



Australian Syrian Association Victoria

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Thursday 15 December 2016

MEDIA RELEASE

ASA-VIC urges the Australian government to stop the killing of civilians in Aleppo

Aleppo was one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world with a pre-war population of around 4.5 million. However, the siege of eastern Aleppo by Russia, Iran, Hezbollah militias, and Syrian government forces starting September 2016, and the continuous Russian and Syrian government aircraft airstrikes using illegal barrel bombs, cluster munitions and "bunker-buster" bombs has flattened the city. East Aleppo now evokes ominous scenes of destruction and despair. Aleppo is now a graveyard for human misery. Additionally, similar to many previous horrendous atrocities against innocent Syrian civilians all around Syria, the Assad's regime and its allies (Iran and Hezbollah) are repeating the same mass horror crimes against the civilians in East Aleppo.

Most recently, the Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said "*We are getting alarming reports of atrocities against civilians, including women and children in eastern Aleppo. We must do all we can to stop the carnage*". And the UN's special envoy to Syria, Staffan de Mistura, warned that the UN cannot allow "another Srebrenica, another Rwanda". Yes, these statements are common sense and easy to say. But the question every human, not only Syrians, continue to ask is how longer do we have to leave those innocent Syrian civilians tortured and killed without foods or humanitarian aids? How are we going to protect them from Assad's and Hezbollah forces? Most recently, the office of the UN Human Rights Commissioner has gone public with reports that 82 civilians have been executed by Assad's troops in East Aleppo this week and worse is yet to come.

Unfortunately, the external political influence upon the Syrian government, *via* the UN, remains extremely weak because of the continuous Russian vetoing every UN resolution. At the same time the USA and the so-called Friends of Syria have badly failed to fulfil their duties and promises toward the Syrian people.

The Australian Syrian Association in Victoria (ASA-VIC) is urging the Australian and international communities to take an immediate action to stop war crimes against the innocent civilians of Syria, and particularly of Eastern Aleppo.

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