapse of the westernmost section of the museum, which had already been damaged.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI is directing critical attention to the condition of all periods of cultural heritage of Aleppo given its significance as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and as a densely populated urban area. ASOR CHI has noticed an increase in collateral damage as a result of expanding aerial bombardment campaigns by SARG and Russian forces. As such, ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to the city of Aleppo and other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns.

#### **Sources:**

##### Online Reporting:

DGAM: <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=1717>

LCCSy: <https://twitter.com/LccSy/status/763734326106357760>

Thiqa News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khhl-e5SMYE>

##### Scholarly:

Archnet:

<http://archnet.org/system/publications/contents/5216/original/DPC1953.pdf?1384788868>

UNESCO: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/21>

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<sup>58</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=khhl-e5SMYE>

<sup>59</sup> <https://twitter.com/LccSy/status/763734326106357760>





Pre-damage satellite imagery of northern fortification wall of Citadel. (DigitalGlobe; August 6, 2016)



Damage to northern fortification wall and western side of Citadel museum (DigitalGlobe; August 11, 2016)



Video still of the damage to the northern side of the Citadel of Aleppo (Thiqa News Agency; August 11, 2016)



Video still of the damage to the northern side of the Citadel of Aleppo, with the Citadel Museum on the left (Thiqa News Agency; August 11, 2016)

**SHI 16-0125**

**Report Date:** August 11, 2016

**Site Name:** Tell al-Mozar (تل مؤزر)  
Qubbat al-Mansour (قبة المنصور)  
Abu Hajar (ابو حجر)  
Tell Zarqat Hamamiah (تل زرقاة حمامية)  
al-Madinah (المدينة; Bir Haidar)

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

**Location:** al-Hawl region, al-Hasakah Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:**

- Tell al-Mozar - Archaeological site with finds from the 3rd-millennium BCE.
- Qubbat al-Mansour - Archaeological site.
- Abu Hajar - Archaeological site.
- Tell Zarqat Hamamiah - Archaeological site.
- al-Madinah - Roman fort.

**Site Date:**

- Tell al-Mozar - 3rd-millennium BCE
- Qubbat al-Mansour - Unknown
- Abu Hajar - Unknown
- Tell Zarqat Hamamiah - Unknown
- al-Madinah - Roman-era

**Incident Summary:** DGAM representatives discover evidence of looting at several sites in al-Hasakah Governorate.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 11, 2016 the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM) reported that DGAM representatives had visited several archaeological sites in southern al-Hasakah Governorate and discovered several instances of illegal excavations and damage:<sup>60</sup>

The site of Tell al-Mozar suffers from illegal excavation using heavy machinery. Qubbat al-Mansour has been damaged by illegal excavation, including trenches and tunnels at the site. There is unspecified damage from “encroachments” at Abu Hajar, Tell Zarqat Hamamiah, and al-Madinah.

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

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to the sites in Hasakah Governorate, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions where looting and illegal excavation has reportedly occurred.

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<sup>60</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2024>

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM:

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2024> ; <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2023>



A site in al-Hasakah governorate (DGAM; August 11, 2016)



Looting pit at a site in al-Hasakah governorate (DGAM; August 11, 2016)



Looting pits at a site in al-Hasakah governorate (DGAM; August 11, 2016)



A site in al-Hasakah governorate (DGAM; August 11, 2016)



Illegal excavation at site in al-Hasakah governorate (DGAM; August 11, 2016)



Looting pit at a site al-Hasakah Governorate (DGAM; August 11, 2016)



Looting pit at a site in al-Hasakah governorate (DGAM; August 11, 2016)





Satellite image of al-Madinah (Bir Haidar) Roman fort (DGAM; August 11, 2016)

**SHI 16-0126**

**Report Date:** August 12, 2016

**Site Name:** Protestant Church; Greek Orthodox Church of the Virgin Mary

**Date of Incident:** August 10, 2016

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

**Site Description:** The Protestant Church and Greek Orthodox Church of the Virgin Mary are located in the center of the city of Idlib.<sup>61</sup> The Greek Orthodox Church was built in 1886 CE as the result of an edict issued by the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II.<sup>62</sup> The church was renovated on more than one occasion; most recently in 2005.<sup>63</sup> The church houses a large number of ancient icons.<sup>64</sup> The church compound houses a school used for Christian education that may also be used as a Protestant Church.

**Site Date:** 1886 CE

**Incident Summary:** Reported Russian airstrikes strike and damage church.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 10, 2016 local media sources reported that Russian airstrikes struck and severely damaged the only church in Idlib city.<sup>65</sup> It remained unclear during the reporting period as to which church was damaged in this airstrike. According to Enab Baladi, a Russian missile struck outside the door of the church creating a large hole in the wall.<sup>66</sup> The airstrike appears to have damaged the side of the building that may house a school for Christian education. The church had been previously damaged by explosives, as well as vandalized by Islamist opposition groups.<sup>67</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

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<sup>61</sup> [http://orient-news.net/ar/news\\_show/119956/0/](http://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/119956/0/)

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/97050>

<sup>63</sup> [http://orient-news.net/ar/news\\_show/119956/0/](http://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/119956/0/)

<sup>64</sup> [http://orient-news.net/ar/news\\_show/119956/0/إدلب-الكنيسة-الوحيدة-في-إدلب-بالصور-طائرات-بوتين-تستهدف-الكنيسة-الوحيدة-في-إدلب](http://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/119956/0/إدلب-الكنيسة-الوحيدة-في-إدلب-بالصور-طائرات-بوتين-تستهدف-الكنيسة-الوحيدة-في-إدلب)

<sup>65</sup> [http://orient-news.net/ar/news\\_show/119956/0/إدلب-الكنيسة-الوحيدة-في-إدلب-بالصور-طائرات-بوتين-تستهدف-الكنيسة-الوحيدة-في-إدلب](http://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/119956/0/إدلب-الكنيسة-الوحيدة-في-إدلب-بالصور-طائرات-بوتين-تستهدف-الكنيسة-الوحيدة-في-إدلب)

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/97050>

<sup>67</sup> <http://en.alalam.ir/video/1529058> ; <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/culture/2015/04/syria-idlib-christians-jabhat-alnusra-.html> ; <http://www.npr.org/2015/07/03/419824382/syrian-christians-face-new-threat-from-rebel-alliance>

