



# **Altering the Trends: The BBC's Biased Reporting on the Syrian Conflict**



**Rethink Rebuild Society**  
*A voice of the British Syrian community*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the start of the Syrian uprising in 2011, there have been concerns from members of the British Syrian community regarding the BBC's coverage of the conflict in Syria. Many Syrians perceive the BBC to be biased in favour of the Assad regime and claim that its coverage does not accurately depict the scale of atrocities committed by the regime and its allies as compared to crimes committed by other armed groups within the country. More specifically, concerns were raised that the BBC is far less likely to mention the perpetrators of attacks within article headlines when these perpetrators consist of the Assad regime or its allies, while conversely perpetrators are clearly mentioned if they involve Syrian opposition fighters or ISIS.

In response to such concerns, this report analysed 309 BBC online articles on Syria between the months of September and December 2016. Articles reporting specific attacks or crimes against the civilian population were sorted according to the perpetrators of these attacks. Articles with Assad's name in the headlines were also identified and grouped together. Analysis was subsequently conducted regarding the frequency by which each perpetrator was specifically identified within the article headlines and text, but also with respect to the connotations imparted by those headlines that specifically mentioned Assad.

Out of the 309 BBC online news articles collected between the months of September and December 2016 on Syria, 61 of them reported specific attacks. The Assad regime and/or its allies were identified within the article headlines in 4 of the 38 attacks attributable to them (11% of the time). This is in contrast to ISIS which was specifically identified in 9 out of the 9 attacks attributable to it (100% of the time); the opposition fighters which were identified in 4 of 5 attacks (80% of the time); and the US-led Coalition which was specifically identified in 4 of 4 attacks (100% of the time). The remaining 5 articles described attacks in which the perpetrators were unknown or unidentified.

Of the 38 articles dealing with attacks committed by Assad/Russia specifically, eight of them did not identify the perpetrators at all within the article text. Thirteen identified the perpetrators well into the articles (in paragraphs 3-12 or in the accompanying videos), meaning that only seventeen of the articles identified Assad/Russia as the perpetrators within the article headlines or within the first two paragraphs of the text. News headlines which specifically included Assad's name imparted either positive or neutral connotations. None of them connected his name to any criminal acts.

Our results indicate that the BBC's online reporting on Syria is clearly biased in favour of the Assad regime, namely that the regime and its allies are significantly less likely to be identified in article headlines and text when they are responsible for attacks against civilian populations as compared to other parties operating within Syria, but also that articles with Assad's name in the headlines refrained from linking him to any criminal activity. This pattern gives rise to concern as it has the potential to distort the public's perception on the situation in Syria and consequently to misdirect public opinion as to the role that the UK should adopt in response to the conflict. Moving forward, we recommend that the BBC adopt a policy for writing article headlines that is accurate, consistent, and representative of what is happening on the ground in Syria. When perpetrators are not clearly named within the article headlines for any compelling reason, they should at least be identified within the first paragraph of the article text.

# RATIONALE

Since the start of the Syrian uprising in 2011, there have been concerns from members of the British Syrian community regarding the BBC's coverage of the conflict in Syria, namely that it is biased in favour of the Assad regime. One of the consistently-voiced complaints, for example, is that the BBC is less likely to identify the perpetrators of attacks within article headlines when they involve the Assad regime or its allies (i.e. Russia, Iran, Hezbollah). This is in direct contrast, as alleged, to other groups such as opposition fighters or ISIS which are routinely identified in the article headlines when they are the source of a specific attack against civilians.

The following are some of the articles which were flagged up for us in early 2016 which described attacks by the Assad regime or its allies although without mention of their role within the article headlines:

Syria conflict: Air strike destroys MSF-supported hospital (February 2016)<sup>1</sup>

Syria: Attack on Aleppo hospital 'devastating' (April 2016)<sup>2</sup>

Moment boy rescued from rubble following Aleppo air strike (June 2016)<sup>3</sup>

Such concerns regarding inconsistencies in article headlines, if true, carry important ramifications given studies which indicate that the majority of news readers do not read past news headlines.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, if article headlines always indicate when opposition fighters are responsible for violations but rarely identify the Assad regime when it is responsible for violations, then this will affect public opinion on what is happening in Syria, which party is responsible for the majority of civilian deaths in Syria, and consequently what role the UK should assume in ensuring civilian protection in the country.

The UK public's misperceptions on some of the basic issues pertaining to the Syrian conflict were highlighted prominently in street interviews that Rethink Rebuild Society conducted in Manchester in order to gauge public opinion and knowledge on the situation in Syria.<sup>5</sup> One of the questions asked of interviewees was, 'Who is causing the most civilian deaths in Syria?' While we do not present the findings of these street interviews as conclusive or as necessarily representative of the entire British population, it is significant that only one of the fifteen respondents was able to confidently identify the Assad regime as the primary perpetrator of civilian deaths in Syria.<sup>6</sup> Two other respondents suggested that it was probably the regime although these were complete guesses. The remaining respondents gave the following answers:

- Five: don't know
- Three: ISIS (with two of them specifically stating that this is what they gathered given media coverage of the situation)
- Two: Opposition fighters
- Two: US-led Coalition

Even if the generalisability of these results is limited, it is nevertheless significant that fourteen out of fifteen respondents, assuming that they are not closely following the situation in Syria and hear about it only through news headline, could not identify the main perpetrator of atrocities in Syria as the Assad regime although it is estimated that over ninety percent of civilian casualties are attributable to the regime.<sup>7</sup> This indicates a major gap in the way that the news on Syria is being presented to the public.

Of course, it cannot be assumed that the interviewees who participated in our street interviews rely on the BBC (or any other news agency for that matter) as their primary source of information on Syria. However, as a Government-sponsored media agency which is funded by UK taxpayers' money, the BBC has a particular responsibility to ensure that the information which it conveys to the British public is accurate, impartial, and representative. The BBC is generally regarded as a trusted news source by the British people and should thus honour this reputation.

The writing of this report was further inspired by an episode that we had with BBC Newsnight over a report on Aleppo which was aired in May 2016 which Rethink Rebuild Society contributed to by securing interviewees for the programme.<sup>8</sup> The report was shockingly biased, stating that the city of Aleppo was 'once a major stronghold of terrorists' and giving the impression that the siege of Aleppo was committed by ISIS rather than by the Assad regime. Newsnight subsequently issued an apology for this report,<sup>9</sup> although the process caused great damage within the British Syrian community as well as among the Syrian activists in Aleppo who were involved.

