

ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiatives (CHI): Planning for Safeguarding Heritage Sites in Syria and Iraq¹

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Weekly Report 99–100 — June 22 - July 5, 2016

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Executive Summary

During the reporting period, ISIL executed and inspired multiple coordinated suicide attacks and bombings against non-combatants in Turkey, Bangladesh, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia directed at Muslim majority populations at the end of Ramadan, resulting in high civilian casualties. These incidents invoke terror, targeting innocuous places such as a cafe in Bangladesh, while also exposing the vulnerability of high security facilities like Atatürk International Airport and the United States Consulate building in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Others were carried out in a Shia neighborhood in Baghdad and at a Shia mosque in Qatif, Saudi Arabia. Though ISIL has lost significant territory, particularly Fallujah, these attacks demonstrate ISIL's organizational sophistication and operational resilience. As Iraqi Security Forces, Popular Mobilization Units, and the US-backed Coalition forces turn from Fallujah and move north to expel ISIL from Mosul, if this reporting period is any indication, it is anticipated that more bombings and suicide attacks, particularly those which target Muslim civilians and places of worship, will follow.

Sectarian tensions in Iraq continue to escalate, particularly in Fallujah where Shia Popular Mobilization Units are alleged to have vandalized and damaged multiple mosques and looted homes and businesses following the expulsion of ISIL. Sunnis in recently liberated ISIL territories like Fallujah, though having been subjected to brutal draconian rule under ISIL, are often more fearful of Shia PMUs. The deteriorating political situation in the wake of the Baghdad bombing and the escalation of civilian targeting by ISIL hold the potential to cause further unrest throughout Iraq, particularly in territories recently liberated from ISIL.

In Syria, all belligerents involved in the conflict were again implicated in heritage damage during the reporting period, largely to places of worship. In particular, many mosques were damaged in the area northwest of Aleppo, where SARG forces are actively engaged in an intense aerial bombardment campaign. In other developments, DigitalGlobe satellite imagery reveals that multiple buildings and vehicles have been removed from the Russian military base located in the Northern Necropolis of Palmyra.

Finally, ISIL released a new propaganda video shot in Palmyra while the ancient site was under its control between May 2015 and late March 2016. The video shows the iconoclastic vandalism of Palmyrene statuary and the destruction of mummies from the Palmyra Archaeological Museum.

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

Key Points

- At least 15 mosques in the city of Fallujah, Anbar Governorate were damaged or occupied by military forces between May 22 (the beginning of the recapture of Fallujah from ISIL militants) and June 28, 2016 (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0019**).
- A suicide bomber targeted the Sunni al-Nour Mosque in Abu Ghraib District, Baghdad Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0020**).
- An ISIL suicide bomber targeted the Shiite Imam Ahmad Shrine in Tuz Kharmutu, Salah ad Din Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0021**).
- A newly released ISIL propaganda video shows the destruction of Palmyrene artifacts and mummies at the Palmyra Museum (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0043 UPDATE**).
- New DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates the Russian military presence within the Northern Necropolis at Palmyra has decreased (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0065 UPDATE**).
- Further analysis of the airstrike damage to the Byzantine site of Qalaat Semaan, Aleppo Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0094 UPDATE**).
- Alleged SARG airstrikes damaged two mosques in al-Bara, Idlib Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0095**).
- Alleged SARG and Russian airstrikes damaged al-Iman Mosque in Quriyah, Deir ez Zor Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0096**).
- Alleged US-led coalition airstrikes damaged a mosque and Sufi tomb in Manbij, Aleppo Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0097**).
- An alleged SARG airstrike damaged al-Foqani Mosque in Hbit, Idlib Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0098**).
- Alleged SARG and Russian airstrikes damaged five mosques in Aleppo Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0099**).
- Alleged SARG and opposition shelling damaged three mosques in Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0100**).
- Alleged opposition shelling damaged St. Demetrius Church in Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0101**).

Heritage Timeline

July 5, 2016

SNHR published a post titled “**Government forces shelling targeted Al Kabeer mosque in Al Bara town in Idlib governorate, July 5.**” **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0095**.

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/05/government-forces-shelling-targeted-al-kabeer-mosque-al-bara-town-idlib-governorate-july-5/>

- *The Art Newspaper* published an article titled “**Louvre Abu Dhabi to host summit on culture versus terrorism**” (by Vincent Noce). The UAE will host an international conference on culture vs terrorism, led by the French president François Hollande and the president of the UAE, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The event is scheduled for December 2016, when the Louvre Abu Dhabi building is due to be completed.

July 4, 2016

<http://theartnewspaper.com/news/louvre-abu-dhabi-to-host-terror-summit/>

Several media outlets published articles discussing the July 4, 2016 **suicide bombings in Saudi Arabia at the U.S. Consulate in Jeddah, a Shiite mosque in Qatif, and the Mosque of the Prophet (Masjid al-Nabawi) in the holy city of Medina**, where four security officers were killed. Medina is the second most holy place in Islam after Mecca.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/suicide-bombers-strike-3-cities-across-saudi-arabia-in-coordinated-attacks-2016-7>

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/07/04/middleeast/saudi-arabia-jeddah-bomb/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2016/jul/05/aftermath-of-suicide-bombing-at-holy-site-in-medina-saudi-arabia-video>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/video/world/third-bombing-attack-in-one-day-in-saudi-arabia/2016/07/04/815b94f4-421a-11e6-a76d-3550dba926ac_video.html

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/05/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-us-consulate-kuwait.html>

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-security-blast-idUSKCN0ZK1RD>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36706761>

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/features/2016/07/06/Saudi-Arabia-triple-attack-purposeless-and-fails-to-intimidate-citizens-.html>

- *EuroNews* published an article titled “**Syria’s cultural heritage recreated in Berlin’s Pergamon Museum.**” A Syrian refugee guide at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin is interviewed.

<http://www.euronews.com/2016/07/04/syria-s-cultural-heritage-recreated-in-berlin-s-pergamon-museum/>

July 3, 2016

The Arab Weekly published an article titled “**Mideast world heritage destroyed by not only by ISIS**” (by Karen Dabrowska). The author argues that the focus on cultural heritage destruction by ISIL distracts from the larger problem of looting by many groups throughout the Middle East.

<http://www.theArabweekly.com/?id=5681>

- *Ekathimerini* published an article titled “**Palmyra Requiem.**” The Benaki Museum in Athens is hosting “Palmyra Requiem,” an exhibition by artist Alecos Levidis. The show is a commentary on the destruction of the ancient remains at Palmyra in Syria and runs through August 28, 2016.
<http://www.ekathimerini.com/209943/article/ekathimerini/whats-on/palmyra-requiem--athens--to-august-28>
 - **DGAM** published an article titled “**Follow-up training for emergency recording and archiving of cultural heritage in high risk zones.**” A training course for emergency recording and archiving of cultural heritage in high risk zones was led by the DGAM, CyArk, and ICOMOS, and carried out at the UNESCO Beirut office from June 27 to July 1, 2016.
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/?d=314&id=2002>
- July 1, 2016
- APSA** published a post titled “**Raqqa: State to the Qal’at Ja’bar.**” A series of photographs indicate the 11th-century site of Qalaat Jabar is in good condition.
<http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/jabar/>
- *The Huffington Post* published an article titled “**It’s Time To End The Boycott Of Iraqi and Syrian Academics**” (by Zainab Bahrani). The author argues that the scholars of Iraq and Syria are in just as much need of assistance from the international community as the monuments they protect and study.
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/its-time-to-end-the-boycott-of-iraqi-and-syrian-academics_us_57768eb7e4b04164640fb5ff
- June 30, 2016
- Al Monitor* published an article titled “**Prized Lion of Babylon joins list of crumbling Iraqi antiquities**” (by Adnan Abu Zeed). The ancient Lion of Babylon, Iraq’s national symbol, is critically threatened by erosion and neglect.
<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/06/iraq-babylon-culture-heritage.html>
- **UNESCO** published an article titled “**Satellite Imagery helping to monitor cultural heritage sites under threat.**” Satellite images developed through UNITAR’s UNOSAT program in 2015 have been contributing to the work of UNESCO and heritage experts to evaluate and protect sites in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Nepal.
<http://en.unesco.org/news/satellite-imagery-helping-monitor-cultural-heritage-sites-under-threat>

- *TASS Russian News* published an article titled “**Эксперты из РФ в июле начнут обследование поврежденных памятников Пальмиры** (Experts from the Russian Federation will survey the damaged monuments of Palmyra in July).” Russian experts will go to Palmyra as part of UNESCO’s mission to restore the World Heritage Site.
<http://tass.ru/kultura/3416552>
- June 29, 2016

• *Gulf News* published an article titled “**Rebuilding Palmyra**” (by Marwan Asmar). This article discusses the challenges facing UNESCO, the DGAM, and international agencies responsible for restoring the monuments at Palmyra. ASOR CHI’s Michael Danti and Amr al-Azm are quoted.
<http://gulfnnews.com/culture/heritage/rebuilding-palmyra-1.1854604>
- *Sputnik News* published an infographic describing the history of ancient Palmyra, including its capture by ISIL militants and subsequent recapture by SARG and Russian forces. Restoration efforts are also discussed.
<http://sputniknews.com/infographics/20160629/1042161312/palmyra-liberated-pearl-infographics.html>
- **DGAM** published an article and video titled “**Documentary film shows the damages of Palmyra after its liberation.**” The video consists of drone footage taken on April 5, 2016 and shows various sections of Palmyra.
<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=2000>
- **UNHCR** published an article titled “**Berlin refugee guides show off cultural riches from home**” (by Josie Le Blond). The Multaqa project, initiated by Stefan Weber, director of the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin, trains Syrian and Iraqi refugees to act as guides for other refugees in Berlin museums.
<http://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2016/6/576d29884/berlin-refugee-guides-show-cultural-riches-home.html>
- *Gulf News* published an article titled “**The politics and poetry of restoring war ruins**” (by Florence Evin). Palmyra is at the center of a debate about preservation vs. restoration of damaged cultural heritage sites.
<http://gulfnnews.com/culture/heritage/the-politics-and-poetry-of-restoring-war-ruins-1.1854608>

June 28, 2016

DGAM published an article titled “**New book released: Syrian Archaeological Heritage: 5 Years of Crisis 2011-2015.**” The book includes a wide range of articles related to protection measures carried out by the DGAM and highlights the damage suffered by various archaeological sites and museums in each of Syria’s governorates.

<http://www.dgam.gov.sy/index.php?d=314&id=1998>

- **Herrick Feinstein LLP** published a press release titled “**Looted Art & Antiquities in the Middle East.**” Herrick’s Art Law Group and The *Art Newspaper* hosted the second installment of the 2016 Art Business Forum, a series of discussions on business issues affecting the art world.
<http://www.herrick.com/events/looted-art-antiquities-in-the-middle-east/>
- *Al Monitor* published an article titled “**Iraqi marsh residents hold tight to their reed homes**” (by Wassim Bassem). The Iraqi government is seeking to include the marshes of southern Iraq on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The residents in the marshlands have used local reeds to build their houses for thousands of years.
<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/06/iraq-culture-environment-unesco-heritage.html>
- *The Art Newspaper* published an article titled “**Isil rampage continues with destruction of the Temple of Nabu in northern Iraq**” (by Gareth Harris). The recent destruction of the Temple of Nabu at Nimrud by ISIL militants is discussed.
<http://theartnewspaper.com/news/isil-rampage-continues-with-destruction-of-the-temple-of-nabu-in-northern-iraq/>

June 27, 2016

Reuters published an article titled “**Suicide bombing west of Baghdad kills 12, sources say**” (by Kareem Raheem & Stephen Kalin). At least 12 people were killed and 32 wounded when a suicide bomber attacked a Sunni mosque in Abu Ghraib, Baghdad Governorate. **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0020.**

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-blast-idUSKCN0ZD2U5>

- *UK Fundraising* published an article titled “**£30m cultural protection fund opens.**” UK’s Cultural Protection Fund, managed by the British Council in partnership with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), aims to protect and conserve cultural sites around the world is now open to applications from arts, culture, and heritage organizations.
<http://fundraising.co.uk/2016/06/27/30m-cultural-protection-fund-opens/#.V3WGxzkrl1i>

June 26, 2016

Al-Monitor published an article titled “**Digital map seeks to document ‘trail of destruction’ of Mideast antiquities**” (by Shahira Amin). To aid efforts to protect heritage, the Antiquities Coalition and Hexagon Geospatial have collaborated to produce a digital map that helps identify #CultureUnderThreat by showing the trail of destruction left behind by ISIL and actors in the Syria and Iraq conflicts.

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/06/egypt-cultural-heritage-destruction-antiquities-digital-map.html>

June 24, 2016

The **Association for Research into Crimes against Art (ARCA)** holds its **8th annual interdisciplinary Art Crime conference** on June 24 - 26, 2016 in Italy.

<http://www.artcrimeresearch.org/interdisciplinary-art-crime-conference-in-ameia/>

- **The Art-Law Centre at the University of Geneva** will hold its second **All Art and Cultural Heritage Law Conference** on June 24, 2016.

http://www.art-law.org/centre/all-art_en.html

- *Ara News* published an article titled “**داعش يبدأ بإزالة زخرفة مساجد وجوامع الموصل** (Daesh begins to remove decoration on mosques in Mosul).” ISIL militants are removing Quranic inscriptions and other mosque decorations in Mosul, claiming they are un-Islamic.