## Sources:

### Online Reporting:

Al Alam: <http://en.alalam.ir/video/1529058>

### Al Monitor:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/culture/2015/04/syria-idlib-christians-jabhat-alnusra-.html>

Enab Baladi: <http://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/97050>

### Baladi News:

<http://baladinews.com/en/news/details/9185/%C2%A0“Protector of Minorities” Destroys Idlib Protestant Church Long Safeguarded by “Islamists”>

Al Hadath FM: <https://www.facebook.com/alhadath.fm/posts/837301646370944>

### Local Coordination Committee for Syria:

<https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1460187074008424>

### NPR:

<http://www.npr.org/2015/07/03/419824382/syrian-christians-face-new-threat-from-rebel-alliance>

On The Ground News (OGN): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HIpIaC1pOY>

### Orient News:

August 10, 2016: [http://orient-news.net/ar/news\\_show/119956/0/](http://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/119956/0/)  
[http://orient-news.net/ar/news\\_show/119949/0/](http://orient-news.net/ar/news_show/119949/0/) غارات النظام تطال الكنيسة-  
الوحيدة-في-مدينة-إدلب

August 11, 2016: [http://www.orient-news.net/en/news\\_show/120004/0/Assad-jets-target-the-only-church-in-Idlib](http://www.orient-news.net/en/news_show/120004/0/Assad-jets-target-the-only-church-in-Idlib)

Shaam News Network: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtGRRwFI6pw>

SMART News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t23GM6-qb8Y>

### Syria Direct:

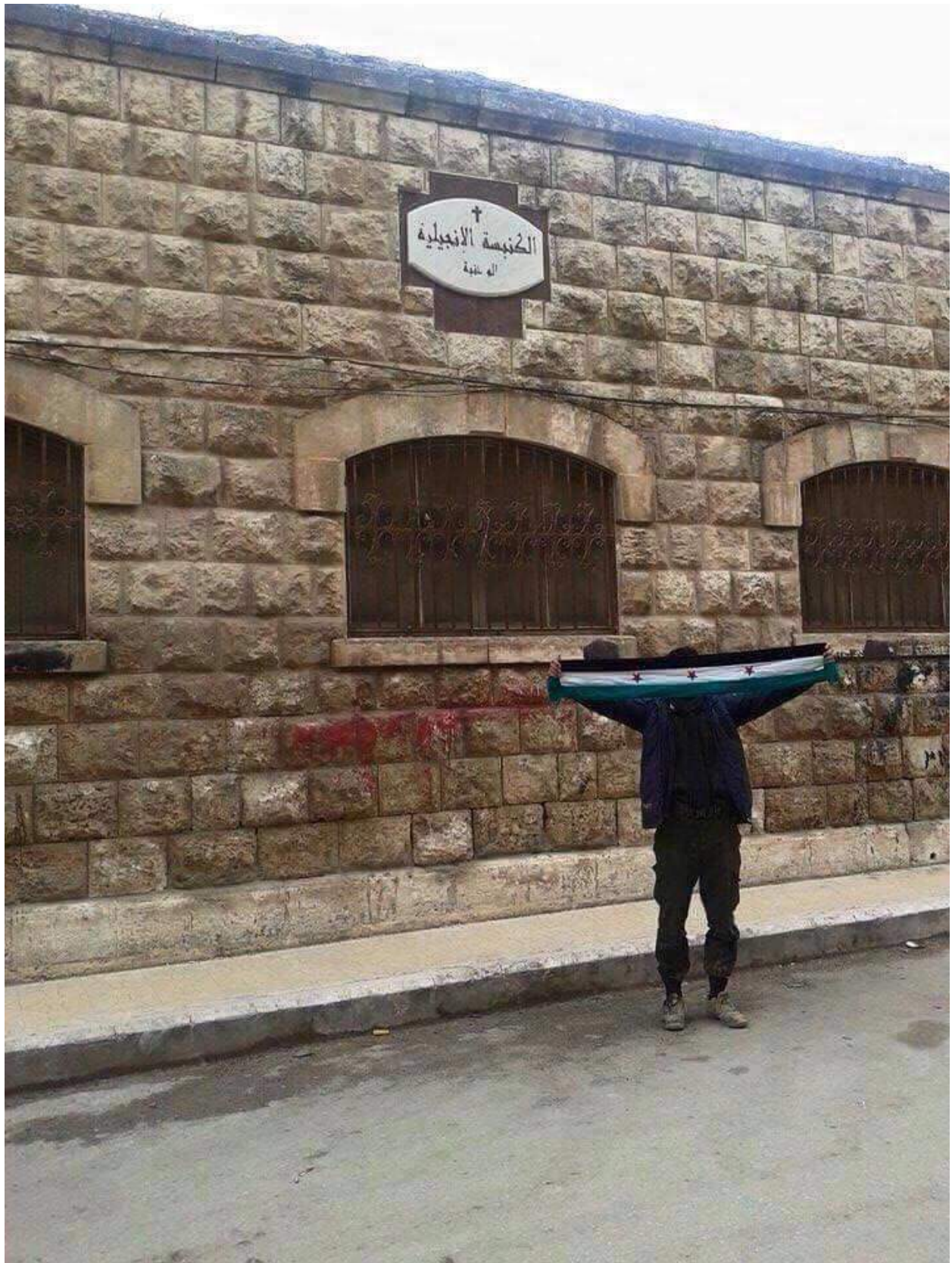
<http://syriadirect.org/news/airstrike-destroys-only-church-in-idlib-city-where-christians-once-happily-coexisted/>

Syrian Press Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVJhMghMS4k>

Syrian News Network: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtGRRwFI6pw>

The White Helmets: [https://twitter.com/whitehelmets\\_sy/status/763353250888314881](https://twitter.com/whitehelmets_sy/status/763353250888314881)

Zaiton Magazine: <http://www.zaitonmag.com/?p=20475>



The Protestant Church prior to damage (ASOR CHI Sources; August 12, 2016)



Large blast hole visible on the right of the church (SNN; August 10, 2016)



Damage to the street outside of the church (The White Helmets; August 10, 2016)