It was concerns such as these which led to a preliminary scoping of the BBC's written online coverage of the situation in Syria. This scoping revealed some reasons for concern with respect to the BBC's reporting on Syria and subsequently paved the way for a more in-depth study which is presented in this report.

# METHODOLOGY

This study examined 309 BBC online articles on Syria between the months of September and December 2016. These articles were obtained through a search of the term 'Syria' in the search box on the BBC home page, after which the 'News' filter was applied. All articles appearing between the months of September and December 2016 were included in this study. The chronological confines of this study reflect the Aleppo tragedy which unfolded primarily between the months of September and December 2016, and furthermore reflect the search results that came up through the BBC search engine which were primarily constrained to this time period. The list of articles encompassed within this study is included in Annexes I and II.

Articles were sorted according to whether they reported a specific attack or crime. This is an important delimitation of this study, as it is confined to cases in which one or more sides engaged in an offensive or committed a certain violation. The following are some of the categories of articles which were hence excluded:

- Generic profile pages (e.g. 'Profile: Aleppo, Syria's second city'<sup>10</sup> – updated 28 November 2016)
- Where there was no commission of a crime or attack (e.g. 22 September 2016 article titled 'Syria conflict: UN 'ready to resume' aid convoys'<sup>11</sup>)
- Where one side of the conflict accused another side of a certain act, in which the news story was the allegation itself rather than any specific event (e.g. 22 December 2016 article titled 'Russia used Syria as live-fire training – US general'<sup>12</sup>)
- Articles which focused on reactions or commentary pertaining to certain attacks rather than on the attacks themselves (e.g. 20 September 2016 article 'Syria conflict: US 'outraged' over aid convoy attack'<sup>13</sup>)
- Articles detailing military advances or shifts in battle lines (e.g. 28 November 2016 article 'Aleppo siege: Third of rebel-held Syria city taken by forces'<sup>14</sup>)
- Articles dealing with peripheral issues pertaining to the Syrian conflict (e.g. 21 December 2016 article titled 'The radio station giving hope to listeners in Syria'<sup>15</sup>)
- Military attacks conducted under the mandate of UN Security Council Resolution 2249 (e.g. 4 September 2016 article titled 'Turkey tanks target IS in Syria'<sup>16</sup>)

Articles which reported a specific attack or crime were subsequently sorted according to the perpetrators of the reported incident(s). This study focused on the following actors:

1. Assad/Russia: Grouped together since they conduct joint military campaigns, and because it is difficult to distinguish between aerial attacks conducted by each of these two groups.
2. ISIS/Daesh
3. Opposition fighters (Rebels)
4. US-led Coalition
5. Unidentified/Unknown

The categorisation of the articles encompassed within this study according to perpetrators is detailed within Annex I.

In addition to sorting articles according to perpetrators, this study also separately identified BBC online articles appearing between September and December 2016 which specifically mentioned 'Assad' in their headlines.<sup>17</sup> A discourse analysis was conducted with respect to the headlines of these articles.

# RESULTS

Out of the 309 BBC online news articles collected between the months of September and December 2016 on Syria, 61 of them reported specific attacks. 38 of these attacks were committed by the Assad regime and/or its Russian allies, 9 by ISIS, 5 by opposition fighters, 4 by the US-led Coalition, and 5 were unknown or unidentified. The news headlines for these articles, however, specifically identified Assad/Russia as the perpetrators in four instances, ISIS in nine, opposition fighters in four, and the US-led Coalition in four. The results are displayed below in Table 1.

**Table 1: Identification of perpetrators in news headlines according to party**

Party	Number of articles reporting attacks or crimes committed by party	Number of articles specifically identifying perpetrators in news headline	Percentage of articles specifically identifying perpetrators in news headlines
Assad regime	38	4	11%
ISIS	9	9	100%
Opposition fighters	5	4	80%
US-led Coalition	4	4	100%
Unknown	5	N/A	N/A

In terms of percentages, Assad/Russia were identified only 11% of the time that they committed attacks or crimes against the civilian population (within article headlines). This is in contrast to ISIS which was specifically identified 100% of the time, opposition fighters which were specifically identified 80% of the time, and the US-led Coalition which was specifically identified 100% of the time.

Beyond the article headlines, Assad/Russia were also not always clearly identified within the texts of the articles themselves. As detailed within Table 2, four of the 38 articles detailing attacks by Assad/Russia identified these parties' responsibility within the article headlines. Eleven articles identified their responsibility within the first paragraph, two within the second paragraph, four within the third paragraph, four within the fourth paragraph, one within the sixth paragraph, one within the seventh paragraph, one within the twelfth paragraph, and two within videos accompanying the articles (although nowhere in the article text). Some of these identifications were done only indirectly. Eight articles failed to identify Assad/Russia as the perpetrators of the specific attacks entirely.

**Table 2: How far into the articles that Assad/Russia are first identified as the perpetrators of reported crimes/attacks**

Place within Article	Number of Articles
Headline	4
First paragraph	11 (1 as an allegation)
Second paragraph	2 (1 of them indirectly)
Third paragraph	4 (2 of them indirectly)
Fourth paragraph	4 (2 of them indirectly)
Sixth paragraph	1
Seventh paragraph	1
Twelfth paragraph	1 (indirectly)
Video	2 (1 as an allegation)
Unidentified	8

Therefore, only 17 out of the 38 articles detailing attacks or crimes by Assad/Russia identified their responsibility for these crimes within the article headlines or within paragraphs 1-2 of the articles. The remaining 21 of the 38 articles identified them as the perpetrators in paragraphs 3-12 of the articles, within the videos accompanying the articles, or failed to identify them entirely.

There were also eight articles with Assad’s name in their headlines. Table 3 identifies these eight articles by date and headline.

