

Syria Risk Profiles

First Regional Conference of Quality Initiative in
Eastern Europe (QIEE), Phase II

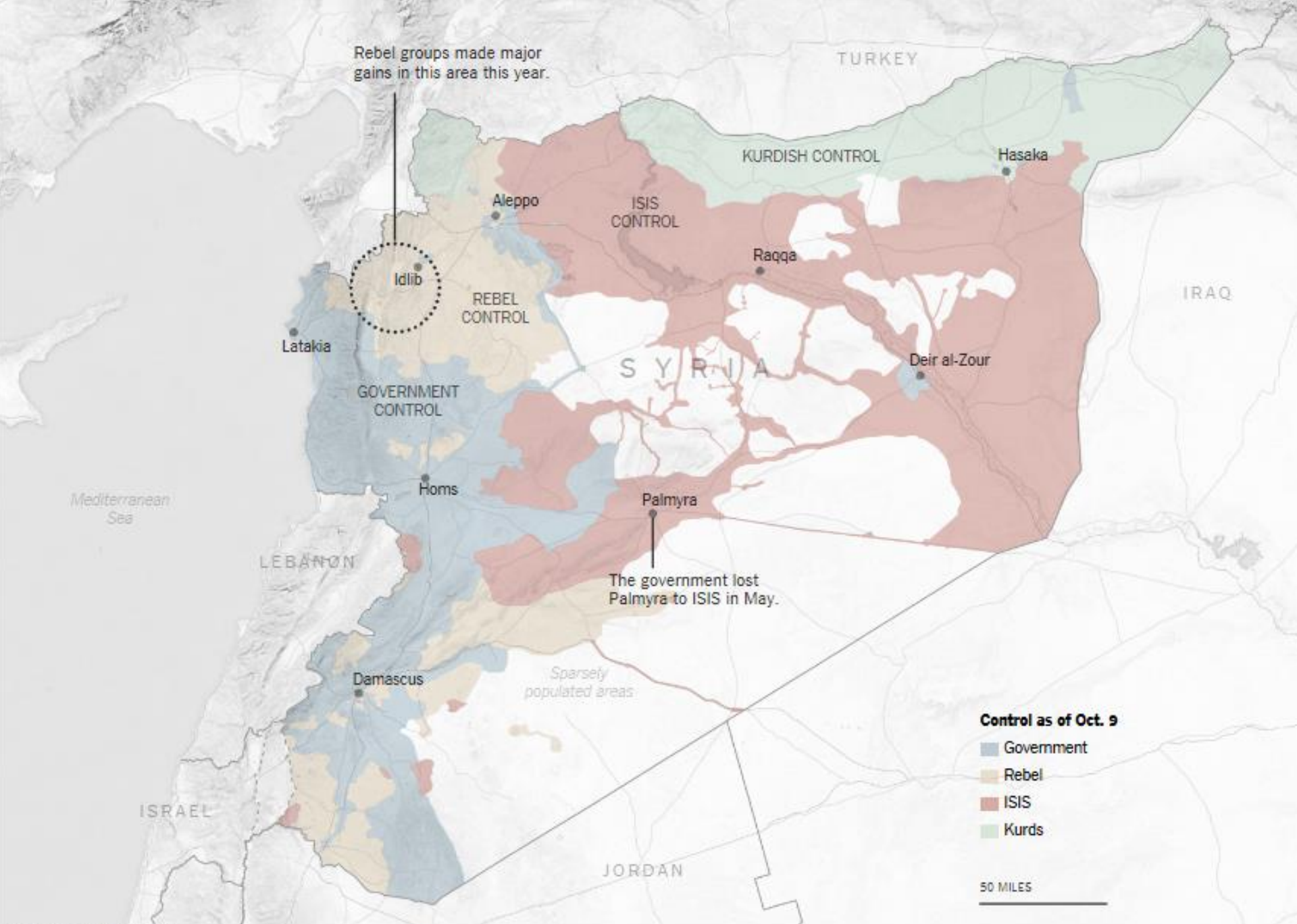
15-16 December 2015

Content

- Overview of the conflict dynamics and the impact of conflict on the civilian population
- Risk profiles
- “Persecution by association”

