

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

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<sup>1</sup> This report is based on research conducted by the “Cultural Preservation Initiative: Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq.” Weekly reports reflect reporting from a variety of sources and may contain unverified material. As such, they should be treated as preliminary and subject to change.

## Other Key Points

- New video footage shows damage to al-Kabir Mosque in al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0048**
- New video footage shows damage to al-Iman mosque in al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0049**
- New photographs show cleanup and reconstruction efforts taking place at Beit Ghazaleh in Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0050**
- New photographs show cleanup and reconstruction efforts taking place at the al-Umayyad Mosque in Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0051**
- New photographs show cleanup and reconstruction efforts taking place at Suq Wara al-Jame in Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0052**
- Shells land near the National Museum in Damascus, Damascus Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0053**
- Reported SARG airstrikes severely damage al-Sahbat al-Abrar Mosque in Damascus, Damascus Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0054**
- Reported SARG airstrikes damage al-Naasan Mosque in Douma, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0055**
- Reported SARG airstrikes damage al-Kabir Mosque in Arbin, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0056**
- Reported SARG airstrikes damage al-Qadim Mosque in Kafr Batna, Rif Dimashq Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0057**
- New video footage shows damage to Usama bin Zaid Mosque in al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0058**
- New video footage shows damage to Zamzam Mosque in al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0059**
- New video footage shows damage to Musabib bin Amir Mosque in al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0060**
- Trench digging causes partial destruction to the tomb of Abu Jdari and its vaulted ceiling in al-Hawl, Hasakah Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0061**
- Reported SARG and Russian airstrikes damage al-Amiriya Mosque in Tadmor, Homs Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0062**
- Reported SARG and Russian airstrikes damage al-Kabir Mosque in Taldou, Homs Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0063**
- Reported US-led Coalition airstrikes damage Ja'afar Bin Abi Taleb Mosque in al-Rahyat, Raqqa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0064**
- Reported US-led Coalition airstrikes damage a cultural center in Dbsi Afnan, Raqqa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0065.**
- Reported Russian airstrikes damage al-Rawda Mosque in Salqin, Aleppo Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0066**
- Reported Russian airstrikes damage al-Thaheriya Mosque in al-Thaheriya, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0067**
- Reported Russian airstrikes damage a Roman-era bridge in Jisr al-Shughur, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0068**
- Reported Russian airstrikes damage Hamza bin al-Mutalleb Mosque in Jisr al-Shughur, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0069**
- Reported Russian airstrikes damage Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque in Ma'ar Shoureen, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0070**

- Reported Russian airstrikes damage al-Firdous Mosque in Sarmin, Idlib Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0071**
- Reported SARG and/or Russian forces damage al-Janubi Mosque and the adjacent cemetery in Lataminah, Hama Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0073**
- Reported SARG and Russian airstrikes damage Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah Mosque in Kafr Zaita, Hama Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0074**
- Reported SARG airstrikes damage Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq Mosque in Kafr Zaita, Hama Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0075**
- New photographs and detail of damage to Mar Qoryaqos Church and Batnaya Cemetery in Batnaya, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0042 UPDATE**
- Video footage shows damage and possible militarization of an unnamed mosque in Ain Talawi Village, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0022**
- Video footage shows damage to dome of al-Nuri al-Kabir Mosque in Mosul, Ninawa Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 17-0023**

## Military and Political Context

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

1. Deir ez Zor Governorate:
  - On April 6, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that ISIL militants had executed 33 people in the al-Mayadin Desert under unknown charges.<sup>2</sup>
2. Aleppo Governorate:
  - On April 16, a car bomb struck a convoy of buses carrying evacuees from SARG-held towns at a checkpoint in the town of Rashidin, killing at least 100 people.
  - On April 19, an Islamist Syrian opposition group known as the 'Abu Amara Special Tasks Company' claimed responsibility for an IED attack that struck a funeral procession in the western Aleppo city district of Salah al-Din. The attack, which marked the first such incident since pro-regime forces captured the city of Aleppo in December 2016, killed six and wounded at least thirty-two others.<sup>3</sup>
3. Rif Dimashq Governorate:
  - On April 14, SARG forces evacuated more than 2,000 residents from the besieged opposition-held towns of Zabadani and Madaya to Idlib Governorate. Residents were also evacuated from the SARG-held towns of Fu'ah and Kefraya in Idlib Governorate.<sup>4</sup>
  - On April 19-20, evacuations of civilians and pro-opposition fighters restarted following an attack on evacuation buses, evacuating another 250 civilians and opposition fighters from Zabadani and Madaya.<sup>5</sup>
  - On April 28-29, rival Syrian opposition groups clashed in Eastern Ghouta, resulting in casualties on both sides.<sup>6</sup>
4. Idlib Governorate:
  - On April 4, SARG warplanes launched a chemical weapons attack against the town of Khan Sheikhoun, killing at least 90 people and wounding at least 300 others.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/06042017>

<sup>3</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-april-14-20-2017.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-march-30-april.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-april-14-20-2017.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-damascus-idUSKBN17V0DJ>; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/05/syria-situation-report-april-20-may-10.html>

Unidentified pro-regime aircraft later struck the underground hospital being used to treat victims of the attack.<sup>7</sup>

- On April 5, members of the Syrian opposition group 'Hay' at Tahrir a-Sham' reportedly killed the commander of the Free Idlib Army, an affiliate of the Free Syrian Army, at a checkpoint near Khan al-Sabil.<sup>8</sup>
- On April 19-21, evacuations of civilians and pro-regime fighters in Idlib Governorate restarted, moving more than 2,300 civilians and 700 pro-regime fighters from the SARG-held towns of Fuah and Kefraya, to Aleppo City.<sup>9</sup>

#### 5. Hama Governorate:

- During the reporting period, local sources including the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported SARG and Russian airstrikes over opposition-held towns in Hama Governorate. At least one group reported the presence of incendiary (phosphorous) bombs.<sup>10</sup>
- On April 16, SARG forces, backed by Russian airstrikes, recaptured the strategic town of Soran from opposition forces.<sup>11</sup>
- On April 17, Russia reportedly withdrew its military forces and equipment from the Hama Military Airport to the Bassel al-Assad International Airport in Latakia. The Free Syrian Army-affiliated Jaish al-Nasr later attacked the Hama Military Airport, temporarily rendering the airfield out of service, destroying several warplanes and the airfield's control tower.<sup>12</sup>
- On April 20-25, pro-regime forces captured the strategic towns of Tayibat al-Imam and Halfaya in northern Hama Governorate from Syrian opposition forces.<sup>13</sup>

#### 6. Raqqa Governorate:

- On April 6, Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) encircled the city of Tabqa following the recapturing of three villages located on the road to Raqqa City.
- On April 11, the US-led Coalition accidentally struck an SDF-held position near Tabqa, killing at least 18 members of the Syrian opposition group 'Liwa Suqour al-Raqqa'.<sup>14</sup>
- On April 13, the SDF announced the fourth phase of 'Operation Euphrates Shield' aimed at isolating Raqqa City.<sup>15</sup>
- On April 15, the SDF entered the city of al-Tabqa in western Raqqa Governorate, capturing the city districts of Alexandria and Ayed Saghir. The SDF efforts were backed by US-led Coalition airstrikes and embedded US advisors.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-march-30-april.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-march-30-april.html>

<sup>9</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-april-14-20-2017.html> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/05/syria-situation-report-april-20-may-10.html> ; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/14/besieged-syria-towns-evacuated-as-regime-and-rebels-begin-huge-people-swap> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-evacuations-idUSKBN17NOLS>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idlib-idUSKBN17C1MK> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-airstrikes-idUSKBN17D105>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.euronews.com/2017/04/17/syrian-army-retakes-key-town-of-soran> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-april-14-20-2017.html>

<sup>12</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-april-14-20-2017.html>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/mideast-crisis-syria-hama-idUSKBN17M1T9> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/05/syria-situation-report-april-20-may-10.html>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/04/13/523746461/misdirected-air-strike-by-u-s-led-coalition-kills-18-allies-in-syria>

<sup>15</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-march-30-april.html>

<sup>16</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-april-14-20-2017.html>



- On April 18, the SDF established a civilian council known as the Ar-Raqqa Civil Council (RCC) in Ayn Issa. The council includes more than one hundred representatives including Arabs, Kurds, and Turkmen from Raqqa City, and additional political figures.<sup>17</sup>
  - On April 22-April 30, local media reported a growing number of deployed troops, armored vehicles, and tanks along the Syrian-Turkish border near the town of Tel Abyad.<sup>18</sup>
  - On April 30, the SDF reported that they had captured six more districts in the city of Tabqa from ISIL militants, leaving ISIL with only the northern part of the city under its control.<sup>19</sup>
7. Damascus Governorate:
- On April 27, an Israeli airstrike struck an “arms supply hub” operated by the Lebanese group Hezbollah located near the Damascus airport.<sup>20</sup>
8. Hasakah Governorate:
- On April 26, Kurdish YPG forces struck Turkish military outposts located on the Syrian border with Turkey one day after Turkish airstrikes struck Kurdish forces in Syria and Iraq. According to a YPG spokesman, Turkish forces carried out heavy artillery fire across the border into Syria. Clashes between Turkish and YPG forces were also reported near the Syrian-border town of Darbasiyah.<sup>21</sup>
9. Homs Governorate:
- On April 7, the US military launched a cruise missile attack against the SARG-held Shayrat Airbase, located in central Homs Governorate. The strike was, according to the Trump administration, a direct response to the April 4 chemical weapons attack that took place in Khan Sheikhoun, Idlib Governorate. The Syrian regime announced that 16 people were killed in the attack, including civilians in nearby towns. However other reports put the death toll at six.<sup>22</sup>
  - On April 8-9, ISIL militants launched two suicide attacks and a ground attack against US-backed Syrian opposition forces along the border with Jordan. The attacks occurred near al-Tanf military base. The attack, which was repelled by opposition forces, killed at least 12 fighters and wounded many more.<sup>23</sup>
10. Latakia Governorate:

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<sup>17</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-april-14-20-2017.html>

<sup>18</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/05/syria-situation-report-april-20-may-10.html>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39765043>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-airport-idUSKBN17T0D4> ; <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/27/world/middleeast/syria-damascus-airport-israel-hezbollah.html> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/05/syria-situation-report-april-20-may-10.html>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-turkey-iraq-idUSKBN17S0XX> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/05/syria-situation-report-april-20-may-10.html> ; <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1164000/turkish-airstrikes-in-syria-iraq-kill-partner-counter-isis-fighters/source/GovDelivery/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/syrian-media-say-u-s-attack-caused-damage-to-air-base-multiple-casualties-1491535071> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39529264> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-source-idUSKBN179080> ; <https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1145665/us-strike-designed-to-deter-assad-regimes-use-of-chemical-weapons> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-march-30-april.html>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-border-idUSKBN17B0JX>

- On April 26, Russia reportedly withdrew half of its aerial capacity from Bassel al-Assad Airport due to “an alleged decrease in ‘terror activities’.”<sup>24</sup>

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Abu Kamal, Deir ez Zor, Palmyra, Raqqa, Shaddadi, Tabqa, and al-Tanf.<sup>25</sup>
- During the reporting period, Russian forces conducted extensive aerial bombardment over Idlib, Hama, Aleppo, and Rif Dimashq Governorates. Airstrikes were also reported in Daraa and Raqqa Governorates.<sup>26</sup>
- On April 7, Russia halted a military cooperation agreement between Russian and American forces in Syria following the US missile attack on Shayrat Airbase.<sup>27</sup>
- On April 19, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) confirmed the use of sarin gas in the April 4, 2017 attack on Khan Sheikhoun. On the same day, the Israeli military stated their belief that the Syrian regime remains in position of “several tonnes of chemical weapons.”<sup>28</sup>
- On April 19, Turkish-backed Syrian opposition forces announced the formation of the ‘Eastern Shield Army.’ A video announcement by the group stated their intentions to “liberate” Deir Ez Zor, Hasakah, and Raqqa Governorates from ISIL and the Syrian Kurdish YPG.<sup>29</sup>
- On April 23, Al Qaeda leader Ayman Zawahiri issued a statement calling for Syrian opposition forces to assess their current strategy and to shift their military activities to “guerilla warfare” in operations against pro-regime forces.<sup>30</sup>
- On April 24, the US Treasury Department announced economic sanctions against 300 employees of the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center (SSRC) in response to ongoing chemical weapons attacks in Syria.<sup>31</sup>

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

1. Ninawa Governorate:
  - During the reporting period, ISIL militants reportedly killed as many as 140 civilians as they attempted to flee the city of Mosul. ISIL reportedly targeted civilians in the city districts of Tenek, Yarmouk, and the Old City.<sup>32</sup>
  - On April 6, ISIL militants shot down an Iraqi helicopter over the city of Mosul, killing two Iraqi army pilots.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>24</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/05/syria-situation-report-april-20-may-10.html>

<sup>25</sup> See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1137891](#), [1138212](#), [1139556](#), [1140956](#), [1143369](#), [1144767](#), [1145930](#), [1146174](#), [1147391](#), [1148762](#), [1150713](#), [1151923](#), [1153216](#), [1153299](#), [1153440](#), [1154494](#), [1156235](#), [1158850](#), [1157513](#), [1160239](#), [1160341](#), [1160433](#), [1161554](#), [1163065](#), [1164307](#), [1165859](#), [1167384](#), [1167750](#)

<sup>26</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russias-unrelenting-attacks-syrian-civilians> ; <http://www.all4syria.info/Archive/405253>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/07/world/middleeast/russia-iran-us-strikes-syria.html>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-israel-idUSKBN17L2U8> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-april-14-20-2017.html>

<sup>29</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/syria-situation-report-april-14-20-2017.html>

<sup>30</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/05/syria-situation-report-april-20-may-10.html>

<sup>31</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/05/syria-situation-report-april-20-may-10.html>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-mosul-idUSKBN1792UH> ; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/iraq-situation-report-march-20-april-20.html>

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-helicopter-idUSKBN1781PX>

- On April 15, ISIL militants launched a chemical weapons attack against Iraqi forces in west Mosul. There were no reported casualties.<sup>34</sup>
  - On April 17, ISIL militants attacked an Iraqi police base in the town of Hammam al-Alil, killing at least one police officer.<sup>35</sup>
  - On April 20-21, Iraqi Security Forces recaptured the neighborhoods of al-Thaw, just west of the Old City, and Nasr.<sup>36</sup>
  - On April 26, the Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) announced that its forces had “liberated” the UNESCO World Heritage site of Hatra from ISIL.<sup>37</sup>
2. Kirkuk Governorate:
    - On April 5, ISIL militants targeted a police checkpoint and home in the central district of Zuhur in the city of Tikrit. In the subsequent clashes between the militants and police, as well as at least two suicide bombings, at least 30 people were killed.<sup>38</sup>
  3. Anbar Governorate:
    - On April 3, an ISIL suicide car bombing attack struck an Iraqi Army and Federal Police checkpoint at the western entrance of Fallujah.<sup>39</sup>
    - On April 24, ISIL militants attacked and killed at least 10 off-duty Iraqi soldiers and injured 20 more near the town of Rutba.<sup>40</sup>
  4. Muthanna Governorate:
    - On April 6, an Iranian-backed Iraqi Shia militia released a Qatari royal who had been kidnapped over one year prior along with 25 other members of a hunting group. The release occurred following a two million dollar ransom payout by the Qatari royal family to the militia.<sup>41</sup>
  5. Diyala Governorate:
    - On April 5-7, ISIL militants attacked several checkpoints in Diyala Governorate resulting in clashes with the PMF and Iraqi Security Forces.<sup>42</sup>
    - On April 19, ISIL militants attacked a security checkpoint in Bazaiz, east of the city of Baqubah.<sup>43</sup>
  6. Salah ad Din Governorate:
    - On April 2, the Iraqi Air Force destroyed an ISIL camp near the city of Samarra, reportedly killing 12 militants. The airstrike reportedly disrupted a planned attack on Shia pilgrims traveling to the holy site of Samarra.<sup>44</sup>
    - On April 6, the PMF reported that they had repelled multiple ISIL attacks near the city of Beiji.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-chemicalweapons-idUSKBN17L2L4>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/isil-attacks-police-station-mosul-170423092506161.html>

