

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

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Weekly Report 109–110 — September 1–15, 2016

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## Executive Summary

During the reporting period, areas of Aleppo Governorate saw renewed fighting, aerial bombardment, and the deployment of new Turkish infantry units that entered northern Aleppo Governorate in support of border clearing operations. Aerial bombardment over Syria resulted in damage to several mosques in Homs, Idlib, Hama, Daraa, and Aleppo Governorates. Reported SARG shelling damaged an Ayyubid-era citadel in Daraa Governorate, as well as an ancient wall in the old city of Aleppo.

In Iraq, US-led Coalition airstrikes continued in support of Iraqi forces as they advanced on ISIL-held territories. The US-led Coalition continues to target ISIL militants in areas across Iraq. Random attacks, often carried out by ISIL, continue to plague Baghdad and other cities and towns across Iraq. One such attack during the reporting period struck just outside a Shia mosque in Mandali, Diyala Governorate.

## Key Points

- A suicide bomber detonated a device outside a Shia mosque in Mandali, Diyala Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 16-0030](#)).
- New photographs show the extent of the damage to a mosque in Tadmor, Homs Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0160 UPDATE](#)).
- SARG forces and pro-regime militias allegedly shelled the Ayyubid Citadel in Bosra, Daraa Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0138 UPDATE](#)).
- APSA published images of damage to the ancient city walls near Bab Qinnasrin and Bab Antakya in Aleppo ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0139](#)).
- SARG and regime-allied warplanes allegedly struck and damaged four mosques in Idlib Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0140](#)).
- A video allegedly shows an airstrike on a mosque in Arbaeen, Hama Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0141](#)).
- New video footage shows damage to three mosques in the Qaboun neighborhood of Damascus ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0142](#)).
- SARG warplanes allegedly fired missiles on three mosques in Daraa Governorate ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0143](#)).
- Alleged Russian airstrikes damaged a mosque in Anadan, Aleppo Governorate and video footage shows damage to a mosque in the city of Aleppo ([ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0144](#)).

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

- Reported Russian airstrikes damaged a mosque in Batbo, Aleppo Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0145**).
- A STEP News Agency video report shows damage to an ancient site in Huarte, Hama Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0146**).
- New video footage shows damage to two mosques and a cemetery in Hreitan, Aleppo Governorate (**ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0147**).

## Heritage Timeline

- September 13, 2016 *BBC* published a video titled “**Inside Aleppo’s ruined covered market.**” BBC Middle East Editor Jeremy Bower reports on the ceasefire in Aleppo from the city’s old market.  
[http://www.bbc.com/news/video\\_and\\_audio/headlines/37353643](http://www.bbc.com/news/video_and_audio/headlines/37353643)
- *TRT World* published a video titled “**Insight: Conflict Antiquities.**” A video report details how artifacts are looted and sold on the black market. Amr al-Azm of The Day After Project is interviewed.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MjIqmU3OdY>
- September 10, 2016 **SNHR** published a post titled “**Russian forces targeted on Fatima Al Zahra mosque in Bennesh city in Idlib governorate, September 9.**” Reported Russian airstrikes damaged a mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0140.**  
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/10/russian-forces-targeted-fatima-al-zahra-mosque-bennesh-city-idlib-governorate-september-9/>
- September 9, 2016 *The National* published an article titled “**Plea for holiday photos to help preserve world heritage**” (by Kirsteen Paterson). Archaeologists launched an appeal for travelers photographs of under-threat heritage sites in order to collect data and build “computerised 3D reconstructions of damaged buildings and statues to aid reconstruction and remembrance of important cultural sites.”  
<http://www.thenational.scot/news/plea-for-holiday-photos-to-help-preserve-world-heritage.22166>
- **Iraqi Popular Mobilization Units** released photographs on Twitter of the group’s efforts to restore an ancient site in Iraq.  
[https://twitter.com/pmu\\_english/status/774012348138790912](https://twitter.com/pmu_english/status/774012348138790912)
- September 8, 2016 **SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Omar Bin Al Khattab Mosque in Ibtā’a town in Daraa governorate in September 8.**” Reported SARG airstrikes damage a mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0143.**  
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/08/government-forces-targeted-omar-bin-al-khattab-mosque-ibtaa-town-daraa-governorate-september-8/>

September 7, 2016

The Embassy of Italy and the Italian Cultural Institute in Washington, in collaboration with The Centro Ricerche Archeologiche e Scavi di Torino (CRAST), presented "**Heritage in danger. The Centro Scavi Torino and the requalification of the Iraqi cultural heritage.**"

[http://www.iicwashington.esteri.it/iic\\_washington/it/gli\\_eventi/calendario/2016/09/heritage-in-danger-the-centro-scavi.html](http://www.iicwashington.esteri.it/iic_washington/it/gli_eventi/calendario/2016/09/heritage-in-danger-the-centro-scavi.html)

- *Associated Press* published an article titled "**Ancient Karkamish sees modern war on Turkey-Syria border**" (by Christopher Torchia). Turkish authorities have plans to open the Turkish side of ancient city of Karkemish, which straddles the Turkish-Syrian border, despite the nearby ongoing conflict.  
<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/e0f672c00f7b42e198f2e77bbf547b08/ancient-karkemish-sees-modern-war-turkey-syria-border>
- *Rudaw* published an article titled "**Ancient Jewish shrine in Kurdistan needs urgent repair, official says.**" The shrine of the Jewish prophet Nahum in Alqosh suffers from neglect and is in need of repair.  
<http://rudaw.net/mobile/english/culture/07092016>

September 6, 2016

*The Creators Project* published an article titled "**ISIS Vandals Inspire Digital Remixes of Cultural Artifacts**" (by Andrew Salomone). This article discusses a new art series by Pierre Chaumont titled 'Mosul' in which "3D scans and software are used to make whimsical and relevant modifications to virtual representations of famous sculptures and artifacts."

<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/isis-vandals-inspire-digital-remix-cultural-artifacts>

- *SNHR* published a post titled "**Alleged Russian forces targeted mosque in Anadan city in Aleppo governorate in September 6.**" Reported Russian airstrikes damaged a mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0144.**  
<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/06/alleged-russian-forces-targeted-mosque-anadan-city-aleppo-governorate-september-6/>
- *Heritage for Peace* published its bi-monthly newsletter titled "**Damage to Syria's Heritage.**"  
<http://www.heritageforpeace.org/syria-culture-and-heritage/damage-to-cultural-heritage/previous-damage-newsletters/damage-to-syrias-heritage-06-september-2016/>
- *Gulf News* published an article titled "**In Syria's Homs, war-ravaged ancient market slowly re-emerges.**" A UN-backed project is trying to restore the ancient souk in Homs city.  
<http://gulfnews.com/culture/heritage/in-syria-s-homs-war-ravaged-ancient-market-slowly-re-emerges-1.1891932>

- Independent* published an article titled “**Fake antiquities flood out of Syria as smugglers fail to steal masterpieces amid the chaos of war**” (by Patrick Cockburn). The first of a four-part series, the article explores the new presence of workshops created during the Syrian civil war to make “fraudulent antiquities” to sell on the global market. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/syria-isis-civil-war-antiquities-fakes-palmyra-a7228336.html>
- September 4, 2016

*The Sydney Morning Herald* published an article titled “**Protecting antiquities in Syria and Libya from Islamic State**” (by Nick Miller). DGAM Director Maamoun Abdulkarim discusses his hopes for using computer modeling in efforts to rebuild Palmyra as well as the need for future proactive efforts to save heritage sites. <http://www.smh.com.au/world/antiquities-syria-libya-seo-here-20160901-gr6mfh.html>
- September 2, 2016