**Table 3: Articles with Assad’s name in the headlines**

Date	Title
19 September 2016	John Kerry: Syria’s Bashar al-Assad must be more responsible
22 September 2016	Assad: Coalition attack on Syria troops ‘intentional’
14 October 2016	Syria’s Assad: Aleppo a ‘springboard’ to winning the war
12 November 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo rebels pushed back by Assad’s forces
15 November 2016	Syria conflict: Assad hopes for ‘anti-terror ally’ in Trump
23 November 2016	Syria war: Assad officials offer Aleppo rebels football match
7 December 2016	Syria conflict: Will President Assad’s forces retake Aleppo?
21 December 2016	The UK should ‘move on’ from opposing Assad, says former UK ambassador

A discourse analysis of these articles reveals that each one contains either positive, or at the very least neutral, key words or take-away messages:

- *John Kerry: Syria’s Bashar al-Assad must be more responsible*<sup>18</sup>  
This article was written in the context of air strikes committed by the Assad regime against civilian areas in Aleppo six days after the conclusion of a ceasefire. The word ‘responsibility’ therefore significantly downplays the seriousness and the grave and destructive nature of the Assad regime’s actions. Although the article headline reflects John Kerry’s choice of words, Kerry also characterised the violence as ‘extraordinary, irresponsible, reckless’ and stressed that ‘the best thing the Russians can do is to keep [Assad] from flying now’, while also noting that ‘it’s very hard for [the opposition] to stop when people are bombing them on a daily basis’. The latter quotes offer alternative phrases which could have been used to draft a more befitting article headline.
- *Assad: Coalition attack on Syria troops ‘intentional’*<sup>19</sup>  
This headline uses a quote from Assad in the context of the US-led Coalition’s direct attack against Assad’s troops. This article headline presents Assad as the ‘victim’ of direct Western ‘imperialism’ which could garner sympathy for Assad.
- *Syria’s Assad: Aleppo a ‘springboard’ to winning the war*<sup>20</sup>  
This headline uses the word ‘win’ which carries a positive connotation. Although this is a direct quote from Assad, the average reader, upon reading only the headline, may gather that Assad is engaged in a war in which it is desirable for him to win.
- *Syria conflict: Aleppo rebels pushed back by Assad’s forces*<sup>21</sup>  
This article headline is neutral and describes the factual situation on the ground in Aleppo at the time whereby opposition forces were losing ground to the Assad regime’s forces.

- *Syria conflict: Assad hopes for 'anti-terror ally' in Trump*<sup>22</sup>  
This article headline clearly portrays Assad as a player in the fight against terrorism. By quoting Assad that he hopes to find an anti-terror ally in Trump, the headline implies that Assad is actively engaged in combating terrorism.
- *Syria war: Assad officials offer Aleppo rebels football match*<sup>23</sup>  
This article immediately invokes a feeling of benevolence on behalf of the Assad regime for 'offering' a football match to opposition fighters in Aleppo. It should be noted, of course, that this article was printed in the midst of suffocating siege and endless bombardments that the Assad regime was inflicting upon opposition-controlled areas in Aleppo.
- *Syria conflict: Will President Assad's forces retake Aleppo?*<sup>24</sup>  
The term 'retake' implies the re-establishment of rightful ownership. Through posing a question, this article headline imparts subliminal messaging that someone – or some entity – has taken Aleppo from Assad's forces, and the question now is whether they will retake it.
- *The UK should 'move on' from opposing Assad, says former UK ambassador*<sup>25</sup>  
This article presents the view of a previous UK Government official that it may no longer be prudent to oppose Assad. While the headline does not state the reason given by this former official, the take-home message is that perhaps Assad is not worthy of being opposed.

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of 309 BBC online articles spanning the months of September to December 2016 on the situation in Syria reveals that attacks and crimes by the Assad regime and/or its Russian allies were clearly underreported within the article headlines, especially as compared to the reporting on the other parties involved in the conflict.

In the 61 articles between September and December 2016 which reported specific attacks or crimes in Syria, Assad/Russia were responsible for more attacks than all of the other parties combined (38 attacks, whereas ISIS was responsible for 9, opposition fighters for 5, and the US-led Coalition for 4). However, a BBC reader skimming only article headlines on Syria is left with the impression that Assad/Russia are on equal footing with opposition fighters as well as the US-led Coalition in terms of the number of attacks committed against civilians or civilian areas, and these groups in turn dwarfed by ISIS as the main perpetrator of attacks. This is because only four article headlines specifically mentioned Assad/Russia as the perpetrators, compared to nine identifying ISIS, four identifying opposition fighters, and four identifying the US-led Coalition.

The pattern which emerges can be contrasted with statistics released by the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) regarding the main parties responsible for civilian deaths in Syria. In January 2017, for example, the SNHR reported that Assad and Russian forces were together responsible for over 75% of civilian deaths in 2016.<sup>26</sup> Even more, SNHR reported in November 2016 that Assad's forces were responsible for over 90% of civilian deaths in Syria between March 2011 (when the conflict started) and November 2016.<sup>27</sup> Not only do BBC article headlines fail to reflect these statistics, but they furthermore alter the trends and fail to present Assad/Russia as the primary perpetrators.

The ramifications of the above patterns are greatest in terms of public opinion, and consequently in public pressure exerted upon the UK Government to respond to the Syrian conflict. Importantly, the issue here is not the falsification of the news, but rather a distortion of facts. Indeed, the same facts, when presented in different ways, can yield dramatically different messaging and can leave viewers with impressions that do not reflect the full reality of the situation. The BBC's online reporting on Syria, especially with respect to attacks or crimes committed by the Assad regime and/or its Russian allies, is built upon a series of factual yet incomplete news headlines which reduce from the gravity of Assad/Russia's actions and consequently increase, by proportion, the perceived offensive nature of ISIS, opposition forces, and the US-led Coalition.

Such a pattern of downgrading Assad/Russia's involvement in criminal activity in Syria within article headlines will undoubtedly contribute to a misinformed public and will influence public opinion on what is happening in Syria and consequently what the UK's role should be in response to the conflict. Most news readers are thought to read only news headlines,<sup>28</sup> meaning that the average reader of BBC online articles may be left with the impression that ISIS, but not Assad/Russia, is responsible for the majority of the reported civilian deaths in Syria but also for the horrors of the conflict more generally. It should also be noted that the pro-Assad propaganda machine has been particularly effective in attracting support from the Western political left through presenting a narrative premised upon anti-interventionism and anti-imperialism. A skewed proportion of article headlines identifying

attack perpetrators within Syria can thus create confirmation bias for this pro-Assadist propaganda and help to fuel these misinformations.