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/iraqi-forces-gains-isil-mosul-170420143243788.html>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39726244>; <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iraqi-forces-seized-hatra-antiquities-site-47027440>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39500946>; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-tikrit-idUSKBN1770KD>; <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/iraq-situation-report-march-20-april-20.html>

<sup>39</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/iraq-situation-report-march-20-april-20.html>

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/ambush-kills-duty-iraqi-soldiers-anbar-province-170424084144675.html>

<sup>41</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2017/04/iraq-situation-report-march-20-april-20.html>

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*

7. Diwaniyah Governorate:

- On April 11, unidentified assailants attacked an Iraqi Communist Party headquarters. No casualties were reported.<sup>46</sup>

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led Coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Beiji, Kirkuk, Kisik, Haditha, Huwajjah, Mosul, Qaim, Qayyarah, Rawah, Rutbah, Sinjar, Taiji, and Tal Afar.<sup>47</sup>
- On April 25, Turkish airstrikes struck Kurdish YPG forces located in Syria and Iraq. Turkish forces alerted the US-led Coalition of the intended strikes, but ignored request by the Coalition to “not proceed without the proper coordination.”<sup>48</sup>

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

- On April 9, two attacks struck Coptic Palm Sunday services in Egypt. The attacks, which were later claimed by ISIL, took place in the northern cities of Tanta and Alexandria and killed at least 44 people.<sup>49</sup>
- On April 14, the US military dropped the largest non-nuclear bomb on ISIL targets in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan.<sup>50</sup>
- On April 20, a gunman opened fire in Paris killing a police officer and wounding two more before being killed. ISIL later claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [1137891](#), [1138212](#), [1139556](#), [1140956](#), [1143369](#), [1144767](#), [1145930](#), [1146174](#), [1147391](#), [1148762](#), [1150713](#), [1151923](#), [1153216](#), [1153299](#), [1153440](#), [1154494](#), [1156235](#), [1158850](#), [1157513](#), [1160239](#), [1160341](#), [1160433](#), [1161554](#), [1163065](#), [1164307](#), [1165859](#), [1167384](#), [1167750](#)

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/25/world/middleeast/turkey-kurds-airstrikes-iraq-syria.html> ; [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/turkey-expands-strikes-against-kurdish-militants-in-syria-and-iraq/2017/04/25/4331d578-29c1-11e7-9081-f5405f56d3e4\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/turkey-expands-strikes-against-kurdish-militants-in-syria-and-iraq/2017/04/25/4331d578-29c1-11e7-9081-f5405f56d3e4_story.html)

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39548645> ; <https://www.nytimes.com/video/world/middleeast/100000005035563/bombings-at-two-christian-churches-roil-egypt.html>

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.cnn.com/2017/04/13/politics/afghanistan-isis-moab-bomb/>

<sup>51</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/french-police-come-under-fire-in-paris-two-reported-shot/2017/04/20/fc1f254c-25ff-11e7-bb9d-8cd6118e1409\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/french-police-come-under-fire-in-paris-two-reported-shot/2017/04/20/fc1f254c-25ff-11e7-bb9d-8cd6118e1409_story.html)

## Incident Reports: Syria

### SHI 17-0038 UPDATE

**Report Date:** April 18, 2017

**Site Name:** Omar Ibn al-Khattab Mosque (مسجد عمر بن الخطاب) (al-Jeineh Mosque)

**Date of Incident:** March 16, 2017

**Location:** al-Jeineh (الجينة), Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Village mosque in al-Jeineh. The mosque is next to another building (part of a compound) built by the 'Da'awe' order which contains a restaurant, a second mosque, and an empty space above the mosque that houses internally displaced persons (IDPs).<sup>52</sup> The mosque reportedly has a capacity of 200.<sup>53</sup> The mosque compound also contains a religious school (aka Sharia School). As of March 2017, the compound, including the Omar Ibn al-Khattab Mosque, remained under construction according to a sign seen outside the mosque.<sup>54</sup> The northern part of the new mosque is possibly a set of meeting rooms.<sup>55</sup> The mosque does not have a minaret or dome.<sup>56</sup>

**Site Date:** Post-2011 CE<sup>57</sup>

**Incident Summary:** New reporting reveals scope of damage and new detail of strike on mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 18, 2017 Forensic Architecture released a report on the March 16, 2017 US-led Coalition airstrike on Omar Ibn al-Khattab Mosque. According to Forensic Architecture, misinformation led to the US-led Coalition airstrikes on the mosque, which was misidentified as a meeting place for al-Qaeda.<sup>58</sup> Forensic Architecture's findings included a detailed description of the mosque complex and the extent of damage to the mosque. 3D Imagery is included in the video report released by the group.<sup>59</sup> According to experts, the explosives used in the attack were most likely hellfire missiles.<sup>60</sup> Human Rights Watch also released a report on the strike, accusing the US-led Coalition of not taking the necessary precautions to avoid civilian casualties by striking a mosque during a prayer time.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2017/03/29/u-s-bombs-syrian-village-and-shrugs.html>

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/mena/2017/03/16/us-missile-remains-reportedly-recovered-from-site-of-aleppo-mosque-bombing/>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/mena/2017/03/16/us-missile-remains-reportedly-recovered-from-site-of-aleppo-mosque-bombing/>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/mena/2017/03/16/us-missile-remains-reportedly-recovered-from-site-of-aleppo-mosque-bombing/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/04/18/syria-us-mosque-attack-likely-unlawful>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.bellingcat.com/news/mena/2017/03/16/us-missile-remains-reportedly-recovered-from-site-of-aleppo-mosque-bombing/>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.forensic-architecture.org/case/al-jinah-mosque/>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOyihqEOFYA>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/04/18/syria-us-mosque-attack-likely-unlawful>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/04/18/syria-us-mosque-attack-likely-unlawful>

According to Forensic Architecture the Omar Ibn al-Khattab Mosque,

“was not a ‘partially constructed community meeting hall’ but a large, functional mosque. The concrete and cinder block building was divided into two parts, north and south, separated by an entrance, a passageway and stairwells. It had two levels, with the upper level still incomplete in parts. On the ground floor, the south part of the building contained the main prayer hall. The upper floor above it was still incomplete. The south part of the building was damaged in the strike but remained largely intact. The northern part of the building contained a set of typical auxiliary functions of a mosque: a communal kitchen with a dining area, the toilets, a ritual wash area and the secondary, smaller prayer room, also know as the ‘winter prayer room’. A residential flat used by the Imam and his family was located above these functions on the upper floor of the northern part of the building. This part was completely destroyed in the strike. As a result of the strike, the passageways connecting the two parts of the building were partially blocked by rubble. The stairwells connecting the ground level with the upper floor were also destroyed. Witness testimonies and photographs of the building taken before the strike show that there were no doors separating the ‘winter prayer room’, the main passageway and the wash area. These rooms were accessible, as well as acoustically and visibly exposed....The strike began when two bombs completely demolished the northern part of the building. The layout of the rubble in the deep craters is consistent with ground penetrating bombs. In order to escape, worshippers in the main prayer hall in the south part of the building had to climb over the rubble that partially blocked the doorways and passageways and destroyed the stairs. While people exited the building and immediately afterwards they were targeted by further missile strikes.”<sup>62</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

Forensic Architecture: <http://www.forensic-architecture.org/case/al-jinah-mosque/>

Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/04/18/syria-us-mosque-attack-likely-unlawful>

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<sup>62</sup> <http://www.forensic-architecture.org/case/al-jinah-mosque/>





A rendering of the mosque complex (Forensic Architecture; April 18, 2017)

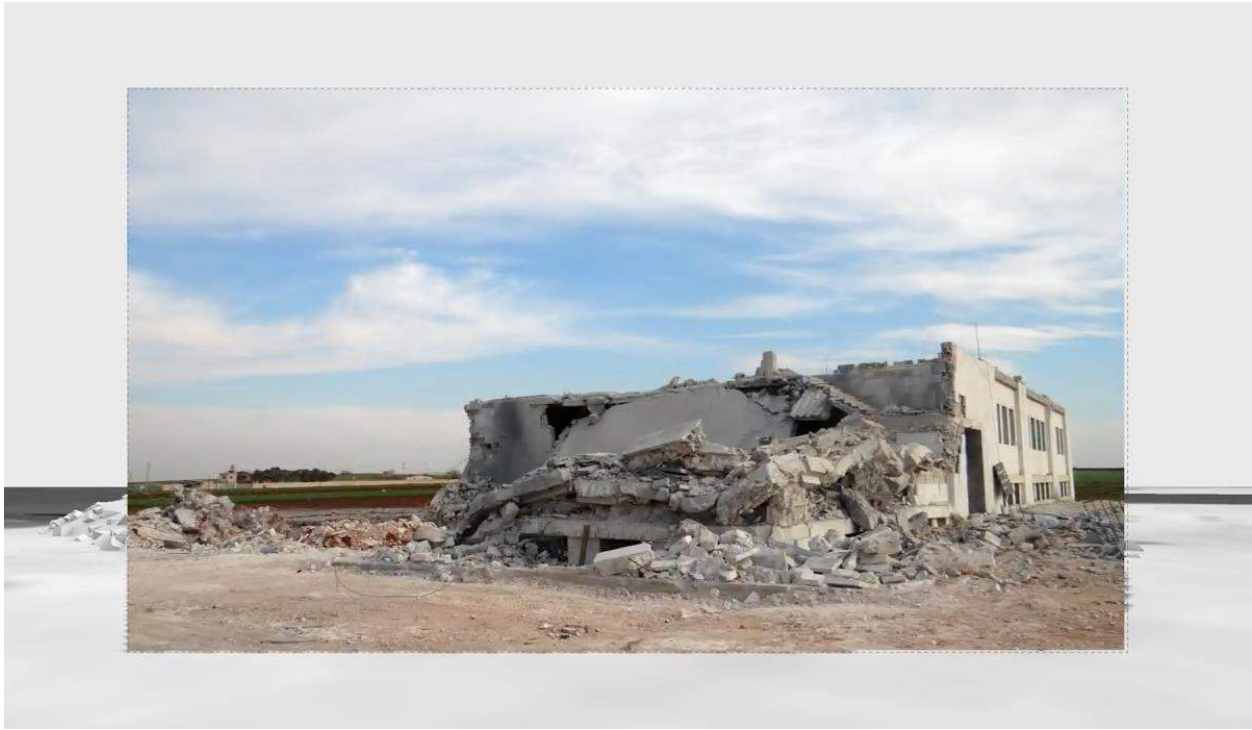


A 3D image shows the front meeting rooms of the mosque complex prior to destruction (Forensic Architecture; April 18, 2017)





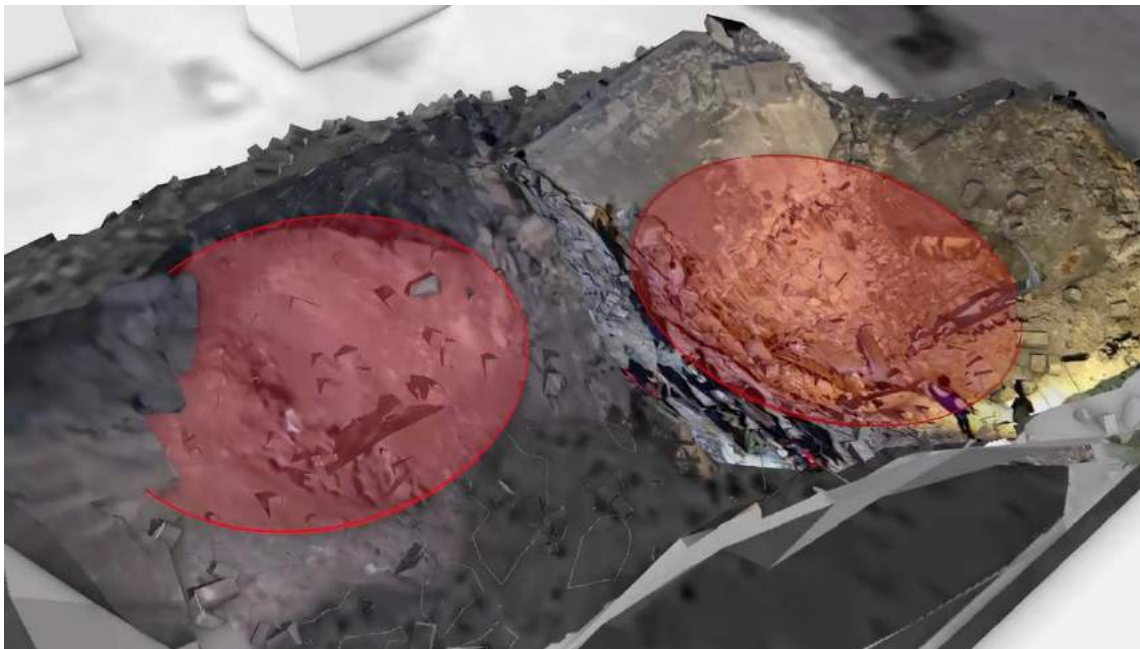
A 3D rendering of the destroyed area of the mosque complex (Forensic Architecture; April 18, 2017)



The destroyed area of mosque complex (Forensic Architecture; April 18, 2017)



Two craters left by reported hellfire missiles (Forensic Architecture; April 18, 2017)



Video still of 3D rendering of craters caused by reported 'hellfire missiles' (Forensic Architecture; April 18, 2017)

**SHI 17-0048**

**Report Date:** April 14, 2017

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

**Date of Incident:** Between December 8, 2016 and February 7, 2017

**Location:** al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

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

**Incident Source and Description:** On March 24, 2017, Anadolu Agency released video footage from the city of al-Bab showing structural damage to the al-Kabir Mosque, mainly to the mosque's domes.<sup>63</sup> Based on DigitalGlobe satellite imagery the damage first occurred between December 8, 2016 and February 7, 2017. During the month of February, the building to the north of the mosque was severely damaged, as was the northern wall of the building.