*La Liberté* published an article titled “**L’agonie d’un patrimoine mondial (The agony of world heritage).**” (by Pascale Fleury). The article includes an interview with Cheikhmous Ali of APSA. <http://www.laliberte.ch/news/international/l-agonie-d-un-patrimoine-mondial-360628#.WBeUKGNahWa>
- **SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Al Kabeir mosque in Kafr Nobul city in Idlib governorate, September 2.**” Reported SARG airstrikes damaged a mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0140.** <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/02/government-forces-targeted-al-kabeir-mosque-kafr-nobul-city-idlib-governorate-september-2/>
- **SNHR** published a post titled “**Government forces targeted Omar Bin Al Khatab mosque on the public road between Ma’aret Msrin city and Ram Hamdan town in Idlib governorate, September 2.**” Reported SARG airstrikes damaged a mosque. **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0140.** <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/02/government-forces-targeted-omar-bin-al-khatab-mosque-public-road-maaret-msrin-city-ram-hamdan-town-idlib-governorate-september-2/>
- *The Washington Post* published an article titled “**Syria’s Message to tourists: Come back, enjoy our beaches**” (by Adam Taylor). This article discusses a new campaign to encourage tourists to return to Syria. Aerial photographs of Palmyra and other ancient sites in Syria are included in the video. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/09/02/syrias-message-to-tourists-come-back-enjoy-our-beaches/>

## Military and Political Context

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

1. Aleppo Governorate:
  - On September 2, Turkish warplanes renewed their airstrikes over ISIL sites in Syria.<sup>2</sup>
  - On September 3, Turkish-backed opposition forces captured several ISIL-held villages near the Syrian-Turkish border.<sup>3</sup>
  - On September 4, opposition forces with the backing of Turkish Armed Forces completed clearing operations in the “last remaining territory” along the Syrian-Turkish Border. Turkish forces entered the opposition-controlled town of al-Rai to support the offensive.<sup>4</sup>
  - On September 4-5, pro-regime forces, backed by Russian air strikes, captured the Ramouseh Artillery College in the city of Aleppo, reinstating a siege over the city.<sup>5</sup>
  - On September 5, Turkish and opposition forces sealed the northern Syria ‘Jarablus gap,’ denying ISIL access to a key access route between the cities of Manbij and Jarablus.<sup>6</sup>
  - On September 6, ISIL rocket fire killed two Turkish soldiers near the northern Aleppo village of al-Waqf.<sup>7</sup>
  - On September 6-7, SARG forces reportedly carried out multiple chlorine gas attacks in opposition-held areas of Aleppo city, sickening more than 120 people including women and civilians.<sup>8</sup>
  - On September 8, Iraqi Shia militia Harakat al-Nujab announced that it had “dispatched more than 1,000 fighters to the frontline” to bolster pro-regime efforts in the battle for Aleppo.<sup>9</sup>
  - On September 8, Turkish military forces said that it had seized control over the northern residential areas of Kantara, al-Sehid, al-Humran, and Taslihuyuk “settlements.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-idUSKCN11765R>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-islamic-s-idUSKCN119012>

<sup>4</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-september-1-7-2016> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-idUSKCN1190GT> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37267111>

<sup>5</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/syria-situation-report-september-1-7-2016> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37271625> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/06/world/middleeast/syrian-forces-make-gains-near-aleppo-with-russian-help.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/935610/turkish-moderate-syrian-forces-close-major-isil-route/source/GovDelivery>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37291821>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/08/world/middleeast/syria-attack-peace-plan.html> ; <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-3776245/Syria-activists-Warplanes-dropped-chlorine-bombs-Aleppo.html> ; <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/syria-aleppo-chlorine-gas-attack-dead-bashar-assad-denies-chemical-weapons/> ; <http://www.newsweek.com/syrias-use-chlorine-gas-and-weapons-history-496568> ; <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/09/07/middleeast/syria-aleppo-chlorine-attack/index.html> ; <http://syriadirect.org/news/one-day-after-purported-chlorine-gas-bombing-%E2%80%98daily%E2%80%99-aleppo-airstrikes-kill-22/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idUSKCN11D248>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-usa-idUSKCN11E1JN>

- On September 9, a suspected US airstrike struck a suspected meeting of Jabhat Fathah al-Sham leaders, killing Abu Hajer al-Homsi, a founding member and senior commander of the group.<sup>11</sup>
  - On September 10, SARG or Russian jets struck opposition-held areas of Aleppo city, killing at least 46 civilians. The strikes happened only hours after a ceasefire agreement was reached between the US and Russia.<sup>12</sup>
  - On September 13, the city council representing opposition-held areas of Aleppo rejected the Russian deployment along a humanitarian aid route, arguing that opposition groups, not the Syrian government, must oversee any aid delivery.<sup>13</sup>
2. Hama Governorate:
- On September 1, SARG forces carried out large-scale targeted airstrikes on opposition-held areas of Hama Governorate.<sup>14</sup>
  - On September 2, opposition forces targeted and destroyed a helicopter near the village of Rahbat al-Khattab. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported that the helicopter was believed to be Russian.<sup>15</sup>
  - On September 10, ISIL militants suddenly evacuated the group's headquarters in the town of Rasm al-Abd, removing their weapons and vehicles to Homs Governorate.<sup>16</sup>
3. Rif Dimashq Governorate:
- On September 1-2, SARG forces evacuated more than 300 civilians from the opposition-held town of Moadamiyah in the suburb of Western Ghouta.<sup>17</sup>
4. Idlib Governorate:
- On September 4-5, clashes occurred between Ahrar al-Sham and Jund al-Aqsa near Idlib city.<sup>18</sup>
  - On September 10, suspected Russian airstrikes struck residential areas and a market in the city of Idlib, killing 55 civilians. The strikes happened only hours after a ceasefire agreement was reached between the US and Russia.<sup>19</sup>
5. Homs Governorate:
- On September 1, ISIL militants launched a new offensive against SARG forces, capturing at least 11 security checkpoints north of the city of Palmyra.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/09/air-raid-kills-syrian-rebel-commander-rebels-160909040202201.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-militants-idUSKCN11E2YD> ; <http://www.newsweek.com/top-commander-former-nusra-group-killed-syria-airstrike-496797> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/09/syrian-rebel-coalition-blames-us-for-killing-jihadi-commander>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/09/syria-scores-killed-air-strikes-truce-deal-160910135209691.html> ; <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/09/11/middleeast/syria-airstrikes-idlib/index.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idUSKCN11G09P> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37324872>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-council-idUSKCN11J1XL>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-hama-idUSKCN1173W8>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-helicopter-idUSKCN11829T>

<sup>16</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/09/isis-militants-withdraw-key-town-syrias-hama/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounders/syria-situation-report-september-1-7-2016>

<sup>18</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgrounders/syria-situation-report-september-1-7-2016>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/09/syria-scores-killed-air-strikes-truce-deal-160910135209691.html> ; <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/09/11/middleeast/syria-airstrikes-idlib/index.html> ; <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-idUSKCN11G09P> ; <http://aranews.net/2016/09/airstrikes-kill-dozens-civilians-syrias-idlib/> ; <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37324872> ; <http://fsla.info/report-on-the-massacre-in-the-city-of-idlib/>

<sup>20</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/09/isis-militants-capture-syrian-army-checkpoints-near-palmyra/>

- On September 30, local sources reported that “dozens” of ISIL militants had deserted from the group in central Homs Governorate.<sup>21</sup>
6. Quneitra Governorate:
- On September 13, Israeli aircraft attacked a Syrian army position in the countryside of Quneitra Governorate following an incident in which a stray mortar bomb struck the Golan Heights, an area controlled by Israel.<sup>22</sup>

Other Key Points:

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Abu Kamal, Ayn Issa, Deir ez Zor, Manbij, Mara, Raqqa, and Shaddadi.<sup>23</sup>
- On September 2-3, opposition group Liwa al-Tahrir reportedly defected from the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) following clashes between the group and the YPG in northern Raqqa Governorate.<sup>24</sup>
- On September 3, US Special Envoy Brett McGurk met with representatives of the SDF following the clashes and pledged continued support but encouraged SDF forces to “withdraw the YPG to the eastern bank of the Euphrates River.”<sup>25</sup>
- On September 5, ISIL militants carried out a “coordinated wave of suicide bombings” in several areas across Syria. Suicide bombings occurred at SARG checkpoints in the Damascus area of Qura al-Assad, al-Zahraa district of Homs City, a SARG checkpoint at Tartus City, and Hasakah City.<sup>26</sup>
- On September 5, US President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed possible ceasefire agreements over Syria.<sup>27</sup>
- On September 6, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that 100,000 civilians had fled the SARG-held city of Hama and opposition towns in southern areas of Idlib Governorate as a result of ongoing fighting.<sup>28</sup>
- On September 7, the Syrian opposition’s High Negotiations Committee set out a proposed transition plan that would include six months of negotiations with President al-Assad followed by the takeover of a unity government that would hold elections after 18 months.<sup>29</sup>
- On September 8, 73 aid groups, in a letter to the UN, announced that they had suspended cooperation with the global body over the “manipulation of humanitarian relief efforts by the political interests of the Syrian government.”<sup>30</sup>
- On September 9, the US and Russia announced a “resumption of a nationwide cessation of hostilities in Syria.” The deal included stipulations for “unimpeded humanitarian aid deliveries,” to begin on September 12.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>21</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/09/30-militants-desert-isis-ranks-homs/>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-syria-idUSKCN11J0EY>

<sup>23</sup> See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [934035](#), [934656](#), [934674](#), [934741](#), [935085](#), [936129](#), [938055](#), [939136](#), [940051](#), [942256](#), [944282](#), [945361](#), [946481](#)

<sup>24</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/syria-situation-report-september-1-7-2016>

<sup>25</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/syria-situation-report-september-1-7-2016>

<sup>26</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/syria-situation-report-september-1-7-2016> ; <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/06/world/middleeast/syrian-forces-make-gains-near-aleppo-with-russian-help.html>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-usa-idUSKCN11B0CE>

<sup>28</sup> <http://understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/syria-situation-report-september-1-7-2016>

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37294532> ; <https://www.newsdeeply.com/syria/articles/2016/09/08/syrian-opposition-reveals-political-transition-plan>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/08/aid-groups-un-syria-concern-assad-united-nations>

- On September 12, members of opposition groups agreed to a ‘cessation of hostilities’ beginning at sundown despite “harsh reservations.”<sup>32</sup>
- On September 12, the US Defense Department confirmed that an August 30 airstrike near al-Bab, Syria had struck and killed “ISIL’s chief propagandist, recruiter and architect of external terrorist operations,” Abu Muhammad al-Adnani.<sup>33</sup>

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

1. Baghdad Governorate:
  - On September 10, ISIL militants claimed two suicide bombings that struck a shopping mall in eastern Baghdad, killing 12 people and wounding 40 more.<sup>34</sup>
2. Kirkuk Governorate:
  - On September 9, reports surfaced of “Iraqi authorities” forcibly removing families of suspected ISIL-members from their homes in the areas of Dhuluiya and Hit.<sup>35</sup>
3. Ninawa Governorate:
  - On September 12, an Iraqi Army raid targeted and killed ISIL’s Chief of Media Operations, Abu Muhammad Furqan and at least 20 other ISIL officials and media workers.<sup>36</sup>

**Other Key Points:**

- During the reporting period, the US-led coalition conducted airstrikes in the areas of Albu Hayat, Baghdadi, Baiji, Bashir, Haditha, Hit, Huwayjah, Kisik, Mosul, Qaim, Qayyarah, Ramadi, Rutbah, Sinjar, Sultan Abdallah, and Tal Afar.<sup>37</sup>
- On September 8, the Military Times reported that in the past week, 400 additional US troops were deployed to Iraq.<sup>38</sup>

## Syrian Network For Human Rights Videos

Beginning March 23, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) published backdated videos on YouTube of combat damage inflicted on schools, bakeries, hospitals, marketplaces, and other types of infrastructure and civilian sites. ASOR CHI will continue to monitor the SNHR YouTube channel and archive videos that document heritage destruction. The following sites have been documented as damaged in the videos released during the current reporting period:

1. Hazqil Mosque allegedly damaged by SARG shelling on November 19, 2012 in Daraya, Rif Dimashq Governorate.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>31</sup> <http://iswresearch.blogspot.com/2016/09/russian-airstrikes-in-syria-pre-and.html>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-rebels-idUSKCN1111JC>

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/941787/pentagon-confirms-us-strike-in-syria-killed-isil-leader>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-blast-idUSKCN11F2S5>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-displacement-idUSKCN11F1RX>

<sup>36</sup> <http://aranews.net/2016/09/islamic-states-chief-media-operations-killed-iraqi-raid/>

<sup>37</sup> See: “US DOD News Release Military Strikes Hit ISIL in Syria, Iraq”. *Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve*. News Release No: [934035](#), [934656](#), [934674](#), [934741](#), [935085](#), [936129](#), [938055](#), [939136](#), [940051](#), [942256](#), [944282](#), [945361](#), [946481](#)

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.militarytimes.com/articles/400-additional-troops-deploy-to-iraq>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9h5vVQ-ZZys> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cwnz6jN43k0>



2. Grand Mosque allegedly damaged by SARG shelling on October 30, 2015 in Daraya, Rif Dimashq Governorate.<sup>40</sup>
3. Al Salaheen Mosque allegedly damaged by a SARG barrel bombing on August 18, 2016 in al-Salaheen, Aleppo Governorate.<sup>41</sup>
4. al-Rahman Mosque allegedly damaged by SARG shelling on August 5, 2015 in Daraya, Rif Dimashq Governorate.<sup>42</sup> **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0122 in Weekly Report 105-106.**
5. al-Rahman Mosque allegedly damaged by SARG shelling and airstrikes on May 19, 2015 in Daraya, Rif Dimashq Governorate.<sup>43</sup> **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0122 in Weekly Report 105-106.**
6. Omar Mosque allegedly damaged by SARG artillery and airstrikes on April 4, 2014.<sup>44</sup>
7. Saint Takla Church allegedly damaged by SARG barrel bombing on May 13, 2014 in Daraya, Rif Dimashq Governorate.<sup>45</sup> **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0153 in Weekly Report 111-112.**
8. St. Takla Church allegedly damaged by SARG artillery shelling on November 26, 2011 in Daraya, Rif Dimashq Governorate.<sup>46</sup> **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0153 in Weekly Report 111-112.**
9. al-Rahman Mosque allegedly damaged by SARG shelling on January 1, 2014 in Daraya, Rif Dimashq Governorate.<sup>47</sup> **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0122 in Weekly Report 105-106.**

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<sup>40</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhqZZQIkZyI>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1l-lx0TY2U>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ixm6p5BNp8g>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DNNlrTLCRw>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55UVL98YHJQ>

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJxoOSDX9rA>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWNjAO7SkTc>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11oXuZxzOnk> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXrnQfC3zI0>

## Incident Reports: Syria

### SHI 15-0160 UPDATE

**Report Date:** September 8, 2016

**Site Name:** Abi Thar al-Ghafari Mosque (مسجد أبي ذر الغفاري)

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

**Location:** West Quarter, Palmyra, Homs Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Large, likely modern mosque, in the western quarter of the city.

**Site Date:** Unknown, likely modern construction.

**Incident Summary:** New photograph shows clearer image of previous damage to mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On September 8, 2016 the Palmyra Coordination Committee shared a new photograph of Abi Thar Al Ghafari Mosque that showed extensive damage to the building's exterior. ASOR CHI has previously reported on damage to the mosque caused by alleged SARG airstrikes.

