

**Syria: Witnesses Describe Idlib Destruction, Killings** Human Rights Watch 15 March 2012

Accounts from witnesses reveal significant destruction and a large number of deaths and injuries of civilians in Syria's bombardment of the city of Idlib, Human Rights Watch said today. On the anniversary of the Syrian uprising, Human Rights Watch urged Russia and China to agree to a UN Security Council resolution calling on Syria to halt the indiscriminate attacks on cities and demand access for humanitarian workers, journalists, and human rights monitors.

Idlib is the latest opposition stronghold to come under attack by the Syrian security forces attempting to rout the armed opposition. Syrian activists have compiled a list of 114 civilians killed since the current assault there, which began on March 10, 2012. (...)

(...) The attacks on Idlib follow months of atrocities that both the United Nation's Commission of Inquiry and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights have described as crimes against humanity. (...)

(...) One year after the uprising began in Syria, security forces have killed at least 8,000 civilians according to lists compiled by local activists. Vetoes by Russia and China have prevented the Security Council from taking any action on Syria despite evidence that crimes against humanity are being committed.

The UN secretary-general's special envoy, Kofi Annan, will brief the Security Council on his efforts on March 16. Human Rights Watch urged Russia and China to support a United Nations Security Council resolution that would give Annan's efforts the strongest possible backing as well as demanding that the Syrian government end the indiscriminate shelling of cities and allow access to affected areas for humanitarian workers, journalists, and human rights monitors. The resolution should also provide for targeted sanctions against officials involved in the abuse and an embargo on arms delivery to the Syrian government, and refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has, on multiple occasions, recommended that the Security Council refer the situation to the court. Similarly, a growing number and wide range of countries have voiced their support for an ICC referral. On March 13, during a session at the UN Human Rights Council, Austria delivered a cross-regional statement on behalf of 13 countries supporting the High Commissioner's call for a referral.

Human Rights Watch urged others to join the mounting calls for accountability by supporting a referral to the ICC as the forum most capable of effectively investigating and prosecuting those bearing the greatest responsibility for abuses in Syria. **To read the full article, see [here](#)**