<http://aranews.org/2016/06/داعش-يبدأ-بإزالة-زخرفة-مساجد-وجوامع-الموصل/>

- **SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Al Shamali Mosque in Al Bara town in Idlib governorate in June 24.**” A mosque in Al-Bara was damaged. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0095.**

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/24/government-forces-targeted-al-shamali-mosque-al-bara-town-idlib-governorate-june-24/>

June 23, 2013

La Vanguardia published an article titled “**Palmira empieza su reconstrucción** (Palmyra begins its reconstruction).” An international group of experts will start working on reconstruction efforts at Palmyra at the end of July 2016.

<http://www.lavanguardia.com/cultura/20160623/402696946063/palmira-empieza-reconstruccion.html>

- *The Atlantic* published an article titled “**Archaeologists Are Spotting Ancient Ruins in Cold War Spy Photos**” (by Geoff Manaugh). Archaeologist Jesse Casana discusses using images from the CORONA satellite program to find archaeological sites often no longer visible today.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2016/06/among-the-remnants/488279/>

- *Art Net News* published an article titled “**Germany passes massively controversial cultural heritage legislation**” (by Henri Neuendorf). A new law seeks to prevent the export of nationally significant cultural goods. However, the legislation was fiercely opposed by many working in the country's cultural sector.
<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/germany-passes-cultural-heritage-legislation-525563>

June 21, 2016

In Style published an article titled “**So, Those Cool Souvenirs You Bought on Vacay Might Not Actually Be Legit**” (by Katie A. Paul & Tess Davis). This article provides tips for how a tourist can avoid buying looted artifacts while travelling.
<http://www.instyle.com/lifestyle/travel/shopping-artifacts-foreign-country-tips>

- *ARA News* published an article titled “مساجد الموصل تكاد تخلو من المصلين” (Mosques in Mosul almost devoid of worshippers). Many of Mosul's residents now avoid attending mosques for fear of being conscripted by ISIL or killed in an airstrike.
<http://aranews.org/2016/06/المصلين من تخلو تكاد الموصل مساجد/>

June 17, 2016 *Counter Punch* published an article titled “**How 100 Syrians, 200 Russians and 11 Dogs Out-Witted ISIS and Saved Palmyra**” (by Franklin Lamb). The author offers theories as to why ISIL militants had not destroyed more of the ancient site of Palmyra by the time it was retaken in March 2016 by Russian and SARG forces.
<http://www.counterpunch.org/2016/06/27/how-100-syrians-200-russians-and-11-dogs-out-witted-isis-and-saved-palmyra/>

Military and Political Context

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

1. Aleppo Governorate:
 - On June 23, US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) entered the outskirts of the city of Manbij after a weeks-long fight against ISIL. Clashes continued between SDF and ISIL militants in the western districts of the city. The battle for Manbij has reportedly resulted in the deaths of several top members of ISIL including the ISIL governor of Manbij.²
 - On June 23, members of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) entered the border town of al-Rai, but were quickly pushed back out by ISIL. Clashes in the area continued during the reporting period.³
 - On June 24, Russian jets reportedly carried out more than 50 airstrikes, dropping cluster bombs and incendiaries, over the city of Aleppo and surrounding towns.⁴
 - On June 24, local Syrian activists reported that ISIL militants had abducted approximately 900 Kurdish civilians in northern Aleppo Governorate over the past three weeks. The civilians were reportedly being forced to “build fortifications” for ISIL, while others have been forced to fight alongside the militants.⁵
 - On June 25, SDF fighters captured grain silos near the ISIL-held town of Manbij, providing a vantage point for the group where they can monitor the town. Clashes between ISIL and SDF fighters continued forcing Kurdish residents of nearby villages to flee the firefight.⁶
 - On June 27, SDF fighters advanced further towards the ISIL-held town of Manbij, seizing the town’s “Sharia roundabout.”⁷
 - On June 28, SDF fighters continued to advance towards the ISIL-held city of Manbij, capturing the Transportation Department located on the Manbij-Aleppo highway as well as part of the Hazawna district inside the city. SDF fighters advanced into Manbij through the southeastern entrance of the city after seizing control of the local silos and mills.⁸
 - On June 28, SARG forces captured “large parts of the Mallah Farms” north of the city of Aleppo, further solidifying SARG control over opposition supply routes.⁹

² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-manbij-idUSKCN0Z916Z> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/syria-kurd-forces-street-fight-isil-manbij-160623131343330.html> ; <http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/810537/syrian-arab-coalition-prepares-to-seize-manbij-in-syria> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/06/top-jihadis-fire-us-backed-sdf-near-isis-border-pocket/> ; <http://bigstory.ap.org/939c655a16c9442b8229e7602426923b>

³ <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-june-18-24-2016>

⁴ <http://qasioun.net/en/news/show/29869>

⁵ <http://bigstory.ap.org/74060581f73748c48362a526e4eed2a5>

⁶ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/air-strikes-kill-civilians-syria-deir-az-zor-160625161340790.html>

⁷ <http://aranews.net/2016/06/syrian-democratic-forces-further-advance-into-manbij-fear-genocide-against-kurds-by-isis/>

⁸ <http://rudaw.net/english/middleeast/syria/29062016> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/06/us-backed-sdf-report-new-gains-anti-isis-operation-north-syria/> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-june-25-july-1-2016>

⁹ <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-june-25-july-1-2016>

- On July 4, ISIL militants launched an attack against SDF fighters on three fronts around the city of Manbij. The SDF, backed by US-led coalition airstrikes, repelled the attack.¹⁰
2. Deir ez Zor:
- On June 25, UNICEF reports that three airstrikes in the governorate of Deir ez Zor killed 25 children. The airstrikes targeted “heavily crowded areas, including a mosque during prayer time” in the ISIL-held town of al-Qurayyah. A total of 82 people, including 60 civilians, were killed in the airstrikes that were suspected of being Russian.¹¹
 - On June 28-29, US-backed New Syrian Army (NSA) forces began an operation to capture the ISIL-held town of Al-Bukamal near the Syria-Iraq border.¹²
 - On June 29, NSA forces seized Hamdan Air Base near the ISIL-held city of al-Bukamal, near the Syria-Iraq border. NSA forces have said they are coordinating the assault on al-Bukamal with Iraqi forces on the other side of the border. Later that day ISIL forces were able to force out the NSA after a surprise attack. The surprise attack killed as many as 40 NSA fighters and allowed ISIL to capture “crates of American ammunition,” mortars, and one vehicle.¹³
3. Raqqa Governorate:
- On June 22, local activists reported that US-led coalition airstrikes struck ISIL targets over the ISIL-stronghold city of Raqqa. According to the activists, one airstrike struck the city council building.¹⁴
 - On June 29, a suicide car bomb struck a Kurdish local authorities building in the YPG-held town of Tel Abyad. The attack killed at least 5 people and wounded dozens more.¹⁵
 - On July 5, ISIL militants claimed to have downed a US MQ-9 Reaper drone carrying hellfire missiles near Tabqa. The US Air Force confirmed the downing of the drone, however they denied that it crashed as a result of enemy fire. The remains of the drone were targeted and destroyed by a coalition airstrikes.¹⁶

¹⁰ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-manbij-idUSKCN0ZK0SI>

¹¹ <http://www.cnn.com/2016/06/26/world/syria-violence-unicef/index.html> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/air-strikes-kill-civilians-syria-deir-az-zor-160625161340790.html> ; <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/syria-russia-regime-air-strikes-isis-targets-kill-60-civilians-1567479> ; <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/27/syria-releases-photos-of-assad-breaking-fast-near-besieged-area/> ; <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-airstrikes-syria-june-3-28-2016> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-june-25-july-1-2016>

¹² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-town-idUSKCN0ZE1YU> ; <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/isis-sanctuary-map-july-1-2016>

¹³ <http://www.voanews.com/content/syria-rebel-forces-retake-is-held-town/3396712.html> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36660861> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-border-idUSKCN0ZF0AW> ; https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/islamic-state-rouns-pentagon-backed-syrian-rebels-in-fresh-setback-for-us-strategy/2016/06/29/41833a16-3e0b-11e6-9e16-4cf01a41decb_story.html ; <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/29/the-islamic-state-just-got-their-hands-on-more-u-s-weapons-syria-rebels/>

¹⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36595166>

¹⁵ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-kurds-idUSKCN0ZF0RP> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/07/isis-attack-kills-ten-kurdish-held-syrian-town/> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-june-25-july-1-2016>

¹⁶ <http://www.airforcetimes.com/story/military/2016/07/05/reaper-down-mq-9-crashes-syria/86714488/> ; <https://twitter.com/BiladFransa/status/750449755382288385>

4. Hasakah Governorate:
 - On June 27, YPG forces repelled an ISIL attack near the villages of Malha and Bir Malan, in close proximity of the town of Shaddadi.¹⁷
 - On July 4-5, Kurdish Asayish forces clashed with pro-regime troops in the city of Hasakah.¹⁸
 - On July 5, a suicide bombing struck outside of a bakery in the neighborhood of Salihiya, Hasakah killing at least 16 civilians and injured dozens more. ISIL later claimed responsibility for the attack.¹⁹
5. Hama Governorate:
 - On June 22, ISIL took credit for the killing of three Russian soldiers after a roadside bomb detonated their vehicle on the road between Raqqa and Ithriyah. Russian officials did not confirm nor deny the incident took place.²⁰
6. Homs Governorate:
 - On June 24, ISIL militants advanced north and east of the city of Palmyra.²¹
 - On June 26, ISIL militants reportedly killed dozens of SARG forces during clashes in the town of Hwesis and al-Sawan hill, east of the city of Homs.²²
7. Damascus Governorate:
 - On July 1, a SARG warplane crashed near Damascus. Islamist opposition group Jaish al-Islam claimed that they had shot the plane down and captured the pilot. The group later claimed to have killed the pilot.²³
8. Latakia Governorate:
 - On July 1, allied opposition groups known as the Jaish al-Fatah Operations Room, a group that includes al-Nusra Front and Ahrar al-Sham, captured the town of Kansaba from SARG forces.²⁴

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of al-Bukamal, Ayn Isa, Deir ez Zor, Manbij, Mara, Raqqa, Washiyah.²⁵
- During the reporting period, Russian airstrikes targeted opposition-held areas across Aleppo Governorate. Russia also conducted “limited airstrikes” against ISIL targets in Raqqa and Deir ez Zor Governorates.²⁶

¹⁷ <http://www.aina.org/news/20160627195516.htm> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/06/kurdish-ypg-forces-repel-isis-attack-syrias-hasakah/>

¹⁸ <http://aranews.net/2016/07/kurds-clash-syrian-regime-forces-hasakah/>

¹⁹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-hasaka-idUSKCN0ZL2BO> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/07/islamic-state-claims-suicide-bombing-killed-30-civilians-syrias-hasakah/>

²⁰ <http://www.interpretermag.com/isis-claims-deaths-of-3-russian-soldiers-in-blast-on-road-to-raqqa/> ; <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/syria-kurd-forces-street-fight-isis-manbij-160623131343330.html> ; <http://understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/syria-situation-report-june-18-24-2016>

²¹ <http://qasioun.net/en/news/show/29892>

²² <http://aranews.net/2016/06/least-50-syrian-soldiers-killed-isis-led-attacks-homs/>

²³ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-army-idUSKCN0ZH4CF> ;

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36685284> ;

<http://understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/syria-situation-report-june-25-july-1-2016>

²⁴ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-latakia-idUSKCN0ZH4QA> ;

<http://understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/syria-situation-report-june-25-july-1-2016>

²⁵ See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [810503](#), [811322](#), [812433](#), [812507](#), [812753](#), [816073](#), [818100](#), , [822566](#), [821220](#), [823596](#), [823625](#), [823672](#), [823806](#), [827269](#)

- On June 22, reports surfaced of Russia using incendiary bombs, which some experts believe to carry thermite, a chemical similar to white phosphorous, which, if proven to be true, would be in direct violation to the Geneva Convention.²⁷
- On June 30, President Obama's administration proposed a new agreement between the US and Russia that would allow for military coordination against "some terrorists" in exchange for Russia's efforts to halt Syrian airstrikes against US supported rebels.²⁸

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

1. Al Anbar Governorate:
 - On June 22, an Iraqi military official reported that Iraqi forces were in control of 90% of the city of Fallujah.²⁹
 - On June 22, Anbar Police Chief Maj. Gen. Hadi Razigh announced that Iraqi security forces had liberated the areas of Thaniya Zankoura and al-Halabsah, northwest of the city of Ramadi. Iraqi security forces also liberated the village of al-Agariya, south of Fallujah.³⁰
 - On June 26, Iraqi forces recaptured the last ISIL-held district of Fallujah. According to Iraqi Lieutenant General Abdul Wahab al-Saidi, at least 1800 ISIL militants were killed in the battle to take back Fallujah, the majority of whom were killed by US-led coalition airstrikes.³¹
 - On June 26, Commander of the Fallujah Operations Lieutenant General Abdul-Wahab al-Saadi announced the end of combat operations in the city.³²
 - On June 29, US-led coalition and Iraqi airstrikes along with Iraqi ground fire struck a large convoy of over 100 vehicles carrying suspected ISIL militants overnight near the town of Amariyat al-Fallujah, reportedly killing at least 250 militants and more than 150 vehicles. According to an Iraqi security source, the militants were attempting to flee to the ISIL-held town of al-Qaim, near the border with Syria.³³
2. Salah ad Din Governorate:
 - On June 22-23, ISIL militants "launched attacks against PMF and Dijla Operations Command (DOC) positions." ISIL also captured areas near the town of Zargah, east of the city of Tikrit.³⁴
 - On June 23, Iraqi security forces continued to move toward the town of Shirqat, capturing the ISIL-held villages of Dibis, Muhammad al-Musa, and Sheikh Ali.