For further information on previous damage to Abi Thar Al Ghafari Mosque see **ASOR CHI Incident Report 15-0160** in **Weekly Report 71-72** and **ASOR CHI Incident Report 15-0160 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 83-84**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to closely monitor reports of ongoing airstrikes for any impact on cultural heritage sites.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Palmyra Coordination Committee:

<https://www.facebook.com/revo.palmyra3/photos/a.433973920060886.1073741829.410518082406470/552596188198658/>



A new photograph shared by the Palmyra Coordination Committee shows damage to the exterior of Abi Thar Al Ghafari Mosque (Palmyra Coordination Committee; September 8, 2016)

## SHI 16-0138

**Report Date:** August 22, 2016

**Site Name:** Bosra Ayyubid Citadel (قلعة بصرى الشام)

**Date of Incident:** August 22, 2016

**Location:** Bosra, Daraa Governorate, Syria

### Site Description:

According to Burns,

“...most of what remains of the citadel today is Ayyubid construction dating from 1202 to 1251. The Ayyubid fortifications were built as an outer strongpoint to defend Damascus against the Crusader threat from the Jerusalem. They enclose the original Roman theater completely, and include huge towers at the northeast and northwest corners, with five smaller towers between them. The Mamluk sultan Baibars I made further improvements to the structure in 1261.”<sup>48</sup>

**Site Date:** 2nd century CE–13th century CE (Roman to Ayyubid Periods).

**Incident Summary:** Alleged SARG forces and pro-regime militias shell ancient site.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 22, 2016 the Bosra Al Sham Department of Antiquities reported that Assad forces and pro-regime militias shelled parts of the Bosra Citadel, causing damage.<sup>49</sup>

Previous incidents of destruction and damage have occurred at the Bosra Citadel, including damage to the northern wall of the Citadel caused by barrel bombs in September 2015. For information, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 14-0037** in **Weekly Report 8**, **SHI 15-0057** in **Weekly Report 34**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0133** in **Weekly Report 59–60**, and **SHI 15-0166** in **Weekly Report 71–72**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI remains concerned as to the condition of the Ayyubid Citadel and Roman Theater in Bosra, and will continue to monitor reports for additional updates on any damage to the site.

### Sources:

#### Online Reporting:

Bosra Al Sham Department of Antiquities:

<https://www.facebook.com/1642112122698614/photos/a.1642178189358674.1073741828.1642112122698614/1822602021316289/>

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<sup>48</sup> Burns 2009: 81

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/1642112122698614/photos/a.1642178189358674.1073741828.1642112122698614/1822602021316289/>

Scholarly Sources:

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



Shelling damage to the Bosra Ayyubid Citadel (Bosra Al Sham Department of Antiquities; August 22, 2016)

**SHI 16-0139**

**Report Date:** September 1, 2016

**Site Name:**

- Bab Qinnasrin (باب قنسرین)
- City Wall Section
- Bab Antakya

**Date of Incident:** August 28, 2016

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

**Site Description:**

- Bab Qinnasrin — According to Yasser Tabbaa:  
Bab Qinnasrin was originally built by Sayf al-Dawla [the Hamdanid founder of the emirate of Aleppo] but was completely rebuilt in 1256 by Al-Nasir Yusuf II who renewed the southwestern part of the city wall between the Qinnasrin and Antakiya gates. The architecture of Bab Qinnasrin was formed by two massive towers of unequal heights. The western tower, eighteen meters high, was used for defense while the eastern one, twenty-six meters high, formed the entrance. The Ayyubid portal in the form of a tall arch leads to a tripartite hall with a cross vaulted middle chamber. The chamber opens into another cross-vaulted chamber that is connected to the western side of the gate by a corridor that extends to the wall behind the western tower. Passing through two more chambers, one enters the city. The plan's sequence of rooms form an enclosed square with an open court in the middle that has a water well, cisterns, and flour and oil mills. The gate also holds the Shrine of Khalil al-Tayyar. The western side has been completely demolished.<sup>50</sup>
- City Wall Section — Historic wall in Aleppo city.
- Bab Antakya — According to Ross Burns:  
Bab Antaki or Antioch Gate consists of two great hexagonal bastions with a jagged entrance path and is a reconstruction by the Ayyubid governor, al-Nasr Yusuf II (r 1242-60) grandson of Ghazi, on an 11th century base. It was further reconstructed in the 15th century. Through the earlier gateway on this spot the Arab armies entered Aleppo in 637.<sup>51</sup>

**Site Date:** 9th-13th centuries CE.

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG airstrike damages historic wall in Aleppo.

**Incident Source and Description:** On August 28, 2016 APSA published photographs of damage to the ramparts between Bab Qinnasrin and Bab Antakya. APSA reported that the damage was a result of SARG shelling.<sup>52</sup> APSA does not state when the damage occurred. The photographs show damage to the ramparts and a fortification tower. Part of the west wall of the tower and ramparts to the west of the tower have collapsed. There is also minor damage to the southern facade of the tower, and a large hole in the street below the fortifications.

For information on previous damage to Bab Qinnasrin, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 15-0063** in **Weekly Report 35**.

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<sup>50</sup> Tabbaa 1997: 21

<sup>51</sup> Burns 2009: 44

<sup>52</sup> <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/qinnasrind/>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to the ramparts near Bab Qinnasrin and Bab Antakya, 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:

APSA: <http://apsa2011.com/apsanew/qinnasrind/>

Scholarly:

Burns, Ross. 2009. *Monuments of Syria: A Guide (Revised and Expanded Edition)*. London; New York: I.B. Tauris.

Tabbaa, Y. (1997) *Constructions of Power and Piety in Medieval Aleppo*. The Pennsylvania State University Press.



Damage to southern facade of the rampart tower and fortification wall (APSA; August 28, 2016)



Damage to fortification wall west of the tower (APSA; August 28, 2016)



Damage to western facade of the fortification tower and ramparts west of the tower (APSA; August 28, 2016)





Damage to street and fortification tower, facing northeast (APSA; August 28, 2016)



Damage to southern facade of fortification tower (APSA; August 28, 2016)



Damage to southern facade of fortification tower (APSA; August 28, 2016)



Damage to western facade of fortification tower (APSA; August 28, 2016)



Damage to western facade of fortification tower (APSA; August 28, 2016)



Damage to western facade of fortification tower (APSA; August 28, 2016)

**SHI 16-0140**

**Report Date:** September 10, 2016

**Site Name:**

- al-Takiya Mosque (مسجد التكية)
- Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque (مسجد عمر بن الخطاب)
- al-Kabir Mosque (المسجد الكبير)
- Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (مسجد فاطمة الزهراء)

**Date of Incident:** September 1, 2016; September 2, 2016; September 10, 2016

**Location:**

- al-Takiya Mosque — Khan Sheikhoun, Idlib Governorate, Syria
- Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque — road between Ma'aret Misreen and Ram Hamdan, Idlib Governorate, Syria
- al-Kabir Mosque — Kafr Nubl, Idlib Governorate, Syria
- Fatima al-Zahra Mosque — Binnish, Idlib Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosques in Idlib Governorate.

**Site Date:** Unknown.

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG and regime-allied warplanes strike and damage mosques in Idlib Governorate.

