

**October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**Statement on the Atrocities Committed in Coastal Latakia,  
and the Human Rights Watch Report**

In the name of the Free Syrian people and our revolution, the Supreme Military Council (SMC) of the Free Syrian Army wholeheartedly condemns the alleged atrocities committed by extremist groups against civilian communities in Latakia. The ruthless massacres of Syrian non-combatants, regardless of their ethnicity, creed, or loyalties, is an abhorrent crime against humanity and antithetical to the values of our revolution.

General Idriss and the SMC have made clear that we will not tolerate those who commit crimes against humanity. Unlike the Assad regime, the SMC is fully committed to respecting the rule of law and will hold any FSA personnel accountable if found guilty of a crime. During General Idriss's visit to the Sahel in Latakia, he met with locals in Christian villages who made it clear that the regime continues to bombard Christian villages (youtube link: <http://youtu.be/Ujmd65zAfxo>). The Assad regime is guilty of the overwhelming majority of gross violations of human rights against the Syrian people.

We stress that the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), Jabhat al-Nusra, Ahrar al-Sham, Suqour al-Izz, and Jaysh al-Muhajireen wa al-Ansar, are not a part of the SMC command structure and do not represent the values of the FSA or the Syrian revolution. These extremists have attacked the FSA and have killed numerous FSA officers. Ayman al-Zawahiri, the Al-Qaeda leader issued a declaration condemning the moderate FSA and banning the ISIS from interacting with FSA units.

The SMC command encourages Human Rights Watch and the international community to focus on the institutional crimes against humanity being committed by Assad's security apparatus. Over 150,000 have been killed, thousands face starvation, and hundreds are killed daily at the hands of Assad's security forces and militias.

Further, we would like to point grave errors in judgement made by the report's authors in relying on numerous regime sources in attempts to corroborate information about the events; the regime's Ministry of Health, "loveassad.syriaforums.net," and interviews with regime "security, army, and militia force members" can hardly be considered unbiased and objective observers.

The SMC also wishes to call upon the international community to take action to halt the Assad regime's ongoing ethnic cleansing campaign that is currently being supported by Hezbollah in Syria's western territories. And we call upon the media to reference the Violence Documentation Center's recent report (<http://www.vdc-sy.info/index.php/en/reports/1381096592#.UlayPhZmQ23>) documenting the systemic torture of children by Assad's Military Intelligence branches.