On April 14, 2017 Smart News Agency released a video report on cleanup efforts occurring at damaged mosques in al-Bab.<sup>64</sup> The mosques were reportedly damaged by Turkish aerial bombardment during efforts to recapture the city. Additional video footage and photographs detail the damage to mosques in al-Bab. New damage to the mosque has continued to be identified through April 29, 2017.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives; Site management: reconstruction/cleanup.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports on the condition of 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:

Anadolu Agency (Via Granadan Traveler): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz\\_VUdwsawM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz_VUdwsawM)

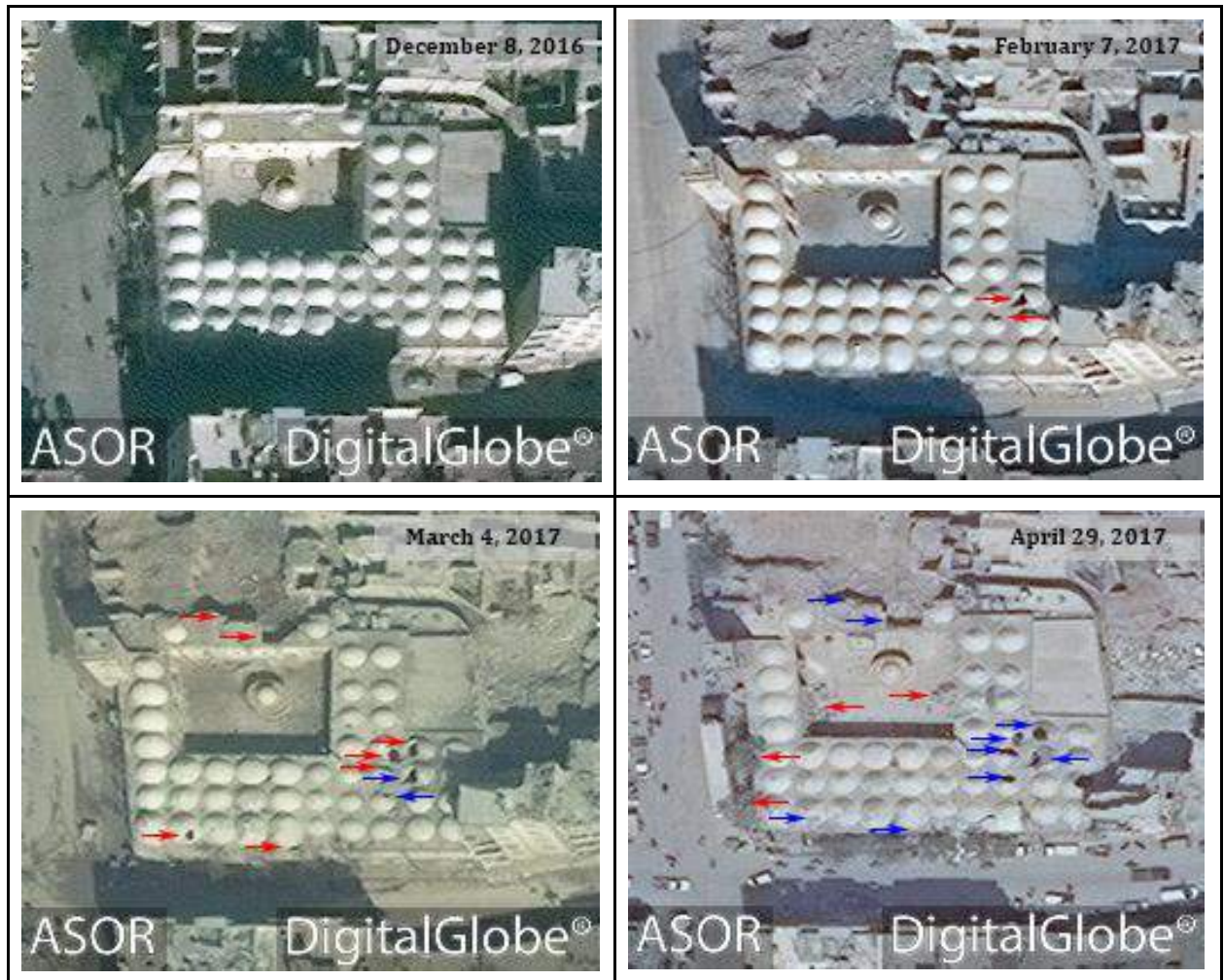
Smaart News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bd4pN3OirU>

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<sup>63</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz\\_VUdwsawM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz_VUdwsawM)

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bd4pN3OirU>





Damage to al-Kabir Mosque between December 9, 2016 and April 29, 2017. The red arrows indicate new damage while the blue arrows mark older damage.



Video still of al-Kabir mosque showing damage to the domes (Anadolu Agency; March 24, 2017)

**SHI 17-0049**

**Report Date:** April 14, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Iman Mosque (مسجد الإيمان)

**Date of Incident:** Between March 5 and April 5, 2017

**Location:** al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

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

**Incident Source and Description:** Between March 5 and April 5, 2017 DigitalGlobe satellite imagery shows damage to the roof of the mosque, and a cylindrical object resting close to the dome. The minaret remains intact. The cylindrical object has not been identified but it is possibly part of a mortar shell.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

**Sources:**



Satellite imagery shows the before and after of the al-Iman mosque, with damage to the roof of the al-Iman Mosque and a cylindrical object lying near the dome.

**SHI 17-0050**

**Report Date:** April 5, 2017

**Site Name:** Beit Ghazaleh (بيت غزالة)

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing

**Location:** Old City Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Built in 1691 CE by Khajadur ibn Murad Bali, Beit Ghazaleh was later inhabited by the Saba 'Aida family and then the Ghazaleh family in 1834 CE. It contains a large courtyard overlooking an intricate stone facade to the north, a large vaulted hall (iwan) to the south, and a gilded wooden reception room (qa'a) to the west.<sup>65</sup> The house also contains a private bathhouse. Many of the ceilings are decorated with wooden panels featuring geometric and plant designs.<sup>66</sup> At the beginning of the 20th-century the building was used as a German school, and later as an Armenian school.<sup>67</sup>

**Site Date:** 1691 CE

**Incident Summary:** New photograph reports theft at site.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 3, 2017 the Facebook group Aleppo Glory released a photograph of Beit Ghazaleh inside the Old City of Aleppo.<sup>68</sup> According to the photograph caption, theft has occurred within the site. Details of any particular items stolen are not included in the caption. For more information on previous damage to Beit Ghazaleh, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0035** in **Weekly Report 107-108** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0191** in **Weekly Report 123-124**.

**Pattern:** Theft.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Aleppo Glory: <https://www.facebook.com/aleppoarchaeology/posts/1372138299511354>

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<sup>65</sup> Hadjar 52.

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/damages/eplace.php?placeid=281#>

<sup>67</sup> Hadjar 52.

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/aleppoarchaeology/posts/1372138299511354>





Damage seen inside Beit Ghazaleh (Aleppo Glory; April 3, 2017)

**SHI 17-0051**

**Report Date:** April 5, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Umayyad Mosque (جامع الأموي)

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing

**Location:** Old City Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** According to Monument of Syria,

"The Great Mosque within the walled city of Aleppo is unjustly given second billing after the Great Mosque of the Umayyads in Damascus. While it lacks the richness of the associations with early Islam and the Roman predecessor on the Damascus site, the Aleppo Great Mosque has its own unique sense of symmetry and calm which owes much to the rebuilding of the mosque in the Ayyubid years, after a disastrous fire. It thus provides us with one of the most striking statements of the purity of form of Islamic medieval architecture. The site of the mosque was originally at the centre of the ancient city and falls partly on the ground used for the sixth century Cathedral of St Helena (the mother of Constantine). A remarkable madrasa to the west of the mosque, the Madrasa Halawiye, preserves part of the cathedral following its twelfth century conversion to serve as a madrasa. The remains of the cathedral were seized in reprisal following the unsuccessful Crusader assault on Aleppo in 1124 and their sacking of important Shi'ite shrines outside the city."<sup>69</sup>

**Site Date:** 715 CE, reconstructed 11th century CE

**Incident Summary:** New photographs show cleanup and reconstruction efforts taking place.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 3, 2017 the Facebook group Aleppo Glory reported that reconstruction efforts were taking place at al-Umayyad Mosque in the Old City of Aleppo.<sup>70</sup> Photographs taken by the group showed cleanup efforts taking place inside the al-Umayyad Mosque courtyard. For more information on previous damage to al-Umayyad Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0040 in Weekly Report 9; SHI 15-0015 in Weekly Report 26-27; SHI 15-0084 in Weekly Report 40; SHI 15-0085 in Weekly Report 41; SHI 16-0071 in Weekly Report 93-94; SHI 16-0192 in Weekly Report 121-122; SHI 16-0191 in Weekly Report 123-124.**

**Pattern:** Site management: reconstruction/cleanup.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Aleppo Glory: <https://www.facebook.com/aleppoglory/posts/1383698755020301>

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<sup>69</sup> <http://monumentsofsyria.com/places/aleppo-03-the-great-mosque-and-madrasa-halawiye/>

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/aleppoglory/posts/1383698755020301>

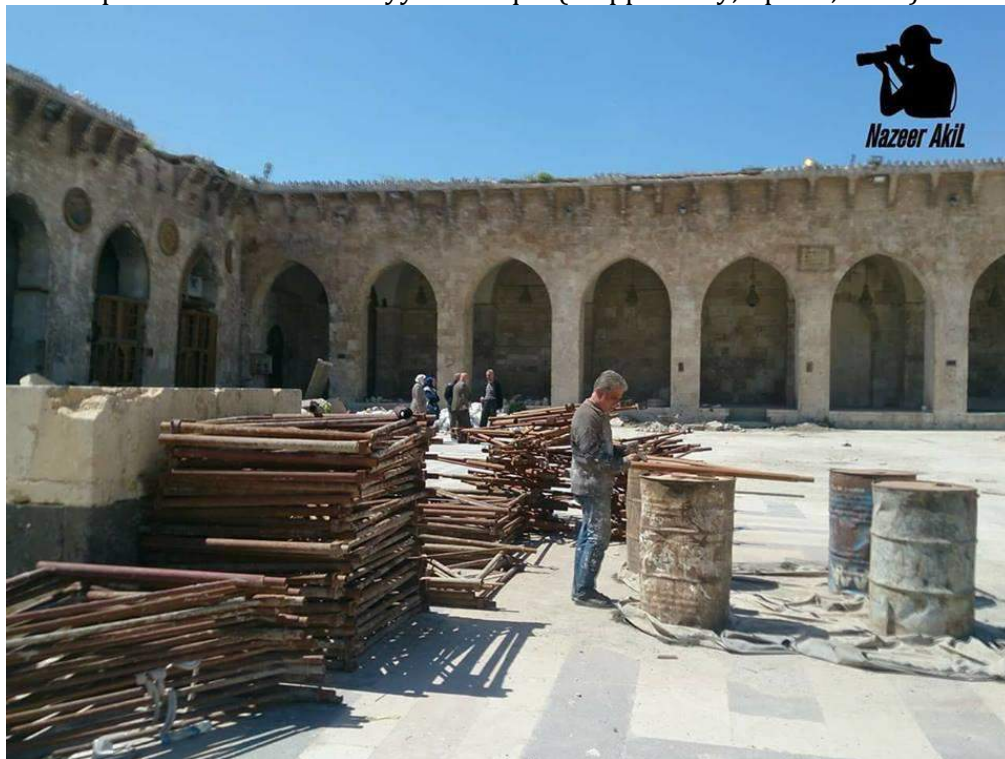


Scholarly:

Burns, Ross. 2009. *The monuments of Syria: A guide*. 3rd ed. London: I. B. Tauris.



Clean-up efforts inside al-Umayyad Mosque (Aleppo Glory; April 3, 2017)



Clean up efforts inside al-Umayyad Mosque (Aleppo Glory; April 3, 2017)



Clean-up efforts inside al-Umayyad Mosque (Aleppo Glory; April 3, 2017)

**SHI 17-0052**

**Report Date:** April 5, 2017

**Site Name:** Suq Wara al-Jame

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing

**Location:** Old City Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Market located south and southwest of the Citadel, next to al-Umayyad Mosque.

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** New photographs show cleanup and reconstruction efforts taking place.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 4, 2017 the Facebook group Aleppo Glory reported that stone sorting was taking place outside Suq Wara al-Jame inside the Old City of Aleppo.<sup>71</sup> The photographs show significant damage to the site.

**Pattern:** Site management: reconstruction/cleanup.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Aleppo Glory: <https://www.facebook.com/aleppoglory/posts/1384245704965606>

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<sup>71</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/aleppoglory/posts/1384245704965606>





Sorted stones in the Suq Wara al-Jame (Aleppo Glory; April 4, 2017)



Sorted stones in the Suq Wara al-Jame (Aleppo Glory; April 4, 2017)

**SHI 17-0053**

**Report Date:** April 10, 2017

**Site Name:** Damascus National Museum

**Date of Incident:** April 5, 2017

**Location:** Damascus, Damascus Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** The Damascus National Museum was founded in 1919 at the Madrassah al-Adiliyeh, The current building was constructed in 1936 with additional wings being added in 1956 and 1975. The museum contains artifacts from across Syria, spanning from the Neolithic to Modern Ages.

**Site Date:** 1936 CE

**Incident Summary:** Shells land near the National Museum without causing damage to the structure.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 5, 2017 DGAM reported that two explosive shells fell near the National Museum in Damascus.<sup>72</sup> According to the report, no material damage or casualties occurred as a result of the shelling. No photographs pertaining to the incident were available at the time of publication. For more information on previous damage to the National Museum, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0115** in **Weekly Report 53** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0161** in **Weekly Report 71-72**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to the Damascus National Museum, 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:

DGAM: <http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=2260>

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<sup>72</sup> <http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=2260>



**SHI 17-0054**

**Report Date:** April 10, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Sahabat al-Abrar Mosque (مسجد الصحابة الأبرار)

**Date of Incident:** April 10, 2017

**Location:** Tishreen Neighborhood, Damascus, Damascus Governorate

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** A reported SARG missile severely damages mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 10, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG forces fired a missile on a mosque in the Tishreen neighborhood in Damascus, causing severe damage.<sup>73</sup> According to SNHR, the explosive used in the attack is known as an 'elephant missile', named for the loud sound it makes, shortly before it hits the ground. According to Syrian journalist Rami Jarrah, an elephant missile is similar to a barrel bomb, however it causes much larger destruction and is a surface-to-surface weapon. Further analysis suggests the unnamed mosque is known as al-Sahabat al-Abrar Mosque. Reported SARG and Russian aerial bombardment has been ongoing in the neighborhood.<sup>74</sup> In February 2017, the Local Council of Tishreen reportedly declared the neighborhood a disaster zone.<sup>75</sup>

al-Sahabat al-Abrar Mosque has been damaged on at least one prior occasion. On June 14, 2013 the Tishreen District Coordination published a video showing damage to the mosque as a result of shelling, resulting in the death of three people and dozens of injuries.<sup>76</sup> Graphic footage taken from outside and inside the mosque show smoke billowing from the site, as well as some damage to the interior. Video footage released in September and October 2013 shows the toppled minaret of the mosque.<sup>77</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

**Sources:**

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<sup>73</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/10/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-tshreen-neighborhood-damascus-city-april-10/>

<sup>74</sup> <http://syriadirect.org/news/regime-shelling-of-encircled-rebel-neighborhoods-in-east-damascus-sparks-fear-among-residents-of-impending-offensive/>

<sup>75</sup> [http://orient-news.net/en/news\\_show/132657/0/Damascus-Tishreen-district-disaster-stricken---Local-council](http://orient-news.net/en/news_show/132657/0/Damascus-Tishreen-district-disaster-stricken---Local-council)

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OCPrb-eX0Es>

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BunJ3lOGs8M> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NACTVsjZVTc>

Online Reporting:

Khalid Laila: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NACTVsjZVTc>

New Action News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BunJ3IOGs8M>

Orient News: [http://orient-news.net/en/news\\_show/132657/0/Damascus-Tishreen-district-disaster-stricken---Local-council](http://orient-news.net/en/news_show/132657/0/Damascus-Tishreen-district-disaster-stricken---Local-council)

