

# UN official says Turkey's attacks threaten civilians

by Wladimir van Wilgenburg - 07/03/2018 00:00



Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, on Wednesday said that Syria is entering a 'new phase of horror', with ongoing fighting in Eastern Ghouta and Afrin that is threatening civilians.

"As this Council session opened, the conflict in Syria entered a new phase of horror. In addition to the staggering bloodshed in Eastern Ghouta, which was discussed in urgent debate last week, escalating violence in the province of Idlib is placing some two million people in danger," he said.

Moreover, the official added that Turkish attacks that were launched on 21 January are threatening a large number of civilians.

"In Afrin, the offensive by Turkey is also threatening large numbers of civilians," he said. "People in Government-controlled Damascus are suffering a new escalation of ground-based strikes. And the offensive against extremist groups has resulted in large-scale loss of civilian life, he added.

Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) spokesperson Gabriel Kino told The Region that Turkey must follow the UN Security Council resolution that calls for a 30-days ceasefire in late February.

“We all know all operations inside Syria must stop,” Kino said. “But this doesn’t include ISIS or Jabhat al-Nusra, but so far nothing is happening, not in Ghouta, nor in Afrin,” he said.

“The attacks are still ongoing against civilians and people, and Turkey doesn’t seem to care or bother himself with the UN Security Council decision,” he added.

He added that Germany and France made clear to Turkey that Afrin is part of this ceasefire, although Turkey acts as if Afrin is not part of this resolution. “Afrin is part of the ceasefire decision,” he added.

A weekly situation report of the World Health Organization (WHO) published last week confirmed that Turkey violated the ceasefire.

“Turkish regime violated UN Security Council Resolution 2401, escalating its aggression on Afrin,” the [report](#) said.

According to a statement of the Afrin Health Council last week over 207 civilians [were killed](#) in the Turkish attacks that were launched on 20 January.