Damage to the street outside of the church (Facebook; August 10, 2016)



Damage to the street outside of the church (Facebook; August 10, 2016)



Damage to school building at Protestant Church (Facebook; August 10, 2016)



Damage to school building at Protestant Church (Facebook; August 10, 2016)



Damage to the classroom located within the church (Facebook; August 10, 2016)



Damage to the church showing a collapsed wall and ceiling beams (Baladi News; August 13, 2016)





Video still of reporter standing in front of the damaged church (OGN; August 16, 2016)



Video still of reporter standing in front of the damaged church (OGN; August 16, 2016)



Video still of reporter pointing out where the missile struck outside of the church, bringing down a wall (OGN; August 16, 2016)



Video still of damage and debris surrounding the church (OGN; August 16, 2016)

**SHI 16-0127**

**Report Date:** August 12, 2016

**Site Name:** Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (مسجد أبو بكر الصديق)

**Date of Incident:** August 12, 2016

**Location:** Teir Ma'ala, Homs Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** SARG and allied airstrikes damage mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 12, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG and “its allies” fired missiles on Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque in Teir Ma’alah, causing damage to the furniture and the building.<sup>68</sup> A photograph provided by SNHR shows that an unidentified section of the mosque has collapsed.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq 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/2016/08/12/government-forces-targeted-abu-bakr-al-sedeiq-mosque-teir-maala-town-homs-governorate-august-12/>

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<sup>68</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/12/government-forces-targeted-abu-bakr-al-sedeiq-mosque-teir-maala-town-homs-governorate-august-12/>



Damage to Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (SNHR; August 12, 2016)

**SHI 16-0128**

**Report Date:** August 13, 2016

**Site Name:** al-Sheikh Fatouh Mosque (مسجد الشيخ فتوح); Shoaib Mosque (مسجد شعيب)

**Date of Incident:** August 12-13, 2016

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

**Site Description:** Mosques in Idlib.

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Airstrikes damage mosques in Idlib.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 12, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles on al-Sheikh Fatouh Mosque in Idlib, causing damage to the building, its furniture, and rendering the mosque inoperable.<sup>69</sup> No photographs were available at the time of publication.

On August 13, 2016 SNHR reported that a SARG airstrike damaged Shoaib Mosque in Idlib, killing at least three civilians.<sup>70</sup> 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 damage to al-Sheikh Fatouh Mosque and Shoaib 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:

August 11, 2016: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/11/government-forces-targeted-al-sheikh-fatouh-mosque-idlib-city-august-11/>

August 13, 2016:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/13/victims-died-government-forces-shelling-shuayb-mosque-idlib-city-august-13/>

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<sup>69</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/11/government-forces-targeted-al-sheikh-fatouh-mosque-idlib-city-august-11/>

<sup>70</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/13/victims-died-government-forces-shelling-shuayb-mosque-idlib-city-august-13/>

**SHI 16-0129**

**Report Date:** August 14, 2016

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

**Date of Incident:** August 13, 2016

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

**Site Description:** Mosque

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** An airstrike severely damages a mosque in Anadan.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 14, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that a Russian airstrike severely damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Anadan on August 13, 2016.<sup>71</sup> A photograph accompanying the report shows that sections of the ceiling in the mosque have partially collapsed. Anadan Media Center published a video of the damage to the mosque's interior on August 13, 2016.<sup>72</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to al-Kabir 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: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0x0QJULFyiA>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/14/alleged-russian-forces-targeted-al-kabir-mosque-anadan-city-aleppo-governorate-august-13/>

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<sup>71</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/08/14/alleged-russian-forces-targeted-al-kabir-mosque-anadan-city-aleppo-governorate-august-13/>

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0x0QJULFyiA>



Severe damage to the interior of al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; August 14, 2016)



Video still of damage to the interior and courtyard of al-Kabir Mosque (Anadan Media Center; August 13, 2016)



Video still of damage to the interior of al-Kabir Mosque (Anadan Media Center; August 13, 2016)



Video still of damage to the interior of al-Kabir Mosque (Anadan Media Center; August 13, 2016)



## SHI 16-0130

**Report Date:** August 15, 2016

**Site Name:** Old Bariqa Town (Buraykah; Breikeh; Briga; بلدة بريقة القديمة)

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing, possibly late 2014-Present

**Location:** Bariqa, Quneitra Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Bariqa contains the ruins of many Roman and Byzantine-era buildings, although the site may have been occupied as early as the Hellenistic era.<sup>73</sup> Several basalt churches and other buildings including a Roman-era well are scattered throughout the area.<sup>74</sup> Some of the remains of buildings are carved with Greek inscriptions, ornate decorations, and early Christian symbols. Building material from the site was re-used by ethnic Circassians who later inhabited the area in the 19th-century CE. According to Schumacher, Bariqa was “one of the largest and best of the Circassian villages at the northern foot of the Tell el-'Akkasheh.”<sup>75</sup>

**Site Date:** Hellenistic through Byzantine-era ruins reoccupied in the 19th-century CE.

**Incident Summary:** Displaced persons living in Bariqa.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 9 and August 11, 2016 SMART News Agency published two videos of internally displaced Syrians living in the old area of Bariqa, a town in Quneitra Governorate.<sup>76</sup> According to the videos' descriptions, more than 200 families from areas south of Damascus are currently living within the facades of old stone houses. Farm animals, such as cows and sheep, are also being housed in the area.<sup>77</sup> According to the video released on August 9, 2016 the IDPs arriving to the area found that the site had already been crudely excavated and looted.<sup>78</sup> One man describes the area in which he is living as a 'Roman era church.'<sup>79</sup> It is unclear when IDPs moved into old Bariqa. Independent video footage taken in 2014 shows some littering in the area, but shows no signs of any inhabitants.<sup>80</sup>

Throughout the conflict in Syria, civilians have fled their homes and taken refuge in ancient and historic sites, including in Quneitra Governorate. For more information on these sites, see **ASOR CHI Incident Reports SHI 16-0004** in **Weekly Report 75-76** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0004 Update** in **Weekly Report 87-88**.