**Incident Source and Description:**

- al-Takiya Mosque - On September 1, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles near al-Takiya Mosque in Khan Sheikhoun city, causing the mosque's walls and roof to crack, and resulting in moderate damage to the furniture.<sup>53</sup>
- On September 2, 2016 SNHR reported that SARG warplanes and regime-allied forces fired missiles on Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque located on the public road between Ma'aret Misreen City and the town of Ram Hamdan.<sup>54</sup> According to SNHR, the strike destroyed the building and rendered the mosque inoperable.
- On September 2, 2016 SNHR reported that SARG missiles "fired near" al-Kabir Mosque, causing partial damage.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> [http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/the\\_vital\\_centers\\_of\\_civilian\\_in\\_September\\_2016\\_en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/the_vital_centers_of_civilian_in_September_2016_en.pdf)

<sup>54</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/02/government-forces-targeted-omar-bin-al-khatab-mosque-public-road-maaret-msrin-city-ram-hamdan-town-idlib-governorate-september-2/>

<sup>55</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/02/government-forces-targeted-al-kabeir-mosque-kafr-nobul-city-idlib-governorate-september-2/>

- On September 10, 2016 SNHR reported that suspected Russian warplanes fired missiles on Fatima al-Zahra Mosque in the city of Binnish, causing partial damage and rendering the mosque inoperable.<sup>56</sup> The damage to the mosque occurred on September 9, 2016 and was reported by several local media sources. Video footage from Shaam News Network (SNN) during prayer shows that one entire side of the mosque has been leveled.<sup>57</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to mosques in Idlib Governorate as well as other heritage sites located in areas subject to aerial bombardment.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

El Dorar al-Shamiya News: <https://twitter.com/eldorar1/status/774300845773058048>

Shaam News Network: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCZe1P5mmc0>

**SNHR:**

September 1, 2016: [http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/the\\_vital\\_centers\\_of\\_civilian\\_in\\_September\\_2016\\_en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/the_vital_centers_of_civilian_in_September_2016_en.pdf) ; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/10/14/28080/>

September 2, 2016: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/02/government-forces-targeted-omar-bin-al-khatab-mosque-public-road-maaret-msrin-city-ram-hamdan-town-idlib-governorate-september-2/> ; <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/02/government-forces-targeted-al-kabeir-mosque-kafr-nobul-city-idlib-governorate-september-2/>

**SMART News Agency:**

<https://smartnews-agency.com/ar/album/197881/دمار-مسجد-فاطمة-الزهراء-في-بنيش-عقب-قصف>

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<sup>56</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/10/russian-forces-targeted-fatima-al-zahra-mosque-bennesh-city-idlib-governorate-september-9/>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCZe1P5mmc0>

**al-Takiya Mosque (مسجد التكية)**



Damage to al-Takiya Mosque (SNHR; September 1, 2016)

**Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque (مسجد عمر بن الخطاب)**



مركز معرفة مصرين الإعلامي

Extensive damage to Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque (SNHR; September 2, 2016)

**al-Kabir Mosque (المسجد الكبير)**

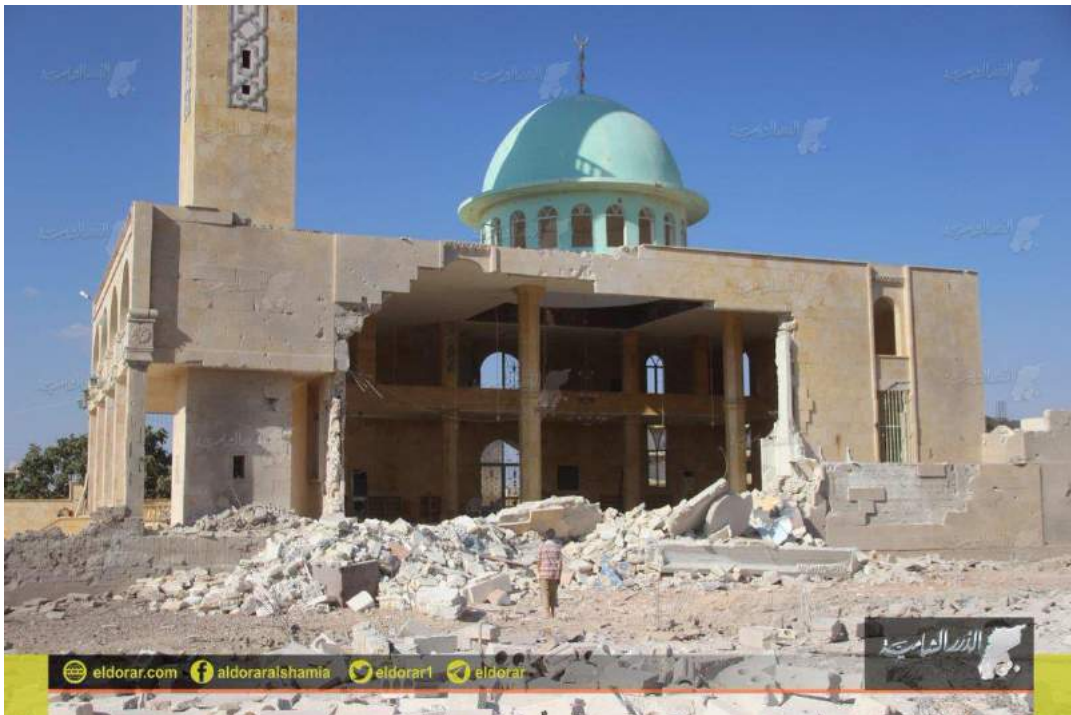


Damage to al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; September 2, 2016)

**Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (مسجد فاطمة الزهراء)**



Extensive damage to Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (SNHR; September 10, 2016)



Extensive damage, including the flattened wall of Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (El Dorar al-Shamiya News; September 9, 2016)





Extensive damage to Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (El Dorar al-Shamiya News; September 9, 2016)



Video still of extensive damage to Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (Shaam News Network; September 9, 2016)



Video still of extensive damage to Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (Shaam News Network; September 9, 2016)



Video still of extensive damage to Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (Shaam News Network; September 9, 2016)



Video still of extensive damage to Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (Shaam News Network; September 9, 2016)



Material damage inside Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (El Dorar al-Shamiya News; September 9, 2016)



Clean up efforts inside Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (SMAART News Agency; September 9, 2016)



Video still of damage to religious material inside Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (Shaam News Network; September 9, 2016)



Video still of prayer taking place inside the severely damaged Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (Shaam News Network; September 9, 2016)



Video still of severe damage to the interior of Fatima al-Zahra Mosque (Shaam News Network; September 9, 2016)

**SHI 16-0141**

**Report Date:** September 5, 2016

**Site Name:** Arbaeen Village Mosque

**Date of Incident:** September 5, 2016

**Location:** Arbaeen (الأربعين), Hama Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** According to the speaker on the video, the mosque is the only one in Arbaeen village.

**Site Date:** Unknown, likely modern

**Incident Summary:** Video footage reportedly shows airstrike on village mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On September 5, 2016 video footage uploaded to Youtube by the Syrian Press Center reported to show an aerial strike on a village mosque in Hama Governorate.<sup>58</sup> The description of the video states that SARG helicopters were responsible for the strike.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to Arbaeen Village Mosque as well as other heritage sites located in areas subject to aerial bombardment.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Syrian Press Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6LJHKY2Xa0>

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<sup>58</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6LJHKY2Xa0>



Video still an airstrike striking a mosque in Arbaeen village (SPC; September 5, 2016)

**SHI 16-0142**

**Report Date:** September 13, 2016

**Site Name:**

- al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (al-Kabir Mosque; جامع الصحابة ابو بكر الصديق)<sup>59</sup>
- al-Hassan Mosque (جامع الحسن)
- al-Omari Mosque (جامع العمري)

**Date of Incident:** Likely July 2013 - August 2016

**Location:** al-Qaboun Neighborhood, Damascus Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** The mosques in the neighborhood of al-Qaboun were once famous for their decoration.<sup>60</sup>

- al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque- Also known as al-Kabir Mosque, it is the largest mosque in al-Qaboun.<sup>61</sup> The mosque once had wooden rooftops and meter thick walls.<sup>62</sup>
- al-Hassan Mosque: turned into a street in May 2013 in order to avoid SARG “posts and sniper fire.”<sup>63</sup>
- al-Omari Mosque: Considered to be one of the oldest mosques in Damascus and famous for its minaret.<sup>64</sup>

**Site Date:**

- al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque: Mamluk, at least one minaret dates back to around 1100-1200 CE.<sup>65</sup> Reconstructed in the 1980s.
- al-Hassan Mosque: Mamluk.<sup>66</sup>
- al-Omari Mosque: Mamluk.<sup>67</sup> Considered to be one of the oldest mosques in Damascus.