Shahba Press: <https://www.facebook.com/ShahbaPress/posts/1500134153338126>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/10/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-tshreen-neighborhood-damascus-city-april-10/>

Syria Direct: <http://syriadirect.org/news/regime-shelling-of-encircled-rebel-neighborhoods-in-east-damascus-sparks-fear-among-residents-of-impending-offensive/>

Tishreen District Coordination: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OCPrb-eX0Es> (Warning Graphic Content)



Damage to the interior of al-Sahabat al-Abrar Mosque mosque (SNHR; April 10, 2017)



Damage to interior of al-Sahabat al-Abrar Mosque (Shahba Press Agency; April 10, 2017)

**SHI 17-0055**

**Report Date:** April 13, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Naasan Mosque (مسجد النعسان)

**Date of Incident:** April 4, 2017

**Location:** Douma (دوما), Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrike damages mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 4, 2017 the Syrian Civil Defense in Rif Dimashq released video footage taken immediately after an airstrike struck a mosque in the city of Douma. The video shows significant damage to the mosque, as well as the presence of injured civilians. Additional research shows the mosque struck by reported SARG airstrikes is al-Naasan mosque.<sup>78</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: airstrikes.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Syria Civil Defense - Rif Dimashq:

<https://www.facebook.com/SCDrifdimashq/videos/1645841392107830/> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvUGEV8X4bA>

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<sup>78</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/SCDrifdimashq/videos/1645841392107830/> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvUGEV8X4bA>





Video still of damage to the front of the al-Naasan Mosque (Syrian Civil Defense - Rif Dimashq; April 4, 2017)



Video still of damage to al-Naasan Mosque (Syrian Civil Defense - Rif Dimashq; April 4, 2017)

**SHI 17-0056**

**Report Date:** April 13, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque (جامع عربين الكبير)

**Date of Incident:** April 7, 2017

**Location:** Arbin (عربين), Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** al-Kabir Mosque is the oldest mosque in the town of Arbin located adjacent to the old market (souq).<sup>79</sup> The mosque was built with wood and mudbrick.<sup>80</sup> During the Syria-Lebanon Campaign, a French air raid reportedly damaged two of the mosque's walls, including the qibla wall, and destroyed the former wooden minaret.<sup>81</sup>

**Site Date:** Original building dates to 11th Century CE;<sup>82</sup> Restored in the 1955-56 and 1985 CE <sup>83</sup>

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrike damages mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 7, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired a missile on al-Kabir Mosque in the town of Arbin, causing damage to the mosque, severely damaging the furniture, and rendering the building inoperable.<sup>84</sup>

The al-Kabir Mosque has been damaged on at least one prior occasion. On August 23, 2015 video footage uploaded online reportedly showed damage to the mosque as a result of unidentified airstrikes.<sup>85</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: airstrikes.

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

#### **Sources:**

##### Online Reporting:

Jobar News: <http://jobarnews.net/2017/04/07/ارتفاع-عدد-الغارات-التي-استهدفت-مدينة-/>

al-Maktab Arbin: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySxWCzYofGE>

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<sup>79</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxEf6JrT5yw>

<sup>80</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWRJk9k2Yzc>

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWRJk9k2Yzc>

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWRJk9k2Yzc>

<sup>83</sup> <https://smartnews-agency.com/ar/album/186079/جامع-عربين-الكبير-بريف-دمشق/#19283>

<sup>84</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/07/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-erbeen-city-damascus-suburbs-april-7/>

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KIF4nEF0KbA>

New Horizon News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KIF4nEF0KbA>

Orient News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wn8uC6V-B1U>

Smart News Agency:

<https://smartnews-agency.com/ar/album/186079/جامع-عربين-الكبير-بريف-دمشق/#19283>

SMO Syria: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Son3eHEzJGI>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/07/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-erbeen-city-damascus-suburbs-april-7/>

Syrian Mirror:

<http://syrian-mirror.net/ar/طفلان-وعدد-من-الجرحى-ضحايا-الغارات-الج/>

Zaman alWasl: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWRJk9k2Yzc>



Damage to Arbin al-Kabir Mosque (Jobar News; April 7, 2017)





Video still of extensive damage to Arbin al-Kabir Mosque (SMO Syria; April 8, 2017)



Video still of damage to the exterior of Arbin al-Kabir Mosque (SMO Syria; April 8, 2017)



Video still of damage to the interior of Arbin al-Kabir Mosque (SMO Syria; April 8, 2017)



Video still of damage to the interior of Arbin al-Kabir Mosque (SMO Syria; April 8, 2017)





Video still of damage to the interior of Arbin al-Kabir Mosque (SMO Syria; April 8, 2017)



Video still of damage to the interior of Arbin al-Kabir Mosque (SMO Syria; April 8, 2017)



Video still of damage to the interior of Arbin al-Kabir Mosque (SMO Syria; April 8, 2017)



Video still of damage to the interior of Arbin al-Kabir Mosque (SMO Syria; April 8, 2017)



**SHI 17-0057**

**Report Date:** April 13, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Qadim Mosque (مسجد القديم)

**Date of Incident:** April 12, 2017

**Location:** Kafr Batna (كفر بطنا), Rif Dimashq Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

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

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 12, 2017 SNHR reported that SARG artillery fired mortar shells on an unnamed mosque in the town of Kafr Batna, causing partial damage to the building and its furniture.<sup>86</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication. Additional research shows the mosque struck by SARG artillery fire is al-Qadim Mosque. For more information on previous damage to al-Qadim Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0171** in **Weekly Report 119-120**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: airstrikes.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

al-Hal News: <https://7al.net/2017/04/12/جرحي-بصفوف-مصلين-ودمار-مسجد-نتيجة-قصف/>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/12/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-kafr-batna-town-damascus-suburbs-governorate-april-12/>

Syria Civil Defense - Rif Dimashq:

<https://twitter.com/SCDrifdimashq/status/852118740397412357>

Syrian Mirror: <http://syrian-mirror.net/ar/ا-اثر-القصف-مدفعي-يوقع-اصابات-بين-المصلين-اثر-ا/>

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<sup>86</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/12/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-mosque-kafr-batna-town-damascus-suburbs-governorate-april-12/>



Damage to the interior of the mosque (al-Hal; April 12, 2017)

**SHI 17-0058**

**Report Date:** April 14, 2017

**Site Name:** Usama bin Zaid Mosque (جامع أسامة بن زيد)

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

**Location:** al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** New video footage shows damage to mosque as well as cleanup efforts.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 14, 2017 SMART News Agency released a video report showing the condition of two mosques in the city of al-Bab.<sup>87</sup> Usama bin Zaid Mosque shows explosives damage, but the structure of the building appear to be relatively well preserved. According to the mosque's imam, the Usama Bin Zaid Mosque was used as a headquarters by ISIL as were the surrounding local houses. A prison was located in the mosque basement, now used for prayers by local residents as the first floor as the ceiling remain too badly damaged. The minaret has also been damaged.

**Pattern:** Military activity: re-use of structure; Site management: reconstruction/cleanup.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports on the condition of Usama bin Zaid 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:

Smaart News Agency: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= Bd4pN3OirU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bd4pN3OirU)

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<sup>87</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= Bd4pN3OirU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bd4pN3OirU)



Video still of damage to the exterior of Usama Bin Zaid Mosque (Smart News Agency; April 14, 2017)



Video still of damage to the dome of Usama bin Zaid Mosque (Smart News Agency; April 14, 2017)





Video still of prayers take place inside Usama Bin Zaid Mosque (Step News Agency; April 14, 2017)

**SHI 17-0059**

**Report Date:** April 14, 2017

**Site Name:** Zamzam Mosque (جامع زمزم)

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

**Location:** al-Bab, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** New video footage shows damage to mosques in Aleppo Governorate.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 14, 2017 SMART News Agency released a video report showing the condition of two mosques in the city of al-Bab.<sup>88</sup> According to the imam at Zamzam Mosque, the mosque had suffered serious damage. He explained that all the doors of the mosque were broken and laying on the ground. The damage is likely the result of aerial bombardment or clashes between armed groups during efforts to recapture the city from ISIL. According to the imam, local residents have cleaned the carpets of the mosque and tried to make basic repairs.

Zamzam Mosque was previously seen in a video released by ISIL-affiliate Amaq News Agency, which showed recruitment activities taking place inside the mosque. The video was released in the lead-up to operations that retook the city from ISIL. For more information on recruitment activity at Zamzam Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0085** in **Weekly Report 97-98**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives; reuse of structure; Site management: reconstruction/cleanup.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports on damage to Zamzam 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:

Anadolu Agency (Via Granadan Traveler): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz\\_VUdwsawM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz_VUdwsawM)

SMAART News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bd4pN30irU>

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<sup>88</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bd4pN30irU>



Video still of al-Bab showing the location of Zamzam mosque on left side of the image (Anadolu Agency; March 24, 2017)



Video still of damage to the exterior of Zamzam Mosque (Smart News Agency; April 14, 2017)



Video still of minimal damage to the interior of the Zamzam Mosque dome (Smart News Agency; April 14, 2017)



Video still of damage to the interior of Zamzam Mosque (Step News Agency; April 14, 2017)





Video still of clean up efforts at Zamzam Mosque (Smart News Agency; April 14, 2017)

**SHI 17-0060**

**Report Date:** April 14, 2017

**Site Name:** Musaib bin Amir Mosque

**Date of Incident:** April 25, 2017

**Location:** al-Tawama, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** New video footage shows damage to mosques in Aleppo Governorate.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 25, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG shelling had struck and partially damaged a mosque in al-Tawama village.<sup>89</sup> The name of the mosque was not released. A report from Qasioun News Agency also reported a strike on the mosque and confirmed injuries of civilians.<sup>90</sup> Further research identified the mosque struck in al-Tawama village as Musaib bin Amir Mosque.<sup>91</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives; Site management: reconstruction/cleanup.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to Musaib Bin Amir 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:

All4Syria: <http://www.all4syria.info/Archive/405253>

Qasioun News Agency:

[http://www.qasioun.net/en/news/show/63301/Airstrikes\\_Hit\\_Tawama\\_Town\\_Western\\_Aleppo](http://www.qasioun.net/en/news/show/63301/Airstrikes_Hit_Tawama_Town_Western_Aleppo)

SNHR:

April 25, 2017: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/25/syrian-russian-alliance-forces-shelled-mosque-al-tawama-village-aleppo-governorate-april-25/>

May 9, 2017: [http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/102\\_incidents\\_of\\_attacks\\_on\\_civilian\\_vital\\_centers\\_in\\_April\\_2017\\_en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/102_incidents_of_attacks_on_civilian_vital_centers_in_April_2017_en.pdf)

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<sup>89</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/25/syrian-russian-alliance-forces-shelled-mosque-al-tawama-village-aleppo-governorate-april-25/>

<sup>90</sup> [http://www.qasioun.net/en/news/show/63301/Airstrikes\\_Hit\\_Tawama\\_Town\\_Western\\_Aleppo](http://www.qasioun.net/en/news/show/63301/Airstrikes_Hit_Tawama_Town_Western_Aleppo)

<sup>91</sup> [http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/102\\_incidents\\_of\\_attacks\\_on\\_civilian\\_vital\\_centers\\_in\\_April\\_2017\\_en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/102_incidents_of_attacks_on_civilian_vital_centers_in_April_2017_en.pdf)



Damage to the interior of Musaib bin Amir Mosque (SNHR; April 25, 2017)



Damage to the interior of Musaib bin Amir Mosque (SNHR; May 9, 2017)

**SHI 17-0061**

**Report Date:** April 15, 2017

**Site Name:** Tomb of Abu Jdari (مدفن ابو جداري)

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

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

**Site Description:** According to DGAM, the tomb was discovered in 1997 by the Department of Antiquities in Hasakah Governorate. The tomb is built of “stone blocks and is a unique burial site similar to the tombs of the Roman emperors but in a smaller size.” The tomb likely had a chapel built above it based on “the architectural plan and the stone elements spread around the site.”<sup>92</sup>

**Site Date:** Roman Era.

**Incident Summary:** Trench digging causes partial destruction to the tomb and vaulted ceiling.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 15, 2017 the DGAM reported that Turkish forces had dug a trench in the northern side of a tomb in Abu Jdari.<sup>93</sup> The digging of the trench caused partial destruction to the tomb and the vaulted ceiling. Photographs show the collapse of parts of the structure.

**Pattern:** Military activity: occupation/militarization.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

DGAM: <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2268> رقم المقالة

Discover Syria: <http://www.discover-syria.com/news/17247>

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<sup>92</sup> <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2268> رقم المقالة

<sup>93</sup> <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2268> رقم المقالة





Damage to the Abu Jdari Tomb, a trench possibly appears in the foreground (DGAM; April 15, 2017)



Damage to the Abu Jdari Tomb (DGAM; April 15, 2017)



Damage to the Abu Jdari Tomb (DGAM; April 15, 2017)



Damage to the Abu Jdari Tomb (DGAM; April 15, 2017)

**SHI 17-0062**

**Report Date:** April 24, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Amiriya Mosque (جامع العامرية)

**Date of Incident:** April 23, 2017

**Location:** al-Amiriya, Tadmor, Homs Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

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

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 23, 2017 the Palmyra Coordination Committee published three photographs showing damage to al-Amiriya Mosque in a northern suburb of Tadmor.<sup>94</sup> According to the Palmyra Coordination Committee, the mosque was damaged as a result of Russian and SARG airstrikes during operations to recapture the area from ISIL. The damage likely occurred during the most recent operations to recapture the modern town of Tadmor in December 2016 - March 2017. The mosque was damaged previously leaving holes in the walls as shown in images from April 2016.<sup>95</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: airstrike.

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

Palmyra Coordination Committee:

<https://www.facebook.com/revo.palmyra3/posts/692780977513511>

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<sup>94</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/revo.palmyra3/posts/692780977513511>

<sup>95</sup> <http://www.unitar.org/unosat/node/44/2379>





Damage to al-Amiriya Mosque (Palmyra Coordination Committee; April 23, 2017)





Damage to al-Amiriya Mosque (Palmyra Coordination Committee; April 23, 2017)

**SHI 17-0063**

**Report Date:** April 24, 2017

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

**Date of Incident:** April 24, 2017

**Location:** Taldou (تلدو), Homs Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

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

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 24, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG airstrikes had targeted al-Kabir Mosque in the town of Taldou, causing severe damage to the building and its furniture. Qasioun News Agency released video of the strike, and Halab Today TV released video of the aftermath in the surrounding area, however neither of these videos showed damage to the mosque.<sup>96</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: airstrike.

**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:

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/24/syrian-regime-forces-shelled-al-kabir-mosque-taldao-city-homs-governorate-april-24/>

Qasioun News Agency: <http://video.qasioun.net/en/video/show/8025>

Halab Today TV: <https://twitter.com/HalabTodayTV/status/856463435562979328>

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<sup>96</sup> <http://video.qasioun.net/en/video/show/8025>; <https://twitter.com/HalabTodayTV/status/856463435562979328>



Damage to al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; April 24, 2017)



Video still of smoke rising near the al-Kabir mosque (Qasion News; April 24, 2017)

**SHI 17-0064**

**Report Date:** April 26, 2017

**Site Name:** Ja'far Bin Abi Taleb Mosque (مسجد جعفر بن أبي طالب)

**Date of Incident:** April 14, 2017

**Location:** al-Rahyat Village (قرية الرحيات), Raqqa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported US-led Coalition airstrikes damage mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 14, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that US-led Coalition warplanes “fired missiles” on Ja’afar Bin Abi Taleb Mosque in the village of al-Rahyat, “damaging it severely and rendering it inoperable.”<sup>97</sup> According to Raqqa 24, no casualties occurred as a result of the airstrike.<sup>98</sup> No photos of the damage were available at the time of publication.