The potential for BBC readers to be misinformed about the situation in Syria is further compounded by the vagueness in identifying perpetrators of attacks within the articles themselves (and therefore, not only within the headlines). Indeed, many of the BBC online articles failed to identify, or only indirectly identified, Assad/Russia as the perpetrators within the article text. Therefore, even readers who are interested enough to read parts or all of the articles may be misled as to which parties are committing the reported attacks. For example, eight of the articles which reported attacks committed by Assad/Russia failed entirely to identify the perpetrators, both within the article headline and text. While the BBC may argue that such information was withheld because certain details pertaining to these attacks were unverified, such an argument would also have to be extended to attacks committed by other groups (for example, opposition forces). Furthermore, the attacks in question followed patterns employed only by the Assad regime and/or its Russian allies and occurred in areas in which only these parties' air forces were operating. By withholding this crucial information, however, only those readers with extensive knowledge on the situation in Syria will be able to deduce that the attacks were committed by Assad/Russia. Otherwise, readers could make incorrect assumptions, derived from their internal biases as influenced by external factors such as media reporting, that these attacks were committed by ISIS, opposition groups, or the US-led Coalition.

In addition to downplaying the crimes committed by Assad/Russia, another point of concern regarding the BBC's online reporting on Syria pertains to the manner in which Assad's name was incorporated within article headlines. Specifically, none of the eight articles mentioning his name linked him to any criminal activity although he is the leader of the Syrian armed forces which are responsible for the vast majority of civilian deaths in Syria. To the contrary, Assad's name was in some cases given a positive connotation in the article headlines, portraying him for example as a 'victim' of Western 'imperialism', as a genuine player in the fight against terrorism, or as a leader whom the UK should no longer oppose.

Although the pattern of under-representation of Assad/Russia's crimes may not be intentional on behalf of the BBC, it undoubtedly creates confusion regarding what is happening in Syria and on the roles that various parties assume within the conflict. It is important that viewers understand what is happening on the ground in Syria because this affects the nature of the political pressure that they will exert on policy makers, which will in turn affect decision making on how the UK reacts to the Syrian conflict.

It should be stressed that a consistent identification of attack perpetrators in the BBC's reporting on Syria would not clash with its commitment to impartiality, even if it would reveal that Assad and Russia are responsible for the overwhelming majority of attacks on civilians and civilian areas. Specifically, impartiality does not mean that the BBC must report attacks committed by various groups in Syria with equal frequency. Instead, it seems more logical that the BBC should report attacks committed by these parties in proportion to each one's responsibility for criminal activity within the overall conflict. BBC's own editorial guidelines can extend this argument even further, as they stress that '[impartiality] does not ... prohibit fair, evidence-based judgements' and that it 'does not require absolute neutrality on every issue or detachment from fundamental democratic values'.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, the BBC can make clear – through objective, neutral, and impartial reporting – who the primary

perpetrators are within Syria, while even passing evidence-based judgments as to the roles of these various parties.

Finally, although it cannot be assumed that British population, in part or in whole, obtains its news primarily through the BBC, the network holds a particular responsibility to ensure accurate, impartial, and representative reporting for its viewers given that it is funded by UK taxpayers' money. The BBC has an established and assumingly proud reputation of being non-biased and impartial and this has earned it the trust of its viewers. Therefore, it is important that the BBC not only report the factual situation in Syria, but also that it do so while providing a representative picture of what is happening within the country. At a minimum, this should include clarity regarding the roles that various parties are playing within the Syrian conflict as well as the gravity of their actions as compared to those of other parties.

The Syrian conflict is by no means over, meaning that the BBC will continue to report on the developments within the country as they occur. In order to ensure accurate, fair, and reliable reporting, we offer the following recommendations:

1. The BBC should adopt a consistent policy of identifying perpetrators of attacks or crimes in Syria within article headlines. Importantly, the frequency by which each party is specifically identified within the headline should reflect the proportion of attacks that it is responsible for within the conflict.
2. If for any justified reason perpetrators of attacks or crimes are not identified within article headlines, then they should be clearly identified within the first paragraph of the articles themselves.
3. Because article headlines provide initial and lasting impressions upon readers, their wordings should be chosen carefully with due regard to the connotations that they impart upon readers.

## ABOUT RETHINK REBUILD SOCIETY

Rethink Rebuild Society is a Manchester-based non-profit organisation established in 2011 to campaign for Syrian issues within the British landscape. We have established ourselves as a leading Syrian advocacy group within the UK, working with policy makers and the media to affect Syria-related decision-making at all levels of government and to shape the Syrian narrative as it is understood by the wider British public.

Rethink Rebuild Society works with policy makers at the local and national levels to address pertinent issues pertaining to Syria and to Syrian refugees in the UK. We issue Parliamentary briefings and statements to flag Parliamentarians' attention to important developments on Syria and offer policy recommendations on what the UK can do to address them.

Rethink Rebuild Society also works to shape the media narrative on the Syrian conflict. We serve as a critical source of information on Syria for journalists and reporters. We also issue press releases that are regularly picked up by media outlets, thereby shaping the news agenda on Syria.<sup>30</sup> We have been hosted on both television and radio programmes and have been quoted in local, national, and international press.<sup>31</sup>

Rethink Rebuild Society is at the forefront in ensuring that the British Syrian community is represented, respected, and catered for within British society.

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<sup>16</sup> 'Syria conflict: IS 'ousted from symbolic town of Dabiq'' (*BBC News*, 16 October 2016) <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-37670998>>.

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- <sup>25</sup> 'The UK should 'move on' from opposing Assad, says former UK ambassador' (*BBC News*, 21 December 2016) <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-38398845>>.
- <sup>26</sup> '16,913 Civilians Killed in 2016' (SNHR, January 2017) <[http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/16913\\_civilians\\_killed\\_in\\_2016\\_en.pdf](http://sn4hr.org/wp-content/pdf/english/16913_civilians_killed_in_2016_en.pdf)>.
- <sup>27</sup> 'The Six Main Parties that Kill Civilians in Syria and the Death Toll Percentage Distribution among them' (SNHR, November 2016) <<http://sn4hr.org/blog/2016/11/14/29132/>>.
- <sup>28</sup> See Jayson DeMers, '59 Percent Of You Will Share This Article Without Even Reading It' (*Forbes*, 8 August 2016) <<http://www.forbes.com/sites/harleyfinkelstein/2017/01/16/5-trends-that-will-change-the-way-you-shop-in-2017/#211990fd387f>>; 'The rational and attentive news consumer' (*American Press Institute*, 17 March 2014) <<https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/publications/reports/survey-research/rational-attentive-news-consumer/>>.
- <sup>29</sup> 'Impartiality' (*BBC*, 2017) <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/article/art20130702112133788>>.
- <sup>30</sup> See 'Press Releases' (*Rethink Rebuild Society*) <<http://rrsoc.org/press-releases>>.
- <sup>31</sup> For our media appearances, see 'RR in the Press' (*Rethink Rebuild Society*) <<http://rrsoc.org/rr-in-the-press>>.