**Incident Summary:** New video footage shows damage to three mosques in the Qaboun neighborhood of Damascus.

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<sup>59</sup> <http://www.dimashqilens.com/en/photos/5316-Qaboun>

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/exclusive/2015/7/3/regime-destroying-all-the-minarets-of-mosques-in-old-qaboun-neighborhood-of-damascus>

<sup>61</sup> <https://freeqabon.wordpress.com/2013/09/17/ع-صادر-المشقي-القايون-المشقي-صادر-ع/>

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/exclusive/2015/7/3/regime-destroying-all-the-minarets-of-mosques-in-old-qaboun-neighborhood-of-damascus>

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/syrian-woman-walks-in-the-al-hasan-mosque-which-was-news-photo/515547802>

<sup>64</sup> <https://freeqabon.wordpress.com/2013/09/17/ع-صادر-المشقي-القايون-المشقي-صادر-ع/>

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/exclusive/2015/7/3/regime-destroying-all-the-minarets-of-mosques-in-old-qaboun-neighborhood-of-damascus>

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/exclusive/2015/7/3/regime-destroying-all-the-minarets-of-mosques-in-old-qaboun-neighborhood-of-damascus>

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/exclusive/2015/7/3/regime-destroying-all-the-minarets-of-mosques-in-old-qaboun-neighborhood-of-damascus>



**Incident Source and Description:** On September 5, 2016 media organization SMO Syria released a video showing damage to the dome and minaret of al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque in the Qaboun neighborhood of Damascus.<sup>68</sup> Both the exterior and the interior of the mosque have extensive damage from shelling. On September 13, 2016 Step News Agency released a video of prayer occurring inside this mosque.<sup>69</sup> Footage of the exterior of the mosque shows extensive damage to the roof, dome, and the minaret as having partially toppled. Video footage published by Free Qaboun Damascus on August 9, 2013 reports to show the destruction of the minaret as a result of mortar shelling.<sup>70</sup> For more information on damage to this Mosque please see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0136** in **Weekly Report 107-108**.

On September 5, 2016 SMO Syria released a video showing damage to the minaret of the al-Hassan mosque, as well as the modifications inside the mosque to create a pedestrian walkway.<sup>71</sup> This walkway was created so that pedestrians could avoid sniper fire from surrounding buildings.<sup>72</sup> Video footage published by Qaboun Media Office on July 20, 2013, shows the mosque has been damaged and the minaret has collapsed, possibly onto the roof of the mosque or a neighboring building.<sup>73</sup>

On September 5, 2016 SMO Syria released a video showing damage to Al-Omari Mosque, including footage of damage to the minaret and building exterior and graffiti on the outer wall.<sup>74</sup> Video footage of al-Omari Mosque shows that the site has been damaged since mid-2013 as a result of continuous SARG shelling. Video released on August 26, 2013 shows shelling striking the mosque's minaret. Another video published by Qaboun Media Office on September 2, 2013 showed the collapse of the minaret, reportedly as a result of heavy SARG shelling.<sup>75</sup> In July 2013, civilians and Syrian opposition forces were reported to have been trapped inside al-Omari Mosque.<sup>76</sup>

All mosques in this report were reportedly first damaged by SARG shelling during Ramadan 2013, starting on the third day of the religious holiday. According to an interview with a local Iman in al-Qaboun, eventually all 'four' minarets of the three mosques had been destroyed. The interview does not disclose which of the three mosques once had a second minaret.<sup>77</sup> A video report released by Akhbar al-Aan showed that by July 2015, the minarets of al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq, al-Hassan, and al-Omari Mosques had been heavily damaged or destroyed, as had the buildings themselves.<sup>78</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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<sup>68</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUGV3xF2DYo>

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JC2hy46NH9w>

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FePjFk1nvpA>

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUGV3xF2DYo>

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/syrian-woman-walks-in-the-al-hasan-mosque-which-was-news-photo/515547802>

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqwj28iOAJ8>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUGV3xF2DYo>

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lFwxwU1yzkk>

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/syrian-troops-advance-against-rebels-damascus>

<sup>77</sup> <http://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/exclusive/2015/7/3/regime-destroying-all-the-minarets-of-mosques-in-old-qaboun-neighborhood-of-damascus>

<sup>78</sup> <http://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/exclusive/2015/7/3/regime-destroying-all-the-minarets-of-mosques-in-old-qaboun-neighborhood-of-damascus>

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to sites in al-Qaboun, 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:

Akhbar al-Aan: <http://www.akhbaralaan.net/news/exclusive/2015/7/3/regime-destroying-all-the-minarets-of-mosques-in-old-qaboun-neighborhood-of-damascus>

CNS News/AP: <http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/syrian-troops-advance-against-rebels-damascus>

Dimashq Lens: <http://www.dimashqilens.com/en/photos/5316-Qaboun>

Free Qabon Damascus: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FePjFk1nvpA>

Free Qabon Word Press:

<https://freeqabon.wordpress.com/2013/09/17/تقرير-عن-مساجد-حي-القابون-المشقي-صادر-ع/>

Qaboun Media Office:

July 20, 2013: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqwj28iOAJ8>

September 2, 2013: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lFwxwU1yzkk>

Getty Images: <http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/syrian-woman-walks-in-the-al-hasan-mosque-which-was-news-photo/515547802>

SMO Syria:

September 2, 2013: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lFwxwU1yzkk>

September 5, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUGV3xF2DYo>

Step News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JC2hy46NH9w>

al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (جامع الصحابة ابوبكر الصديق)



Video still of the damage to al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (Step News Agency; September 13, 2016)



Video still of the exterior of al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque showing some light damage (Step News Agency; September 13, 2016)



Video still of damage to the dome of al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to the dome of al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to the minaret of al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to inside of the dome at al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to inside of al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to inside of al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to inside of al-Sahba Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)

**al-Hassan Mosque (جامع الحسن)**



Video still of damage to the minaret of al-Hassan Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to the minaret of al-Hassan Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to the minaret of al-Hassan Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)





Video still of al-Hassan Mosque showing pedestrian walkway (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)

**al-Omari Mosque (جامع العمري)**



Video still of damage to minaret of al-Omari Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to minaret of al-Omari Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to the minaret of al-Omari Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to al-Omari Mosque, the top of the minaret is seen among the rubble (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)



Video still of damage to the outside of al-Omari Mosque (SMO Syria; September 5, 2016)

**SHI 16-0143**

**Report Date:** September 9, 2016

**Site Name:**

- al-Ayyubi Mosque (مسجد الايوبي)
- Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque (مسجد عمر بن الخطاب)
- Musaib bin Amir Mosque (مسجد مصعب بن عمير)

**Date of Incident:** September 5, 2016; September 8, 2016; September 9, 2016

**Location:**

- al-Ayyubi Mosque - Ibta'a, Daraa Governorate, Syria
- Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque - Ibta'a, Daraa Governorate, Syria
- Musaib bin Amir Mosque - Dael, Daraa Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosques in Daraa Governorate.

**Site Date:**

- al-Ayyubi Mosque - Unknown
- Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque - Unknown
- Musaib bin Amir Mosque - Founded April 18, 2001 CE

**Incident Summary:** Reported SARG warplanes damage mosques in Daraa Governorate.

**Incident Source and Description:** On September 5, 2016 Horan News reported that SARG forces had targeted al-Ayyubi Mosque with heavy artillery.<sup>79</sup> The extent of the damage to the mosque was not detailed and no photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication.

