

CIVCAS Tracker

CLASSIFICATION: SECRET

RELEASABILITY: REL TO USA, FVEY

Allegation

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

RELEASABILITY: FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

ALLEGATION NUMBER: 658

ALLEGATION STATUS: Closed

INCIDENT DATE: 20-May-2016 00:00

COUNTRY: SYRIA

OPENED DATE: 26-May-2017 00:00

LOCATION OF INCIDENT: Arshaf

MGRS: Not Reported

NEAREST MAJOR CITY: Not Reported

COORDS UNKNOWN: No

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

RELEASABILITY: NONE

ALLEGATION DATE: 26-May-2017 00:00

SOURCE: Airwars

SOURCE TYPE: Social Media

DESCRIPTION:

(1) Up to ten civilians were reported killed in an alleged Coalition evening strike at Al Arshaf village on the outskirts of Ekhitrin town, in the northern Aleppo countryside.

(2) (U) Syria Urgent initially said six civilians died - four women and two men - with another four injured "following an American raid."

The Syrian Observatory placed the death toll at seven, saying all the victims came from one family. Shaam News said ten died, including 5 women.

(3) (U) The Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that "On Friday evening 20 May 2016 International coalition warplanes launched missiles at the northeastern parts of Arshaf Town [near subway Akhtarín] in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate

under the control of ISIS, killing eight people, including three children and two women. Seven others were injured."

(4) Violations Documentation Centre later provided names for eight individuals (three men, two women, and three children), purportedly from a single family, also noting that two other unidentified adult males were killed.

Initial Assessment

CLASSIFICATION: SECRET

RELEASABILITY: REL TO USA, FVEY

INITIAL DATE: Not Reported

INITIAL ASSESSMENT: Not Reported

Assessment Details

Assessment

CLASSIFICATION: SECRET

RELEASABILITY: REL TO USA, FVEY

ASSESSMENT UNIT: CJTF-OIR

ASSESSMENT TASK DATE: Not Reported

NON-US COALITION NATION: Not Reported

ASSESSMENT RESPONSE:

"1. (U) BLUF: I assess that the allegation of civilian casualties (CIVCAS) on 20 May 2016 in Al-Arshaf, Syria is NOT CREDIBLE. This assessment is based upon a thorough review of all reasonably available information, including information provided by Combined Joint Task Force -

Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) and open source material.

2. (U) CIVCAS Allegation:

a. (U) Source: Airwars.org (aggregated from: Syria Urgent, Syrian Press Centre, Hussein al Ahmad blog, Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, Alaan TV, Shaam News Network, Local Civil Defence of Syria, Smart News, Al A'Amaq Agency, Violations Documentation Centre, Syrian Network for Human Rights)

b. (U) Time and Location: 20 May 2016, Al-Arshaf, Aleppo governorate, Syria

c. (U) Description:

(1) (U) Up to ten civilians were reported killed in an alleged Coalition evening strike at Al Arshaf village on the outskirts of Ekhitrin town, in the northern Aleppo countryside.

(2) (U) Syria Urgent initially said six civilians died - four women and two men - with another four injured "following an American raid." The Syrian Observatory placed the death toll at seven, saying all the victims came from one family. Shaam News said ten died, including 5 women.

(3) (U) The Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that "On Friday evening 20 May 2016 International coalition warplanes launched missiles at the northeastern parts of Arshaf Town [near subway Akhtarin] in the northern suburbs of Aleppo governorate under the control of ISIS, killing eight people, including three children and two women. Seven others were injured."

(4) Violations Documentation Centre later provided names for eight individuals (three men, two women, and three children), purportedly from a single family, also noting that two other unidentified adult males were killed.