**Pattern:** Military activity: airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to Ja’afar Bin Abi Taleb 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:

Raqqa 24:

April 15, 2017: <https://twitter.com/24Raqqa/status/853225583714676736> ; <https://twitter.com/24Raqqa/status/853272800840355841>

SNHR:

April 14, 2017: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/15/international-coalition-forces-shelled-jafar-bin-abi-taleb-mosque-al-rahayat-village-raqqa-governorate-april-14/>

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<sup>97</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/15/international-coalition-forces-shelled-jafar-bin-abi-taleb-mosque-al-rahayat-village-raqqa-governorate-april-14/>

<sup>98</sup> <https://twitter.com/24Raqqa/status/853225583714676736> ; <https://twitter.com/24Raqqa/status/853272800840355841>



**SHI 17-0065**

**Report Date:** April 26, 2017

**Site Name:** Cultural Center

**Date of Incident:** April 26, 2017

**Location:** Dbsi Afnan, Raqqa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported US-led Coalition airstrikes damages cultural center.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 26, 2017 local activist group Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently (RBSS) reported that a US-led Coalition airstrikes had struck and severely damaged the cultural center in the town of Dbsi Afnan.<sup>99</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: airstrike.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to the cultural center in Dbsi Afnan, 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:

Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently:

<https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/photos/a.780113668666553.1073741828.780110825333504/1532077810136798/>

Raqqa Post: <http://www.raqqapost.com/25071/2017/04/15>

SNHR:

April 25, 2017: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/27/international-coalition-forces-shelled-cultural-center-debsi-afnan-village-raqqa-governorate-april-25/>

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<sup>99</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Raqqa.SI/photos/a.780113668666553.1073741828.780110825333504/1532077810136798/>; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/27/international-coalition-forces-shelled-cultural-center-debsi-afnan-village-raqqa-governorate-april-25/>



Damage to the cultural center (RBSS; April 26, 2017)

**SHI 17-0066**

**Report Date:** April 4, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Rawda Mosque (مسجد الروضة)

**Date of Incident:** April 4, 2017

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

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported Russian airstrikes partially destroy mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 4, 2017 SNHR reported that suspected Russian warplanes fired a missile near al-Rawda Mosque, partially destroying it.<sup>100</sup> Casualties, including civilians were reported.<sup>101</sup> Video footage suggests that the mosque may have housed a religious school, where children were present at the time of the strike.<sup>102</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

Salqin City Coordination:

April 5, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udSRPGV5-Wk>

April 7, 2017: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iAkiOK9Z6Uk>;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAXLP9JOHmA>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/05/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-al-rawda-mosque-salqin-city-idlib-governorate-april-4/>

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<sup>100</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/05/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-al-rawda-mosque-salqin-city-idlib-governorate-april-4/>

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iAkiOK9Z6Uk>

<sup>102</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAXLP9JOHmA>





The partial destruction of al-Rawda Mosque (SNHR: April 4, 2017)



Video still of damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Salqin City Coordination; April 7, 2017)





Destruction surrounding al-Rawda Mosque (Private Twitter Account; April 4, 2017)



Video still shows damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Salqin City Coordination; April 7, 2017)



Video still shows damage to al-Rawda Mosque (Salqin City Coordination; April 7, 2017)



Video still shows damage to the interior of al-Rawda Mosque (Salqin City Coordination; April 7, 2017)





Video still shows damage to the interior of al-Rawda Mosque (Salqin City Coordination; April 7, 2017)



Video still shows damage to the interior of al-Rawda Mosque (Salqin City Coordination; April 7, 2017)

**SHI 17-0067**

**Report Date:** April 7, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Thaheriya Mosque (مسجد الظاهرية)

**Date of Incident:** April 7, 2017

**Location:** al-Thaheriya village, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

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

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 7, 2017 SNHR reported that suspected Russian airstrikes struck near al-Thaheriya Mosque, causing damage.<sup>103</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 reports of damage to al-Thaheriya 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/2017/04/07/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-al-romani-bridge-jisr-al-shoghour-city-idlib-governorate-april-6/>

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<sup>103</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/08/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-al-thaheriya-mosque-al-thaheriya-village-idlib-governorate-april-7/>



**SHI 17-0068**

**Report Date:** April 6, 2017

**Site Name:** Roman Bridge (الجسر الروماني)

**Date of Incident:** April 6, 2017

**Location:** Jisr al-Shugur, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** The Roman-era bridge is built over the Orontes River. While the foundations of the bridge date to the Roman era, the bridge has been modified several times. According to Syria Photo Guide, “the most notable historic site in Jisr al-Shaghur (جسر الشغور) is the bridge, spanning the Orontes River, which the town is named after. Still in use today, the foundations of this bridge date back to the Roman period. The design forms a broad arrow facing south to withstand the force of the current. The angle and the fact that the bridge was almost horizontal distinguish it from the majority of Roman and Arab bridges. As it has been in continuous use, numerous modifications have been made over the centuries, and the result is somewhat chaotic. However, the bridge’s ancient origins are still noticeable. The bridge is located just east of the main microbus station.”<sup>104</sup>

According to Burns, “Little remains of the Roman bridge and its many successors though parts are still exposed south of the modern highway crossing and on the downstream side of the earlier Ottoman bridge.”<sup>105</sup>

**Site Date:** Roman era, modern era modifications.

**Incident Summary:** Reported Russian airstrikes damage bridge.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 8, 2017 Idlib Antiquities Center reported that SARG airstrikes had struck and damaged the Roman bridge in Jisr al-Shugur. A photograph shared by the organization shows that a section of the bridge has been destroyed. According to SNHR, the strike occurred on April 6, 2017.<sup>106</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to the Roman bridge, 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:

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<sup>104</sup> <http://www.syriaphotoguide.com/home/jisr-al-shaghur-جسر-الشغور/>

<sup>105</sup> <http://monumentsofsyria.com/places/jisr-al-shugur-جسر-الشغور/>

<sup>106</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/07/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-al-romani-bridge-jisr-al-shoghour-city-idlib-governorate-april-6/>

Idlib Antiquities Center:

<https://www.facebook.com/1070868956264699/photos/a.1072279832790278.1073741829.1070868956264699/1509629725721951/>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/07/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-al-romani-bridge-jisr-al-shoghur-city-idlib-governorate-april-6/>



Damage to the Roman bridge (Idlib Antiquities Center; April 8, 2017)

**SHI 17-0069**

**Report Date:** April 8, 2017

**Site Name:** Hamza Bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque (مسجد حمزة بن عبد المطلب)

**Date of Incident:** April 8, 2017

**Location:** Jisr al-Shugur, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

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

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 8, 2017 SNHR reported that suspected Russian warplanes fired on Hamza Bin Abd al-Mutallab Mosque, causing partial damage to the building and damage the building's furniture.<sup>107</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to Hamza Bin Abd al-Mutallab 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/2017/04/08/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-mosque-jisr-al-shoghour-city-idlib-governorate-april-8/>

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<sup>107</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/08/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-mosque-jisr-al-shoghour-city-idlib-governorate-april-8/>





Damage to the interior of Hamza Bin Abd al-Mutalleb Mosque (SNHR; April 8, 2017)



**SHI 17-0070**

**Report Date:** April 27, 2017

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

**Date of Incident:** April 27, 2017

**Location:** Ma'ar Shoureen Village (قرية معر شورين), Maaret al-Numan District, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

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

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 27, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that suspected Russian warplanes fired two missiles near Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque in the al-Janoubi neighborhood in Ma'ar Shoureen, causing partial damage.<sup>108</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 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/2017/04/27/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-abo-bakr-al-sedeiq-mosque-maar-shoureen-village-idlib-governorate-april-27/>

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<sup>108</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/27/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-abo-bakr-al-sedeiq-mosque-maar-shoureen-village-idlib-governorate-april-27/>

**SHI 17-0071**

**Report Date:** April 27, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Firdous Mosque (الفردوس مسجد)

**Date of Incident:** April 27, 2017

**Location:** Sarmin (سرمين), Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown, repairs to the mosque occurred in May 2015 following damage by aerial bombardment.<sup>109</sup>

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

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 27, 2017 SNHR reported that suspected Russian warplanes fired two missiles near al-Firdous Mosque, causing damage.<sup>110</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

al-Firdous Mosque has been damaged on at least three prior occasions. On May 7, 2013 video footage released online showed extensive damage to the mosque's interior. The description accompanying the video explains that the mosque had been struck for the fourth consecutive time.<sup>111</sup> On July 4, 2014 video footage released by Sarmin Coordination reported that barrel bombs struck either on or near the mosque during Friday prayers.<sup>112</sup> In May 2015, social media accounts again reported explosives damage to the mosque as a result of aerial bombardment.<sup>113</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

Sarmin Coordination:

July 4, 2014: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMxp-jrAdaQ>

May 19, 2015: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBbshRPoIMY>

SNHR:

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<sup>109</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBbshRPoIMY>

<sup>110</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/27/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-mosque-sarmin-city-idlib-governorate-april-27/>

<sup>111</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvUhdQ1ets8>

<sup>112</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMxp-jrAdaQ>

<sup>113</sup> <https://twitter.com/aljmhoria/status/594623094490300417>

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/27/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-mosque-sarmin-city-idlib-governorate-april-27/>

Ugarit News Network - Syria: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvUhdQ1ets8>

**SHI 17-0072**

**Report Date:** April 27, 2017

**Site Name:** Hammam al-Daraj al-Qadim (الدرج حمام)

**Date of Incident:** April 27, 2017

**Location:** Sarmin (سرمين), Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Dated to the Roman Era. Rebuilt during the Ottoman Era, and renovated in 2002 CE.

**Incident Summary:** Reported Russian airstrikes damage an Ottoman-area hammam.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 27, 2017 Step News Agency reported that suspected Russian airstrikes had struck and severely damaged the Hammam al-Daraj al-Qadim in Sarmin.<sup>114</sup> Video footage shows severe damage to the site, including the collapse of parts of the roof.<sup>115</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to the Hammam al-Daraj al-Qadim, 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/2017/04/27/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-al-daraj-archaeologist-bath-sarmin-city-idlib-governorate-april-27/>

Step News Agency:

<http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/143131>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmRDeTRseB8>

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<sup>114</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/27/suspected-russian-forces-shelled-al-daraj-archaeologist-bath-sarmin-city-idlib-governorate-april-27/>

<sup>115</sup> <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/143131>





Video still of severe damage to Hammam al-Daraj al-Qadim (Step News Agency; April 27, 2017)



Video still of severe damage to Hammam al-Daraj al-Qadim (Step News Agency; April 27, 2017)





Video still of severe damage to Hammam al-Daraj al-Qadim (Step News Agency; April 27, 2017)



Video still of severe damage to Hammam al-Daraj al-Qadim (Step News Agency; April 27, 2017)





Video still of severe damage to Hammam al-Daraj al-Qadim (Step News Agency; April 27, 2017)



Video still of severe damage to Hammam al-Daraj al-Qadim (Step News Agency; April 27, 2017)



Video still of severe damage to Hammam al-Daraj al-Qadim (Step News Agency; April 27, 2017)



**SHI 17-0073**

**Report Date:** April 28, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Janubi Mosque (لمسجد الجنوبي); al-Janubi Cemetery

**Date of Incident:** April 6, 2017

**Location:** Lataminah, Hama Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG and/or Russian airstrikes damage mosques and cemetery.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 6, 2017, Thiqa News released video footage showing damage to the Mosque al-Janub in Lataminah. This damage was reportedly due to rockets and barrel bombs dropped by SARG and/or Russian forces.<sup>116</sup> Various other sources corroborated the instance of aerial bombardment.<sup>117</sup> The video shows only the minaret and a few walls standing, but the roof has collapsed over part of the building and outside walls are missing. The al-Janubi Cemetery across the road looks to have received little to no damage. For previous reports of damage to mosques in Lataminah, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0154** in **Weekly Report 69-70**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to al-Janubi Mosque and cemetery, 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:

Thiqa News:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lddY1u1W2dA&list=PLNxxX7r4A554pJ50lBinFVhgXnzArVdn&index=2>

YT Newswire: <https://twitter.com/ytnewswire/status/849990451990073344>

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<sup>116</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lddY1u1W2dA&list=PLNxxX7r4A554pJ50lBinFVhgXnzArVdn&index=2>; <https://twitter.com/ytnewswire/status/849990451990073344>

<sup>117</sup> <http://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/syria/1.781928>; <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2017/04/06/US-Britain-France-request-name-of-pilot-who-carried-out-Syrian-chemical-attack.html>; <http://www.uawire.org/news/second-chemical-attack-hits-the-syrian-province-of-hama>



Video still of damage to al-Janubi Mosque in Lataminah showing collapsed roof and standing minaret (Thiqa News; April 6, 2017)



Video still of al-Janubi cemetery in Lataminah showing little to no damage (Thiqa News; April 6, 2017)

**SHI 17-0074**

**Report Date:** April 28, 2017

**Site Name:** Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah Mosque (مسجد أبو عبيدة بن الجراح)

**Date of Incident:** April 28, 2017

**Location:** Kafr Zaita, Hama Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

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

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 28, 2017 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG and Russian warplanes “fired on” Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah Mosque in Kafr Zaita, destroying the building and rendering it inoperable.<sup>118</sup> A photograph of the damage shows that the mosque has been leveled with only the minaret remaining. According to a private twitter account, the mosque was adjacent to a hospital that was also destroyed. Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah Mosque was previously damaged by SARG barrel bombs on November 11, 2016. For more information on previous damage to Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah Mosque, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0166** in **Weekly Report 117-118**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah 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/2017/04/28/syrian-russian-alliance-forces-shelled-mosque-kafr-zita-city-hama-governorate-april-28/>

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<sup>118</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2017/04/28/syrian-russian-alliance-forces-shelled-mosque-kafr-zita-city-hama-governorate-april-28/>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ayFxguQ7iY>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHN5sjIQD7w>



The destruction of Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah Mosque (SNHR; April 28, 2017)



Local residents visit the site of Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah Mosque (Private Facebook Account; April 29, 2017)





Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah Mosque prior to destruction (DigitalGlobe; April 3, 2017)



Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah Mosque post destruction with only the minaret still standing (DigitalGlobe; April 29, 2017)

**SHI 17-0075**

**Report Date:** April 28, 2017

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

**Date of Incident:** Around April 24, 2017

**Location:** Kafr Zaita, Hama Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

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

**Incident Source and Description:** DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from April 29, 2017 showed new damage to Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq Mosque that occurred on or after April 3, 2017. Video footage published April 24, 2017 shows ongoing aerial bombardment, including the presence of parachute bombs landing near the mosque, likely causing the damage seen in the satellite imagery.<sup>119</sup> Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq Mosque has previously been damaged by reported SARG barrel bombs in February 2016. For more information on previous damage to Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0028 in Weekly Report 79-80**. Satellite imagery shows the extent of damage to the town of Kafr Zaita that occurred in the month of April. Much of the center of the town has been destroyed over a short period of time.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

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

Madar Daily: <https://www.facebook.com/2011madardaily/posts/776580462498579>

Qalaat al-Mudiq/Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/QalaatAlMudiq/status/857966847286751233/video/1>

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<sup>119</sup> <https://twitter.com/markito0171/status/858254899049619457> ; <https://twitter.com/QalaatAlMudiq/status/853647223783141376> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RlEyhXfpHKQ>



Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq Mosque with minor damage to the roof (DigitalGlobe; April 3, 2017)



Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq Mosque with damage to the dome, courtyard, and surrounding areas (DigitalGlobe; April 29, 2017)



Video still of parachute bombs falling on Kafr Zeita near Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq Mosque (Private Youtube Account; April 24, 2017)



Video still of parachute bombs exploding on Kafr Zeita near Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq Mosque (Private Youtube Account; April 24, 2017)



The city of Kafr Zeita prior to recent bombardment (DigitalGlobe; April 3, 2017)





The severe damage to the city of Kafr Zaita since April 3, 2017 (DigitalGlobe; April 29, 2017)

## Incident Reports: Iraq

### IHI 15-0097 UPDATE

**Report Date:** April 19, 2017

**Site Name:** Nineveh

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

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

**Site Description:** Nineveh is made up of two mounds, Kouyunjik and Tell Nabi Yunus. Kouyunjik rises about 20 m above the surrounding plain of the ancient city. It measures 800 by 500 meters, and its layers contained several Neo-Assyrian palaces and temples, as well as habitation stretching to 6000 BCE. Nebi Yunus is the smaller of the two mounds and is the site of a palace built by Esarhaddon, as well as a church and mosque constructed on top of the mound. The ruins of Nineveh are surrounded by a massive stone and mudbrick wall dating to about 700 BCE. This city wall was fitted with fifteen monumental gateways.