On September 8, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that SARG warplanes fired missiles on Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque, causing severe damage and "rendering it inoperable."<sup>80</sup> Local media reports confirmed the damage.<sup>81</sup>

On September 9, 2016 Baladi Network reported that SARG aerial bombardment struck a mosque in the city of Dael.<sup>82</sup> No photographs of the damage were available at the time of publication. Further research suggests that the mosque struck in the aerial bombardment was the Musaib bin Amir Mosque. The Musaib bin Amir Mosque has been struck at least once before, as suggested by local video footage and photographs, in early October 2013.<sup>83</sup>

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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<sup>79</sup> <https://twitter.com/horannews/status/772862552837648384>

<sup>80</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/08/government-forces-targeted-omar-bin-al-khattab-mosque-ibtaa-town-daraa-governorate-september-8/>

<sup>81</sup> <https://twitter.com/horannews/status/773886951153930240> ; <https://twitter.com/horannews/status/773830759471804416>

<sup>82</sup> <https://twitter.com/baladinetwork/status/774196132897517568>

<sup>83</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mvL6KwQF4uQ>

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor any reported damage to sites in Daraa, as well as other heritage sites located in regions subject to ongoing aerial bombardment campaigns and intense military activity.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Baladi Network: <https://twitter.com/baladinetwork/status/774196132897517568>

Horan News:

September 5, 2016: <https://twitter.com/horannews/status/772862552837648384>

September 8, 2016: <https://twitter.com/horannews/status/773886951153930240> ; <https://twitter.com/horannews/status/773830759471804416>

SNHR: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/08/government-forces-targeted-omar-bin-al-khattab-mosque-ibtaa-town-daraa-governorate-september-8/>

Sha3rda3l: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mvL6KwQF4uQ>



Damage to the interior of Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque (SNHR; September 8, 2016)



Damage to Omar bin al-Khattab Mosque (Horan News; September 8, 2016)

**SHI 16-0144**

**Report Date:** September 10, 2016

**Site Name:** al-Kabir Mosque (المسجد الكبير); Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarah Mosque (جامع أبي ابن عبيدة الجراح)

**Date of Incident:** September 6, 2016; Unknown

**Location:** Anadan, Aleppo Governorate, Syria; al-Sukkari neighborhood, Aleppo, Aleppo Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** Mosques in Aleppo Governorate.

**Site Date:** al-Kabir Mosque: Modern, building likely began 1965 CE<sup>84</sup>  
Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarah Mosque: built 1980 CE

**Incident Summary:** Alleged Russian airstrikes severely damage mosque; video footage shows damage to mosque.

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<sup>84</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Anadan.Media.Center3/posts/1369513379730287>

**Incident Source and Description:** On September 6, 2016 the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that alleged Russian airstrikes struck and severely damaged al-Kabir Mosque in the city of Anadan.<sup>85</sup> The strike rendered the mosque inoperable. Photographs shared via social media, as well as video footage published by local media, show extensive damage to the exterior and interior of the mosque.<sup>86</sup>

This is the second confirmed report by SNHR of an aerial strike damaging al-Kabir Mosque. For further information on damage to al-Kabir Mosque see **ASOR CHI Incident Report 16-0129** in **Weekly Report 105-106**.

On September 10, 2016 Baladi News released video footage of damage to Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarah Mosque in the al-Sukkari Neighborhood of Aleppo.<sup>87</sup> The exact date of the damage is unknown, however the description of the video states that the damage was due to an airstrike.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

#### **Sources:**

##### Online Reporting:

Baladi News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v01ktbDz2IE>

Qasioun News Agency: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iOdkTz\\_0\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iOdkTz_0_4)

##### SNHR:

September 6, 2016: <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/06/alleged-russian-forces-targeted-mosque-anadan-city-aleppo-governorate-september-6/>

October 4, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCvO-h7Jj48>

##### Thiqa News Agency:

September 6, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIHfzoPx1Gg> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bm8Z4brYFh4>

September 7, 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Le5tZdZwlhU>

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<sup>85</sup> <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/09/06/alleged-russian-forces-targeted-mosque-anadan-city-aleppo-governorate-september-6/>

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIHfzoPx1Gg> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Le5tZdZwlhU> ; [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iOdkTz\\_0\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iOdkTz_0_4)

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v01ktbDz2IE>



Severe damage to al-Kabir Mosque (SNHR; September 6, 2016)



Extensive damage to al-Kabir Mosque (September 6, 2016)





Extensive damage to al-Kabir Mosque (September 6, 2016)



Extensive damage to al-Kabir Mosque (September 6, 2016)



Video still shows extensive damage to the dome of al-Kabir Mosque (Thiqat News Agency; September 6, 2016)



Video still shows extensive damage to al-Kabir Mosque (Thiqat News Agency; September 6, 2016)



Video still shows damage to religious materials at al-Kabir Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; September 6, 2016)



Video still shows severe damage to al-Kabir Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; September 6, 2016)



Video still shows damage to religious materials at al-Kabir Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; September 6, 2016)



Video still shows extensive damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; September 6, 2016)



Video still shows severe damage to al-Kabir Mosque (Thiqa News Agency; September 6, 2016)



Video still shows damage to the exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (Qasioun News Agency; September 6, 2016)



Damage to the exterior of Abu Obeida ibn al-Jarah Mosque (Baladi News; September 10, 2016)

**SHI 16-0145**

**Report Date:** September 10, 2016

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

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

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

**Site Description:** Mosque in Batbo.

**Site Date:** Unknown.

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

**Incident Source and Description:** On September 10, 2016 Daretezza Media Center reported Russian airstrikes damaged al-Kabir Mosque in Batbo, Aleppo Governorate. Video footage published by Daretezza Media Center and STEP News Agency indicates the mosque suffered severe damage.<sup>88</sup> The interior of the mosque is filled with dust and debris. The windows appear to have been blown out by the blast. The mosque's exterior stairway and many of the buildings surrounding the mosque have been reduced to rubble.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor damage to al-Kabir Mosque as well as other heritage sites located in areas subject to aerial bombardment.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Daretezza Media Center: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GltpBP8wjo>

STEP News Agency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NviticVIHStY>

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<sup>88</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NviticVIHStY> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GltpBP8wjo>



Video still of damage to interior of al-Kabir Mosque (Daretezza Media Center; September 10, 2016)



Video still of damage to interior of al-Kabir Mosque (Daretezza Media Center; September 10, 2016)





Video still of damage to area surrounding al-Kabir Mosque (Daretezza Media Center; September 10, 2016)



Video still of damage to entrance to al-Kabir Mosque (Daretezza Media Center; September 10, 2016)



Video still of damage to exterior of al-Kabir Mosque and surrounding area (Daretezza Media Center; September 10, 2016)



Video still of damage to exterior of al-Kabir Mosque and surrounding area (Daretezza Media Center; September 10, 2016)



Video still of damage to exterior of al-Kabir Mosque and surrounding area (STEP News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of damage to exterior of al-Kabir Mosque (STEP News Agency; September 10, 2016)

**SHI 16-0146**

**Report Date:** September 10, 2016

**Site Name:** Mithraeum and Church of Photios

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing

**Location:** Huarte, Hama Governorate, Syria

**Site Description:** M. Gawlikowski writes,

The village of Hawarti (also known as Huarte) lies 15 km north of Apamea, on the southern slope of a little outcrop among the first hills of Jebel Shahshabu. Situated there are the ruins of an important church complex excavated in the 1970s by Maria-Teresa and Pierre Canivet and published some years later. The extant church was built and paved with mosaics by the Archbishop Photios of Apamea in the 480s. It is a three-aisled basilica, adjoined on the north by a portico, baptistery, and, on a higher level, a small church dedicated to the Archangel Michael, built above a monumental tomb containing several sarcophagi. The basilica of Photios overlies an earlier, smaller church, also provided with mosaics, dated by the excavators toward the end of the 4th century. Both earlier and later mosaics have been removed and are now stored in the Museum at Qalaat al-Mudiq.<sup>89</sup>

In 1996/1997 part of the church floor collapsed, revealing a 4th-century CE mithraeum that looters illegally excavated. A mithraeum is a place of worship dedicated to the mystery cult of the Roman god Mithras. Mithraea were located either in natural caves or in underground structures built to look like caves. Later, many mithraea had Christian churches built over them. Looters uncovered vibrant wall murals in the mithraeum, now kept in the National Museum in Damascus. Gawlikowski began excavations in 1998 and discovered more wall murals in the mithraeum, as well as a niche in the middle of the north wall that likely once contained a Mithraic relief.<sup>90</sup> By the final phase of the mithraeum, the northern, western, and eastern walls had all been painted.<sup>91</sup>

**Site Date:** Mithraeum: 4th-century CE; Church of Photios: 480s CE

**Incident Summary:** New video shows damage to ancient site in Huarte including the Church of Photios.

**Incident Source and Description:** On September 10, 2016 STEP News Agency released a video discussing the state of the ancient Church of Photios and mithraeum at Huarte.<sup>92</sup> The video indicates that the site suffers from illegal excavation and the reuse of the structures by internally displaced persons (IDPs). The roof placed over the mithraeum by an archaeological excavation team has been removed. Metal sheets have been placed over the entrances to the site as makeshift doors and walls. The walls of the church are crumbling and sections of the remaining murals appear to have been chipped off with tools. The exact cause of the damage to the church walls and murals is unknown.

