



UNITED NATIONS
PRESS RELEASE

Statement by Adama Dieng, Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, on the situation of civilians in the Syrian Arab Republic

(New York, 9 May 2016) Responding to the deadliest two weeks since the Cessation of Hostilities accord, which came into effect on 27 February 2016, the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, expressed his outrage at the ongoing indiscriminate and seemingly calculated attacks against civilians and civilian objects in Syria.

“Between 27 April and 5 May 2016, there were at least six attacks on medical facilities by different parties to the conflict in the north-western governorate of Aleppo alone. The attack against the Al Quds Hospital on 27 April reportedly killed 55 civilians, including the last pediatrician in the city” – noted the Special Adviser. On 5 May, an attack on the Kamouna Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camp in northern Idlib governorate killed at least 30 civilians.

“These attacks reflect the continued blatant disrespect of international humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict, and may constitute war crimes”, the Special Adviser stated. “The international community cannot allow the perpetrators of flagrant violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law to enjoy impunity. Just a few days ago, in its Resolution 2286 on Healthcare in Armed Conflict, the Security Council reiterated the need for Member States to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law and ensure that the responsible parties are held to account. It is crucial that the Council consistently apply this principle”.

The Special Adviser concluded: “The Member States have a duty not to fail the Syrian people yet again and to uphold their pledge to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. In this respect, the international community should step up its commitment to end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes in Syria and thus contribute to preventing new atrocities from being committed. For this reason, I strongly support the Secretary-General’s repeated calls to the Security Council to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court”.

For media queries please contact:

Davide Zaru
Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect
<http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/>
Phone: +1 212 963 3573
Email: zaru@un.org