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

**Site Date:** 6000 BCE at the earliest occupation levels, with largest architectural expansion beginning 700 BCE. Modern habitation is also in proximity to the site.

**Incident Summary:** New video reports the construction of a road and looting activities at Nineveh.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 19, 2017, al-Aan Arabic Television released a video report that included an interview with a resident near the ancient site of Nineveh. He stated that ISIL looted and trafficked antiquities under the guise of constructing a road through the site. The road was named al-Khilafa Road and is built between 'al-Sina'a area around the '4th Bridge' and 'al-Jaswaq' area. The road reportedly cuts through the 'ancient site's wall'. According to a local resident, ISIL built the road using bulldozers and then used cars to move antiquities along that road. ISIL reportedly dug through watery ground until they hit stone, and the antiquities were uncovered in that same area.<sup>120</sup> Local residents were blocked by ISIL from going anywhere near the site, and were threatened that their arms would be cut-off if they did. This information corroborates ASOR CHI's previous reporting on the construction of a road through the ancient site of Nineveh (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0097 UPDATE in WR 103-104**). New satellite images from DigitalGlobe do not show any change in the site since July 18, 2016.

For more information on damage to Nineveh, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0095 in WR 59-60; ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0097 in WR 67-68; ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-**

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<sup>120</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPoKeqliBx0>

0097 UPDATE in WR 103-104; ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0010 in WR 91-92; ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0010 UPDATE in WR 95-96; and ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0010 UPDATE in WR 103-104.

**Pattern:** Development disturbances; Illegal excavation.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

al-Aan Arabic Television: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPoKeqliBx0>

Akhbariaa: <http://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/arab-world/2017/4/19/>



Video still of the ancient site of Nineveh (al-Aan Arabic Television; April 14, 2017)



Video still of a banner, with the street name blacked out, that has been torn down and defaced at Nineveh (al-Aan Arabic Television; April 14, 2017)



Video still of a large quern found at Nineveh (al-Aan Arabic Television; April 14, 2017)





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

## IHI 16-0042 UPDATE

**Report Date:** April 19, 2017

**Site Name:** Mar Qoryaqos Church (مار قرياقوس) (Mar Qiriaqs); Batnaya Cemetery

**Date of Incident:** August 2014 - October 2016

**Location:** Batnaya, Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Chaldean Catholic Church built on ruins of 15th century monastery of the same name. The church was built with local stones; Christian cemetery located in the town of Batnaya. Location of Mar Shmooni Shrine.

**Site Date:** Mar Qoryaqos Church - Renovated in 1944 CE; Cemetery - Unknown

**Incident Summary:** New photographs and detail of damage to church and cemetery.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 19, 2017 charity relief organization Preemptive Love Coalition published a report from the first Easter mass to be celebrated at Mar Qoryaqos Church in Batnaya since ISIL swept through the area in 2014.<sup>121</sup> According to Preemptive Love Coalition, ISIL graffiti is still present on the walls of the church and live ammunition was used to deface crosses inside the church. Much of the church, however, has been cleaned up by former residents.<sup>122</sup> In addition, the church tower was reportedly used as a sniper position by ISIL during Peshmerga efforts to recapture the village.<sup>123</sup>

A report from April also shared additional photographs from Batnaya that showed extensive damage to other Christian sites in Batnaya, including Mar Qoryaqos Church and the local Christian cemetery. The church structure itself remains largely intact, however the interior of the church was subjected to vandalism by ISIL.<sup>124</sup> According to the report, approximately 80 percent of residential buildings in Batnaya were destroyed.

According to a Peshmerga member, another church located in the town was destroyed completely because ISIL used it as a “weapons dump.” It is unclear whether this church was targeted in an airstrike, intentionally blown-up by ISIL, or destroyed during clashes between ISIL and the Peshmerga. The name of the church was not shared in the report.

According to the Peshmerga, the cemetery in Batnaya was desecrated and booby-trapped. The site has yet to be entirely cleared of explosives.<sup>125</sup> According to a Peshmerga captain, ISIL members opened the tombs “to steal gold from the dead.”

For more information on previous damage to sites in Batnaya, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0042 in Weekly Report 117-118.**

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<sup>121</sup> [http://www.preemptivelove.org/christian\\_community\\_mosul\\_easter\\_destruction\\_and\\_hope](http://www.preemptivelove.org/christian_community_mosul_easter_destruction_and_hope)

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43T75UeJZbI>

<sup>123</sup> <https://theferret.scot/iraq-war-destruction-liberation-batnaya/>

<sup>124</sup> <https://theferret.scot/iraq-war-destruction-liberation-batnaya/>

<sup>125</sup> <https://theferret.scot/iraq-war-destruction-liberation-batnaya/>

**Pattern:** Military activity: intentional destruction, explosives, occupation/militarization, gunfire/light weaponry; Vandalism; Theft.

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

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

The Arlington Catholic Herald:

[http://www.catholicherald.com/News/National\\_International/Fate\\_of\\_Iraqi\\_Christians\\_in\\_peril/](http://www.catholicherald.com/News/National_International/Fate_of_Iraqi_Christians_in_peril/)

Chaldeans Online: <http://www.chaldeansonline.org/village/batnaya.html>

The Ferret:

April 13, 2017: <https://theferret.scot/iraq-war-destruction-liberation-batnaya/>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcbbpA5xz9I>

Preemptive Love Coalition:

[http://www.preemptivelove.org/christian\\_community\\_mosul\\_easter\\_destruction\\_and\\_hope](http://www.preemptivelove.org/christian_community_mosul_easter_destruction_and_hope)

Ruptly TV: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43T75UeJZbI>



Damage surrounding Mar Qoryaqos Church (The Ferret; April 13, 2017)





An overhead view of Mar Qoryaqos Church showing some damage to the roof and courtyard (The Ferret; April 13, 2017)



The damaged altar seen during Easter mass (Preemptive Love Coalition; April 19, 2017)





Live ammunition damaged a cross on the wall in Mar Qoryaqos (Preemptive Love Coalition; April 19, 2017)



Damage to the Christian Cemetery in Batnaya (The Ferret; April 13, 2017)



Vandalism and intentional destruction to the Christian Cemetery in Batnaya (The Ferret; April 13, 2017)



Vandalism and intentional destruction to the Christian Cemetery in Batnaya (The Ferret; April 13, 2017)



**IHI 17-0022**

**Report Date:** April 13, 2017

**Site Name:** Unnamed Village Mosque

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

**Location:** Ain Talawi Village (قرية عين طلاوي), Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Unknown

**Site Date:** Unknown

**Incident Summary:** Video footage shows damage and possible militarization of mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 13, 2017 al-Hurra Iraq published a video report from the village of Ain Talawi showing damage and militarization of the village mosque by ISIL militants.<sup>126</sup> The Shia militia known as the Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) captured the village in February 2017 from ISIL.<sup>127</sup> According to the report, large holes are present in the mosque walls, connecting the site to other buildings in the village including residential buildings. These holes were used by ISIL fighters to move between areas without being seen by Iraqi military forces. In addition, the mosque was reportedly used by ISIL as an execution site and weapons depot. The entire mosque was discovered to have been mined by ISIL when the village was recaptured.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives, occupation/militarization.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to the unnamed Ain Talawi village 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-Hurra Iraq: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DTt0307JmyY>

Rudaw: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DTt0307JmyY>

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<sup>126</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DTt0307JmyY>

<sup>127</sup> <http://www.rudaw.net/arabic/middleeast/iraq/010220175>



Video still of the village mosque showing evidence of explosives damage (al-Hurra Iraq; April 13, 2017)



Video still of the village mosque showing evidence of damage and militarization (al-Hurra Iraq; April 13, 2017)





Video still of the village mosque showing some damage (al-Hurra Iraq; April 13, 2017)



Video still of the village mosque showing evidence of tunneling and militarization (al-Hurra Iraq; April 13, 2017)

**IHI 17-0023**

**Report Date:** April 19, 2017

**Site Name:** al-Nuri al-Kabir Mosque (جامع النوري)

**Date of Incident:** Unknown

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

**Site Description:** al-Nuri al-Kabir Mosque- Historical mosque famous for its leaning minaret.<sup>128</sup> The mosque is part of a complex that includes the famous al-Hadba' Minaret and a school named after the builder Nur al-Din al-Zangi Atabeg. According to World Monuments Fund, "in 1942, as part of a renovation campaign by the Iraqi Department of Antiquities, the mosque and madrasa were dismantled and reassembled according to a new plan, but the minaret remains as one of the few original elements of the medieval Nur al-Din complex."<sup>129</sup>

**Site Date:** Original complex built in 1172 CE. Rebuilt in 1942 CE by the Iraqi Department of Antiquities.

**Incident Summary:** Video footage shows damage to dome of mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 19, 2017 France24 Arabic published video footage of clashes between Iraqi Security Forces and ISIL militants in Mosul's Old City.<sup>130</sup> The damaged dome of al-Nuri al-Kabir Mosque is shown as Iraqi forces continue to advance towards the symbolic mosque where in 2014 ISIL leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi announced the creation of the ISIL caliphate.<sup>131</sup> Additional video footage shows similar damage to the dome.<sup>132</sup> Clashes have been ongoing in the area as Iraqi forces attempt to capture the Old City, and the damage appears to be a result of explosives.<sup>133</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Nuri 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 Jazeera: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/troops-close-nuri-mosque-residents-flee-mosul-170319102311931.html>

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<sup>128</sup> <https://www.wmf.org/project/al-hadba%E2%80%99-minaret>

<sup>129</sup> <https://www.wmf.org/project/al-hadba%E2%80%99-minaret>

<sup>130</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDFBkaJITq4>

<sup>131</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39339373>

<sup>132</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTsaDtFq9K0>

<sup>133</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/03/troops-close-nuri-mosque-residents-flee-mosul-170319102311931.html>

al-Hurra: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTsaDtFq9K0>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39339373>

France24 Arabic: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDFBkaJJTq4>

Scholarly:

World Monuments Fund: <https://www.wmf.org/project/al-hadba%E2%80%99-minaret>



Video still of damage to the dome of al-Nuri al-Kabir Mosque (France 24; April 19, 2017)

**IHI 17-0024**

**Report Date:** April 26, 2017

**Site Name:** Hatra (al-Hadr) (الحضر)

**Date of Incident:** March 2015

**Location:** Ninawa Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** The city of Hatra — a large fortified urban center — was built by the Seleucid Empire in the third or second centuries BCE and was later conquered by the Parthians. During the first and second centuries CE it rose to prominence as a religious center and as a major trading city along the Silk Road. Roman Emperors Trajan and Septimius Severus unsuccessfully attempted to capture the city in 116 CE and 198 CE, respectively. Hatra eventually formed an alliance with the Romans in 230 CE, during the reign of Emperor Gordian III, but the city was conquered in 241 CE and destroyed by Ardashir I (226-42 CE), founder of the Sassanid dynasty.

The surviving remains of Hatra date between the first century BCE and the second century CE. The city is approximately 2 km in diameter and was protected by two large fortification walls, separated by a wide ditch with four fortified gates. The city center is marked by a temple complex dedicated to several Greco-Roman, Mesopotamian, Canaanite, Aramean, and Arabian deities, with monumental architectural remains blending Hellenistic, Roman, and Middle Eastern traditions. The archaeological site was successfully inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985.

**Site Date:** 3rd/2nd century BCE – 241 CE

**Incident Summary:** Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) captures site from ISIL.

**Incident Source and Description:** On April 26, 2017 forces from the Shia militia officially known as the Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) recaptured the ancient site of Hatra from ISIL. New photographs of the site show damage consistent with ISIL propaganda footage released in March 2015. One photograph shared by Iraqi archaeologist Layla Salih shows evidence that ISIL used at least one area as a shooting range, and possibly used other areas for military training.<sup>134</sup> According to Salih, the site was being used as a ‘military training center.’ ASOR CHI was unable to independently verify Ms. Salih’s claim. Graffiti and munitions are present at the site.

For more information on previous damage to Hatra, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0068** in **Weekly Report 31** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0068 Update** in **Weekly Report 35**.

