A Press Statement
On the Attack of al-Rodwan Hospital in Jasim City in Daraa

On 15 May 2014
About the City of Jasim:

It is located in the northwestern Countryside of Horan (the Governorate of Daraa) in al-Jaidor district. It’s bordering the city of Nawa to the south, the towns of Nimer and al-Hara to the north, the city of Inkhil to the east and the al-Qunaitera governorate to the west. The city’s estimated population is 40000. It was first stormed by the regime forces on 11 May 2011. After that, many storms and arrest raids against civilians and activists followed till 24 Jan 2013, when the rebels liberated most of its neighborhoods, except for two military checkpoints. The city was completely liberated by the rebels on 3 Jan 2014 and since then it has been exposed to brutal attacks by the regime especially by air forces. The relatively calm city was, before the shelling intensified, a destination for thousands of the displaced from other areas, which was, according to activists, a reason why the Free Syrian Army avoided localizing in the city not to give any excuse for the regime to shell it.
Al-Rodwan Hospital:

After liberating most of the city in April 2013, a number of doctors turned a two-floor-school into al-Rodwan Hospital. Later, the services of this hospital were not limited to residents of Jasim; it received tens of cases from 27 village and towns nearby. Moreover, it covered a part of al-Qunaitera countryside.

In terms of the available equipment, there were 20 beds. The first floor consists of 8 rooms and many departments including: a relief room, an operation room, a doctors’ room, a sterilization room, a recovery room, a waiting room, an imaging department and a laboratory. The second floor consists of a restroom, an equipment store, and a store for consumed materials. The vault of the school was turned into two rooms for critical operations like: general surgery, bone surgery, caesarean, and the surgery of connecting arteries, veins and open chest.
Targeting the Hospital:

On 15 May 2014, many attacks were carried out by air forces on the area between Nawa and Jasim during the battle of ‘Liberating Om Horan Hill’. On that same day, at 9:30 am, the air forces waged an attack on a civilian building in the Southern Neighborhood in Jasim; six people were martyred, in addition to tens of casualties. Three of the martyrs were from al-Shihadat Family and one from outside the city. Even after this horrible massacre, regime forces didn’t hold their brutal attacks; the city was exposed to a series of cluster bombs attacks in addition to some artillery shelling.
In this regard, Abu Yaser, a member of Jasim Media Center, said:

“After the massacre, we took the many casualties and the martyrs to the Hospital of al-Radwan. I stayed in the hospital till 4:00 pm, when I decided to go home to rest for a while. As I got home, I heard the sounds of the jet fighter again. The targeted location was in the western part of the city, but I didn’t expect at all that they might target the hospital. Few minutes later, I received a call from a friend asking me to go to the Hospital of al-Amal, which is a group of children clinics that is owned by Wael al-Halaqi, the regime’s Prime Minister, which usually does not receive any shelling casualties neither of civilians nor of Free Army members. When I arrived to al-Amal Hospital, I was surprised that all the martyrs and casualties were members of the cadres of al-Radwan Hospital, in addition to casualties who had been transferred to al-Radwan Hospital after the first attack. Among the martyrs were, Dr. Walid Kamal Shobat, who was torn up into pieces, the nurse Chadi Dhaher al-Mizaal and others, in addition to more than ten casualties. The attack caused a complete destruction to the hospital (the school) as it was shelled with two guided missiles; the first hit the second floor and the second targeted he doctors’ room directly.”
VDC member, Ala’a al-Faqeer, has contacted several eyewitnesses and field activists in Jasim city including the media activist Abu al-Majd, whose house is near the attacked location. He stated:

“At about 4:30 in the afternoon, I was coming back home after covering the incidents in the city’s countryside. It is about one kilometer between my house and al-Rodwan Hospital. Meanwhile, I heard the sound of helicopters followed by two consecutive explosions, which, later on, I got to know they were of two guided missiles. I went to the roof of my house immediately and I saw smoke rising from the western neighborhood of the city. Thus, I rushed to the place where I was shocked that al-Rodwan Hospital was hit and destroyed completely by the regime forces. When I got there, casualties, blood, and carnages were every where. There were more than fifteen injured, many of whom were hospitalized to al-Amal and Inkhel Hospitals. At just then, another attack by cluster bombs was lunched against the city, yet this time no damages were reported. We continued to move out the martyrs and the injured, including the hospital’s cadres, from under the debris for about two hours. After that, we heard the sounds of consecutive explosions of barrel bombs no more than fifty meters away from the hospital as two barrel bombs fell injuring more than twenty civilians, most of whom were moved to Jordan.”
VDC’s correspondent has also met Abu Sham, a medicine student and the Administrative Manager of the hospital, who was inside the hospital when it was shelled and who described the very first moments after the shelling saying:

“All-Rodwan Hospital is one of the most important hospitals in the north-western part of Horan. It covers the medical cases in all al-Jaidoor district and Quneitra countryside. Only in April 2014, the hospital received more than four thousand different cases and operated more than two hundred medical surgeries. On 15 May 2014, the day when the hospital was targeted, the hospital had had received about fifty injured, more than thirty of whom were civilians besides a number of FSA fighters. At two o’clock, we had finished treating many of those cases, and sent some others to Jordan. Thus, some of the medical cadres went home while some others, about fifteen including some patients, remained at the hospital. The city was calm. However, few minutes before the hospital was shelled, I went out of the room on which the second missile fell for ablution, and other colleagues of mine remained there. I went to the bathroom, fifteen meters from the doctors’ room. Few seconds later, the hospital was crumbling and the place was filled with dust. I looked at my hand and it was bleeding massively so I went out of the bathroom to be shocked by the great damage. I began shouting and looking for my colleagues. I found the carnages of Dr. Waleed’s body near the doctors’ room. Four lives were claimed and more than ten were injured.”

All testimonies matched the testimony of nurse Abu al-Jarrah, who assured that the hospital became completely out of order after this massacre and that the area is now facing a real problem treating the injured of the daily shelling by the regime forces because this hospital used to receive dozens of cases from different areas every day to provide them with the needed medical help. He added:

“The story of how the hospital was shelled is a tragic one especially for me because I knew all the medical cadres. On that exact day I helped a lot of patients before I went home at about two o’clock in the afternoon. Then, I heard the warplanes shelling the hospital at about four thirty in the afternoon. When I arrived there, I saw a car carrying some of the injured, including the radiographer Waleed Jebawi and the laboratorian Hani al-Hashmeh, coming out of the hospital.”
Consequent Massacres:

On 16 May 2014, the next day to the massacre of al-Rodwan Hospital, Jasim city was exposed again to random shelling that claimed the lives of more than twenty of the city’s residents and displaced people. At about ten o’clock in the morning, war planes waged an attack on a public square, usually crowded with people, in the mid of the city claiming the lives of four people and injuring dozens. About fifteen minutes later, a guided missile was dropped by a war plane on a two-story civilian house in the western neighborhood of the city, which destroyed it completely, claimed the lives of twelve people and injured many. At eleven forty-five, war planes waged another attack by cluster bombs on a public square, which lead to the immediate death of two people and the injury of other three. That was not the last attack with cluster bombs on that day; other attacks followed till the evening injuring many people. A video posted on the internet by activists shows the cluster bombs, their types and numbers.

On the next day, 17 May 2014, the number of the random attacks launched by the regime forces against Jasim city, which claimed the lives of many people, was more than five attacks. These daily consecutive attacks were the reason behind the displacement of the city’s citizens as well as the already displaced people in it.

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