²⁶ <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-airstrikes-syria-june-3-28-2016>

²⁷ <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/russia-unleashes-lethal-aerial-arsenal-on-aleppo-q73c8dll3> ; <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/banned-bomb-burns-hot-enough-to-melt-steel-2xkkmrtdp>

²⁸ https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/obama-proposes-new-military-partnership-with-russia-in-syria/2016/06/29/8e8b2e2a-3e3f-11e6-80bc-d06711fd2125_story.html

²⁹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/22/fallujah-in-ruins-after-iraqi-forces-retake-90-of-the-city-from/>

³⁰ <http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/security-forces-liberate-two-areas-northwest-of-ramadi/>

³¹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-falluja-idUSKCN0ZC08>

³² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36633140> ;

<http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/06/iraq-situation-report-june-21-28-2016.html> ;

<http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/isis-sanctuary-map-july-1-2016>

³³ <http://www.militarytimes.com/story/military/2016/06/30/air-strikes-destroy-isis-120-vehicle-convoy/86549420/> ; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2016/06/30/iraqi-gunships-u-s-jets-target-islamic-state-convoys-outside-fallujah-and-ramadi/http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36660869> ; <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/06/30/middleeast/iraq-militants-airstrike/index.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-usa-idUSKCN0ZF2VF>

³⁴ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/06/iraq-situation-report-june-21-28-2016.html>

- On June 24, Iraqi security forces recaptured the ISIL-held district of Makhool.³⁵
 - On June 25, Iraqi security forces captured the ISIL-held villages of Albu Amira and al-Ayn al-Baydha.³⁶
 - On June 29, Iraqi military officials reported that it had advanced into ISIL-held northern villages, including the village of Telol al-Baj, en route to the strategic Qayara air base.³⁷
3. Baghdad Governorate:
- On June 28, a suicide bomber targeted a Sunni mosque in the district of Abu Ghraib, killing at least 12 people and wounding 32 more. No group has yet taken responsibility for the attack.³⁸
 - On July 3, a truck bomb struck the busy Karada district in Baghdad, killing 250 people and wounding 225 more. ISIL later took responsibility for the attack. Iraq's interior minister offered his resignation following outcry at the government for not protecting such attacks.³⁹
4. Diyala Governorate:
- On June 27, Iraqi forces began a clearing operation against ISIL in the "Hamrin Mountains and Narin River area," northeast of the city of Baquba.⁴⁰
5. Ninawa Governorate:
- On June 25, US-led coalition forces carried out an airstrike that killed Hatim Talib al-Hamduni, an ISIL military commander in Mosul and Basim Muhammad Ahmad Sultan al-Bajari, ISIL's deputy minister of war.⁴¹
 - On July 5, Iraqi security forces captured all the villages in the area of Haj Ali and "reached the eastern bank of the Tigris" approximately 40 miles (60 km) south of Mosul.⁴²

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Albu Hayat, Baghdadi, Bashir, Beiji, Fallujah, Habbaniyah, Haditha, Hit, Huwayjah, Kisik, Mosul, Qayyarah, Qaim, Ramadi, Rutbah, Sinjar, Sultan Abdullah, Tal Afar, and Waleed.⁴³
- On June 28, US Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, Brett McGurk, reported that ISIL had lost 47 percent of its previously held territory in Iraq and had lost between 10,000-14,000 of its fighters since 2014.⁴⁴

³⁵ <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2016/06/24/Iraqi-forces-capture-district-in-province-north-of-capital.html> ; <http://www.iraqnews.com/iraq-war/security-forces-recapture-makhoul-advances-towards-al-sharqat-salahuddin/>

³⁶ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/06/iraq-situation-report-june-21-28-2016.html>

³⁷ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-mosul-idUSKCN0ZF0ZL>

³⁸ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/iraq-suicide-bombing-abu-ghraib-mosque-kills-12-160628040953541.html>

³⁹ <http://www.cnn.com/2016/07/04/middleeast/iraq-baghdad-death-knocks/> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36720720> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-minister-idUSKCN0ZL1II>

⁴⁰ <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/06/iraq-situation-report-june-21-28-2016.html>

⁴¹ <http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/823529/recent-strike-in-mosul-killed-isil-commanders-pentagon-official-says> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36690806>

⁴² <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-mosul-idUSKCN0ZL1FS>

⁴³ See: "US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq". *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [810503](#), [811322](#), [812433](#), [812507](#), [812753](#), [816073](#), [818100](#), [821220](#), [822566](#), [823596](#), [823625](#), [823672](#), [823806](#), [827269](#)

⁴⁴ <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/28/top-u-s-official-islamic-state-has-lost-47-percent-of-its-territory-in-iraq/>

- On July 5, the UN Human Rights Chief Zaid Ra'ad al-Hussein reported that there was "strong evidence" that the Shia militia group Kataab Hezbollah kidnapped 900 civilians and executed at least 50 from the town of Saqlawiyah during operations to recapture ISIL-held Fallujah and the surrounding areas.⁴⁵

Other significant political and military events during the reporting period:

- On June 26, ISIL claimed responsibility for the June 21, 2016 attack along Jordan's border that killed seven Jordanian soldiers.⁴⁶
- On June 27, nine suicide bombings occurred in the small majority-Christian Lebanese village of Qaa, close to the border with Syria. Four bombings occurred in the early morning and another five took place at night. Hezbollah TV station Al-Manar blamed ISIL for the attack.⁴⁷
- On June 28, three suicide bombers attacked a terminal entrance at Ataturk Airport in Istanbul, Turkey. At least 41 people were killed and more than 200 injured. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack, however ISIL operatives are suspected.⁴⁸
- On June 29, Reuters quoted Baghdad-based expert Hisham al-Hashimi who stated that 39 of the original 43 founders of ISIL have been killed.⁴⁹
- On July 4, as many as four suicide attacks struck Saudi Arabia including one that struck near the burial site of the Prophet Muhammad in the city of Medina. The other two attacks struck near the US consulate in Jeddah and outside a Shia mosque in the majority Shia city of Qatif. No group has been taken responsibility for the attack however ISIL is suspected.⁵⁰

Saudi Arabia Bombing Analysis:

On July 4, 2016 a series of coordinated suicide bombing attacks struck across Saudi Arabia. In the morning, the first suicide bombing struck near the US Consulate in the city of Jeddah, wounding two security officers.⁵¹ Shortly after dusk a suicide bomber struck a Shia mosque in the eastern governorate of Qatif.⁵² No casualties besides the suicide bomber were reported as the attack occurred after worshippers had left the mosque.⁵³ In the early evening, as worshippers gathered to pray the Maghrib prayer, a third suicide bombing occurred at the security office located near the

⁴⁵ <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/un-blames-iraq-pro-govt-militia-kidnappings-beheadings-1378232626> ; <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/fallujah-isis-iraq-shia-militias-popular-mobilisation-battle-civilians-kidnapped-missing-massacred-a7121266.html> ; <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20237> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36716494> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-falluja-un-idUSKCN0ZL1KR>

⁴⁶ <https://www.yahoo.com/news/claims-deadly-suicide-attack-jordanian-soldiers-jihadist-linked-215645829.html>

⁴⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36637378> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2016/06/28/world/middleeast/ap-ml-lebanon-.html> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/28/world/middleeast/al-qaa-lebanon-suicide-bombers.html> ; <http://www.aina.org/news/20160627195430.htm> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36649779>

⁴⁸ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36662684>

⁴⁹ <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-islamic-state-idUSKCN0ZE1XK>

⁵⁰ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36712320>

⁵¹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/05/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-us-consulate-kuwait.html>

⁵² <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/05/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-us-consulate-kuwait.html>

⁵³ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36712320>

Prophet Mosque in the city of Medina.⁵⁴ The original structure of the Prophet Mosque was built in the 7th century AD by the Prophet Muhammad and is said to be the final resting place of the Prophet and his first two successors.⁵⁵ The attack was likely foiled by four security officers who stopped the suicide bomber and who died when the attacker detonated his device. The suicide bomber who targeted the Prophet Mosque was identified by the Saudi Interior Ministry as a 35-year old Pakistani expatriate named Abdullah Qalzar Khan, who had been working as a private driver in Saudi Arabia for 12 years.⁵⁶ No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack but ISIL is suspected, and King Salman pledged to strike the perpetrator(s) of this attack “with an iron hand.”⁵⁷

Saudi Arabia has experienced 26 “terror attacks”, some claimed by ISIL, on Shia and security targets over the past two years.⁵⁸ Saudi Arabia is a contributing member to the US-led coalition against ISIL in Syria and Iraq, and has agreed to host a training camp for moderate Syrian opposition forces.⁵⁹ In addition, Saudi Arabia has previously hosted leaders of Syrian opposition groups, including members of Islamist groups, for talks in Riyadh. However, Saudi Arabia has been criticized for hosting and propagating strict interpretations of Islamic text that is often utilized by ISIL and other militant Islamic groups.⁶⁰ ISIL has benefited from around 2,500 Saudi citizens who have travelled to Syria to join the group.⁶¹ In addition, wealthy Saudis have been reported to send money to ISIL.⁶²

Leading Arab Muslim leaders and experts have taken the stance that the attack on the Prophet Mosque, which coincided with the end of the holy month of Ramadan and the holiday of Eid al-Fitr, is an attack on all Muslims.⁶³

⁵⁴ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36712320> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/05/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-us-consulate-kuwait.html>

⁵⁵ <http://in.reuters.com/article/saudi-security-medina-toll-idINKCN0ZK1WA>

⁵⁶ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36712320>

⁵⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36712320>

⁵⁸ <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/05/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-us-consulate-kuwait.html> ; <http://in.reuters.com/article/saudi-security-medina-toll-idINKCN0ZK1WA> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36706761>

⁵⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-36706761> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29074514>

⁶⁰ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-35101612> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/07/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-isis-al-qaeda-jihadists.html>

⁶¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29074514>

⁶² <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29074514>

⁶³ <http://in.reuters.com/article/saudi-security-medina-toll-idINKCN0ZK1WA>

Incident Reports: Syria

SHI 16-0043 UPDATE

Report Date: July 5, 2016

Site Name: Palmyra Museum

Date of Incident: Unknown

Location: Palmyra/Tadmor, Homs Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Built in 1961 to house artifacts from Palmyra and the surrounding area, the museum is located in the southwestern part of the modern day city of Palmyra in a location known as the Museum Square, which is a vital strategic cross section for the two vital roads linking the town; the road to Homs in the west and the road to Damascus in the southwest. The Museum Square is also considered as the northern entrance to the archaeological area. The museum building is surrounded by the relatively modern (ca. 1940) town of Palmyra to the north and to the east, and the archeological area to the south and west.

Site Date: 1961 CE

Incident Summary: New ISIL propaganda shows destruction of Palmyrene artifacts and Palmyrene mummies.

Incident Source and Description: On July 5, 2016 the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) shared a video of ISIL propaganda that detailed the group's destruction of Palmyrene artifacts inside the Palmyra Museum and the group's desecration of Palmyrene mummies.⁶⁴ In the video, ISIL militants (including members of the Hisbah Police) smash Palmyrene artifacts inside the museum. In another clip, a large vehicle drives over Palmyrene mummies that are lined up on a highway in the city. At the end of the video, a clip shows the detonation of the Shrine of Sheikh Mohammed, located in Jabal al-Mazar north of Palmyra. The shrine was detonated by ISIL on July 22, 2015. The reason for its placement in this video is unclear.⁶⁵

The Palmyra Museum has been the site of ongoing destruction by ISIL and SARG forces, most recently during the recapturing of the city from ISIL. Previous ASOR CHI Incident Reports detail the damage to artifacts inside the museum as well as extensive damage to the museum building. See **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0014** in **Weekly Report 51-52**, **SHI 15-0016** in **Weekly Report 53-54**, **SHI 16-0043** in **Weekly Report 85-86**, **SHI 16-0043** in **Weekly Report 87-88**.

Pattern: Military activity: performative destruction.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI is directing critical attention to the condition of all periods of cultural heritage at Palmyra, given the high visibility and ongoing significance of the city and UNESCO World Heritage Site.