# ANNEX I

## Database of BBC online articles on Syria between the months of September and December 2016 reporting specific attacks or crimes

Article Date	Article Title	Party	Place Party is First Identified in Article
7 September 2016	Syria 'gas attack'	Assad/Russia	First paragraph – as allegation
7 September 2016	Syria conflict: Government helicopters 'drop chlorine' on Aleppo	Assad/Russia	Headline
10 September 2016	Syria conflict: Footage captures market attack aftermath	Assad/Russia	Not identified
11 September 2016	Syria conflict: Heavy air strikes resume on Aleppo	Assad/Russia	First paragraph
11 September 2016	Syria conflict: Bombs rain down as truce hopes rise	Assad/Russia	Not identified
14 September 2016	Syria ceasefire: Aleppo district 'pulverised'	Assad/Russia	In video – as allegation
21 September 2016	Syria conflict: Air strike kills five medical workers	Assad/Russia	Fourth paragraph – as allegation
22 September 2016	Syria conflict: Footage 'shows warplane attack on Aleppo'	Assad/Russia	Not identified
22 September 2016	Syria conflict: Warplanes set rebel-held Aleppo ablaze	Assad/Russia	Not identified
23 September 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo pounded as military presses offensive	Assad/Russia	Headline
23 September 2016	Syria war: Army declares new offensive in eastern Aleppo	Assad/Russia	Headline
23 September 2016	Syria: Aleppo under heavy attack for a second day	Assad/Russia	First paragraph
24 September 2016	Syria conflict: Air strikes leave Aleppo 'without water'	Assad/Russia	Fourth paragraph – indirectly
1 October 2016	Syria conflict: Surveying the damage to Aleppo's hospital	Assad/Russia	Not identified
2 October 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo bombing shuts largest hospital	Assad/Russia	Not identified
3 October 2016	Syria conflict: Hospital in rebel-held Aleppo 'bombed again'	Assad/Russia	First paragraph
6 October 2016	Syria conflict: Life under siege in rebel-held Aleppo	Assad/Russia	Third paragraph
8 October 2016	Syria war: Hunger stalks besieged Madaya	Assad/Russia	Sixth paragraph
11 October 2016	Syria conflict: Heavy air strikes resume on Aleppo	Assad/Russia	First paragraph
17 October 2016	Aleppo bombing 'kills 14 members of one family'	Assad/Russia	Twelfth paragraph – indirectly
22 October 2016	Syria blamed for chemical weapons attack in 2015	Assad/Russia	Headline
26 October 2016	Syria conflict: Helicopter 'drops bombs on Turkish-backed rebels'	Assad/Russia	First paragraph
26 October 2016	Syria conflict: Schoolchildren killed in Idlib air raids	Assad/Russia	Third paragraph

9 November 2016	Children pulled from Syria rubble	Assad/Russia	Not identified
15 November 2016	Syria conflict: Air strikes resume on rebel-held Aleppo	Assad/Russia	First paragraph
16 November 2016	Syria conflict: Children's hospital hit in deadly Aleppo strikes	Assad/Russia	First paragraph
16 November 2016	Syria conflict: Fear in Aleppo as air strikes resume	Assad/Russia	In video only
17 November 2016	Syria conflict: Strikes on rebel-held Aleppo 'kill 25'	Assad/Russia	First paragraph
18 November 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo bombarded as UN warns of 'bleak' moment	Assad/Russia	Not identified
19 November 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo hospitals 'knocked out by bombardment'	Assad/Russia	Second paragraph
20 November 2016	Syria conflict: Moment of blast at rebel Aleppo hospital	Assad/Russia	Third paragraph – indirectly
20 November 2016	Explosion rocks Aleppo hospital	Assad/Russia	First paragraph
28 November 2016	Syria war: Thousands uprooted from rebel-held east Aleppo	Assad/Russia	First paragraph
1 December 2016	Syria conflict: Clown of Aleppo 'dies in air strike'	Assad/Russia	Third paragraph – indirectly
12 December 2016	Palmyra: 'Chemical gas attack' hits IS-held Syrian area	Assad/Russia	Second paragraph – indirectly
14 December 2016	Syria conflict: Fierce fighting halts Aleppo evacuation	Assad/Russia	Fourth paragraph
14 December 2016	Aleppo battle: Raids on Syria city 'probably war crime' UN says	Assad/Russia	Fourth paragraph
23 December 2016	Syria war: From besieged Madaya, desperate calls for help	Assad/Russia	Seventh paragraph
6 September 2016	IS rocket attack kills Turkish soldiers in Syria	ISIS	Headline
4 October 2016	IS suicide bomber kills 30 at Kurdish wedding in Syria	ISIS	Headline
6 October 2016	Syria war: IS bomb kills rebels at Turkey border crossing	ISIS	Headline
24 November 2016	IS conflict: Turkish soldiers killed in Syria attack	ISIS	Headline
25 November 2016	IS conflict: US soldier killed in Syria blast	ISIS	Headline
29 November 2016	Islamic State conflict: Turkey says two soldiers missing in Syria	ISIS	Headline
10 December 2016	Islamic State fighters re-enter ancient Palmyra in Syria	ISIS	Headline
21 December 2016	IS conflict: 14 Turkish soldiers dead in worst day's loss yet	ISIS	Headline
23 December 2016	IS 'burns Turkish soldiers alive' in Syria execution video	ISIS	Headline
29 October 2016	Syria conflict: Rebel groups launch Aleppo offensive	Opposition forces	Headline
3 November 2016	Syria conflict: Rebels ramp up attacks on government-held Aleppo	Opposition forces	Headline
18 December 2016	Aleppo battle: Syria evacuation buses set on fire	Opposition forces	First paragraph
18 December 2016	Aleppo battle: Rebels burn Syria evacuation buses	Opposition forces	Headline