3. (~~S//REL~~) Analysis of Coalition Strike Activity: Coalition Forces (CF) conducted a strike against a single target

facility on the alleged date and in the vicinity of the alleged location of the CIVCAS incident. This assessment focuses on this strike.

a. (S//REL) Strike ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ Overview: Strike number ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ was a deliberate strike that occurred on 20 ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ MAY 2016 under ROE ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ that targeted ARSHAQ ISIL C2 NODE 001 at ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ aircraft struck the target with ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ were flown by ~~(b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4a~~ an American asset. The strike resulted in four Joint Desired Points of Impact struck and functional destruction of the facility.

b. (S//REL TO FVEY) Review of Supporting Intelligence: ARSHAQ ISIL C2 NODE 001 was a quarter-acre compound consisting of four smaller buildings located 500m northeast of the Arshaq village center, roughly six kilometers west from the village of Akhterin. Functional characterization of the target facility as a command and control (C2) node was supported by a body of sensitive multi-discipline intelligence reporting as recent as April 2016. The facility's former function was commercial. The facility was assessed with high confidence to have been under the exclusive use and control of ISIS since at least October 2014 and was no longer serving a civilian function. Pre-strike aerial reconnaissance captured ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ of Full Motion Video (FMV) producing a slant of 7/0/0.

c. (S//REL TO FVEY) Collateral Damage Estimate (CDE)/Battle Damage Assessment (BDA):

(1) The CDE call for this facility was ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ There was one collateral concern within the weapons effects radii of the weaponizing solution.

(2) This strike occurred in an area with a ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ which resulted in the ~~(b)(1)1.4a~~ call. My assessment was unable to determine the engagement approval authority for this strike.

(3) The BDA call for this strike was 4 x C2 BLDG

CONFIRMED DESTROYED. FACILITY FUNCTIONALLY DESTROYED/NON-OP.

d. (~~S//REL TO FVEY~~) Review of WSV/FMV: Neither weapons system video (WSV) nor full motion video (FMV) were available for review.

4. Credibility Assessment: Based on a thorough assessment of all reasonably available evidence, this CIVCAS allegation is deemed NOT CREDIBLE. That is, there is insufficient available evidence to corroborate this allegation.

a. While the various allegations differed on the exact number and composition of civilian casualties for this incident, at least two sources identified the casualties as coming from a single family. In addition, the Violations Documentation Centre provided names for eight individuals allegedly killed in this incident. However, these potentially corroborating details, even when considered together, are insufficiently determinative to assess to the "more likely than not" standard required for a CREDIBLE finding.

b. As for the facility itself, which was assessed to have been under the exclusive control of ISIS, pre-strike analysis did not reflect the presence of any civilians, women or children at this location. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, any individuals present in the facility who were killed in the strike would therefore be assessed as Enemy Killed In Action (EKIA), not CIVCAS.

c. There was one collateral concern (commercial facility 34 feet north of the nearest aimpoint) identified in the CDE analysis which gave rise to the (b)(1)1.4a. However, post-strike BDA did not assess any damage to this structure.

d. I was unable to assess the means by which engagement of this target was approved given the (b)(1)1.4a call. However, it is unlikely that the details of the approval process for engagement of this target would be germane to this assessment of CIVCAS.

e. Without any visual evidence of CIVCAS, this assessment solely considered the content of the allegation itself and pre- and post-strike images of the target facility most closely corresponding to the time and location of the alleged incident. Discovery of further evidence may warrant re-assessment.

5. (U) The point of contact for this memorandum is the undersigned at: (b)(3) 10 USC 130b; (b)(6)
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ASSESSMENT CIVCAS: No
 FURTHER ACTIONS DIRECTED: Not Reported
 LESSON LEARNED/ROOT CAUSE: Not Reported
 ASSESSMENT KILLED: 0 ASSESSMENT INJURED: 0

Status

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED	RELEASABILITY: FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY
INVESTIGATION STATUS: NONE	CLOSED DATE: 31-May-2017 00:00
US INVESTIGATION REPORT DATE: Not Reported	CLOSED AT: CCAR
EX GRATIA: No	CIVCAS: NO
COMMENTS: Not Reported	
KILLED: 0	INJURED: 0
PAO RELEASE DATE: Not Reported	NA: No
REASON FOR NO RELEASE: Not Reported	