⁶⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srmTKWptC5c>

⁶⁵ For further information on the destruction of the Shrine of Sheikh Mohammed see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0102**.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SOHR:

July 5, 2016: <http://www.syriahr.com/2-مومياءات يحطم الإسلامية الدولة تنظيم/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srmTKWptC5c>



Video still of damaged Palmyrene artefacts (SOHR; July 5, 2016)



Video still of ISIL Hisbah police (SOHR; July 5, 2016)



Video still of large vehicle running over Palmyrene mummies (SOHR; July 5, 2016)



Video still of large vehicle driving over Palmyrene mummies (SOHR; July 5, 2016)

SHI 16-0065 UPDATE

Report Date: June 23, 2016

Site Name: Palmyra - Northern Necropolis (مقبرة الشمالية)

Date of Incident: April 2016 - Ongoing

Location: Palmyra, Homs Governorate, Syria

Site Description: The Northern Necropolis is located directly north of the main group of ruins at Palmyra, and abuts the modern town on the necropolis' north and east side. This necropolis has not been extensively excavated. Though it has around the same number of tower tombs as the Valley of the Tombs (as well as many hypogea and several funerary temples), these are spread over a wide area and badly maintained. The Northern Necropolis once included tombs as far south as the Temple of Baal-Shamin, but the construction of Diocletian's Wall (a fortification built around Palmyra ca. 303 CE) cut the area in half and broke with the Roman custom that necropoli must be outside a city's walls. Some of the extant tombs were even incorporated into the wall itself. The eastern part of the Northern Necropolis is especially difficult to study because it was the site of a village built in the 1930s by residents evicted from the Temple of Bel.⁶⁶ UNESCO determined that the Northern Necropolis and other features outside the fortification walls should be included in the site's protected zone when Palmyra was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1980.⁶⁷

Site Date: 1st-century BCE to 3rd-century CE

Incident Summary: Military presence within the Northern Necropolis decreased.

Incident Source and Description: Over the past month, activity at the Northern Necropolis of Palmyra has decreased. First, between May 25 and June 6, 2016 many of the tents and buildings on the paved military base located on the site were removed. The tanks visible in the May 25, 2016 DigitalGlobe image and located just south of the base were also removed from the site. There were also fewer vehicles present in the secondary parking area, located southwest of the base. Many of the gun emplacements noted in the May 25, 2016 image were also removed from the ancient site including those located between the Northern Necropolis and the Ancient Fortification Wall.

In a DigitalGlobe image from June 23, 2016, the pattern of decreasing military presence continued. Trucks and gun emplacements continue to be removed from the site, particularly in the area to the west of the base. While military presence has decreased, there are still vehicles on and around the site and buildings in use on the military base. However, no new constructions or new areas for truck parking were created in the last month.

Previous reporting on the Military Base at Palmyra can be found in **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0065** in **Weekly Report 93-94** and **SHI 16-0065 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 95-96**.

Pattern: Military activity: occupation/militarization, vehicles/heavy weaponry.

⁶⁶ Gawlikowski 1970: 162-5; Piacentini 2005: 246

⁶⁷ World Heritage Committee; 4th session (1980): 4

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI is directing critical attention to the condition of all periods of cultural heritage at Palmyra, given the high visibility and ongoing significance of the city and UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Sources:

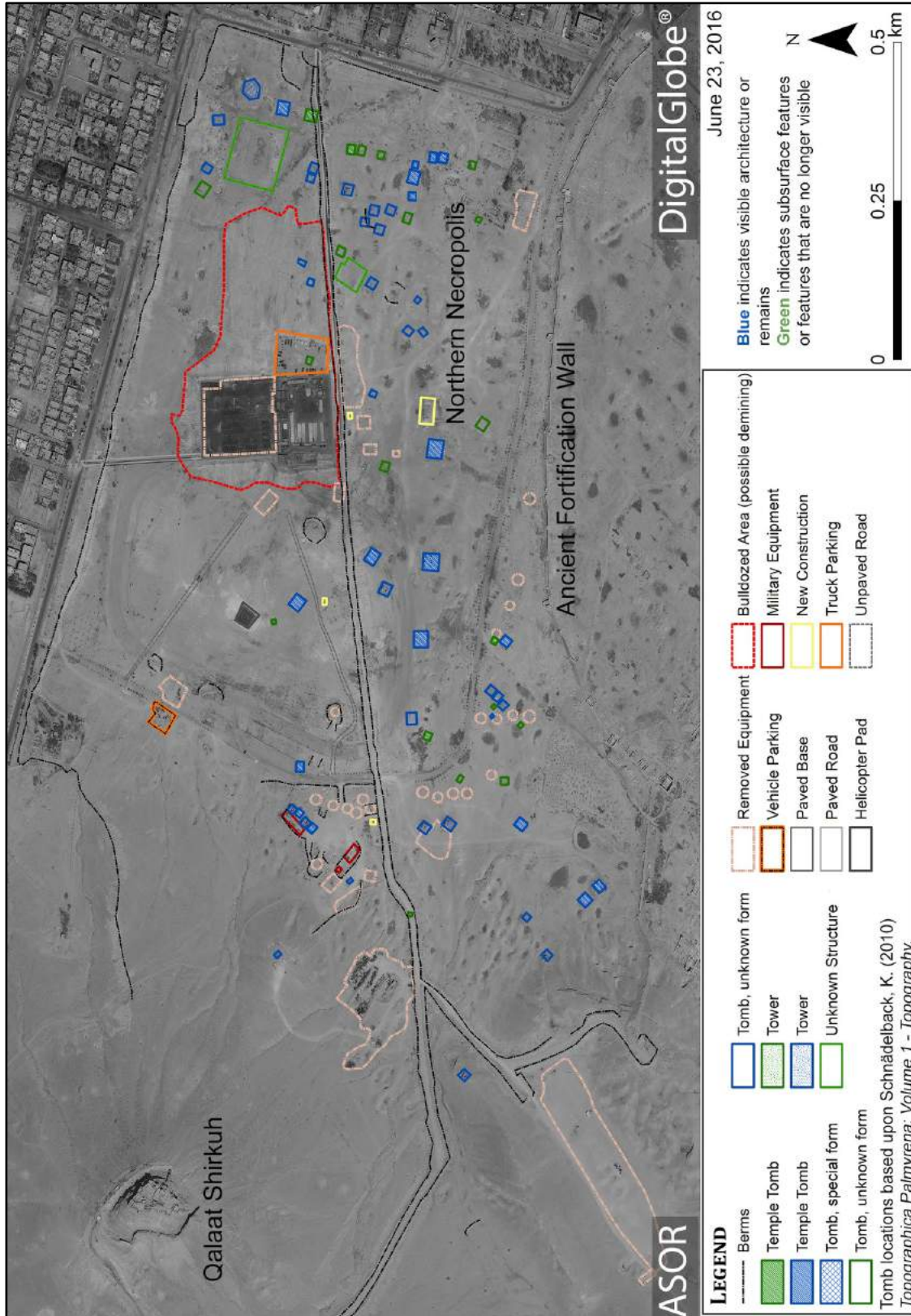
Scholarly:

Gawlikowski, M. (1970). *Monuments Funéraires de Palmyra*. Warsaw: PWN - Editions Scientifiques de Pologne.

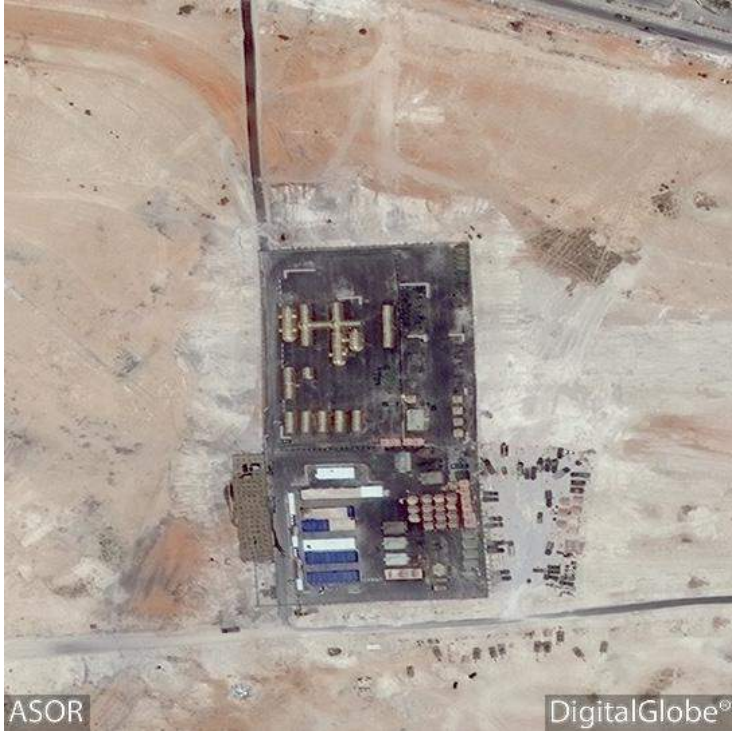
Piacentini, D. (2005) "The Palmyrene Attitudes Towards Death." *ARAM* 17.

World Heritage Committee; 4th session (1980) *Report of the rapporteur on the fourth session of the World Heritage Committee*.

<http://whc.unesco.org/archive/1980/cc-80-conf016-10e.pdf>



The peach color indicates all the removed equipment, such as tanks, vehicles, and artillery (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; June 23, 2016)



Military Base with many buildings, tents, and vehicles. This includes tanks parked directly to the south (DigitalGlobe; May 25, 2016)



The military base after the removal of buildings from the northern portion (DigitalGlobe; June 23, 2016)

SHI 16-0094 UPDATE

Report Date: June 17, 2016

Site Name: Qalaat Semaan (Deir Semaan; دير سمعان; Telanissos)⁶⁸

Date of Incident: June 15-17, 2016

Location: Deir Semaan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: The Church of Saint Simeon Stylites (388-459 CE) is one of the oldest surviving Byzantine churches in the Near East. The architectural complex atop the hill consists of a basilica (built ca. 476-492 CE), baptistery, monastery (ca. 490 CE), two hostelrys (ca. 490 CE and later), and a monumental arch. According to Ross Burns,

Unlike the later cathedrals of medieval Europe, the great church [basilica] was conceived and executed more or less as a single project over a short space of time. The cruciform church comprising four separate basilica buildings was probably constructed shortly after the death of the ascete, St. Simeon....[who] took up residence on a platform atop a column around the remains of which the great building is centered. Construction of the complex began a few years after St. Simeon's death (probably spanning AD 476 to 491)....[T]he column and the site of [St. Simeon's] ascetic deeds was commemorated under imperial patronage, thus encouraging the continuation of the cult of St. Simeon through pilgrimage.⁶⁹

The site was fortified when the Byzantines retook the area from Arabs in the 10th century. It was retaken and sacked by the Hamdanids in 985 CE and subsequently largely abandoned as a monastic-religious center. In 2011, the site of Deir Semaan (including Qalaat Semaan, the Church of St. Simeon Stylites) was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as one of the "Ancient Villages of Northern Syria."⁷⁰

Site Date: Byzantine (5th century CE)

Incident Summary: The Day After Heritage Project Initiative assessed the damage to Qalaat Semaan following a recent airstrike.

Incident Source and Description: The Day After Heritage Project Initiative (TDA-HPI) assessed the damage to Qalaat Semaan following a series of airstrikes in June 2016. According to TDA-HPI site monitors, the site was hit by a Russian airstrike around 9:00 AM on June 16, 2016. According to the Media Office of Daret Ezzah, bombardment of the site continued into the next day.⁷¹ The June 15, 2016 strike apparently caused damage to the site and consisted of three missiles. Two missiles hit outside Qalaat Semaan and caused superficial damage to its external walls. The first hit the southeast side of the complex, and mainly caused damage to a modern road and minor shrapnel damage to a (possibly modern) wall. The second missile hit near the northeast section of the

⁶⁸ While the names Qalaat Semaan and Deir Semaan are often used in news media interchangeably, Qalaat Semaan technically refers only to the Church of Saint Simeon Stylites complex located on the hill above Deir Semaan, the modern town. Deir Semaan also contains extensive ruins, including several churches, monasteries, and tombs.

⁶⁹ Burns, 2009: 272-273

⁷⁰ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1348/>

⁷¹ <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1312756995418334> ; <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1312752972085403>

complex, causing stones to fall from a damaged section of the 10th-century CE fortification wall and tower.

The third missile hit inside the complex near the southern entrance of the Church of Saint Simeon Stylites. This third missile was a cluster bomb, which spread its load across the site. This area suffered extensive damage on May 12, 2016 when Qalaat Semaan was reportedly hit by a Russian airstrike (**ASOR CHI Incident Report 16-0066** in **Weekly Report 93-94**). A side-by-side comparison of TDA-HPI images from June 11, 2016 and images of the site following the May 12, 2016 bombing indicate the June 2016 airstrike caused minimal damage to the southern section of the site. No standing structures or stones appear to have collapsed.

On June 17, 2016 the number of airstrikes in the area apparently increased.⁷² The Media Office of Daret Ezzah also reported that Qalaat Semaan was hit by missiles fired from a rocket launcher stationed on Tell Sheikh Yusuf at the southernmost point of Jabal el-A'la.⁷³ The Media Office later posted two nighttime videos allegedly showing the moment Qalaat Semaan was struck by missiles.⁷⁴

Qalaat Semaan and the nearby modern town of Deir Semaan have been damaged throughout the Syrian conflict (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report 14-0028** in **Weekly Report 6**; **SHI 14-0079** in **Weekly Report 15**; **SHI 14-0106** in **Weekly Report 21-22**)

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI remains concerned about the state of Qalaat Semaan, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and will continue to monitor this and other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Media Office of Daret Ezza:

June 15, 2016: <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1312756995418334>

June 16, 2016: <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1312752972085403>

June 17, 2016: <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1313817551978945>

<https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1313832051977495>

<https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1313826641978036>

<https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/videos/1313877971972903/>

<https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/photos/a.1131974403496595.1073741828.1018380168189353/1313890945304939/>

⁷² <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1313832051977495>

⁷³ <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/posts/1313826641978036>

⁷⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/videos/1313877971972903/>; <https://www.facebook.com/cityofDaretEzzha/photos/a.1131974403496595.1073741828.1018380168189353/1313890945304939/?type=3&theater>

Scholarly:

Burns, R. 2009. *Monuments of Syria: A guide*. I.B. Tauris.