18 December 2016	Rebels burn Syria evacuation buses	Opposition forces	Headline
18 September 2016	Syria conflict: US air strikes 'kill dozens of government troops'	US-led Coalition	Headline
9 November 2016	Syria conflict: Coalition strike 'kills 20 civilians near Raqqa'	US-led Coalition	Headline
29 November 2016	Syria conflict: US admits mistakes led to strike on state forces	US-led Coalition	Headline
1 December 2016	Syria conflict: US coalition admits killing civilians in Manbij	US-led Coalition	Headline
14 September 2016	Shot in the spine amid Syria ceasefire	Unknown	N/A
19 September 2016	Syria conflict: Aid convoy hit by 'air strike' near Aleppo	Unknown	N/A
22 September 2016	Syria aid convoy attack: What happened?	Unknown	N/A
22 October 2016	Syria war: Aleppo ceasefire ends with clashes	Unknown	N/A
30 December 2016	Syria conflict: Clashes reported despite truce	Unknown	N/A

## ANNEX II

### Database of BBC online articles on Syria between the months of September and December 2016 not reporting specific attacks or crimes

Article Date	Article Title
1 September 2016	The Syria you don't think of
4 September 2016	Turkey tanks target IS in Syria
6 September 2016	Sven Lau: Islamist preacher faces Syria charges in Germany
7 September 2016	Deputy Foreign Minister: 'This is a war against Syria'
7 September 2016	Syria conflict: Opposition unveils transition plan
8 September 2016	Syria: The long path to peace
8 September 2016	US Defence Secretary: Russia 'fuelling violence' in Syria
8 September 2016	Syria conflict: Civilians leave rebel-held Damascus suburb Muadhamiya
8 September 2016	What is Aleppo? Gary Johnson foxed by Syria question
9 September 2016	Syria conflict: Grim prospect of 10 more years of war
9 September 2016	IS 'loses more than a quarter of its territory' in Syria and Iraq
9 September 2016	Syria conflict: Senior militant leader 'killed' near Aleppo
10 September 2016	Syria truce?
10 September 2016	US and Russia agree Syria peace moves
11 September 2016	Turkey 'has duty' to defeat Islamic State group in Syria
12 September 2016	Syria war: Cessation of hostilities comes into effect
12 September 2016	Celebrating Eid with the children of Aleppo, Syria
13 September 2016	Syria ceasefire: Devastation on road into west Aleppo
13 September 2016	Syria ceasefire: Emergency aid expected soon for Aleppo
13 September 2016	Syria conflict: Life returns to Jarablus after IS flees
13 September 2016	Syria conflict: How will the new truce work?
13 September 2016	Syria ceasefire: 'No civilian deaths on first day'
13 September 2016	Syria ceasefire: Inside Aleppo's ruined covered market
14 September 2016	Syria ceasefire: Pentagon disquiet over US-Russia air war plan
14 September 2016	Syria ceasefire: Russian officers caught in firefight near Aleppo
14 September 2016	Pain of death crosses battle lines in Syria's Aleppo
14 September 2016	Syria ceasefire: UN's Ban Ki-moon makes aid plea
15 September 2016	The child victims of Syria's war
15 September 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo soup kitchen feeds the war-weary
16 September 2016	Syria war: Aleppo's children and families suffer conflict's horror
16 September 2016	How is this road crucial in Syria truce?
16 September 2016	Syria war: US and Russia argue over truce
16 September 2016	'Syria, I'll be right back. Promise'
17 September 2016	Syria conflict: Russia fears collapse of ceasefire
17 September 2016	US special forces 'chased from Syria town al-Rai'
18 September 2016	Syria conflict: US apology over air strikes 'not enough'
18 September 2016	Syria conflict: US air attack endangers truce - Russia
19 September 2016	John Kerry: Syria's Bashar al-Assad must be more responsible
19 September 2016	Teens' passports seized in Brighton over Syria travel fears
19 September 2016	IS supporter's warning: Don't fight in Syria
19 September 2016	Syria conflict: Hopes fade for truce as violence flares
20 September 2016	Aid workers 'in shock' over Syria attack
20 September 2016	Syria conflict: UN suspends all aid after convoy hit
20 September 2016	Syria activist: 'Helicopter dropped bombs on aid convoy'
20 September 2016	Syria convoy attack 'could be war crime'

20 September 2016	Syria conflict: US 'outraged' over aid convoy attack
21 September 2016	Newspaper headlines: Syria 'new low' and cataract op 'lottery'
21 September 2016	Syria conflict: Why truce was doomed to fail
21 September 2016	Syria ceasefire 'not dead yet': US State Department
21 September 2016	Syria war: John Kerry urges planes to be grounded
21 September 2016	Syria convoy attack: Russia drone footage shows 'militant mortar'
21 September 2016	Syria aid convoy attack: US 'holds Russia responsible'
21 September 2016	Syria: Kerry urges Russia 'to come clean' over air strikes
22 September 2016	Syria conflict: UN 'ready to resume' aid convoys
22 September 2016	Syria's White Helmets win 'alternative Nobel Prize'
22 September 2016	Three days in Syria
22 September 2016	Assad: Coalition attack on Syria troops 'intentional'
23 September 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo remains thorn in government's side
23 September 2016	Viewpoint: Why it is unconscionable to attack Syria's aid workers
25 September 2016	US accuses Russia of Syria 'barbarism'
25 September 2016	Syria conflict: US accuses Russia of 'barbarism' in Aleppo
25 September 2016	Johnson: 'Russian actions in Syria could be war crime'
25 September 2016	Syria conflict: Russia 'may have committed war crime' - Johnson
25 September 2016	Russian ambassador to UN: 'Syria peace almost impossible'
25 September 2016	Syria conflict: UN chief 'appalled' by Aleppo escalation
26 September 2016	Syria conflict: Aid reaches Madaya and other besieged towns
26 September 2016	Syria conflict: US and UK rhetoric 'unacceptable' – Russia
26 September 2016	Syria conflict: One quiet moment tells of Aleppo's despair
26 September 2016	Syria conflict: Obama 'deeply concerned' about Aleppo
27 September 2016	Syria toy smuggler visits children from besieged town
27 September 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo evacuation corridors needed, WHO says
27 September 2016	Syria conflict: US pledges \$360m in additional aid
28 September 2016	Flint taxi driver convicted of rape fled 'to Syria'
28 September 2016	Syria war: Those bombing Aleppo 'must answer to God' – Pope
29 September 2016	German journalist Janina Findeisen flees Syria captivity with baby
30 September 2016	Syria: The kids playing football in Aleppo's ruins
30 September 2016	US protecting Syria jihadist group – Russia's Lavrov
1 October 2016	Russia on Syria
1 October 2016	Syria conflict: US says Russia driving rebels into extremists' camp
2 October 2016	Reporting Syria's war – the images you won't see
2 October 2016	Syria conflict: Besieged areas of Aleppo a 'living hell'
3 October 2016	What Syria reveals about the new world order
4 October 2016	Syria conflict: Spain and France draft Aleppo truce resolution
4 October 2016	Syria conflict: Russia sends missile system to Tartus base
4 October 2016	Syria conflict: US suspends talks with Russia
4 October 2016	Syria conflict: Militant leader 'killed in air strike'
5 October 2016	Syria aid convoy attack: What we know
5 October 2016	Syria conflict: Aid convoy attack was air strike, UN expert says
6 October 2016	Syria conflict: The children who go an underground school
6 October 2016	Syria conflict: Eastern Aleppo faces 'total ruin' in two months
7 October 2016	Chinese fans call for football head resignation after Syria defeat
7 October 2016	Syria conflict: US calls for Russia and Syria war crimes probe
9 October 2016	Syria: Why does the town of Dabiq matter?
9 October 2016	Newspaper headlines: Trump's troubles, Syria sorrow and pension perk-up
10 October 2016	Syria conflict: France wants Russia on war crimes charges
11 October 2016	Protest against Russian bombing of Syria, urges Ann Clwyd
11 October 2016	Syria conflict: Russia's Putin halts France visit amid row
11 October 2016	Boris Johnson: Russia risks becoming pariah over Syria bombing

