



FORWARD-LEARNING Global Security Report



Report 12-007
4 February 2012

PROPRIETARY CLASSIFICATION: BUSINESS-IN-CONFIDENCE

FLASH: ASSAD UNLEASHES HOMS MASSACRE OF 2012

337 Butchered, 1300 Wounded; Opposition Declares "War"

On the 30th anniversary of Hafez Al-Assad's Hama Massacre, the army and security forces of his son, Bashar, unleashed a massive attack on the city of Homs. The artillery barrage alone destroyed whole city blocks, leveled apartments, pulverized hospitals and killed a reported 337 with those injured numbering 1,300 (Source: SYRIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE). Strike aircraft were seen and heard flying low over the city. Entire neighborhoods were torched (YOUTUBE, 01:38). The slaughter confirms our grim assessment that the Assad regime would keep its pledge to crush the opposition with "an iron fist," and the Homs Massacre may prefigure assaults by loyalists outside the nation.¹



Fire and utter chaos reigned for 12 hours in Homs. (YOUTUBE, 00:47)

Last night, FREE SYRIA ARMY commander Alabanbil Ammar Wawi declared "war" and stated that all regime army and security locations were legitimate targets. Separately, the FREE SYRIA ARMY vowed to retaliate for the Homs slaughter in the next day or two, but that retaliation is going on now. Multiple sources report that fighting is breaking out now across Syria from Damascus north to Idlib.

There are multiple reports that the FAROUK "BATTALION" of the FREE SYRIA ARMY attacked the Homs headquarters of IDARAT AL-MUKHABARAT AL-JAWIYYA, ("AIR FORCE INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE") overnight, and one unconfirmed report that the headquarters was destroyed. FSA contends this unit spearheaded the Homs massacre.

¹ "Flash: Damascus Bombing Triggers Attack Threats by Assad Loyalists. Forecast in Part: Massive Regime 'Retaliation....'" FORWARD-LEARNING 12-002 7 January 2012. Available at the OSEN-HUNTER website.

Some 260 were murdered in the Khaldiyyeh (or Khaldiya) neighborhood alone, and the hospital there was destroyed. The attack was sustained for at least 12 solid hours. Shooting in Khaldiyyeh could still be heard at 0500 EST. One dazed man said he spent all last night searching for his brother and his cousins. “I don’t know where are the rest,” he said last night. This morning, he concluded:

Maybe I’m the only survivor from [my] whole family. I don’t care, nothing to be afraid of anymore.

More regime violence is likely today in Barzeh (northern Damascus), as security forces were said to have surrounded the town. Snipers have taken position on the roof of TISHREEN HOSPITAL there ([YOUTUBE, 00:44](#)).



One of the mildest photos of the scene at a Homs mosque where the dead and dying outnumbered the caregivers. ([YOUTUBE, 07:07, grim and graphic](#)). Within minutes of the opening salvos, the number of wounded and severity of their injuries completely outstripped emergency medical care capabilities throughout the city. **Some photos of butchered victims are too gruesome to portray here (FACEBOOK).**

Defections are said to be “unprecedented.” Some soldiers captured by the FAROUK “BATTALION” were asked why they surrendered so readily. Initially they said nothing, then one chimed in: “Bashar is in his palace, leaving us here to get killed.”

Protests at Syrian embassies are breaking out on every continent. At 0330 EST this morning, the opposition prepared **this report** of actions at various embassies. Clashes have broken out in New York City between Assad loyalists and opponents.

In what may be a sign of his first grasp of the “ground truth” in Syria, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will visit Damascus on Tuesday to meet with Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, according to AL-ARABIYA. A Russian intelligence official may accompany him.

While decency alone should prompt the international community to topple Assad, commentator Charles Krauthammer summarizes the strategic reasons that make Syria “the biggest show on earth.”²

[Assad’s] fall would deprive Iran of an intra-Arab staging area and sever its corridor to the Mediterranean. Syria would return to the Sunni fold. HEZBOLLAH, Tehran’s agent in Lebanon, could be next, withering on the vine without Syrian support and Iranian materiel. And Hamas

² “Assessment: Conflict in Washington, Unity Between Damascus & HEZBOLLAH.” Under “Syria: The Biggest Show on Earth.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 11-066 26 May 2011.

would revert to Egyptian patronage.

At the end of this causal chain, Iran, shorn of key allies and already reeling from economic sanctions over its nuclear program, would be thrown back on its heels.

LOOK FURTHER. It may be that Mr. Lavrov is paying a call on Assad to ensure Russia is not “thrown back on its heels.”



Last Month. Mediterranean Sea. An Italian AV-8B Harrier II strike aircraft lands on the flight deck of the amphibious assault ship USS BATAAN (LHD 5), command ship of the BATAAN AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP. (Public domain photo by MCSN Hannab Willbide, U.S.N.)

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