



Aleppo hospitals overwhelmed by flood of injured people after air attacks against the population

(December 13th, 2013 | Paris) – Air strikes dropped barrels of explosives on the city of Aleppo and its province, resulting in numerous deaths within the civilian population. Doctors of the World, which supports seven medical networks inside the country, is one of the few international medical NGOs providing a humanitarian assistance in Syria.

For the last 15 days, a deadly offensive, carried out with "barrels" filled with TNT, targeted residential areas or public areas such as schools, markets or hospitals. More than 500 people died in these air raids, civilians comprising the first victims. The Syrian medical partners of Doctors of the World in Aleppo have witnessed first-hand the catastrophic effects of the air attacks. Injured peoples are flooding the city's several hospitals. Pictures of the victims or dead bodies received by Doctors of the World reveal significant mutilations, particularly amongst women and children who represent more than two-thirds of the injured people. Our medical partners denounce the brutal attacks on civilians.

« I will be haunted for the rest of my life by what I've seen over the last few days », explains doctor F., a Syrian doctor working in one of the four hospitals supported by Doctors of the World. « It's even worse than chemical weapons, because at least [in a chemical attack] you die in only one piece... ».

Most of the hospitals are overloaded by patients and are short on medical supplies. Ambulances are damaged, destroyed or without fuel anymore. According to the Syrian medical partners, the medical needs are urgent. Doctors of the World has responded to this urgent need with a shipment of surgical equipment to support more than 150 operations, medical supplies and 20,000 blood bags.

Doctors of the World reiterates its previous stance that all parties involved in this conflict respect international humanitarian right to intervene to protect civilian populations not directly involved in the civil war. We now denounce the crime of targeting hospitals as it prevents basic access to healthcare for injured populations.

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