Hadjar, A. (1991) *The Church of St. Simeon the Stylite and Other Archaeological Sites in the Mountains of Simeon and Halaqa*. trans. P. Amash. Damascus: Sidawi Printing House.



Map showing location the May 2016 airstrike on Qalaat Semaan in red, and the location of June 2016 airstrike in blue (TDA-HPI; June 16, 2016)

SHI 16-0095

Report Date: June 24, 2016

Site Name: al-Shamali Mosque (مسجد الشمالي); al-Kabir Mosque (مسجد الكبير)

Date of Incident: June 24, 2016; July 5, 2016

Location: al-Bara, Idlib Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosques in al-Bara.

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: SARG forces allegedly damage mosques in Al-Bara.

Incident Source and Description: On June 24, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG helicopters dropped “explosive cylinders” near al-Shamali Mosque in al-Bara, causing unspecified damage to the mosque.⁷⁵ No photographs were available at the time of publication.

On July 5, 2016 SNHR reported a SARG airstrike had caused unspecified damage to al-Kabir Mosque in al-Bara.⁷⁶ No photographs were available at the time of publication.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to the Shamali and al-Kabir Mosque, as well as other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

SNHR:

June 24, 2016:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/24/government-forces-targeted-al-shamali-mosque-al-bara-town-idlib-governorate-june-24/>

July 5, 2016:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/05/government-forces-shelling-targeted-al-kabeer-mosque-al-bara-town-idlib-governorate-july-5/>

⁷⁵ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/24/government-forces-targeted-al-shamali-mosque-al-bara-town-idlib-governorate-june-24/>

⁷⁶ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/05/government-forces-shelling-targeted-al-kabeer-mosque-al-bara-town-idlib-governorate-july-5/>

SHI 16-0096

Report Date: June 26, 2016

Site Name: al-Iman Mosque (مسجد الإيمان)

Date of Incident: June 25, 2016

Location: al-Quriyah, Deir ez Zor Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported Russian and SARG airstrikes cause undetermined damage to mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On June 25-26, 2016 several news outlets reported that three airstrikes of both Russian and SARG origin struck heavily crowded areas in the ISIL-held town of al-Quriyah. At least one of the airstrikes struck a centrally located mosque during prayer time. The strikes reportedly killed as many as 80 people, the majority of whom were civilians including at least 25 children. The extent of the damage to the mosque is unclear, however one report states that that 30 worshippers were inside the mosque at the time of the airstrike when an airstrike struck the mosque, starting a fire.⁷⁷ ISIL fighters reportedly “set up a security perimeter around the residential area where the town’s mosque is located” following the airstrikes.⁷⁸ No photographs of the incident 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-Iman Mosque, as well as other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

ABC News:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-26/syria-airstrikes-kill-dozens-including-civilians-monitor/7544210>

Al Araby UK:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/politics/2016/6/26/السوري والانتلاف قتلوا 70 لـ الزور دير مجزرة ضحايا ارتفاع يدين>

⁷⁷ <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/politics/2016/6/26/السوري والانتلاف قتلوا 70 لـ الزور دير مجزرة ضحايا ارتفاع يدين>

⁷⁸ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/air-strikes-kill-civilians-syria-deir-az-zor-160625161340790.html>

Al Jazeera:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/air-strikes-kill-civilians-syria-deir-az-zor-160625161340790.html>

CNN: <http://www.cnn.com/2016/06/26/world/syria-violence-unicef/index.html>

Gulf News:

<http://gulfnews.com/news/mena/syria/russian-raids-in-eastern-syria-kill-58-civilians-1.1852734>

Institute for the Study for War:

<http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-june-25-july-1-2016>

Masar Press Agency: <https://www.masarpress.net/القوري بمجزرة ارتقوا طغلا 25 اليونيسيف/>

Qasioun:

<http://www.qasioun.net/ar/news/show/30097/الزور دير في القورية قرية قصف يدين السوري الوطني الائتلاف/>

Step Agency: <http://stepagency-sy.net/archives/95638>

SHI 16-0097

Report Date: June 29, 2016

Site Name: al-Miqdad Mosque (مسجد المقداد); Tomb of Sheikh Aqeel (مقبرة الشيخ عقيل)

Date of Incident: June 29, 2016

Location: Manbij, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosques in Manbij.

The Tomb of Sheikh Aqeel is a Sufi Shrine located in the southern area of the city. The site is adjacent to the largest and oldest cemetery in the city, and is the second largest mosque in the city of Manbij next to al-Kabir Mosque.

Site Date: al-Miqdad Mosque: Unknown

Tomb of Sheikh Aqeel: Sheikh Aqeel is said to have lived ca. 450-555 CE. According to some descriptions the mosque and tomb were built shortly after Sheikh Aqeel's death.⁷⁹

Incident Summary: US-led coalition airstrikes and shells strike mosque and tomb.

Incident Source and Description: On June 29, 2014 local Syrian media sources reported that a US-led coalition airstrike hit al-Miqdad Mosque in Manbij.⁸⁰ The airstrike also struck an adjacent school. Satellite imagery obtained from DigitalGlobe on June 26, 2016 indicates the northeastern corner of the mosque and minaret have been damaged. In addition, the satellite imagery shows a building within the mosque complex, possibly a school building, was struck by artillery. A photograph of the mosque shows that the top portion of the minaret has been completely destroyed.

On June 29, 2014 Aleppo 24 and Menbij Coordination Committee reported that nearby shelling and mortar shells struck the Tomb of Sheikh Aqeel.⁸¹ The tomb of Sheikh Aqeel has been damaged on at least one prior occasion. In 2014, the DGAM reported that ISIL militants intentionally destroyed the Sufi shrine which the group deemed as heretical (see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0071 in Weekly Report 13**). Video released on Youtube showed extensive damage to the shrine and the adjacent cemetery.⁸² DigitalGlobe satellite imagery narrows the time of destruction to between May 23, 2014 and October 6, 2014. No photographs were available at the time of publication.

Syrian Democratic Forces began an offensive at the beginning of June 2016 to recapture Manbij from ISIL and US-led coalition airstrikes targeting ISIL have been a daily occurrence over the city.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

⁷⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZIO1GRNXII>

⁸⁰ https://twitter.com/RFS_NORTH/status/748269213761081344 ; <https://twitter.com/24Aleppo/status/748271066716463104> ; <https://twitter.com/MenbijCoordinat/status/748307659858845696> ; <https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1426284630732002>

⁸¹ <https://www.facebook.com/24Alepp/posts/1216166075084258> ; <https://www.facebook.com/24Alepp/posts/1216123938421805> ; https://twitter.com/RFS_NORTH/status/748269213761081344

⁸² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZIO1GRNXII>

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Miqdad Mosque and the Tomb of Sheikh Aqeel, 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:

Aleppo 24:

June 29, 2016: <https://www.facebook.com/24Alepp/posts/1216123938421805>
<https://twitter.com/24Aleppo/status/748271066716463104>
https://twitter.com/RFS_NORTH/status/748269213761081344
<https://www.facebook.com/24Alepp/posts/1216166075084258>

Baladi News:

http://baladi-news.com/ar/news/details/7767/حلب_على_النظام_بقصف_طفلين_استشهاد

LCCSy: <https://www.facebook.com/LCCSy/posts/1426284630732002>

Manbij Om al-Duonia:

<https://www.facebook.com/alduonia/photos/a.202439253428835.1073741829.174781746194586/301288193543940/>

Menbej Coordination: <https://twitter.com/MenbijCoordinat/status/748308069558394881>

Revolutionary Forces of Syria Media Office:

June 29, 2016: https://twitter.com/RFS_NORTH/status/748269213761081344 ; <https://twitter.com/MenbijCoordinat/status/748307659858845696>



Damage to the minaret of al-Miqdad Mosque (Manbij Om al-Duonia; June 30, 2016)



al-Miqdad Mosque complex (DigitalGlobe; May 27, 2016)



al-Miqdad Mosque complex with visible damage due to airstrikes. The minaret has been destroyed on the northeast corner of the mosque (DigitalGlobe; June 26, 2016)



The Tomb of Sheikh Aqeel prior to destruction (DigitalGlobe; May 23, 2014)



After the destruction of the tomb, the debris was removed from the site (DigitalGlobe; October 6, 2014)



Reuse of the site for parking and storage of dirt piles (DigitalGlobe; June 26, 2016)

SHI 16-0098

Report Date: June 28, 2016

Site Name: al-Foqani Mosque (جامع الفوقاني)

Date of Incident: June 28, 2016

Location: Hbit, Idlib Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: An alleged SARG airstrike damages mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On June 28, 2016 the Local Coordination Committees of Syria reported that SARG airstrikes struck al-Foqani Mosque and the surrounding neighborhood in Hbit, killing five civilians and causing unspecified damage to the mosque.⁸³ The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported the airstrike damaged the mosque's basement and furniture, "rendering it inoperable."⁸⁴ SNHR also published a photograph that shows a great deal of damage in the mosque's interior.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the condition of al-Foqani 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:

Alhabet Today: <https://twitter.com/AlhabetToday/status/747757443992682496>

Local Coordination Committees of Syria: <https://twitter.com/LccSy/status/747757951679627265>

SNHR:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/28/government-forces-targeted-al-foqani-mosque-al-hbait-town-idlib-governorate-june-28/>

⁸³ <https://twitter.com/LccSy/status/747757951679627265>

⁸⁴ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/06/28/government-forces-targeted-al-foqani-mosque-al-hbait-town-idlib-governorate-june-28/>



Damage to the interior of al-Foqani Mosque in Hbit (SNHR; June 28, 2016)

SHI 16-0099

Report Date: June 30, 2016

Site Name:

- Ali Sayyad Mosque (مسجد علي الصياد)
- Martyrs Cemetery (مقبرة الشهداء)
- al-Farouq Mosque (جامع الفاروق) (Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque; (مسجد عمر بن الخطاب)
- Ammar bin Yasser Mosque (جامع عمار بن ياسر)
- al-Hassan wa al-Hussein Mosque (مسجد الحسن والحسين)

Date of Incident: June 24 - July 3, 2016

Location:

- Ali Sayyad Mosque: Hreitan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria
- Martyrs Cemetery: Anadan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria
- al-Farouq Mosque: Kafr Hamra, Aleppo Governorate, Syria
- Ammar bin Yasser Mosque: Maarat al-Artiq, Aleppo Governorate, Syria
- al-Hassan wa al-Hussein Mosque: Kafr Hamra, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosques and cemetery in Aleppo Governorate.

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Reported SARG and Russian airstrikes damage mosques.

Incident Source and Description: On June 30, 2016 the Syrian Revolution Network released a post via the group's Facebook page that included a photograph of damage to Ali Sayyad Mosque allegedly as a result of Russian airstrikes. Local news source Hraytan News released video footage showing damage to Ali Sayyad Mosque, as well as to other areas around the city, caused by reported Russian airstrikes over the previous days. The video footage and photograph show damage to exterior of the mosque with particular damage to the minaret, which has largely fallen down leaving only its supporting beams. Video footage of the mosque also shows damage to the nearby cemetery.

On June 30, 2016 Anadan Media Center released a video showing airstrike damage to the Martyrs Cemetery in Anadan City.⁸⁵ The video did not detail who was responsible for the airstrikes, however both Russian and SARG warplanes have been reported over the area. In addition, Anadan Media Center released another video on June 30, 2016 showing reported Russian airstrikes on Anadan.⁸⁶ It is unclear whether this video shows the exact moment of an airstrike over the Martyrs Cemetery.

On June 30, 2016 Kafr Hamra Media Center released a set of photographs showing airstrike damage to al-Farouq Mosque in Kafr Hamra.⁸⁷ The photographs did not detail who was responsible for the airstrikes, however both Russian and SARG warplanes have been reported over the area. On July 1, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) identified the damaged mosque as Omar Bin al-

⁸⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dzn52SkTs9o>

⁸⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=trzPYD_rGPE

⁸⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/Kafarhamra.Media.Center/posts/1173096506065662>

Khattab.⁸⁸ Another activist group also identified the mosque as Omar Bin al-Khattab Mosque and shared three additional photographs detailing the damage.⁸⁹ ASOR CHI cannot independently verify the reason for the discrepancy of the names.

On July 1, 2016 Thiqa News Agency reported that an airstrike severely damaged Ammar bin Yasser Mosque in Maarat al-Artiq during or around the time of Friday prayers.⁹⁰ Photographs show severe structural damage to the mosque building. At least one wall has been reduced to rubble.

On July 3, 2016 SNHR reported a Russian airstrike severely damaged al-Hassan wa al-Hussein Mosque in Kafr Hamra, “partially damaging it and rendering it inoperable.”⁹¹ A photograph provided by SNHR shows a large hole in the side of the mosque and a great deal of rubble.