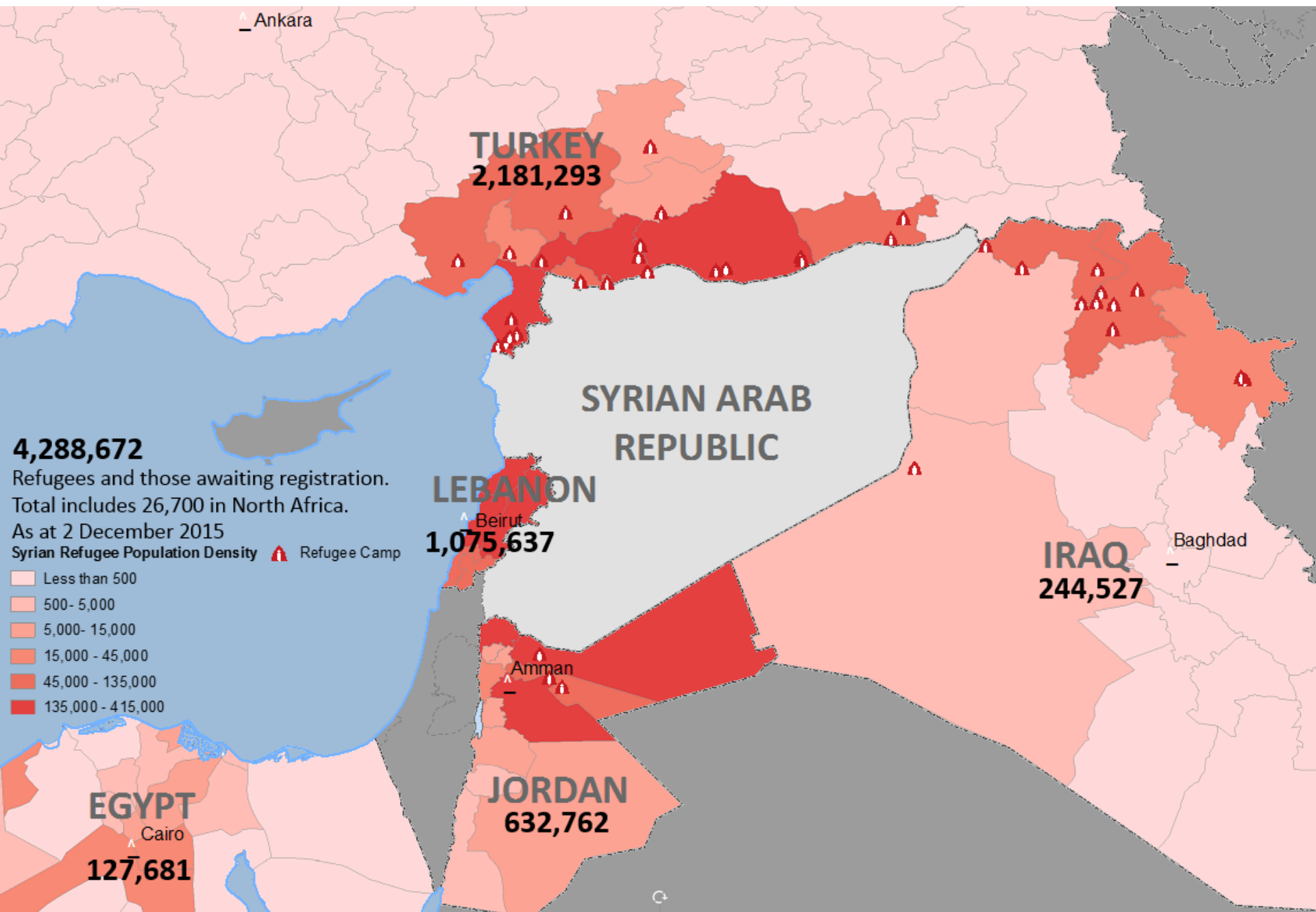
Conflict Dynamics

- Nearly all parts of Syria embroiled in violence
- Many actors, partially overlapping conflicts
- Country fractured as different actors exercise control and influence
 - **Government**
 - **ISIS**
 - **Anti-government armed groups**
 - **YPG**
- Efforts to end the conflict in Syria have yet to yield results