12 October 2016	Syria: US as much a target for protests as Russia – Labour
12 October 2016	Syria rebels set up internment camp for IS defectors
12 October 2016	Syria conflict: Rebels set up internment camp for IS defectors
12 October 2016	Inside the camp for IS defectors in Syria
13 October 2016	Syria conflict: Russian war crimes claim ‘rhetoric’ says Putin
13 October 2016	Theresa May not planning to extend UK military action in Syria
13 October 2016	Policing, devolution, Syria, and a Lords maiden speech
13 October 2016	MoD ‘no civilian deaths’ claim in Syria strikes challenged
13 October 2016	In pictures: How a rebel fighter became ‘Syria’s Banksy’
13 October 2016	New UN boss Antonio Guterres: Priority to end Syria conflict
14 October 2016	Aleppo’s Syria Civil Defence manager on the White Helmets
14 October 2016	Syria conflict ‘top priority’ for next UN chief Guterres
14 October 2016	Syria’s Assad: Aleppo a ‘springboard’ to winning the war
15 October 2016	Syria conflict: Rebels advance on IS stronghold of Dabiq
16 October 2016	Syria conflict: West considers new sanctions over Aleppo
16 October 2016	Syria conflict: IS ‘ousted from symbolic town of Dabiq’
17 October 2016	Syria war: Russia announces Aleppo humanitarian pause
18 October 2016	Syria First Lady Asma Al-Assad ‘rejected offer of asylum’
18 October 2016	Syria war: Russia halts Aleppo bombing for humanitarian pause
18 October 2016	Syria’s Asma al-Assad: ‘Western media solely focus on refugees’
19 October 2016	Syria conflict: Jihadists reject Aleppo evacuation offer
20 October 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo ‘humanitarian pause’ begins
20 October 2016	Syria conflict: Russia extends Aleppo ceasefire by 24 hours
21 October 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo a slaughterhouse, UN rights chief says
25 October 2016	Syria ‘toy smuggler’ talks to the BBC about fraud claims
26 October 2016	Playing football as bombs and bullets fly in Syria
27 October 2016	UN aid chief: My incandescent rage on Syria
27 October 2016	Luton couple arrested over suspected Syria trip plans
28 October 2016	Former UN Syria envoy: People are spoiling for a bigger war
28 October 2016	Syria rebels ‘in push to break Aleppo siege’
28 October 2016	Syria conflict: UN urges inquiry into deadly air strike on school
30 October 2016	Aleppo siege: UN envoy Mistura ‘appalled’ by rebel attacks
3 November 2016	Syria conflict: Russia tells rebels to leave Aleppo
4 November 2016	Syria conflict: Ceasefire for Aleppo rebels ends
4 November 2016	Syria conflict: East Aleppo braces itself for more air strikes
6 November 2016	Syria conflict: Rebel force targets IS ‘capital’ Raqqa
8 November 2016	Batley man charged with Syria terrorism offences
10 November 2016	Syria conflict: Food rations run out in rebel-held Aleppo
11 November 2016	Labour: ‘Get jihadis out of Aleppo’ to stop Syria violence
12 November 2016	Madaya, Syria, where children resort to suicide
12 November 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo rebels pushed back by Assad’s forces
14 November 2016	Men ‘used Syria-bound aid convoys to move terror items’
15 November 2016	UN special envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, on Trump
15 November 2016	Syria conflict: Assad hopes for ‘anti-terror ally’ in Trump
16 November 2016	Syria conflict: Kurdish YPG militia to leave Manbij
20 November 2016	Syria war: Aleppo self-rule plan rejected by government
21 November 2016	Syria conflict: Almost one million living under siege – UN
22 November 2016	Syria war: UN resumes aid to Syrians on Jordan border
23 November 2016	Syria conflict: The girl, 7, who tweets from Aleppo
23 November 2016	Syria war: Assad officials offer Aleppo rebels football match
27 November 2016	Syria government forces retake largest Aleppo rebel district
27 November 2016	Syria war: Army makes rapid gains in rebel-held east Aleppo
28 November 2016	Profile: Aleppo, Syria’s second city