Since the end of the declared ceasefire over Syria, the area northwest of the city of Aleppo has been subject to ongoing aerial bombardment. Similar incidents caused by airstrikes since May 2016 include damage to at least two other mosques in Hreitan, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0071** in **Weekly Report 93–94** and **SHI 16-0092** in **Weekly Report 97–98**, and two mosques in Anadan, **SHI 16-0075** in **Weekly Report 95–96**.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Anadan Media Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dzn52SkTs9o>

Hraytan City:

June 30, 2016: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11H7tNcIN_A

July 5, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKM38gYkgbc>

Kafr Hamra Media Center:

<https://www.facebook.com/Kafarhamra.Media.Center/posts/1173096506065662>

Mahmud al-Jurh Abu Malik Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/abomalek06/status/748844416274722817>

⁸⁸ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/01/government-forces-targeted-omar-bin-al-khattab-mosque-kafr-hamra-town-aleppo-governorate-july-1/>

⁸⁹ <https://twitter.com/thiqanewsagency/status/748940206074716161>

⁹⁰ <https://twitter.com/abomalek06/status/748844416274722817>

⁹¹ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/04/suspected-russian-forces-targeted-al-hasan-w-al-hussein-mosque-kafr-hamra-town-aleppo-governorate-july-3/>

SNHR:

July 1, 2016: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/01/government-forces-targeted-omar-bin-al-khattab-mosque-kafr-hamra-town-aleppo-governorate-july-1/>

July 3, 2016:

<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/04/suspected-russian-forces-targeted-al-hasan-w-al-hussein-mosque-kafr-hamra-town-aleppo-governorate-july-3/>

Syrian Revolution Network:

<https://www.facebook.com/Syrian.Revolution/photos/a.10150397575815727.619133.420796315726/10157313391975727/>

Thiqa News Agency: <https://twitter.com/thiqanewsagency/status/748940206074716161>

Ali Sayyad Mosque (مسجد علي الصياد)



A video still showing an overview of damage to Ali Sayyad Mosque and Martyrs Cemetery (Hraytan City; July 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to Ali Sayyad Mosque and minaret (Hraytan City; June 30, 2016)



Detail of damage to the minaret, the facade of which has fallen off its metal supports (Hraytan City; June 30, 2016)



Damage to Ali Sayyad Mosque (Syrian Revolution Network; June 30, 2016)



Video still of damage to Ali Sayyad Mosque and surrounding area including adjacent cemetery (Hraytan City; June 30, 2016)



Ali Sayyad Mosque (outlined in red) with the minaret intact. Note the buildings to the north have already been damaged (DigitalGlobe; June 24, 2016).



Ali Sayyad Mosque (outlined in red) with the minaret and corner of the mosque badly damaged (DigitalGlobe; June 30, 2016).

Martyrs Cemetery (مقبرة الشهداء)



Video still of a crater caused by an airstrike in the Martyrs Cemetery (Anadan Media Center; June 30, 2016)



Video still of the same crater caused by an airstrike in the Martyrs Cemetery (Anadan Media Center; June 30, 2016)



Video still of damage to graves within the Martyrs Cemetery (Anadan Media Center; June 30, 2016)



Video still of damage to graves within the Martyrs Cemetery (Anadan Media Center; June 30, 2016)



Video still of damage to graves and an airstrike crater within the Martyrs Cemetery (Anadan Media Center; June 30, 2016)



Video still of a crater caused by an airstrike in the Martyrs Cemetery (Anadan Media Center; June 30, 2016)



Video still of damage to graves and an airstrike crater within the Martyrs Cemetery (Anadan Media Center; June 30, 2016)



Martyrs Cemetery prior to the airstrike (DigitalGlobe; June 24, 2016)



Martyrs Cemetery after the airstrike. A large bomb crater is visible in the center of the cemetery (DigitalGlobe; June 30, 2016)

al-Farouq Mosque (جامع الفاروق)/Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque (مسجد عمر بن الخطاب)



Damage to the exterior of al-Farouq Mosque (Kafr Hamra Media Center; June 30, 2016)



Interior and material damage to al-Farouq Mosque (Kafr Hamra Media Center; June 30, 2016)



Interior and material damage to al-Farouq Mosque (Kafr Hamra Media Center; June 30, 2016)



Damage to the interior of the dome of al-Farouq Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; July 1, 2016)



Damage to the exterior of the dome of al-Farouq Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; July 1, 2016)



Damage to the interior of al-Farouq Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; July 1, 2016)



Damage to al-Farouq Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; July 1, 2016)

Ammar bin Yasser Mosque (جامع عمار بن ياسر)



Exterior view of damage to Ammar bin Yasser Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; July 1, 2016)



Exterior view of damage to Ammar bin Yasser Mosque (Mahmud al-Jurh Abu Malik/Twitter; July 1, 2016)



Exterior view of damage to Ammar bin Yasser Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; July 1, 2016)



Severe damage to Ammar bin Yasser Mosque (Mahmud al-Jurh Abu Malik/Twitter; July 1, 2016)

al-Hassan wa al-Hussein Mosque (مسجد الحسن والحسين)



A large hole in the side of al-Hassan wa al-Hussein Mosque in Kafr Hamra (SNHR; July 3, 2016)

SHI 16-0100

Report Date: June 30, 2016

Site Name:

- al-Rawda Mosque (جامع الروضة)
- al-Ghazali Mosque (جامع الغزالي)
- al-Ghufran Mosque (جامع الغفران)

Date of Incident: June 30, 2016; July 1, 2016

Location:

- al-Rawda Mosque: al-Mokambo neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria
- al-Ghazali Mosque: al-Shuhaba neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria
- al-Ghufran Mosque: al-Khalidiyeh neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Mosques in the city of Aleppo.

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Opposition and SARG shelling reportedly damages mosques in Aleppo.

Incident Source and Description: On June 30, 2016 al-Zahra Neighborhood News Network reported, via the group's Facebook page, that rocket fire struck the al-Rawda Mosque and near the al-Ghazali Mosque.⁹² The two mosques are within 600-650 meters of one another in the city of Aleppo. The origin of the rocket fire was not detailed. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication, although some photographs of the damage to al-Mokambo neighborhood where al-Rawda Mosque is located show extensive destruction and crumbling buildings.⁹³

On July 2, 2016 Shaam News Network reported on Facebook that al-Ghufran Mosque in al-Khalidiyeh neighborhood was damaged by opposition shelling on July 1, 2016.⁹⁴ The extent of the damage is unknown. No photographs were available at the time of publication.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

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

⁹² https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1124103327648706 ; <https://www.facebook.com/617319418327102/photos/a.617421408316903.1073741828.617319418327102/1124142617644777/>

⁹³ https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1124103327648706 ; <https://www.facebook.com/617319418327102/photos/a.617421408316903.1073741828.617319418327102/1124142617644777/>

⁹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/ShaaamNewsNetwork/posts/1047050458676062>

Sources:

Online Reporting:

al-Zahra Neighborhood News Network:

June 30, 2016: https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1124103327648706
<https://www.facebook.com/617319418327102/photos/a.617421408316903.1073741828.617319418327102/1124142617644777/>

Shaam News Network:

<https://www.facebook.com/ShamNewsNetwork/posts/1047050458676062>

SHI 16-0101

Report Date: July 3, 2016

Site Name: St. Demetrius Church Melkite Greek Catholic Church (كنيسة ديميتريوس)

Date of Incident: July 2, 2016

Location: Suleimaniyah neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

Site Description: Melkite Greek Catholic Church

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Alleged opposition shelling damages a church in Aleppo.

Incident Source and Description: On July 3, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that opposition forces fired shells on Demetrius Church in the Suleimaniyah neighborhood from their position in the Old City of Aleppo, causing unspecified damage.⁹⁵ According to Aleppo Pulse, the shelling caused the church to catch fire.⁹⁶ Alikhbaria Channel published a video of the fire on Youtube, but the extent of the damage to the church is currently unknown.⁹⁷

St. Demetrius Church suffered damage at least on one other occasion. On July 24, 2014 Aksalser reported a missile struck the church, damaging its facade and windows, and killing at least 10 civilians.⁹⁸

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to St. Demetrius Church, as well as other heritage sites subject to ongoing military activity and aerial bombardment.

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⁹⁵ <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/07/03/armed-opposition-factions-targeted-demetrius-church-al-sulimaniyah-neighborhood-aleppo-city-july-2/>

⁹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/alepponow/posts/881647378608244>

⁹⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnaeA_tIz44

⁹⁸ http://www.aksalser.com/index.php?page=view_articles&id=37abc15d4d4bbb4bde3251a665abe24d&utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=twitterfeed

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Video still of fire in Saint Demetrius Church (Alikhbaria Channel; July 3, 2016)

Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 16-0019

Report Date: July 5, 2016

Site Name:

- Mosque of the Caliphs (جامع الخلفاء)
- al-Hassan Bin Ali Mosque (الحسن بن علي جامع)
- al-Taqwa Mosque (جامع التقوى)
- al-Furqan Mosque (جامع الفرقان)
- al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque (جامع الحسن البصري)
- Abu Obeida Mosque (جامع ابو عبيدة)
- al-Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Samarrai Mosque (جامع الشيخ عبد العزيز السامرائي)
- al-Raqib Mosque (جامع الرقيب)
- al-Mudallal Mosque (جامع المدلل)
- Uthman bin Affan Mosque (جامع عفان بن عثمان)
- al-Hadra Mosque (جامع الحضرة)
- Prophet Ali bin Abu Talib Mosque (جامع نبي علي بين أبوطالب)
- al-Anbia Mosque (جامع الأنبياء)
- al-Fayad Mosque (جامع الفياض)
- al-Sheikh Hamza Abbas Mosque (the Martyr) (جامع الشيخ الشهيد حمزة عباس)

Date of Incident: May 22 - June 28, 2016

Location:

- Mosque of the Caliphs - جامع الخلفاء - al-Dhubat I neighborhood
- al-Hassan Bin Ali Mosque - الحسن بن علي جامع - al-Askari neighborhood
- al-Taqwa Mosque - جامع التقوى - al-Khadra neighborhood
- al-Furqan Mosque - جامع الفرقان - al-Wahda neighborhood
- al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque - جامع الحسن البصري - al-Askari neighborhood
- Abu Obeida Mosque - جامع ابو عبيدة - al-Jamhoureya neighborhood
- al-Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Samarrai Mosque - جامع الشيخ عبد العزيز السامرائي - Nazzal neighborhood
- al-Raqib Mosque - جامع الرقيب - al-Jolan neighborhood
- al-Mudallal Mosque - جامع المدلل - al-Dhubat II neighborhood
- Uthman bin Affan Mosque - جامع عفان بن عثمان - Fallujah al-Qadim neighborhood
- al-Hadra Mosque - جامع الحضرة - al-Dhubat I neighborhood
- Prophet Ali bin Abu Talib Mosque - جامع نبي علي بين أبوطالب - al-Risala neighborhood
- al-Anbia Mosque - جامع الأنبياء - al-Shuhada neighborhood
- al-Fayad Mosque - جامع الفياض - Fallujah al-Qadim neighborhood
- al-Sheikh Hamza Abbas Mosque (the Martyr) - جامع الشيخ الشهيد حمزة عباس - al-Andalus neighborhood

Site Description: Mosques in Fallujah.

Site Date: late 19th-century CE to early 21st-century CE

Incident Summary: Damage to mosques during the military operations to recapture Fallujah.

Incident Source and Description: Fallujah is known as a city of 120 mosques. During US-led advances into Fallujah in the beginning stages of the second Iraq war, dozens of mosques were damaged in the city. During many battles mosques were used as triage units, military positions, and aid distribution sites.⁹⁹ Fallujah was the first city to fall to ISIL in January 2014.¹⁰⁰ The city was first declared as recaptured on June 17, 2016 after months of preparation and approximately one month of military operations to reach the center of the city.¹⁰¹ On June 26, 2016 Iraqi security forces, backed by US-led coalition airstrikes completed clearing operations in Fallujah.¹⁰² During the fight to reclaim Fallujah, Iraqi Popular Mobilization Units accused ISIL militants of using mosques as mortar firing positions.¹⁰³ Prior to Iraqi forces advancing into Fallujah, many feared that ISIL militants had booby-trapped mosques as well as other civilian sites.¹⁰⁴ Southern industrial areas of the city, where ISIL reportedly created car bombs to use in Baghdad, were reportedly more destroyed than the rest of Fallujah.¹⁰⁵ Some Iraqi officials estimate that between 10%-30% of the city has been destroyed.¹⁰⁶ An ASOR CHI source reported that the perimeters of the city suffered the most damage as this was where the fiercest battles with ISIL occurred. According to AP, “almost all [mosques in the city] are still standing, but many have their intricate tile work chipped away by small arms fire and artillery.”¹⁰⁷ The center of the city has relatively minor damage, especially when compared to other recently recaptured cities such as Sinjar and Ramadi. Since the start of operations to reclaim Fallujah, instances of sectarian violence have been reported with Shia militia members accused of looting and burning civilian homes as well as mosques.¹⁰⁸ The presence of Shia militia graffiti as well as group’s flags have been photographed in the city.¹⁰⁹

- Mosque of the Caliphs (جامع الخلفاء) - Shortly after Iraqi security forces first entered the city of Fallujah in their efforts to recapture the city from ISIL, photographs of a damaged Mosque of the Caliphs began to circulate. Some social media accounts suggested that ISIL car bombings, intending to slow the advancement of Iraqi forces, were responsible for the damage.¹¹⁰ At least one video published on June 17, 2016 shows the detonation of a moving vehicle near the mosque.¹¹¹ An AP article published on June 27, 2016 describes a hole below one of the mosque’s

⁹⁹ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A58510-2004Nov17.html> ; http://www.nbcnews.com/id/6496898/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/t/us-probes-shooting-fallujah-mosque/