**Pattern:** Illegal excavation; Reuse of ancient/historic structures (non-combatants); Refugee camp/encampment.

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<sup>73</sup> <http://www.esyria.sy/equnaytra/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=201112201225144>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6YHf19WqYU> ; <http://www.esyria.sy/equnaytra/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=201112201225144>

<sup>75</sup> Schumacher 1888: 106

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHkZ7r11V7o>

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6YHf19WqYU>

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6YHf19WqYU>

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6YHf19WqYU>

<sup>80</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEgfcmgkkDA>

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to Bariqa, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions where IDPs have taken up residence.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEgfcmgkkDA>

SMART News Agency:

August 11, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHkZ7r11V7o>

August 9, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6YHf19WqYU>

Scholarly:

ESyria:

March 12, 2010:

<http://www.esyria.sy/equnaytra/index.php?p=stories&category=places&filename=201003121925021>

December 20, 2011:

<http://www.esyria.sy/equnaytra/index.php?p=stories&category=ruins&filename=201112201225144>

Scholarly Sources:

Schumacher, Gottlieb. 1888. *The Jaulan: Surveyed For The German Society For The Exploration Of The Holy Land* (Richard Bentley and Son)



Video still from 2014 shows litter scattered around Byzantine-era ruins (Youtube; February 7, 2014)



Video still from 2014 shows litter in the ruins (Youtube; February 7, 2014)



Video still of the Byzantine ruins at Bariqa (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine-era ruins (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2016)



Video still of a modern house in Bariqa (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 9, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)





Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)



Video still of personal belongings of Syrian IDPs in Bariqa (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)



Video still of Byzantine structures reused by modern inhabitants (SMART News Agency; August 11, 2016)

**SHI 16-0131**

**Report Date:** August 15, 2016

**Site Name:** Waraqa Cultural Center (مركز ورقة الثقافي); al-Hassan Mosque (مسجد الحسن)

**Date of Incident:** August 15, 2016

**Location:** Waraqa Cultural Center - Maadi neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria  
al-Hassan Mosque - al-Mayassar neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** The Waraqa Cultural Center was established in December 2015 as an educational facility for Aleppo residents.<sup>81</sup> The center was funded by a small grant from an unnamed Italian organization and was founded by independent activists in an effort to “commemorate local culture and heritage.”<sup>82</sup> The center was housed in a medieval ‘khan’ (or inn) used by traveling merchants. The building is located in Aleppo’s Old City, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.<sup>83</sup> It was reportedly the last remaining cultural center in the city. The center included a library, classrooms/training rooms, and an event hall that hosted film screenings and other performances.<sup>84</sup> According to the founder of Waraqa Cultural Center: “The center also hosted choir groups, whirling dervishes, Arabic dance teams and educational courses, such as computer and language courses.”<sup>85</sup> The center’s library contained “more than 2,500 books, collected from other east Aleppo libraries damaged over the past five years,” as well as from donation drives in Jerusalem, Beirut, and Gaziantep.<sup>86</sup> Video footage from local news sources shows performances and concerts occurring inside the center at the time of its opening on December 15, 2016.<sup>87</sup>

**Site Date:** Waraqa Cultural Center - est. December 15, 2015 CE; Original building built between 12-14th Century CE; al-Hassan Mosque - unknown

**Incident Summary:** Airstrikes severely damage cultural center and mosque in Aleppo.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 15, 2016 Halab Today TV reported that several airstrikes had severely damaged the Waraqa Cultural Center located in the Old City of Aleppo.<sup>88</sup> According to the founder of Waraqa Cultural Center, the airstrikes began at 11:00am on Monday August 15, 2016.<sup>89</sup> The airstrike was either carried out by SARG or Russian forces.<sup>90</sup> The planes

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<sup>81</sup> <http://www.enabbaladi.net/archives/56235>

<sup>82</sup> <http://syriadirect.org/news/a-russian-airstrike-destroyed-a-medieval-building-housing-rebel-held-east-aleppo's-only-cultural-center/>

<sup>83</sup> <http://syriadirect.org/news/a-russian-airstrike-destroyed-a-medieval-building-housing-rebel-held-east-aleppo's-only-cultural-center/>

<sup>84</sup> <https://www.zamanalwsl.net/news/66987.html> ; <http://syriadirect.org/news/a-russian-airstrike-destroyed-a-medieval-building-housing-rebel-held-east-aleppo's-only-cultural-center/>

<sup>85</sup> <http://syriadirect.org/news/a-russian-airstrike-destroyed-a-medieval-building-housing-rebel-held-east-aleppo's-only-cultural-center/>

<sup>86</sup> <http://syriadirect.org/news/a-russian-airstrike-destroyed-a-medieval-building-housing-rebel-held-east-aleppo's-only-cultural-center/> ; ASOR CHI Sources

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zb4Wbff6Wrk> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zb4Wbff6Wrk> ; ASOR CHI Sources

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/HalabTodayTV/videos/1462833977067369/>

<sup>89</sup> ASOR CHI Sources

<sup>90</sup> ASOR CHI Sources

carried out a “direct hit” on the site, striking the “center’s central dome [and] damaging the building beyond repair.”<sup>91</sup> The central dome was located directly above the library, leading to extensive damage at the center. The strike caused extensive material damage in the center’s library. According to the founder: “the last airstrike destroyed everything in the library: The tables, chairs, bookshelves and glass. Even the white boards we used in the classrooms were lost.”<sup>92</sup> A full observation of the damage was halted, as airstrikes have continued over the area, preventing staff members from returning to the center.<sup>93</sup> According to the founder, the cultural center had previously been superficially damaged by airstrikes occurring near the building.<sup>94</sup>

On August 15, 2016 Halab Today TV reported that barrel bombs struck al-Hassan Mosque, causing material damage and killing four civilians.<sup>95</sup> A photograph accompanying the report shows debris in the interior of the mosque.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

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Halab Today TV: <https://www.facebook.com/HalabTodayTV/posts/1462518030432297>  
<https://www.facebook.com/HalabTodayTV/videos/1462833977067369/>  
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<sup>91</sup> <http://syriadirect.org/news/a-russian-airstrike-destroyed-a-medieval-building-housing-rebel-held-east-aleppo's-only-cultural-center/>