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

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<sup>89</sup> Gawlikowski 1999: 197.

<sup>90</sup> [http://www.tertullian.org/rpearse/mithras/display.php?page=supp\\_Syria\\_Hawarte\\_Mithraeum](http://www.tertullian.org/rpearse/mithras/display.php?page=supp_Syria_Hawarte_Mithraeum)

<sup>91</sup> Gawlikowski 1999: 203.

<sup>92</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZySBEXjr\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZySBEXjr_4)

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI will continue to monitor reports of damage to the Mithraeum and Church of Photios, as well as the condition of other heritage sites located in regions subject to vandalism and the reuse of historic buildings.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Step News Agency: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= ZySBEXJr\\_4&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= ZySBEXJr_4&feature=youtu.be)

Scholarly:

M. Gawlikowski, "Hawarti: Preliminary Report", *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* 10 (Reports 1998), 1999, 197-204.

Retrieved from: [http://www.pcma.uw.edu.pl/fileadmin/pam/PAM\\_1998\\_X/324.pdf](http://www.pcma.uw.edu.pl/fileadmin/pam/PAM_1998_X/324.pdf)

Tertullian.org:

<http://www.tertullian.org/rpearse/mithras/display.php?page=supp Syria Hawarte Mithraeum>



Video still of the Church of Photios, facing east (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of the Church of Photios, facing east (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of section of ancient site at Huarte (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of later building Church of Photios (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of section of ancient site at Huarte (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of section of ancient site at Huarte (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of the top of the Church of Photios facing southeast, with stabilizing blocks in the foreground (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)





Video still of section of ancient site at Huarte (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of section of ancient site at Huarte (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of columns from the Church of Photios (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of section of ancient site at Huarte (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of section of the Church of Photios (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of makeshift walls built by IDPs (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of the Church of Photios showing possible tunneling or erosion of ancient wall (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of the inside roof of the Church of Photios (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of the inside of the Church of Photios (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of a mural in mithraeum (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of the northwest corner of the mithraeum showing the wall murals (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of the northeast corner of the Mithraeum showing the missing roof (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of the mithraeum, facing west (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of wall mural in north-east corner of mithraeum (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of wall murals in mithraeum (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)



Video still of subterranean entrance to mithraeum (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)





Video still of a limestone sarcophagus outside Church of Photios (Step News Agency; September 10, 2016)

**SHI 16-0147**

**Report Date:** September 12, 2016

**Site Name:** Hreitan

- Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque (مسجد أبو بكر الصديق)
- al-Quds Mosque (جامع القدس)
- al-Martyrs Cemetery

**Date of Incident:** Ongoing

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

**Site Description:** Mosques and cemeteries in Hreitan.

**Site Date:**

- Hreitan - Modern town in Aleppo Governorate.
- Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque - Unknown
- al-Quds Mosque - Unknown
- al-Martyrs Cemetery - Unknown.

**Incident Summary:** New video shows damage to sites in Hreitan.

**Incident Source and Description:** On September 12, 2016, Hreitan City released a new video of damage to sites in Hreitan.<sup>93</sup> Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque is shown with minor damage to the roof, minaret, and interior. Video footage of al-Martyrs Cemetery shows possible damage from vandalism, with some gravestones removed. Another shot shows a large crater, possibly from an airstrike. The dome and minaret of al-Quds Mosque is shown with no further damage.

ASOR CHI has previously reported on several incidents of explosives damage to sites in Hreitan. For previous reports on damage to sites in Hreitan, please see **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0071** in **Weekly Report 93-94**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0082** in **Weekly Report 95-96**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0092** in **Weekly Report 97-98**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0099** in **Weekly Report 99-100**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0099 UPDATE** in **Weekly Report 101-102**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0102** in **Weekly Report 101-102**, **ASOR CHI Incident Report SHI 16-0120** in **Weekly Report 105-106**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

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

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<sup>93</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gp09D02D80c>

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Hreitan City: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gp09D02D80c>



Video still of Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque in Hreitan (Hreitan City; September 12, 2016)



Video still of unidentified cemetery in Hreitan (Hreitan City; September 12, 2016)



Video still of damage to the interior of Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque in Hreitan (Hreitan City; September 12, 2016)



Video still of light interior damage to Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque in Hreitan (Hreitan City; September 12, 2016)



Video still of structural damage to Abu Bakr al-Sedeiq Mosque in Hreitan (Hreitan City; September 12, 2016)



Video still of al-Martyrs Cemetery (Hreitan City; September 12, 2016)



Video still of al-Martyrs Cemetery (Hreitan City; September 12, 2016)



Video still of al-Martyrs Cemetery showing possible airstrike crater (Hreitan City; September 12, 2016)



Video still of al-Martyrs Cemetery with al-Quds Mosque dome and minaret in background (Hreitan City; September 12, 2016)

## Incident Reports: Iraq

IHI 16-0030

**Report Date:** September 2, 2016

**Site Name:** al-Zahra Mosque (al-Zahra Husseiniya; حسينية الزهراء)

**Date of Incident:** September 2, 2016

**Location:** Mandali, Balad Ruz District, Diyala Governorate, Iraq

**Site Description:** Shia Mosque.

**Site Date:** Unknown, likely modern.

**Incident Summary:** Suicide bomber detonates device outside mosque.

**Incident Source and Description:** On September 2, reports surfaced on Twitter of a suicide bomber detonating himself outside of a Shia mosque in the town of Mandali, near the Iran-Iraq border.<sup>94</sup> The bomber reportedly detonated his device when “security forces confronted him.” No photographs of any damage to the mosque were available at the time of publication. No group claimed responsibility for the attack, however ISIL has previously targeted Shia mosques in suicide bombings and other attacks.

ISIL, which equates Shia Muslims to apostates, has frequently targeted Shia populations and Shia institutions, and aims to incite Shia-Sunni conflict. For additional information on attacks on Shia mosques and religious sites, see **ASOR CHI Incident Report IHI 15-0098** in **Weekly Report 67-68**, **IHI 16-0006** in **Weekly Report 81-82**, **IHI 16-0007** in **Weekly Report 81-82**, **IHI 16-0021** in **Weekly Report 99-100**, **IHI 16-0023** in **Weekly Report 101-102**.

**Pattern:** Military activity: explosives.

**Monitoring Recommendations and Mitigation Measures:** ASOR CHI remains concerned as to the ongoing violence and sectarian tensions in Iraq and will continue to monitor the situation closely in the case that a group claim responsibility for the attack.

**Sources:**

Online Reporting:

Breaking News Iraq: <https://twitter.com/IQBN247/status/771997553634136064>

INP: [https://twitter.com/INP\\_PLUS/status/771688789681070080](https://twitter.com/INP_PLUS/status/771688789681070080)

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<sup>94</sup> <https://twitter.com/IraqiSecurity/status/771824356200636416> ; <https://twitter.com/IraqiSecurity/status/771825678467551232>