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4I-vPCCBoU>

¹⁰¹ <http://www.wsj.com/articles/iraqi-city-of-fallujah-fully-liberated-from-islamic-state-iraqicommander-says-1466934423>

¹⁰² <http://post.understandingwar.org/backgrounders/isis-sanctuary-map-july-1-2016>

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¹⁰⁷ <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/13376bf19d044b5bbf47103539997d15/dozens-homes-burned-looted-iraqi-city-freed>

¹⁰⁸ <https://twitter.com/fallujahtv/status/747746381897433088> ; <http://english.aawsat.com/2016/06/article55353572/al-hashd-al-shaabi-burns-homes-fallujah> ;

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¹⁰⁹ <https://www.yahoo.com/news/despite-fears-iraq-militiamen-joined-battle-inside-fallujah-170114139.html> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xn83NljqXgg>

¹¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/IraqiSecurity/status/746111986673532928>

¹¹¹ <https://twitter.com/miladvisor/status/743910927242825728>

blue domes as a result of artillery fire.¹¹² Photographs of the mosque indicate the damage is largely cosmetic. For example, many tiles seem to have fallen from the mosque's domes. No photographs have yet been released of the interior of the mosque. Between June 13-June 28, 2016 DigitalGlobe satellite imagery showed damage to the entrance gate and roof of the mosque. On April 26, 2014 Iraq News Center tweeted that Iraqi Security Forces had shelled the mosque with mortars that day, causing unspecified damage.¹¹³ On May 8, 2014 Iraq News Center reported that an Iraqi airstrike hit the library attached to the Mosque of the Caliphs, causing unspecified damage.¹¹⁴

- al-Hassan Bin Ali Mosque (الحسن بن علي جامع) - DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from June 13 and June 28, 2016 indicates al-Hassan Bin Ali Mosque was damaged sometime after June 13, 2016. The southeast section of the mosque has sustained minor damage. On January 28, 2016 a Twitter user reported al-Hassan Bin Ali Mosque had been bombed that day by Iraqi government warplanes.¹¹⁵ Two accompanying photos show a pile of rubble near the mosque's minaret, from a nearby building or a building connected to the mosque.
- al-Taqwa Mosque (جامع التقوى) - Between June 13-June 28, 2016 DigitalGlobe satellite imagery showed severe damage to al-Taqwa Mosque, the minaret, and exterior buildings. On June 22, 2016 various social media accounts shared a photograph of a damaged al-Taqwa Mosque. The posts placed the blame on several armed groups including local police, security forces, and militias. The mosque was reportedly blown up by whichever group is responsible for the attack.
- al-Furqan Mosque (جامع الفرقان) - DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from June 13 and June 28, 2016 showed damage to the roof of al-Furqan Mosque. On June 28, 2016 AFP Baghdad Bureau Chief W.G. Dunlap released a series of photographs taken in Fallujah. One of the photographs reported to show a mosque burning in the city. ASOR CHI analysis suggests that the photograph shows al-Furqan Mosque, located in the al-Wahda neighborhood of Fallujah. On September 23, 2014 photographs were published on Twitter showing cleanup and repair efforts at Furqan Mosque following an airstrike by Iraqi Security Forces. The photographs indicate damage to the mosque was minimal at this time, and included a small hole and debris on the roof of the mosque.
- al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque (جامع الحسن البصري) - On June 23, 2016 Team Correspondents tweeted a photograph of al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque. The photographs show that the mosque's minaret and dome have been badly damaged, probably in an airstrike. The author of the tweet blames the damage on bombing by Popular Mobilization Forces. It is unclear when this damage occurred and who was responsible, but the mosque was clearly further damaged between February 2014 (when the first video of damage to the mosque was published) and June 2016 when this photograph was taken. DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from June 28, 2016 showed more damage to the minaret and roof of the mosque since March 5, 2016. A YouTube video published on January 14, 2014 by Herak Media Network shows damage to the minaret of the al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque, as well as debris on the ground around it, allegedly from a recent airstrike by Iraqi Security Forces.¹¹⁶ On February 20, 2014 Herak published another video

¹¹² <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/13376bf19d044b5bbf47103539997d15/dozens-homes-burned-looted-iraqi-city-freed>

¹¹³ <https://twitter.com/NewsOfIraq/status/460122754373926912>

¹¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/NewsOfIraq/status/464379036265742336>

¹¹⁵ https://twitter.com/n_iraq67/status/692790761591590912

¹¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MeOSlkk1Tnc>

showing damage to the mosque, though it is unclear whether the mosque had been shelled a second time or if this damage resulted from the January 14, 2014 airstrike.¹¹⁷ This video shows a hole in a low wall surrounding the mosque complex, as well as damage to the loudspeakers on the minaret.

- Abu Obeida Mosque (جامع ابو عبيدة) - DigitalGlobe satellite imagery indicates the roof of Abu Obeida Mosque was damaged May 20–31, 2016. Imagery from June 28, 2016 shows new damage to the mosque, with debris visible from damage to the front facade of the mosque and the minaret. On May 21, 2016 the activist group Iraqi Spring Media Center published a Youtube video showing damage to Abu Obeida Mosque and subsequent cleanup efforts.¹¹⁸ The group blames the damage on Iraqi government shelling. It is unclear exactly when this damage occurred. Damage appears limited to an exterior courtyard of the mosque.
- al-Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Samarrai Mosque (جامع الشيخ عبد العزيز السامرائي) - On June 22, 2016 Iraq Gate tweeted photographs purportedly showing members of a Shia militia within the courtyard of al-Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Samarrai Mosque.¹¹⁹ Members of the Iraqi Security Forces advanced to the area around the mosque on June 16, 2016.¹²⁰ On February 22, 2014 Herak Media Network posted a tweet reporting a mortar shell hit the mosque, causing unspecified damage.¹²¹ On October 17, 2014 the Youtube media channel Anbar Cities published a video showing minor damage to the minaret of the mosque.¹²² It is unclear when this damage occurred.
- al-Raqib Mosque (جامع الرقيب) - DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from June 28, 2016 shows damage to the roof an exterior building and the dome of al-Raqib Mosque, possibly as a result of ongoing operations to recapture Fallujah. ASOR CHI has previously reported on damage to the al-Raqib Mosque as a result of US-led coalition airstrikes in May 2016 in **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0014** in **Weekly Report 93–94**.
- al-Mudallal Mosque (جامع المدلل) - Between June 13-June 28, 2016 DigitalGlobe satellite imagery showed severe damage to al-Mudallal Mosque, most likely caused by an airstrike. On May 27, 2016 Fajr al-Iraq News tweeted several photographs of damage to al-Mudallal Mosque, allegedly the result of shelling.¹²³ The photographs show the destruction of a building connected or adjacent to the mosque, a great deal of debris in the mosque courtyard (including a destroyed metal overhang), and minor damage and debris in the mosque interior. ISIL-affiliated Amaq News Agency also shared a video of damage to the mosque. According to Amaq, it was an airstrike that caused the damage to the mosque.¹²⁴ For further information on previous damage to al-Mudallal Mosque see **IHI 16-0016** in **Weekly Report 95–96**.
- Uthman bin Affan Mosque (جامع عفان بن عثمان) - On June 28, 2016 Hadid Hamid reported on Twitter that members of the Popular Mobilization Force had set fire to Uthman bin Affan Mosque.¹²⁵ DigitalGlobe satellite imagery from June 28, 2016 shows minor damage to the exterior of the

¹¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0MNxirQ934>

¹¹⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZ2OmBQgvY>

¹¹⁹ https://twitter.com/Iraq_Gate/status/745699063031533568

¹²⁰ https://twitter.com/The_H16/status/744302346155483136

¹²¹ <https://twitter.com/Herakiq/status/437175882105380865>

¹²² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6vHlr_dzfo

¹²³ https://twitter.com/FajrAlIraq_News/status/736317814974369793

¹²⁴ https://twitter.com/news_Fallujah/status/736271567248891904

¹²⁵ <https://twitter.com/HamidHadeed/status/747968634341982208>

mosque. On April 15, 2014 Baghdad Satellite Channel reported an Iraqi Security Forces airstrike seriously damaged the Uthman bin Affan Mosque.¹²⁶

- al-Hadra Mosque (جامع الحضرة) - Between June 13-28, 2016 new DigitalGlobe satellite imagery showed new damage to the eastern side of the al-Hadra Mosque and multiple auxiliary buildings. On June 25, 2016 al-Forat News published a video showing Iraqi Special Operations Forces (ISOF) members raising the Iraqi flag on the roof of the al-Hadra Mosque.¹²⁷ On June 23, 2016 the ISOF posted photographs on Twitter showing members of the group inside the al-Hadra Mosque, which had reportedly been retaken from ISIL militants on June 20, 2016.¹²⁸ The photographs show a significant amount of debris in the mosque interior, including glass from broken windows. It is unclear when this damage occurred. On May 9, 2014 Iraq News Center reported that an Iraqi Security Forces airstrike hit al-Hadra Mosque, causing unspecified damage.¹²⁹ On December 17, 2014 Al Arabiya reported that the al-Hadra Mosque had been turned into a prison by ISIL militants, and that “hundreds of men and women” were being held there.¹³⁰ On January 24, 2015 Iraqi Spring Media Center reported that an Iraqi Security Forces airstrike hit al-Hadra Mosque, causing unspecified damage.¹³¹
- Prophet Ali bin Abu Talib Mosque (جامع نبي علي بين أوطالب) - Between June 13-28, 2016 new DigitalGlobe satellite imagery showed that severe damage was inflicted to the minaret of Prophet Ali bin Abu Talib Mosque during the recapturing of Fallujah. The exact cause of the damage is unknown. On July 21, 2015 Iraqi Spring Media Center published a video on Youtube showing damage to the Ali bin Abu Talib Mosque, reportedly the result of an Iraqi government airstrike that day.¹³² Part of a wall surrounding the courtyard of the mosque complex appears to have been destroyed. There is also a great deal of damage on the street outside the mosque, including destroyed cars. A Twitter account posted photographs of damage to a tree in the interior courtyard and other areas of the mosque.
- al-Anbia Mosque (جامع الأنبياء) - Between June 13-26, 2016 new DigitalGlobe satellite imagery showed that al-Anbia Mosque was completely destroyed during the recapturing of Fallujah. The minaret of the mosque remains standing but the building itself appears to have been leveled. The exact cause of the damage is unknown.
- al-Fayad Mosque (جامع الفياض) - Between June 13-26, 2016 new DigitalGlobe satellite imagery showed slight damage to al-Fayad Mosque and severe damage to the area immediately surrounding the mosque. The damage occurred during the recapturing of Fallujah. The exact cause of the damage is unknown. On July 9, 2014 a Twitter user alleged an Iraqi government airstrike had damaged al-Fayad Mosque. On November 15, 2014 another Twitter user posted two photographs of the mosque showing damage and debris in the mosque interior and minor damage to an exterior wall. It is unclear whether this damage was the result of the July 9, 2014 bombing or a subsequent incident.

¹²⁶ <https://twitter.com/tvbaghdad/status/456074288513437697>

¹²⁷ <http://alforatnews.com/modules/news/article.php?storyid=120572>

¹²⁸ https://twitter.com/isof_iq/status/746002494191509508

¹²⁹ <https://twitter.com/NewsOfIraq/status/464679985727279105>

¹³⁰ <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/12/17/ISIS-fighters-kills-more-than-150-women-for-refusing-jihad-marriage.html>

¹³¹ <https://twitter.com/IraqiSpringMC/status/558918332527943681>

¹³² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrycpSGHA60>

- al-Sheikh Hamza Abbas Mosque (the Martyr) (جامع الشيخ الشهيد حمزة عباس) - Between June 13–26, 2016 new DigitalGlobe satellite imagery showed damage to al-Sheikh Hamza Abbas Mosque. The imagery also shows possible damage to the mosque’s minaret. The damage occurred during the recapturing of Fallujah. The exact cause of the damage is unknown. On August 14, 2014 Iraq Now tweeted a photograph of damage to the mosque, allegedly as the result of an Iraqi government airstrike.¹³³ There is a large hole in a wall near the minbar, and debris litters the interior of the mosque.

Pattern: Military activity: explosives; gunfire/light weaponry.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to mosques in Fallujah, focusing particular attention on the cause of such damage. Areas in Iraq recently recaptured from ISIL have often seen a rise in sectarian violence between Shia and Sunni groups. Due to Fallujah’s large Sunni population and its position as a former Sunni stronghold, the risk of such violence remains high. It is imperative that the Iraqi government works to avoid such violence and holds all armed groups in such operations to the same standard.