<sup>92</sup> <http://syriadirect.org/news/a-russian-airstrike-destroyed-a-medieval-building-housing-rebel-held-east-aleppo's-only-cultural-center/>

<sup>93</sup> ASOR CHI Sources

<sup>94</sup> <http://syriadirect.org/news/a-russian-airstrike-destroyed-a-medieval-building-housing-rebel-held-east-aleppo's-only-cultural-center/>

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Zaman al-Wasal: <https://www.zamanalwsl.net/news/66987.html>



Video still showing Waraqa Cultural Center at the time of its opening (Halab News Network; December 14, 2015)



Video still of what is likely the entrance to Waraqa Cultural Center following damage to the building (APSA; August 16, 2016)





Video still of damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (SMART News Agency; August 15, 2016)



Video still closeup of damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (SMART News Agency; August 15, 2016)



Video still of the opening event at Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab News Network; December 14, 2015)



Video still of the opening event at Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab News Network; December 14, 2015)



Video still showing extensive damage to Waraqa Cultural Center as an individual removes damaged books from the rubble (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



A view of extensive damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (Syria Direct; August 17, 2016)



Video still of extensive damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



Extensive damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



Extensive damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



Video still of extensive damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (SMART News Agency; August 15, 2016)



Video still of extensive damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of damage to a room of Waraqa Cultural Center, showing the collapse of the entire ceiling (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



Video still of the collapsed ceiling at Waraqa Cultural Center (SMART News Agency; August 15, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to the ceiling of Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to the ceiling and extensive rubble at Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of damage to the Waraqa Cultural Central (APSA; August 16, 2016)





Video still of detail of the damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to the Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of detail of the damage to Waraqa Cultural Center (APSA; August 16, 2016)



Video still of Waraqa Cultural Center shortly after its opening (Halab News Network; December 14, 2015)



The interior of Waraqa Cultural Center prior to damage (Al Waraqa Cultural Center; December 11, 2015)



The library at Waraqa Cultural Center prior to damage (Al Waraqa Cultural Center; December 12, 2015)



Video still of the library at Waraqa Cultural Center prior to damage (Halab News Network; December 14, 2015)





Damage to the library at Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



An employee of Waraqa Cultural Center picks up damaged books (Syria Direct; August 17, 2016)



Video still of damage to the library at Waraqa Cultural Center (SMART News Agency; August 15, 2016)



Video still of damage to the library at Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



Video still of damaged library books at Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



Video still of damaged library books at Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



Video still of damage to the library at Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



Video still of material damage at Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



Video still of damage to the interior of Waraqa Cultural Center (SMART News Agency; August 15, 2016)



Video still of classroom at Waraqa Cultural Center prior to any damage (Halab News Network; December 14, 2015)



Video still of damage to a classroom at Waraqa Cultural Center (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)



Video still of damage to a classroom at Waraqa Cultural Center (SMART News Agency; August 15, 2016)



Video still of material damage at Waraqa Cultural Center (SMART News Agency; August 15, 2016)



Damage to al-Hassan Mosque (Halab Today TV; August 15, 2016)

## Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 16-0026

**Report Date:** August 8, 2016

### Site Name:

Mosul University (جامعة الموصل) - Main Campus

- College of Agriculture
- University Publishing Center
- Sport College Courts
- Sport College Court
- Headquarters of Mosul University President
- Headquarters of Tel Afar University President
- Girls Hostel
- Department of Statistics in the College of Administration and Economics
- Department in the College of Administration and Economics
- College of Nursing
- Mosul University Main Warehouse
- Faculty of Science
- Department of Mechanics in the College of Engineering
- Department of Electrics in the College of Engineering
- Institute of Technology
- College of Islamic Science

Mosul University - Second Campus

- Government Building
- Health Center for Staff and Faculty
- Police Camp

Mosul Presidential Site:

- al-Remah Palace (قصر الرماح)
- Palace of Swords

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing

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

### Site Description:

- Mosul University (جامعة الموصل) - Main Campus - The University of Mosul, established 1967 CE, is the second largest university in Iraq, after the University of Baghdad.<sup>96</sup> The university once hosted 4,200 faculty members and 30,000 students.<sup>97</sup> Located within the main campus is the College of Agriculture, University Publishing Center, Sport College Courts, Sport College Court, Headquarters of Mosul University President, Headquarters of Tel Afar University President,

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<sup>96</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Mosul>

<sup>97</sup> <http://www.ibtimes.com/isis-takeover-iraq-mosul-university-students-faculty-uncertain-about-future-higher-1731468>



Girls Hostel, Department of Statistics in the College of Administration and Economics, Department in the College of Administration and Economics, College of Nursing, Mosul University Main Warehouse, Faculty of Science, Department of Mechanics in the College of Engineering, Department of Electrics in the College of Engineering, Institute of Technology, and the College of Islamic Science.

- Mosul Presidential Site (which includes the al-Remah Palace and the Palace of Swords): The Mosul Presidential Site or VIP Residence Site was completed in 1994 CE. The site consists of several palaces, including al-Remah Palace and the Palace of Swords, and other buildings set on an area over 2.2 km. The area reportedly features “man-made lakes, waterfalls, underground bunkers and extensive gardens,” as well as bunkers and warehouses.<sup>98</sup> The site was “re-purposed as a base for the 101st Airborne Division and renamed ‘Camp Courage’ or ‘Post Freedom’ during the Iraq War.”<sup>99</sup> It was one of eight ‘Presidential Sites’ inspected by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on March 29, 1998.<sup>100</sup> Following the invasion of Mosul by ISIL, the Palace of Swords was converted into a critical building that was eventually targeted by US-led coalition on August 1, 2016 and destroyed.<sup>101</sup>
- Mosul University - Second Campus - The second campus includes the College of Law, the College of Fine Arts, Government Building, Health Center for Staff and Faculty, and Police Camp.