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

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

**Sources:**

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<sup>134</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/layla.mss/posts/1522574794419727>



### Online Reporting:

ABC News: <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iraqi-forces-seized-hatra-antiquities-site-47027440>

Art Daily: <http://artdaily.com/?date=04/29/2017&bfd=0>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39726244>

Deutsche Welle: <http://www.dw.com/en/iraqi-forces-retake-damaged-hatra-heritage-site-from-isis/a-38601736>

France 24: <http://www.france24.com/en/20170427-iraq-forces-retake-town-hatra-southwest-mosul-0>

The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2017/apr/27/ancient-city-of-hatra-recaptured-from-isis-iraqi-forces-say-video>

IB Times UK: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/ancient-iraqi-city-hatra-liberated-isis-control-after-two-days-fierce-fighting-1619369>

Iraqi National Army/Twitter: [https://twitter.com/IQ\\_Mesopotamia/status/857576616129683458](https://twitter.com/IQ_Mesopotamia/status/857576616129683458)

Layla Salih: <https://www.facebook.com/layla.mss/posts/1522574794419727>

al-Mesla: [https://twitter.com/The\\_H16/status/857573699184189441](https://twitter.com/The_H16/status/857573699184189441)

Middle East Eye: <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/iraqi-forces-retake-ancient-city-hatra-1951856372>

Mosul Eye: <https://www.facebook.com/MosulEye/posts/1236911503097016>

Ruptly TV: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnXro9ydUI0>

Il Sole: <http://stream24.ilsole24ore.com/video/mondo/ecco-quel-che-resta-hatra-immagini-sito-tolto-isis/AEq6qmCB>

Voice of America: <http://www.voanews.com/a/iraqi-militias-find-relics-destroyed-ancient-town/3828751.html>

### War Media Team:

April 27, 2017: <https://twitter.com/warmediateam/status/857243176607899649/photo/1> ;  
<https://www.facebook.com/WarMediaTeam/posts/1742063292700979>

### Scholarly:

UNESCO: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/277>



A view of Hatra following the recapturing of the area by the PMF (Private Facebook Account; April 27, 2017)



Hatra as it appears today (Art Daily; April 27, 2017)





PMU fighters flash victory signs outside Hatra (Art Daily; April 27, 2017)



Mortars and bullets present at the ancient site of Hatra (Art Daily; April 27, 2017)





Damage and erosion at Hatra (Iraqi National Army/Twitter; April 27, 2017)



Damage and erosion at Hatra (Iraqi National Army/Twitter; April 27, 2017)



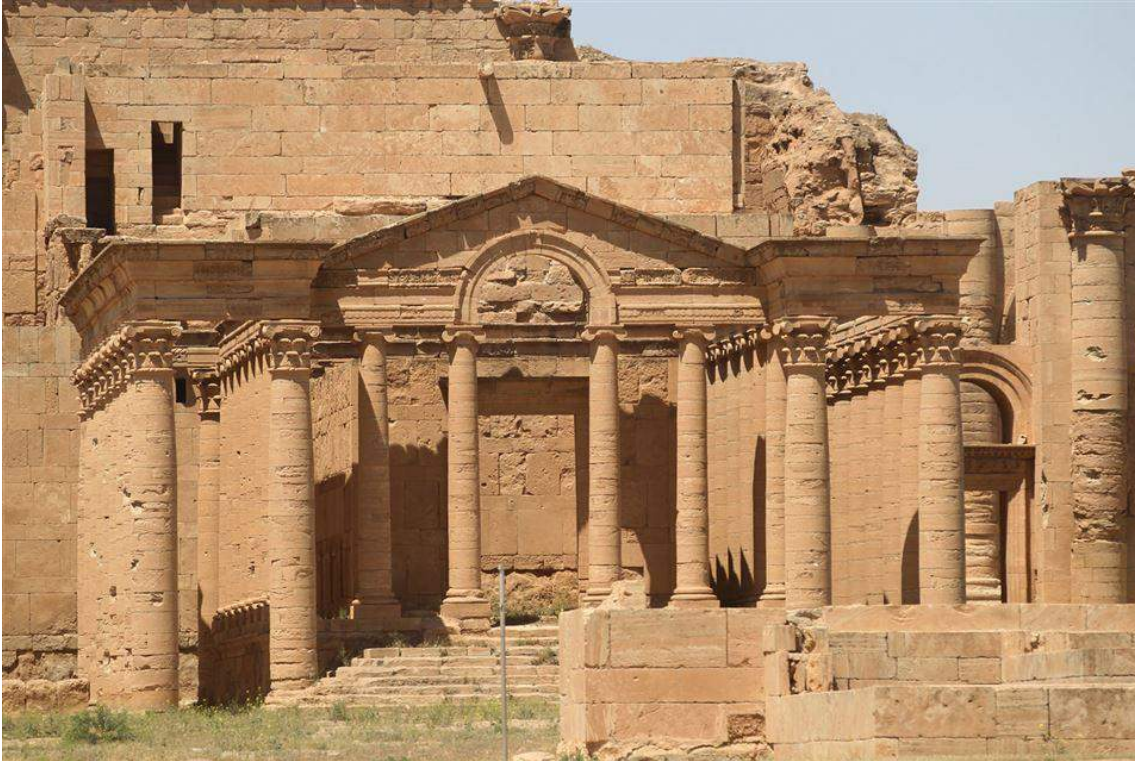


Damage and erosion at Hatra (Iraqi National Army/Twitter; April 27, 2017)



Damage and erosion at Hatra (Art Daily; April 27, 2017)





A view of Hatra as it stands today (Art Daily; April 27, 2017)

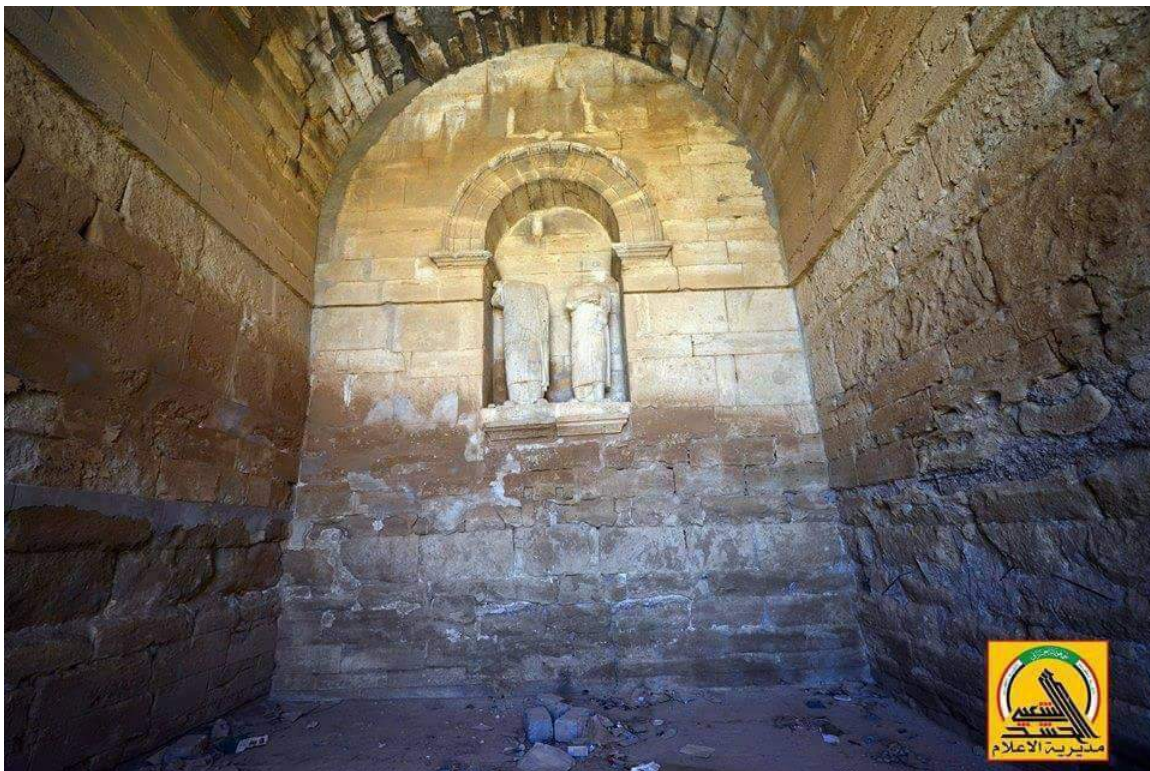


A view of Hatra as it stands today (Art Daily; April 27, 2017)





Evidence of intentional destruction to and military training at Hatra (Mosul Eye; April 29, 2017)



Damage to statues at Hatra (Iraqi National Army/Twitter; April 27, 2017)





Detail of damage to statues at Hatra (Art Daily; April 27, 2017)



Damage to artifacts at Hatra (al-Mesla; April 27, 2017)





Damage to artifacts at Hatra (Art Daily; April 27, 2017)



Video still of a damaged artifact at Hatra (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)

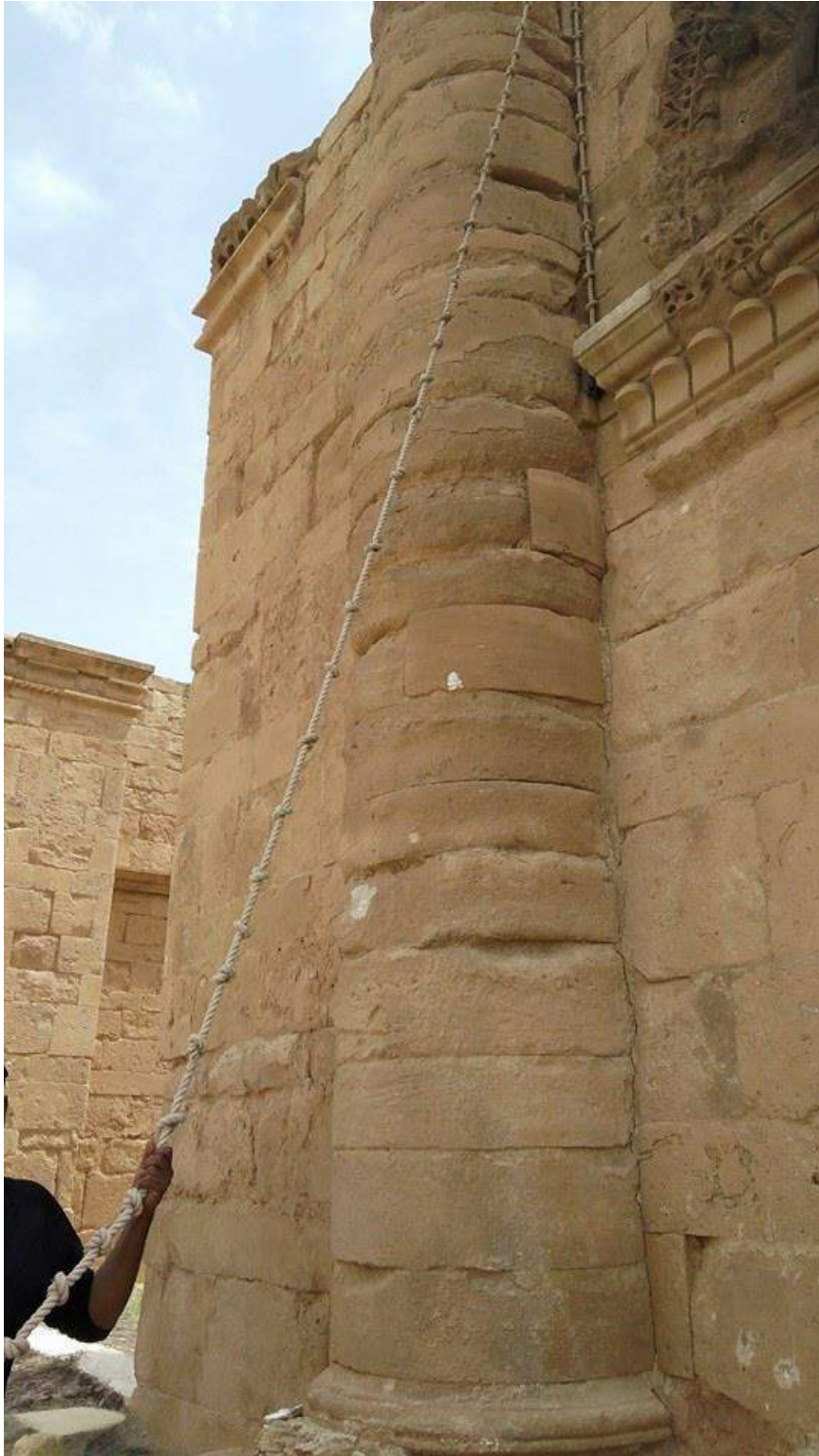


Damage to artifacts at Hatra (Voice of America; April 27, 2017)





Evidence of target practice at Hatra (Layla Salih; April 28, 2017)



Evidence of militarization at Hatra (Layla Salih; April 28, 2017)





Hatra as it stands today (Layla Salih; April 28, 2017)





Observers inside Hatra (Layla Salih; April 28, 2017)



Video still of Hatra with ISIL graffiti and defacement of artifacts present (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)



Video still of Hatra (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)



Video still of Hatra (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)





Video still of Hatra (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)



Video still of the inside of a temple at Hatra (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)





Video still of the inside of a temple at Hatra (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)



Video still of explosives material inside a temple at Hatra (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)





Black smoke billowing from the eastern room of the Temple of the Triad from the day the site was recaptured (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; April 26, 2017)



Video still of tombs and the site of Hatra (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)



Video still of tombs and the site of Hatra (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)



Video still of burned temples at Hatra (Ruptly TV; April 29, 2017)





The remains of a truck inside a temple, fire damage is apparent in the photograph (al-Mesla; April 27, 2017)



Details of the remains of a truck inside a temple at Hatra (Art Daily; April 27, 2017)

## Incident Reports: Libya

LHI 17-0001

**Report Date:** April 25, 2017

**Site Name:** House of Ben Halim

**Date of Incident:** Early March - present.

**Location:** Old City of Derna (المدينة القديمة في درنة), Cyrenaica, Libya

**Site Description:** The house of Ben Halim is on a prominent corner on the edge of the old city of Derna. It was a typical house built circa 1800 during the Ottoman period and renovated during the Italian colonial period (1910-1947). As such, the Historic Cities Authority of Derna protected it, and any construction project on the property was subject to review.

**Site Date:** Ottoman period.

**Incident Summary:** Private owners are circumventing Libyan law and dismantling a prominent historic house in downtown Derna.

**Incident Source and Description:** In the aftermath of the Libyan revolution of 2011, the Historic Cities Authority has been sidelined. Since ISIL forces retreated from Derna in April 2016, normal life and economic activity (largely tied to trade across the border with Egypt) have gradually returned to Derna. Some individuals have enough liquidity to fuel a speculative real estate market that appears to be growing in strength. In the absence of rule of law, owners have bypassed this process, and are currently dismantling the historic house to replace it with a new development. On April 25, 2017 a member of the Libyan Department of Antiquities in Derna reported that despite previous attempts of intercession with the owners of the building and the Historic Cities Authority, the house was being dismantled.

**Pattern:** Development Disturbance: Construction.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the Old City of Derna for signs of ongoing destruction of historic structures.

### Sources:

The Derna Office of the Libyan Department of Antiquities has reported this incident.