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¹³³ https://twitter.com/al_iraqnow/status/499966266283929600

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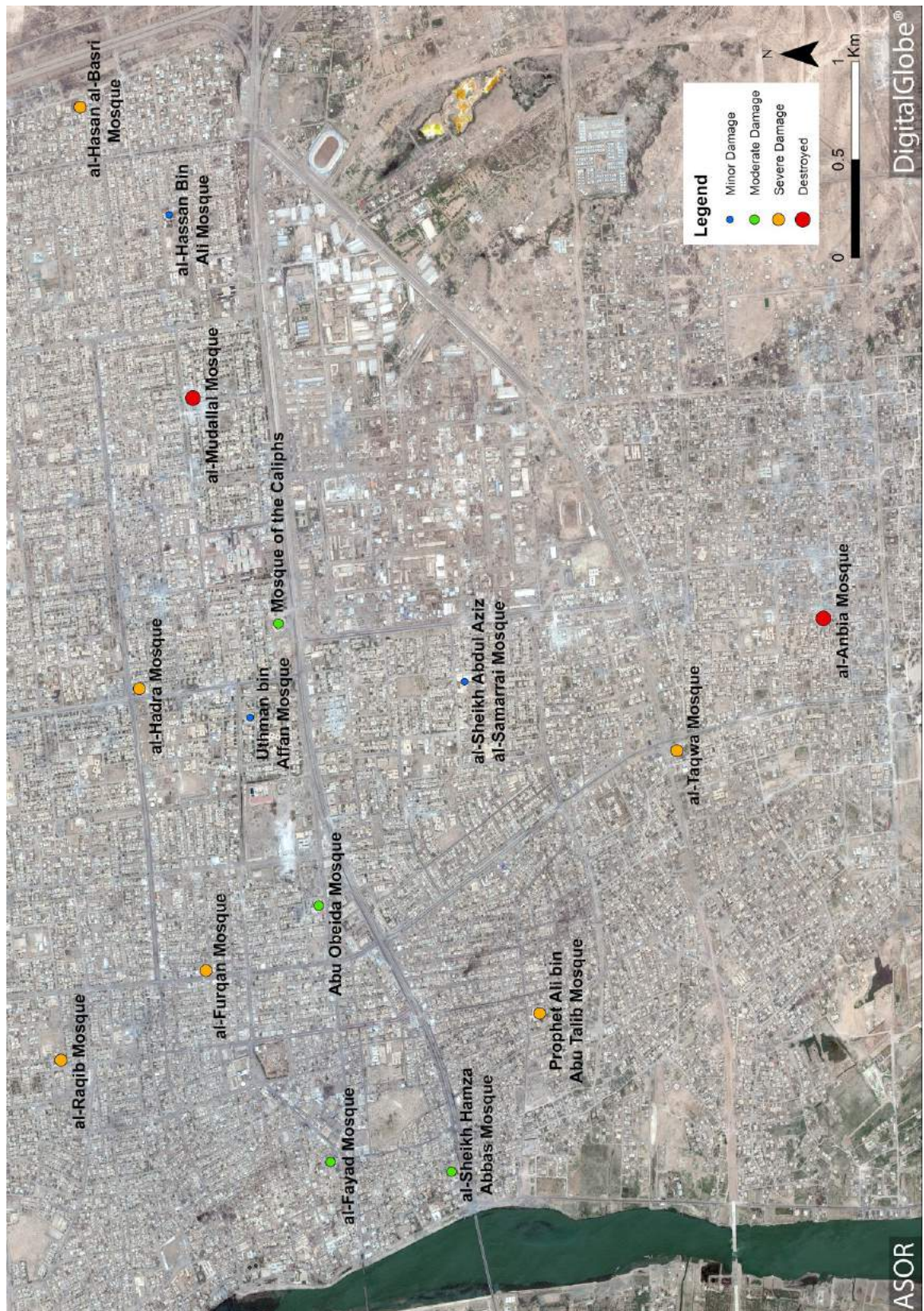
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All mosques damaged during the Battle of Fallujah. They are color coded and sized to reflect the amount of overall damage to the mosque (ASOR CHI/DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)

Mosque of the Caliphs (جامع الخلفاء)



Mosque of the Caliphs with little visible damage (DigitalGlobe; June 13, 2016)



Mosque of the Caliphs with damage to the entrance gate and roof (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Damage to exterior of the Mosque of the Caliphs (Fallujah TV; June 20, 2016)



Smoke rises in Fallujah behind the Mosque of the Caliphs (Iraqi PMU English; June 17, 2016)



Video still of damage to the Mosque of the Caliphs (AP; June 22, 2016)



Video still of damage to the entrance of the Mosque of the Caliphs (AP; June 22, 2016)



Damage to facade and domes of Mosque of the Caliphs as seen from the inside of a passing vehicle (AP; June 22, 2016)

al-Hassan Bin Ali Mosque (الحسن بن علي جامع)



Hassan bin Ali Mosque with no visible damage
(DigitalGlobe; June 13, 2016)



Visible damage to Hassan bin Ali Mosque
(DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Severe damage to Hassan bin Ali Mosque (Twitter; January 28, 2016)

al-Taqwa Mosque (جامع التقوى)



al-Taqwa Mosque with little visible damage
(DigitalGlobe; June 13, 2016)



al-Taqwa Mosque with severe damage to the minaret, the mosque, and exterior buildings
(DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Damage to the fence and minaret of al-Taqwa Mosque (Twitter; June 22, 2016)



Severe damage to the minaret of al-Taqwa Mosque (BBC Urdu; June 21, 2016)

al-Furqan Mosque (جامع الفرقان)



al-Furqan Mosque with minor damage to the roof (DigitalGlobe; June 13, 2016)



al-Furqan Mosque with new damage to the roof (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



A fire burns in al-Furqan Mosque (WG Dunlap; June 28, 2016)



A hole in the roof of al-Furqan Mosque following an airstrike (Twitter; September 23, 2014)

al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque (جامع الحسن البصري)



Dome of the al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque damaged prior to 2016 (DigitalGlobe; March 5, 2016)



Additional damage to the minaret and visible debris within the mosque (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Severe damage to minaret and dome of al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque (Twitter; June 23, 2016)



Damage to al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque complex wall (Herak News; February 20, 2014)



Damage to loudspeakers on minaret of al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque (Herak News; February 20, 2014)



Damage to al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque minaret (Herak News; January 14, 2014)



Debris around the base of minaret of al-Hassan al-Basri Mosque (Herak News; January 14, 2014)

Abu Obeida Mosque (جامع ابو عبيدة)



Damage to the roof of Abu Obeida Mosque between May 20 and 31st in 2016 (DigitalGlobe; May 31, 2016)



New damage to the mosque with visible debris from the front facade and the minaret (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Cleanup efforts in the courtyard of Abu Obeida Mosque (Iraqi Spring Media Center; May 21, 2016)



Damage to the exterior of the courtyard of Abu Obeida Mosque (Iraqi Spring Media Center; May 21, 2016)

al-Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Samarrai Mosque (جامع الشيخ عبد العزيز السامرائي)



Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Samarrai Mosque
(DigitalGlobe; December 8, 2014)



No visible exterior damage to the mosque
(DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Minor damage to minaret of al-Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Samarrai Mosque (Anbar Cities; October 17, 2014)



Disturbed area outside al-Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Samarrai Mosque (Iraqi PMU English; June 18, 2016)



Minor exterior damage to al-Sheikh Abdul Aziz al-Samarrai Mosque (Iraqi PMU English; June 18, 2016)

al-Raqib Mosque (جامع الرقيب)



al-Raqib Mosque with no visible damage
(DigitalGlobe; May 20, 2016)



Damage to the metal roof of an exterior
building, the roof and the dome of the mosque
(DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)

al-Mudallal Mosque (جامع المدلل)



Previous damage to the metal roof over the courtyard of the al-Mudallal Mosque (DigitalGlobe; May 31, 2016)



Extensive damage to al-Mudallal Mosque and complex which occurred between June 13 and 28th. (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)

Uthman bin Affan Mosque (جامع عفان بن عثمان)



Uthman bin Affan Mosque with no visible damage (DigitalGlobe; June 13, 2016)



Minor damage to the mosque from the exterior (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)

al-Hadra Mosque (جامع الحضرة)



al-Hadra Mosque with no visible damage
(DigitalGlobe; June 13, 2016)



al-Hadra Mosque with damage to the eastern
side of the mosque and multiple auxiliary
buildings (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Broken glass behind ISOF members in al-Hadra Mosque (ISOF/Twitter; June 23, 2016)



Broken glass and other debris behind ISOF member in al-Hadra Mosque (ISOF/Twitter; June 23, 2016)

Prophet Ali bin Abu Talib Mosque (جامع نبي علي بين ابيطالب)



Prophet Ali bin Abu Talib Mosque with no visible damage (DigitalGlobe; June 13, 2016)



Visible damage to the minaret and corners of two buildings closest to the minaret (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Video still of damage to wall left of entrance to Ali bin Abu Talib Mosque complex (Iraqi Spring Media Center; July 21, 2015)



Video still of damage on street outside of entrance to Ali bin Abu Talib Mosque complex (Iraqi Spring Media Center; July 21, 2015)



Photographs depicting damage to Ali bin Abu Talib Mosque (Twitter; July 21, 2015)

al-Anbia Mosque (جامع الأنبياء)



al-Anbia Mosque with no visible damage
(DigitalGlobe; June 13, 2016)



Complete destruction of al-Anbia Mosque
(DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)

al-Fayad Mosque (جامع الفياض)



al-Fayad Mosque with no visible damage (DigitalGlobe; June 13, 2016)



al-Fayad Mosque with damage to the eastern portion of the buildings (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



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



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

al-Sheikh Hamza Abbas Mosque (the Martyr) (جامع الشيخ الشهيد حمزة عباس)



al-Sheikh Hamza Abbas Mosque with no visible damage (DigitalGlobe; June 13, 2016)



al-Sheikh Hamza Abbas Mosque with visible damage to the minaret and the wall closest to it (DigitalGlobe; June 28, 2016)



Damage and debris in interior of al-Sheikh Hamza Abbas Mosque (Iraq Now/Twitter; August 14, 2014)

IHI 16-0020

Report Date: June 28, 2016

Site Name: al-Nour Mosque (مسجد النور)

Date of Incident: June 27, 2016

Location: Abu Hreet, Zaidan area, Abu Ghraib District, Baghdad Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Sunni Mosque

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: Suicide bomber targets mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On June 27, 2016 a suicide bomber targeted the Sunni al-Nour Mosque in the Abu Ghraib district of Baghdad Governorate. The attack occurred during the Ramadan prayers known as Taraweeh, which occur after the last evening prayer.¹³⁴ According to some reports, the bomber entered the mosque during the Taraweeh prayers before detonating his suicide vest. The attack occurred “as worshippers gathered after midnight to pray.”¹³⁵ At least one news report and several local activist accounts state that the attack was carried out by Shia militiamen from the “League of the Righteous” (aka Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq).¹³⁶ According to these accounts the attack was a multipronged assault including gunfire and at least one suicide and/or roadside bombing.¹³⁷ ASOR CHI has been unable to independently verify these claims. At least 12 people were killed in the attack and another 32 wounded.¹³⁸ No photographs 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-Nour Mosque as well as other heritage sites subject to terrorist attacks.

¹³⁴ <http://arabi21.com/story/917808/> بغداد قرب انحناري بتفجيري اشخاص ثرانيه مقتل

¹³⁵ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/iraq-suicide-bombing-abu-ghraib-mosque-kills-12-160628040953541.html>

¹³⁶ <http://alkhaleejonline.net/articles/1467113755149135200/> غربي مسجد داخل مصلىين تقتل شريعية ملي شريات شهيد

بغداد / <https://www.facebook.com/IraqiSMCEn/posts/592321344269715> ; <https://www.facebook.com/IraqiSMCEn/posts/592321344269715>

¹³⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/IraqiSMCEn/posts/592321344269715> ; <https://www.facebook.com/IraqiSMCEn/posts/592321344269715>

¹³⁸ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/iraq-suicide-bombing-abu-ghraib-mosque-kills-12-160628040953541.html>

Sources:

Online Reporting:

ABC News:

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/attack-west-baghdad-kills-14-wounds-32-40173188>

Al Jazeera:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/iraq-suicide-bombing-abu-ghraib-mosque-kills-12-160628040953541.html>

Al Khaleej Online:

<http://alkhaleejonline.net/articles/1467113755149135200/مسجد داخل مصلى تقاتل شيعية مليشيات شهود/بغداد غربي>

Al Sharq: <http://www.al-sharq.com/news/details/430724>

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Arabi 21: <http://arabi21.com/story/917808/بغداد قرب انتحاري بتفجير أشخاص ثمانية مقتل>

Iraqi Spring Media Center:

June 28, 2016:

<https://www.facebook.com/IraqiSMCEn/posts/592321344269715> ; <https://www.facebook.com/IraqiSMCEn/posts/592321344269715>

Reuters: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-blast-idUSKCN0ZD2U5>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/K0VmTD6v6P8BT4e/status/747589061741842432>

IHI 16-0021

Report Date: July 1, 2016

Site Name: Imam Ahmad Shrine (مرقد امام احمد)

Date of Incident: July 1, 2016

Location: Imam Ahmad district, Tuz Kharmutu, Salah ad Din Governorate, Iraq

Site Description: Shia Mosque/Site

Site Date: Unknown

Incident Summary: ISIL suicide bomber targets mosque.

Incident Source and Description: On July 1, 2016 Rudaw reported that a suicide bomber targeted a Shia mosque in the Imam Ahmad district in the city of Tuz Kharmutu.¹³⁹ According to the news report, the suicide bomber targeted a mosque near a Shia Popular Mobilization Front base, killing two people and wounding four more. No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication. ISIL later took credit for the attack, publishing a photograph of the man they say carried out the suicide attack on Amaq News Agency.¹⁴⁰

Pattern: Military activity: explosives.

Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures: ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to the Imam Ahmad Shrine as well as other heritage sites subject to terrorist attacks.

Sources:

Online Reporting:

Rudaw: <http://rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/010720163>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/Terror_Monitor/status/749209578798141440

¹³⁹ <http://rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/010720163>

¹⁴⁰ https://twitter.com/Terror_Monitor/status/749209578798141440