**Site Date:**

- Mosul University: founded 1967 CE
- Mosul Presidential Site: built 1994 CE

**Incident Summary:** Airstrikes damage buildings belonging to Mosul University.

**Incident Source and Description:**

- Mosul University (جامعة الموصل) - Main Campus - On March 19, 2016 the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes on ISIL targets located inside Mosul University. According to the Pentagon: "ISIL has also been using the buildings as training areas, weapon manufacturing and storage facilities, and communication equipment hubs... the Mosul University strike met all criteria and was coordinated with the Government of Iraq before striking."<sup>102</sup> The strikes reportedly caused dozens of civilian casualties, including faculty members.<sup>103</sup> Following the strike, claims arose that the intended targets inside the university were the “college of electrical engineering, telecommunication channels, military censors and a propaganda radio.”<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-air-strikes-raf-targets-saddam-husseins-former-palace-as-iraq-bombing-campaign-continues-a7170506.html> ; [http://www.us-bases.com/post\\_freedom\\_mosul.php](http://www.us-bases.com/post_freedom_mosul.php)

<sup>99</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-air-strikes-raf-targets-saddam-husseins-former-palace-as-iraq-bombing-campaign-continues-a7170506.html> ; [http://www.us-bases.com/post\\_freedom\\_mosul.php](http://www.us-bases.com/post_freedom_mosul.php)

<sup>100</sup> [http://www.us-bases.com/post\\_freedom\\_mosul.php](http://www.us-bases.com/post_freedom_mosul.php) ; <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/mosul-cc.htm>

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/defence-secretary-praises-strikes-on-daesh-stronghold>

<sup>102</sup> <https://news.vice.com/article/the-us-led-coalition-bombed-the-university-of-mosul-for-being-an-islamic-state-headquarters>

<sup>103</sup> <https://news.vice.com/article/the-us-led-coalition-bombed-the-university-of-mosul-for-being-an-islamic-state-headquarters> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/education-36417382>

<sup>104</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/education-36417382>

There have been multiple buildings previously affected by airstrikes as seen in satellite imagery. DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates that between August 29, 2015 and March 6, 2016, two buildings within the Institute of Technology were badly damaged. The University Publishing center which included all tools and machines and a building building from the College of Agriculture were destroyed. On the second university campus a police camp, which had been reused by ISIL, was also destroyed.

A large number of buildings on the main campus were destroyed by airstrikes between March 6, 2016 and April 1, 2016, likely as part of the airstrikes on March 19, 2016 discussed above. These included many buildings within the administration center, buildings from the College of Administration and Economics, multiple buildings belonging to the Sport College, two buildings from the College of Engineering, and the Chemistry Lab. Most of these buildings were reduced to rubble with minimal standing architecture still visible.

According to Iraq's top explosives officer General Hatem Magsos, Mosul University has become "the best [ISIL] research center in the world" where ISIL "trainees to go Raqqa, [Syria], then to Mosul university to use the existing facilities (sic)."<sup>105</sup> According to the US Spokesman for the US Military in Iraq, the coalition is aware "that [ISIL] has used some of those [university] buildings for military purposes," including ISIL's biggest 'bomb-making labs', and that those facilities had been bombed.<sup>106</sup> Other buildings were used to house ISIL militants.<sup>107</sup> The US-led coalition has previously expressed its intent to target any facilities, including those at Mosul University which are identified as military targets.<sup>108</sup> Following ISIL's takeover of Mosul, Al Jazeera released an article on the situation at Mosul University describing that:

"large parts of the university (were) shut down, taken over, and turned into barracks and storage for fighters. At least one of the libraries remained intact, although a source said squatters have moved onto the campus with their farm animals. [The source] feared that books and furniture might be used as firewood."<sup>109</sup>

From September to October 2014, ISIL closed several university departments including archaeology, law, and political science. In addition classes about, non-Islamic culture, democracy, human rights, drama, geography, and government were banned.<sup>110</sup>

In addition, a chemistry lab located inside Mosul University has reportedly been repurposed by ISIL into a bomb manufacturing facility. On April 1, 2016 the Wall Street Journal reported that ISIL militants in Mosul had been using a "well-stocked...chemistry lab" at Mosul University. Following the capturing of the city of Mosul, ISIL set up a research center in the chemistry lab. By March 2015, dozens of ISIL engineers and scientists, including many international recruits,

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<sup>105</sup> <http://www.wsj.com/articles/islamic-state-hijacks-mosul-university-chemistry-lab-for-making-bombs-1459503003>

<sup>106</sup> <http://www.wsj.com/articles/islamic-state-hijacks-mosul-university-chemistry-lab-for-making-bombs-1459503003>

<sup>107</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/education-36417382>

<sup>108</sup> <http://www.wsj.com/articles/islamic-state-hijacks-mosul-university-chemistry-lab-for-making-bombs-1459503003>

<sup>109</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2015/02/sacrificial-books-mosul-150227060556341.html>

<sup>110</sup> <http://www.ibtimes.com/isis-takeover-iraq-mosul-university-students-faculty-uncertain-about-future-higher-1731468> ; <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-09-16/mosul-schools-go-back-in-time-as-militants-impose-new-curriculum>

were using the plentiful amounts of equipment and chemicals.<sup>111</sup> Sources inside Mosul reported that specialized units for chemical explosives, suicide-bomb construction, and weapons research had been established at the university.<sup>112</sup> Facilities such as these, according to Iraq's top explosives officer General Hatem Magsosi, enhanced ISIL's capability to export bombmakers internationally, as well as carry out attacks in Iraq.<sup>113</sup>

- Faculty of Science - On August 5, 2016 NRN News reported via the group's Facebook page that heavy shelling had struck the Faculty of Science building. According to NRN News, the Faculty of Science building was being used by ISIL.<sup>114</sup> On August 6, 2016 Amaq News Agency released video footage of the aftermath of the airstrikes on the Faculty of Science.<sup>115</sup> The video shows extensive damage to the building. Satellite imagery from April 11, 2016 shows both buildings completely destroyed.
- Palace of Swords - According to the UK Ministry of Defense, on August 1, 2016 "a pair of RAF Tornados struck a headquarters and training centre...located in a Saddam Hussein built palace...[which] housed and trained recruits and contained outbuildings for internal security and repression."<sup>116</sup> This palace was later identified as the Palace of Swords. The strike was carried out after surveillance showed the palace being used as an ISIL HQ, making it a key target for the US-led coalition in order to degrade ISIL capabilities.<sup>117</sup> According to reports, RAF Tornados the "largest guided bombs" they used for the strike.<sup>118</sup> NRN News reported that more than six missiles struck the palace, inflicting a small number of casualties against ISIL militants.<sup>119</sup> On March 31, 2016, al-Gharbiya News cited local sources as reporting that ISIL militants had detonated explosives at the palace.<sup>120</sup> The exact location of the reported explosions in the compound is unknown.
- College of Islamic Science - On July 31, 2016 NRN News reported that US-led coalition airstrikes targeted the College of Islamic Science at Mosul University. According to the report, debris from the building struck a nearby street, injuring and/or killing 20 civilians.<sup>121</sup> The buildings appear completely destroyed in satellite imagery from August 5, 2016.
- Mosul University - Second Campus - Between May 21, 2016 and June 16, 2016 multiple buildings on the University's second campus were damaged. This included a government building and the health center for staff and faculty. The health center has a large hole in the roof but much of the building still looks intact.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives; Occupation/militarization.