Ben Halim house prior to construction project (ASOR CHI Sources; April 2014)



Ben Halim house being dismantled (ASOR CHI Sources; April 2017)

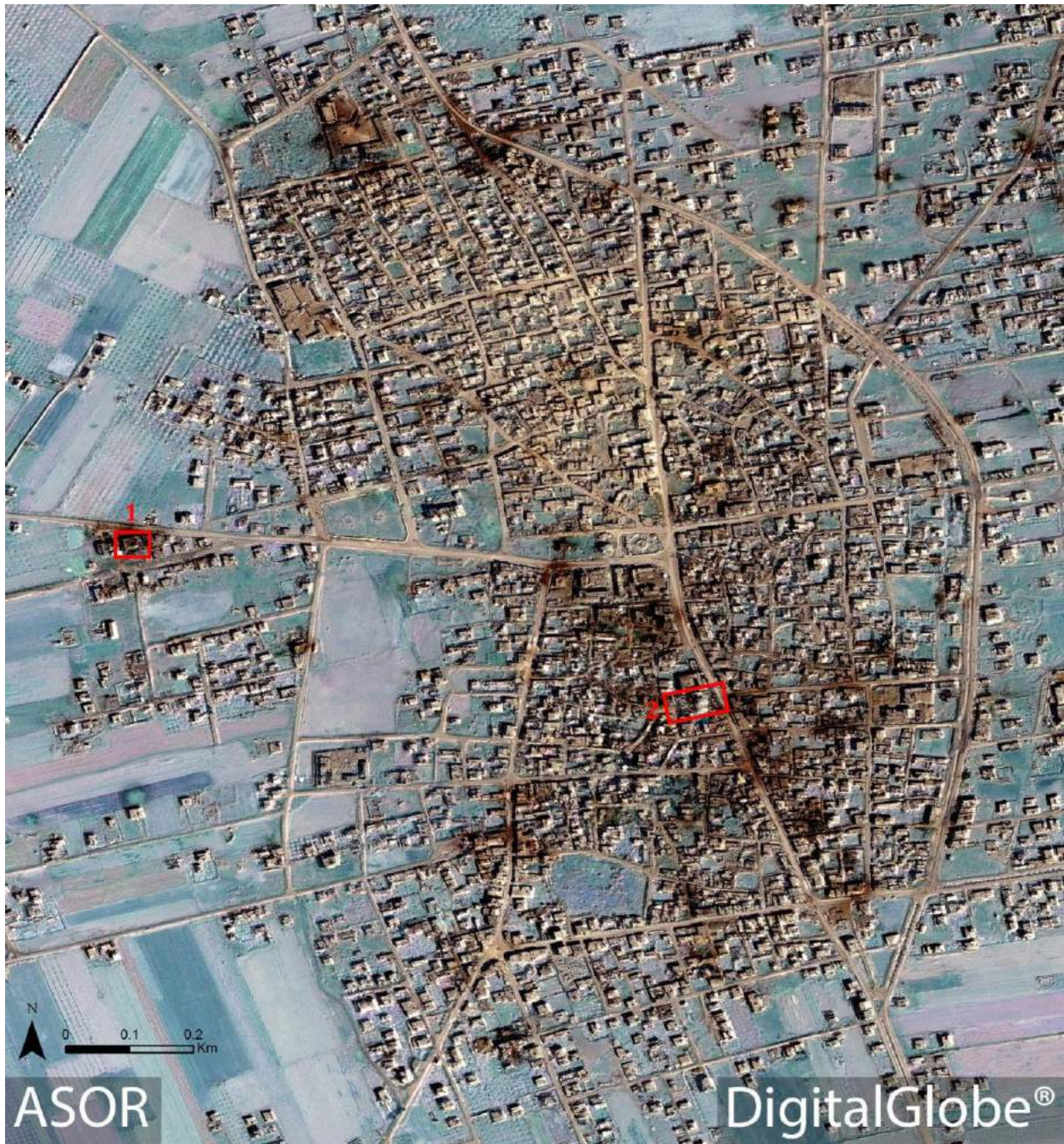




Heavy equipment has arrived on site to dig the foundations for the new building that will replace the Ben Halim house (ASOR CHI Sources; April 25, 2017)

## Satellite Imagery and Geospatial Analysis

Satellite imagery from the month of April shows extensive damage to areas in Hama Governorate, especially around the city of Kafr Zaita. In addition to reported damage to mosques in the area, the city itself has been heavily damaged (see [ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0075](#)). By analyzing two DigitalGlobe images from April 3 and April 29, 2017, the extent of the damage to the city becomes clear. The dark spots seen in the image below show the areas of severe damage while the areas in tan illustrate areas with moderate damage. Satellite imagery shows that the majority of the damage is concentrated in the southern portion of the city around Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq Mosque.



Dark spots indicate damaged areas within Kafr Zaita. Damaged mosques are outlined in red: (1) Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarrah Mosque (2) Abu Bakr al-Sadeiq Mosque (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; April 29, 2017)





The city of Kafr Zaita prior to recent bombardment (DigitalGlobe; April 3, 2017)



The severe damage to the city of Kafr Zaita since April 3, 2017 (DigitalGlobe; April 29, 2017)

## Heritage Timeline

April 29, 2017

*AINA* published an article titled “**ISIS Financing Terrorism Through Archaeology**” (by Marlene Gantt). ISIL is using archaeological antiquities to finance terror operations, the FBI is asking for tips about cultural heritage items from Iraq or Syria.

<http://www.aina.org/news/20170429140410.htm>

April 28, 2017

*Tech Dirt* published an article titled “**Creative Commons Is Resurrecting Palmyra**” (by Leigh Beadon). Creative Commons launched its 2017 Global Summit which included a “seven-foot-tall 3D printed replica of the Tetrapylon” destroyed by ISIL.

<https://www.techdirt.com/articles/20170428/08073037256/creative-commons-is-resurrecting-palmyra.shtml>

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*Los Alamos Daily Post* published an article titled “**History Museum Explores Turn-Of-The-Century Syria In A Post-ISIS World.**” A temporary exhibit titled “**Syria: Cultural Patrimony Under Treat**” will be on display at the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe from June 23 - December 2017. <http://www.ladailypost.com/content/history-museum-explores-turn-century-syria-post-isis-world>

April 27, 2017

*DGAM* published an article titled “**Exhibition entitled Treasures of The Syrian Heritage.**” A new exhibit will be opened on May 4, 2017 at the Damascene Hall at the National Museum in Damascus.

<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2272>

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*PennCurrent* published an article titled “**Penn Museum Exhibit Sheds Light on War-Torn Cultures in Iraq and Syria**” (by Lauren Hertzler). The Penn Museum opened a new exhibit titled Cultures in the Crossfire on April 8, 2017.

<https://penncurrent.upenn.edu/news/penn-museum-exhibit-sheds-light-on-war-torn-cultures-in-iraq-and-syria>

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Iraqi Shia paramilitary force known as the Popular Mobilization Front (PMF) recaptured the ancient site of Hatra from ISIL. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0037.**

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1658>

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iraqi-forces-seized-hatra-antiquities-site-47027440>

<http://www.voanews.com/a/iraqi-militias-find-relics-destroyed-ancient-town/3828751.html>

<http://www.dw.com/en/iraqi-forces-retake-damaged-hatra-heritage-site-from-is/a-38601736>

- April 26, 2017 *Smart News Agency* published an article titled "الأسايش " تلقي القبض على "" منقبى آثار وتاجر مخدرات شرق الحسكة (**'Asayish' arresting drug addicts and drug dealer east of Hasaka**).” The Asayish reported arresting drug traffickers, antiquities dealers, and excavators from Tell Brak, Qamishli, and Brif al-Hasaka. <https://smartnews-agency.com/ar/wires/230151/-محافظة-بآثار-للتعريف-ورشة-تبدأ-الإدارة-الذاتية-محافظة-الحسكة>
- April 25, 2017 *ArtNet* published an article titled “**10 Nations Band Together to Protect Cultural Heritage Sites Under Threat.**” Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Greece, Italy, China, India, Bolivia, Mexico, and Peru have formed a coalition to combat ISIL destruction in Syria and Iraq. <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/ten-nations-cultural-heritage-protection-936116>
- April 23, 2017 *Daily Sabah* published an article titled “**Turkey to repair dozens of mosques in Syria.**” Turkey’s Presidency of Religious Affairs is planning to repair dozens of mosques in places with operations by the Turkey-led Operation Euphrates Shield. They have completed repairs in Jarablus including the Kabir, Nur and al-Hassan Mosques. <https://www.dailysabah.com/syrian-crisis/2017/04/23/turkey-to-repair-dozens-of-mosques-in-syria>
- April 20, 2017 **Crossroads Cultural Center** hosted a presentation titled “**In the Eye of the Storm: Archaeology in the Midst of War in Syria.**” <http://www.crossroadsculturalcenter.org/events/2017/4/20/in-the-eye-of-the-storm-archeology-in-the-midst-of-war-in-sy.html>
- April 19, 2017 *al-Masdar News* published an article titled “**Shocking satellite images show illicit archaeological excavation in Syria**” (by Zen Adra). Looting at Apamea has increased because of the conflict and satellite imagery is showing the extent of the looting. <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/shocking-satellite-images-show-illicit-archeological-excavation-syria/>
- April 18, 2017 **Forensic Architecture** published their findings on the March 16, 2017 airstrike on Omar Ibn al-Khattab Mosque in al-Jinah. These findings detail damage to the mosque, as well as the US-led Coalition culpability in the attack. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0022 UPDATE.** <http://www.forensic-architecture.org/case/al-jinah-mosque/>
- **Human Rights Watch** published a report titled “**Syria: US Mosque Attack Likely Unlawful.**” According to HRW, US forces “failed to take necessary precautions to avoid civilian casualties” on a strike that destroyed part of the Omar Ibn al-Khattab Mosque in al-Jeineh in March of 2017. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0022 UPDATE.** <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/04/18/syria-us-mosque-attack-likely-unlawful>



- *Courier-Post* published an article titled “**Preserving Culture and Heritage in Midst of War**” (by Shannon Eblen). The Penn Museum opened a new exhibit titled Cultures in the Crossfire on April 8, 2017. <http://www.courierpostonline.com/story/life/2017/04/18/preserving-culture-and-heritage-midst-war/100603048/>
  - **DGAM** published an article titled “**Preliminary Statistics for Documentation of Illicit Excavations in Hama.**” <http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2270>
- April 16, 2017
- Heritage for Peace** published their newsletter “**Damage to Syria’s Heritage April 16, 2017.**” This newsletter contains articles about heritage from April 1, 2017-April 15, 2017. <http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-16-april-2017/>
- April 15, 2017
- DGAM** published an article titled “**Damage in the Tomb Abu Jdari.**” This article states the site was damaged by the construction of a trench. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0033.** <http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2268> رقم المقالة
- *APSA* published an article titled “**Aleppo: the actual state of the St. Simeon Monastery.**” Photographs show the state of St. Simeon Monastery. <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/%D9%8E-m-n-15-04-2017/>
- April 13, 2017
- Al Monitor* published an article titled “**Iraqis demand action as popular archaeological site neglected**” (by Adnan Abu Zeed). Ongoing erosion has damaged the ziggurat of Dur Kurigalzu <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/04/iraq-ziggurat-nowruz-kassites-babylon-hittites.html>
- **Aleppo Archaeology** published a photograph showing the Saraya building and Aleppo Citadel. <https://www.facebook.com/aleppoarchaeology/photos/a.480200765371783.107575.459668177425042/1386269274764923/>
- April 12, 2017
- PBS Newshour* published a video report titled “**Reduced to rubble by ISIS, archaeologists see a new day for ancient city of Nimrud**” (by Marcia Biggs). <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/reduced-rubble-isis-archaeologists-see-new-day-ancient-city-nimrud/>
- *BBC* published an article titled “**Rebuilding Mosul’s libraries book by book**” (by Neveen Youssef). A campaign is underway to restore the Mosul University Library as well as other libraries in Mosul. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39439657>
  - *Foreign Policy* published an article titled “**UNESCO Fights Back As ISIS Tries to Stamp Out Culture**” (by Robbie Gramer). ISIL is not

only destroying heritage, it is also selling it, and UNESCO is pushing against the antiquities market.

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/04/12/unesco-united-nations-isis-islamic-state-cultural-antiquities-trade-irina-bokova-refugees-heritage>

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-wp-isis-comment-b727967c-1fa6-11e7-be2a-3a1fb24d4671-20170412-story.html>

April 11, 2017

**DGAM** published an article titled “**Workshop in the Old City of Aleppo on the emergency intervention to address the damage in the archaeological buildings.**” The workshop was organized by Jacques Seigne with the support of the French consulting company SAWA.

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2266>

April 10, 2017

**The Authority of Tourism and Protection of Antiquities** published a video titled “**Documented by The Authority of Tourism and Protection of Antiquities-Tell Bayder 2016.**” The video states people have cleaned Tell Beydar re-plastered walls, and appointed a guard for the site.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPMBE35vKeM&feature=share>

April 9, 2017

**DGAM** published an article titled “**The Technical Institute of Antiquities and Museums invites you to attend a lecture series entitled Protecting Our Heritage.**” The lecture series stretches from 4/12 to 5/27 and consists of 5 lectures about heritage and conservation.

<http://dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=177&id=2263>

April 8, 2017

**Idlib Antiquities Center** published a photograph showing damage to the Roman Bridge in Jisr al-Shughur. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0036.**

<https://www.facebook.com/1070868956264699/photos/a.1072279832790278.1073741829.1070868956264699/1509629725721951/>

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**The Penn Museum** opened a new exhibit named “Cultures in the Crossfire” focusing on artifacts from Syria and Iraq. The Penn Cultural Heritage Center (SHOSHI) sponsors the exhibit.

<https://www.penn.museum/information/press-room/press-release-exhibitions/1105-cultures-in-the-crossfire-stories-from-syria-and-iraq>

<http://www.phillyvoice.com/cultures-crossfire-stories-syria-and-iraq/>

<http://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/Penn-Museum-Exhibit-Examines-Cultural-Heritage-in-Syria-and-Iraq---418658253.html>

- April 6, 2017
- DGAM published an article titled “**Directorate of Laboratories for conservation is archiving and documenting the mosaics.**” DGAM began the work of archiving and maintenance on mosaics stored in Damascus.  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2262>
- **Aleppo Archaeology** published a photograph showing damage to a souq in Aleppo.  
<https://www.facebook.com/aleppoarchaeology/photos/a.480200765371783.107575.459668177425042/1383012185090632/>
- April 5, 2017
- DGAM published an article titled “**Two shells fell in the surrounding of the National Museum.**” **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 17-0030.**  
<http://dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=2260>
- **Heritage for Peace** published their newsletter “**Damage to Syria’s Heritage April 05, 2017.**” This newsletter contains articles about heritage from March 2017.  
<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-05-april-2017/>
  - *BBC World Service* published a video titled “**Syria’s Monuments Man.**” This video shows Isber Sabrine’s (Heritage for Peace) network of volunteers documenting Syrian Antiquities.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04z4jvd>
- April 4, 2017
- DGAM published an article titled “**Directorate of excavation and archaeological studies begins implementing its plan for 2017.**”  
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2258>
- The Center for Ethics and the Rule of Law at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, in collaboration with the Penn Museum and the Museum’s Penn Cultural Heritage Center, hosted an international conference titled “**The Preservation of Art and Culture in Times of War**” at the Penn Museum. The panel included Richard Leventhal, Karima Bennoune, Derek Gillman, Richard Goldstone, Irina Bokova, and Shamilla Batohi.  
<https://www.penn.museum/calendar/eventdetail/555/preservation-of-art-and-culture-in-times-of-war-public-keynote-panel-new-frontiers-in-the-protection-of-cultural-property>
- April 3, 2017
- The Art Newspaper* published an article titled “**Culture on the frontline: Penn Museum shows artefacts curators are fighting to save in Syria and Iraq**” (by Julia Halperin). A new exhibit titled “Cultures in the Crossfire: Stories from Syria and Iraq” will present more than 50 artifacts from the Penn Museum collection between April 8 - November 26, 2017.  
<http://theartnewspaper.com/news/archeology/culture-on-the->



[frontline-penn-museum-shows-the-art-curators-are-fighting-to-save-in-syrian-and-iraq/](#)

- **Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society** is hosting an exhibition titled “**The Past Sold: Case Studies in the Movement of Archaeological Objects.**” The exhibit features artifacts that have traveled due to “legal, state-sponsored sale...and the illegal looting in Jordan, Iraq, and Syria that continues to this day.” The exhibit will run from April 3 - May 13, 2017.  
[https://neubauercollegium.uchicago.edu/exhibitions/current\\_exhibition/](https://neubauercollegium.uchicago.edu/exhibitions/current_exhibition/)

April 2, 2017

*BBC* published a video titled “**History Destroyed: The ruins of Mosul Museum.**” *BBC* Middle East Editor Jeremy Bowen visits the Mosul Museum.  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-39470521>

April 1, 2017

*Zaman alwsl* published a video report titled “تحقيق مصوّر: سبعة آلاف سنة من تاريخ سوريا مهددة بالضياع في إدلب (Photographer: **Seven thousand years of history of Syria threatened in Idlib**).” This video shows footage of damage in al-Bara, Harim, and Serjilla interspersed with still photos of Qalb Loze, and Bakirha as well as interviews with local Idlib officials.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9B2am-S hc>