



## Statement

10 May 2019

### **RR Warns of Escalating Military Campaign and another Wave of Displacement of Syrians in Idlib**

Since 26 April 2019, the Assad regime and its Russian ally have launched an extermination campaign on Idlib province, resulting in the death of dozens of Syrian civilians and the destruction of several hospitals and schools. The fierce Russian aerial bombardments and the regime's unremitting artillery shelling on civilian camps and residential areas have led to mass destructions of homes, leaving thousands without shelter and at risk of being forcibly displaced again.

It is appalling that the Assad regime and their Russian sponsors choose the Muslim holy month of Ramadan to continue their onslaught on civilians in violation to all resolutions, agreements and humanitarian norms.

The Assad and Russian vicious campaign purposefully aims to terrify Idlib's three millions civilians similar to what they did in East Ghouta and Aleppo forcing civilians to surrender or to leave. This on-going indiscriminate bombing proves to the world once again that Russia and the Assad regime show utter disrespect for the de-militarised zones which they have themselves established.

With Turkey having limited capacity to host more refugees, the civilians in Idlib have no options but to move towards Europe, creating another wave of forced displacement, or to return to the pro-Assad areas from which they fled. In the latter case, they might be subjected to detention, killing or forced conscription.

Rethink Rebuild Society urges the UK Government to assume its responsibility in protecting civilians in Idlib and to take all necessary measures to stop Assad and Russia from their systematic targeting of civilians and civilian facilities.

#### **ENDS**

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**Rethink Rebuild Society (RR)** is a Manchester-based charity that works towards improving the lives of refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants, in particular but not exclusively Syrians in the UK, helping them become positively established within the British society. RR endeavours to promote peace and protection of civilians to its audience in the UK and the wider public.