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<sup>111</sup> <http://www.wsj.com/articles/islamic-state-hijacks-mosul-university-chemistry-lab-for-making-bombs-1459503003>

<sup>112</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/newsnrn/posts/570097806507231> ; <https://www.facebook.com/newsnrn/posts/570434563140222>

<sup>115</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqeiF6-YSk>

<sup>116</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/defence-secretary-praises-strikes-on-daesh-stronghold>

<sup>117</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-36960197>

<sup>118</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-36960197>

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<sup>120</sup> <http://www.algharbiyanews.com/?p=46545>

<sup>121</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/newsnrn/posts/567950210055324>

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

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Wall Street Journal:  
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Vice News:  
<https://news.vice.com/article/the-us-led-coalition-bombed-the-university-of-mosul-for-being-an-islamic-state-headquarters>

Scholarly:  
Encyclopedia Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Mosul>

### **Mosul University - Main Campus**



Video still of an Amaq Video showing the smoke billowing after the March 19, 2016 US-led coalition airstrikes on Mosul University (Vice News; March 21, 2016)



Mosul University after the March 19, 2016 US-led coalition airstrikes (Vice News; March 21, 2016)

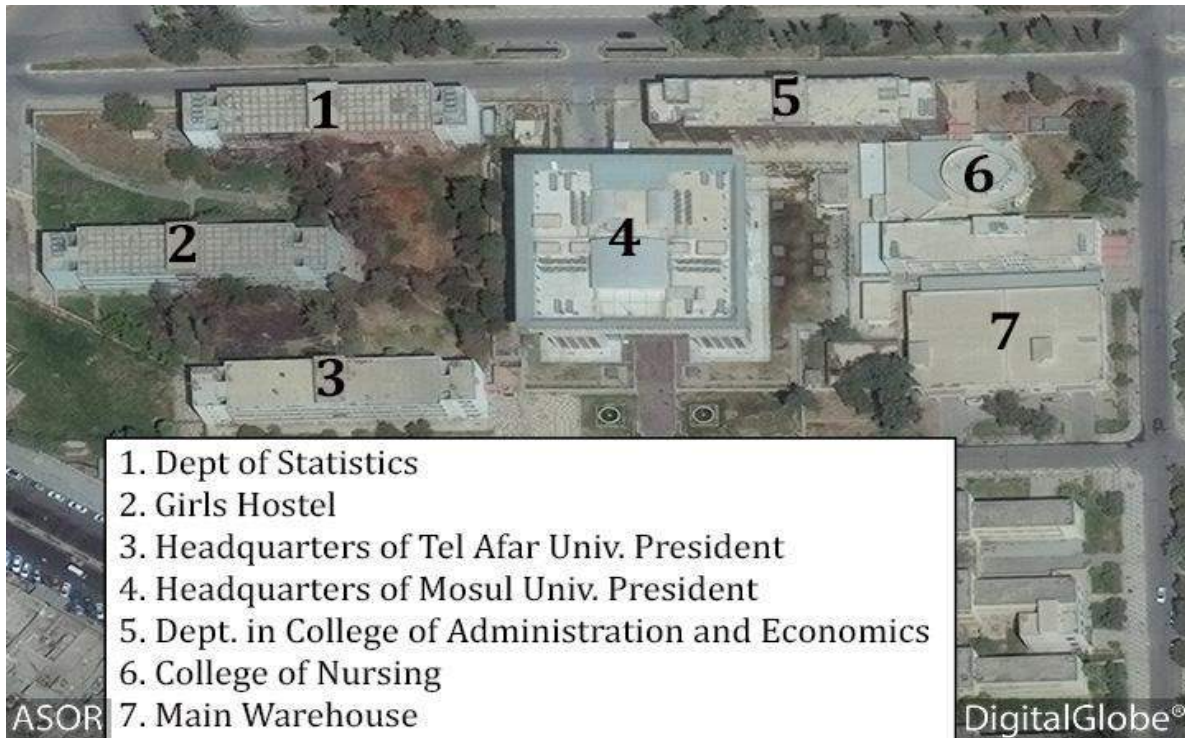


Mosul University prior to damage. Red outlines indicate buildings that are later damaged. (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; August 29, 2015)