Impact of Conflict on Civilians

- Rising casualties (250,000 +), including many civilians
- Unprecedented humanitarian crisis (13.5 million in need), high and increasing levels of poverty
- Large-scale displacement inside and outside the country (6.5 million IDPs and over 4.2 million refugees)



Human Rights Situation and Violations of International Humanitarian Law

- Parties to the conflict have been implicated in **war crimes and gross violations of human rights**
- The Government and ISIS held responsible for **crimes against humanity.**
- Widespread immunity.

Risk Profiles

- Persons opposing or perceived to be opposing the government
- Persons supporting or perceived to be supporting the government
- Persons opposing, or believed to oppose, ISIS in areas under its *de facto* control or influence
- Persons opposing, or believed to oppose, anti-government armed groups in areas under their *de facto* control
- Persons opposing, or believed to be oppose, the PYD/YPG in areas under their *de facto* control
- Certain professionals
- Members of religious groups
- Persons perceived as contravening *Shari'a* Law
- Members of minority ethnic groups
- Women, children
- Individuals of diverse sexual orientation and/or gender identity
- Palestinian refugees

Persecution for Reason of Association

- Family members and others such as neighbours or work associates
- Based on geographic criteria (e.g. “*protest area*”, “*opposition area*”, “*pro-government area*”)
- Based on religion, ethnicity, tribe


Civilians Perceived to Be Opposing the Government

Civilians of urban neighbourhoods, villages and towns

Individual

Family, associates, neighbours





“Victims have often described the Government’s strategy as that of ‘tansheef al bakhar’ , or ‘draining the sea to kill the fish’.” (COI, February 2015)

***“Regime killings and use of lethal tactics increased during the year. The government reportedly targeted members of opposition groups and the communities sheltering them.”
(US Department of State, June 2015)***