28 November 2016	Syria conflict: Rebels lose third of east Aleppo territory
28 November 2016	Aleppo siege: Third of rebel-held Syria city taken by forces
29 November 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo defeat 'not the end for rebels'
30 November 2016	Terror funding accused Syed Hoque admits sending cash to nephew in Syria
30 November 2016	Syria war: Aleppo risks becoming giant graveyard - UN
30 November 2016	Syria conflict: 'Israeli jets' strike outside Damascus
30 November 2016	Fleeing from Iraq... to Syria
1 December 2016	Sutton Hoo bitumen links Syria with Anglo-Saxon England
1 December 2016	Syria conflict: Russia proposes safe corridors for Aleppo
1 December 2016	Aleppo: Key battleground in Syria's civil war
3 December 2016	Aleppo siege: Syria rebels lose 50% of territory
5 December 2016	Syria conflict: The things Syrians take with them
5 December 2016	Trump supporters shrug off conspiracy theory attack and Twitter seeks Syria's Bana
5 December 2016	Syria Iraq conflict: Is victory any closer?
6 December 2016	Syria: Celebrations as families return to homes in Aleppo
6 December 2016	Aleppo battle: Syria forces 'seize more rebel-held areas'
6 December 2016	Canada's Justin Trudeau tears up meeting Syria refugee
7 December 2016	Syria conflict: 'Israel missiles' hit Damascus military airport
7 December 2016	Syria rebels 'withdraw from Old City' of Aleppo
7 December 2016	Aleppo battle: Syria rebels call for truce to evacuate civilians
7 December 2016	Syria conflict: Will President Assad's forces retake Aleppo?
8 December 2016	Aleppo battle: 'Forgotten' civilians moved from Syria frontline
8 December 2016	Syria war: Russia awards medals to dead and wounded
9 December 2016	Syria war: East Aleppo evacuees and devastation – in pictures
9 December 2016	Syria conflict: Army 'suspends Aleppo fighting'
9 December 2016	Syria war: IS edge closer to Palmyra again
10 December 2016	Jeremy Corbyn speech disrupted by Syria protesters
10 December 2016	Syria Aleppo: UN envoy urges political solution to war
10 December 2016	Syria conflict: US urges 'grace' as Aleppo's fall nears
10 December 2016	Syria conflict: US to send troops to help seize Raqqa from IS
11 December 2016	Syria couple win legal fight for care of children
11 December 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo rebels 'stem army advance'
11 December 2016	Syria Russia: 'First footage of special forces fighting IS'
13 December 2016	Aleppo battle ends as Syria rebel deal reached
13 December 2016	George Osborne: We share responsibility for what is happening in Syria
13 December 2016	Paris attacks planners 'killed in Syria'
14 December 2016	Recapture of Aleppo: What next for Syria?
15 December 2016	Aleppo Syria: Global shows of solidarity over Aleppo
15 December 2016	Syria civil war: First buses leave rebel-held eastern Aleppo
15 December 2016	Boy, 7, asks for 'peace in Syria' in Santa letter
15 December 2016	Humza Ali found guilty of trying to travel to Syria
15 December 2016	Aleppo Syria battle: Aerial footage shows evacuation
15 December 2016	Aleppo Syria battle: Evacuation of rebel-held east
16 December 2016	The family reunited after being split by Syria conflict
16 December 2016	Aleppo Syria battle: Evacuees graffiti words of hope
16 December 2016	Syria crisis: Aleppo wounded relive bombing ordeal
16 December 2016	Syria crisis: Hope turns to panic in Aleppo
16 December 2016	Aleppo Syria: Russia hails 'victory over terrorism'
16 December 2016	Syria Aleppo: Thousands wait as exodus from city halts
17 December 2016	Syria war: Would you invite a refugee to live with you?
17 December 2016	Aleppo: A group of UK doctors is heading to Syria with medical supplies
17 December 2016	War photographer returns to Syria with People's Convoy

18 December 2016	Aleppo Syria battle: Sick left behind in evacuation delays
18 December 2016	Aleppo evacuation: Thousands stranded in desperate conditions
19 December 2016	Aleppo evacuation: Orphans among thousands to leave Syria city
19 December 2016	In pictures: Aleppo's evacuated children
19 December 2016	'Syria is one of our greatest failings'
19 December 2016	Why is there a war in Syria?
19 December 2016	Aleppo battle: Hundreds leave Syria city as evacuations resume
20 December 2016	What happens to Aleppo's evacuees?
20 December 2016	Aleppo evacuation: Syrian army warns rebels to leave
20 December 2016	Fifa's not so fine, Syria's Bana is reported safe and Trump supporters claim Star Wars boycott worked
21 December 2016	Aleppo girl Bana Alabed thanks Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan
21 December 2016	Russia and Turkey remain close despite ambassador's murder
21 December 2016	The UK should 'move on' from opposing Assad, says former UK ambassador
21 December 2016	The radio station giving hope to listeners in Syria
21 December 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo evacuations resume after 24-hour delay
22 December 2016	Russia used Syria as live-fire training - US general
22 December 2016	Islamic State and the crisis in Iraq and Syria in maps
22 December 2016	Syria conflict: Aleppo evacuation operation nears end
23 December 2016	The woman walking to Aleppo to 'end the Syrian war'
23 December 2016	What's happening in Aleppo?
23 December 2016	Syria aid convoys: Two guilty over terror funding
23 December 2016	Archbishop calls on people to 'build bridges not walls'
23 December 2016	UK Foreign Office 'got Syria wrong'
23 December 2016	Britain 'got Syria wrong every step of the way'
23 December 2016	Syria: 'Moment of relief' for Aleppo children
24 December 2016	Trump's Syria conundrum
25 December 2016	Recovery operation after Russian military plane crashes into Black Sea
25 December 2016	Pope Francis's Christmas message calls for an end to Syrian war
25 December 2016	Pope Francis sends message of peace to Syria
28 December 2016	Seven charged with attempted murder of Berlin homeless man
28 December 2016	US says claim it supported IS in Syria is 'ludicrous'
28 December 2016	Syria conflict: Turkey and Russia 'agree ceasefire plan'
29 December 2016	Russian plane crash: What we know
29 December 2016	Syria conflict: Ceasefire agreed, backed by Russia and Turkey
29 December 2016	Syria conflict: Turkey plans for ceasefire before new year
29 December 2016	Syria conflict: Putin announces ceasefire
29 December 2016	Russia plane crash: Attack not ruled out by investigators
29 December 2016	Syria ceasefire declared: As it happened
30 December 2016	Trump and the Middle East: an impossible disengagement?
30 December 2016	Newspaper reviews: Debbie Reynolds and May 'Israel row'
30 December 2016	Ceasefire in Syria: Turkish policy sets Syria on new path
30 December 2016	The US illustrator drawing pictures of Syria's civil war
31 December 2016	Syria conflict: UN welcomes Russia-Turkey truce efforts
31 December 2016	Syria ceasefire deal?
31 December 2016	Five issues which shaped the Middle East in 2016