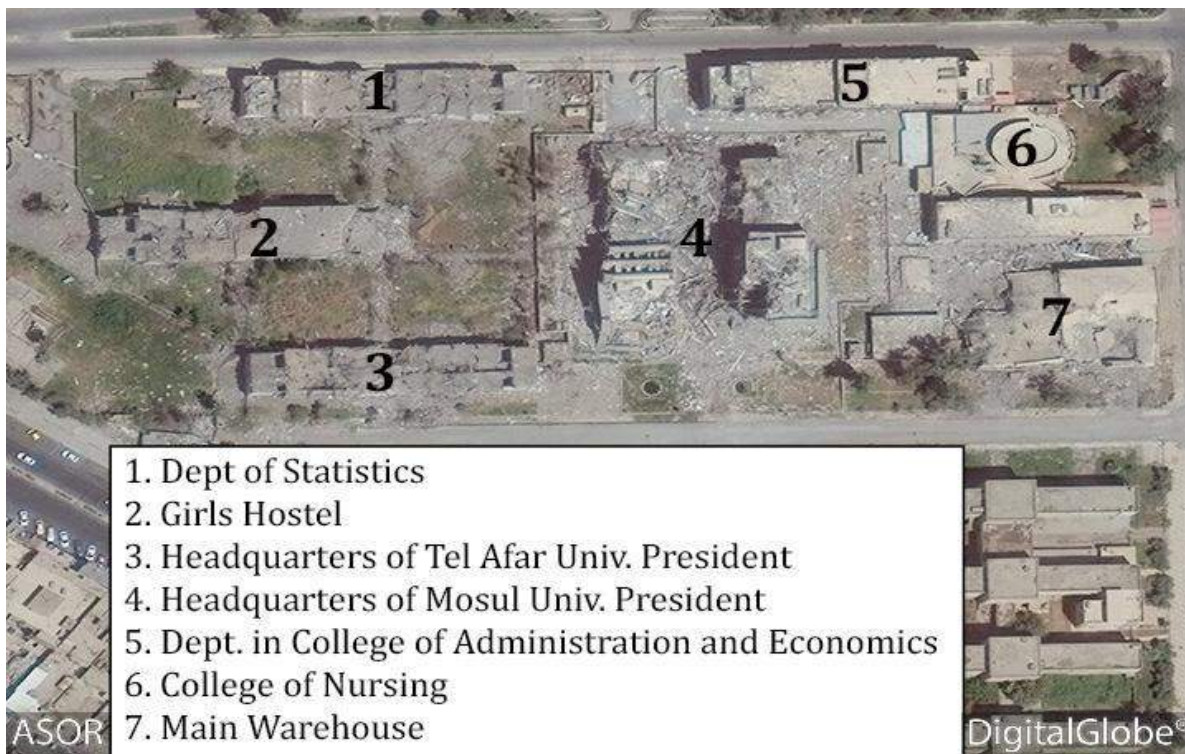


Mosul University after multiple airstrikes. Red outlines indicate damaged buildings. (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; August 11, 2016)





Close up the Administration Buildings Area (number 5 above) before damage (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; August 29, 2015)



Close up the Administration Buildings Area after damage (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; August 11, 2016)

## Faculty of Science



Video still of damage to the Faculty of Science (Amaq News Agency/Youtube; August 6, 2016)



Video still of damage to the Faculty of Science (Amaq News Agency/Youtube; August 6, 2016)



Video still of damage to the Faculty of Science (Amaq News Agency/Youtube; August 6, 2016)



Video still of damage to the Faculty of Science (Amaq News Agency/Youtube; August 6, 2016)



Video still of damage to the Faculty of Science (Amaq News Agency/Youtube; August 6, 2016)



Video still of damage to the Faculty of Science (Amaq News Agency/Youtube; August 6, 2016)



Video still of damage to the Faculty of Science (Amaq News Agency/Youtube; August 6, 2016)



Video still of damage to the Faculty of Science (Amaq News Agency/Youtube; August 6, 2016)



Video still of damage to the Faculty of Science (Amaq News Agency/Youtube; August 6, 2016)



Second Mosul University Campus prior to damage (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; August 29, 2015)



Second Mosul University Campus with damage to buildings located on the eastern side (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; July 29, 2016)



## Palace of Swords



Palace of Swords shortly before an RAF airstrike leveled the building (Daily Mail UK; August 3, 2016)



An airstrike carried out by an RAF Tornado strikes Palace of Swords (Daily Mail UK; August 3, 2016)



Smoke rises following an RAF airstrike on Palace of Swords (UK Ministry of Defense; Released August 3, 2016)

Palace of Swords; al-Remah Palace (قصر الرماح)



Al-Remah Palace (northern building) and the Palace of Swords (southern building) prior to airstrike (DigitalGlobe; July 29, 2016)



Al-Remah Palace and Palace of Swords after airstrike (DigitalGlobe; August 5, 2016)

**IHI 16-0027**

**Report Date:** August 9, 2016

**Site Name:** Mar Ahudemmeh Syrian Orthodox Church (كنيسة مار أهوداممة; Mar Hudeni Church; كنيسة مار (هوديني))

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

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

**Site Description:** Mar Ahudemmeh (Hudeni) Syrian Orthodox Church was named after Mar Ahudemmeh Maphrian of Tikrit (martyred 575 CE), and is one of the oldest churches in Mosul. It dates to the 10th-century CE, and was restored in 1896 CE and again in 1970 CE.<sup>122</sup> There is a well containing mineral water in the church courtyard, and a chain attached to one of the church walls was thought to cure epilepsy.<sup>123</sup> The church also contains important 13th-century CE carvings and inscriptions. Al-Tikriti Mosque was built adjacent to or on top of part of the church in 1763 CE.<sup>124</sup>

**Site Date:** Mar Ahudemmeh Syrian Orthodox Church: ca. 10th-century CE; restored 1896 CE and 1970 CE

**Incident Summary:** ISIL militants allegedly demolish church in Mosul.

**Incident Source and Description:** On July 31, 2016 Ankawa reported that ISIL militants had destroyed the Mar Ahudemmeh Syrian Orthodox Church in order to expand the nearby al-Tikriti Mosque.<sup>125</sup> ISIL militants allegedly forced area residents to participate in the destruction of the church. Photographs accompanying the article show a collapsed building, although no other information is provided. The exact location of the church and mosque is unknown.

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

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of intentional damage and destruction of churches and other religious heritage sites in Iraq.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Ankawa:

February 8, 2011: <http://www.ankawa.com/forum/index.php?topic=525514.0>

February 2, 2012: <http://www.ankawa.com/forum/index.php?topic=558889.0>

July 31, 2016: <http://www.ankawa.com/forum/index.php?topic=815255.0>

Omar Jasim: <https://omarjasim.org/2012/01/11/الكنائس-والاديرة-في-الموصل-العهد-العث/>

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<sup>122</sup> <http://www.ankawa.com/forum/index.php?topic=525514.0>

<sup>123</sup> Hann, et al. 2015: 217

<sup>124</sup> <https://omarjasim.org/2012/01/11/الكنائس-والاديرة-في-الموصل-العهد-العث/>

<sup>125</sup> <http://www.ankawa.com/forum/index.php?topic=815255.0>

Scholarly:

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



Reportedly the destruction of Mar Ahudemme Church (Ankawa; July 31, 2016)



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