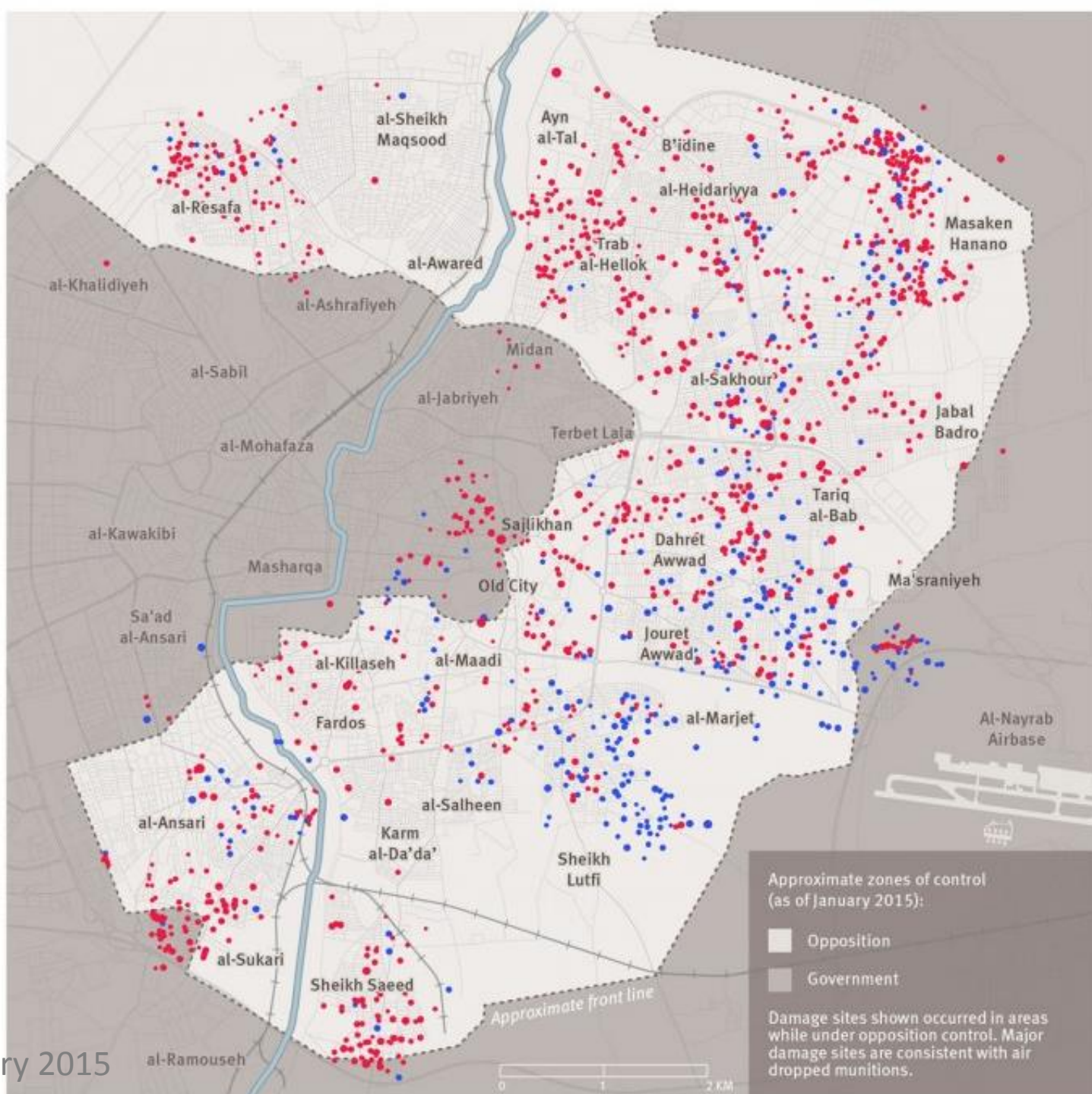
“Civilians are targeted on the basis of their perceived opposition to the Government. Merely living or originating from certain neighbourhoods leads to targeting.” (COI, Feb. 2015)

Abuses and arrests at checkpoints, during raids or ground offensives



**Missiles, airstrikes
and barrel bombs
on opposition-held
areas**





**Sieges, deprivation
of medial care**





Civilians Perceived to Be Supporting the Government

Broad views as to who is considered “pro
government:

- Persons living in government-held areas
- Members of religious minority groups

An aerial photograph showing a large-scale urban destruction. The ground is covered in rubble, including bricks, concrete, and twisted metal. Numerous people are scattered throughout the scene, some standing in groups, others walking. The buildings are severely damaged, with many windows missing and structural elements exposed. The overall atmosphere is one of devastation and displacement.

“[N]on-State armed groups attacked civilian areas under Government control in an indiscriminate manner, often targeting no military objective and causing civilian casualties.

(HRW, March 2015)

(...) these attacks also appear to be launched with the intention of punishing civilians for their perceived support of the Government. (COI, August 2014)

“Groups have intentionally targeted civilian localities either in retaliation for government operations or owing to those localities’ perceived support of the Government.” (COI, June 2015)



**Mortar, IED attacks
against government-
held areas**

Abuses during ground attacks

أبطال قرية الجوز
لن أبوة العلوي

Graffiti tag reads, "The heroes of Khirbet al-Jawz to the genocide of Alawites." © 2013 Human Rights Watch

**Targeting of whole
communities, incl.
religious/ethnic
minority groups and
tribes by ISIS**



Persecution for reasons of association

