

HTS Terrorists Close Symbolic Church in Syrian Christian Town Sparking Fear and Controversy

CIA-MI6-Mossad-MIT terrorism is changing the face of Syria through violence, intimidation and ethnic cleansing

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In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

The beautiful symbolic replica of Hagia Sophia in Al Sqeilbiyyeh is boarded up by HTS terrorist gangs.

The Hagia Sophia Church in the northern Hama Syrian Christian town of Al Sqeilbiyyeh (also spelled As Suqalibiyah) has been closed by the terrorist gangs affiliated with the HTS Junta regime in Damascus.

The move comes after armed gangs set fire to the Christmas tree in the centre of Al Sqeilbiyyeh during Christmas celebrations. During the December attacks on Christian communities the same gangs had also entered the church and desecrated the icons, holy scriptures and stunning murals.

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Video of the terrorist destruction inside Hagia Sophia church:



[Watch here](#)

According to one [Syrian X account](#):

The closure was carried out using cement and without any prior announcement or official clarification, while local accounts indicate that verbal threats were directed at those in charge of the church by a security official affiliated with the so-called “Military Operations Administration” in the area.

The History of the Resurrection of Hagia Sophia in Al Sqeilbiyyeh



3rd [February 2021](#): Yesterday I visited the Syrian Christian town of Al Sqeilbiyyeh, one of the most fertile areas of Syria that was besieged for 7 years by the US Coalition- backed armed gangs. During that time the terrorist groups targeted schools, residential areas, infrastructure with missiles, nowhere was safe. The closest terrorist encampment was only 500m away in Qalaat Al Madiq. Invasion was an ever present danger.

In 2021 people were seen taking selfies on the hills that previously faced the Nusra Front (Al Qaeda) checkpoints and headquarters that regularly rained rockets and mortars down on the civilians of [Al Sqeilbiyyeh](#):

On the 12th of May, 2019, Jaish Al Izza — an armed [affiliate of Hayat Tahrir Al Sham](#) (HTS) — an Al Qaeda rebrand that controls the majority of Idlib province and Northern Hama — targeted the Syrian Christian town of As Suqaylabiyah, situated on the border of terrorist-held areas.

The attacks came just after the Syrian Arab Army liberation of Qalaat Al Madiq, a town only 500 meters from As Suqaylabiyah. The civilians of As Suqaylabiyah had seen this advance by the SAA as a victory — many of the attacks on their town had emanated from Qalaat Al Madiq, a Nusra Front stronghold intermittently populated by other extremist groups, among them Jaish Al Islam, which was evacuated from Douma in April 2018, and Jaish Al Izza, the HTS/Nusra affiliate.



Families grieving the loss of children killed in As Suqaylabiyah, May 12, 2019. Photo | Gaith Al Abdullah

Four children — Bashar Nemeh, Jessica Karajian, Suhair Adnan and Engi Faisal Razouk — along with an adult woman, Hala Mkashkash, [were murdered](#) in the horrifying attack on As Suqaylabiyah, their young lives wiped out by Grad missiles almost certainly supplied to the extremist groups by the U.S or its allies.

Hagia Sophia and Erdogan

When Erdogan threatened the history and existence of Christianity in the region through his support of terrorists and extremists in Syria and his erosion of Christian heritage in Turkey – the commander of the Sqeilbiyyeh National Defence Forces, Nabel Alabdalla, decided to take action against Erdogan’s neo-ottoman ambitions.

Taken from a [former article](#):

Formerly a museum celebrating regional religious co-existence and secular cultures, it has recently been converted into a mosque by Turkish president, Recip Erdogan. Erdogan in his eagerness to return to the pre- [Sevres Treaty](#) (1923) borders and to reinstate the Ottoman Empire, is uprooting Christian identity in Turkey.

In addition to Aya Sophia, Erdogan has [reconverted](#) the historic Chora church, one of the most famous Istanbul Byzantine buildings, into a Mosque, one month after Aya Sophia opened for Friday prayer.

Previously, the St. Georgios Greek Orthodox Church, which was restored and transformed into a cultural centre by the Nilüfer Municipality in Bursa, was taken from the municipality and transferred to an Islamic Foundation. The historical building, which was neglected for 7 years, was destroyed recently.

“..known as the “Hagia Sophia of Bursa” since it was used both as a church and a mosque in the past, to future generations, organized various cultural events in the historical building. “ ~ [Paul Antonopoulos](#)

This is from the [Conversation](#) in 2020:

Ever since the reversion of Hagia Sophia back into a mosque, the Muslim call to prayer has been resounding from its minarets.

Originally built as a Christian Orthodox church and serving that purpose for centuries, Hagia Sophia was transformed into a mosque by the Ottomans upon their conquest of Constantinople in 1453.

In 1934, [it was declared a museum](#) by the secularist Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

As of June 24 of this year, Hagia Sophia’s icons of the Virgin Mary and infant Christ are covered by fabric curtains as the edifice yet again changes functions.

This time around, rather than maintain Hagia Sophia as a [monument of coexistence](#), the

Turkish government's actions have [sharpened an already tense ideological divide](#) between pious and secular Turks, and between Muslims and Christians worldwide.



When Erdogan converted the historic Hagia Sophia temple into a mosque, Nabel began his project to rebuild a downsized replica of Hagia Sophia in Sqeilbiyyeh. Nabel's vision is that the Sqeilbiyyeh Hagia Sophia will be a place of remembrance of all the martyrs who have sacrificed their lives to defend Syria, including the Russian heroes who fought alongside their brothers in the Syrian Arab Army to liberate this holy land from the sectarian invaders and proxy forces of the West.

I wrote back in 2019:

It is a beautiful thing to see this miracle take shape. It is a miracle because in the midst of all the turmoil in this world, here is someone who is laying the seeds of resistance for the future and leading by example, honouring steadfastness, resilience, justice and hope in a land that has been battered and besieged for ten long years. The building of this symbol of faith in the midst of a world that has forgotten what it is to believe in something better for Humanity, is a gift, not only to Syria but to the world. It is not about religion, it is about peace and honour and dignity.

[This is a short video](#) I put together of the photos I took during the construction phase.

Alabdalla reacted the minute that Erdogan declared his intent to convert Aya Sophia in July 2020. Alabdalla undertook to finance the initiative himself while making a [statement](#) that explained his vision. Excerpts below:

“Hagia Sophia was originally built as a church and was not a temple for any other religion prior to that. It was a symbol of Christianity for thousands of years before the Ottoman occupied it by force and because he is a barbarian extremist, he converted it to a mosque - the opposite to what Al-Farouk (Omar bin Al-Khattab) did in Jerusalem.”

“Our Russian friends heard about this initiative from the media, so they mentioned the project to the Duma and this is evidence of their opposition to Erdogan’s actions. However, the church will be built only with hands from Sqeilbiyyeh and with Syrian stone, on my land and I will finance the project personally - just as our ancestors preserved our heritage and our land, so we shall do the same.”



Hagia Sophia foundation stone ceremony. Photo: Vanessa Beeley

On the [5th September 2020](#), the day that Deir Ezzor was liberated from a three year ISIS occupation in 2017, the foundation stone of the new Aya Sophia was laid in an olive-tree lined field in Al Sqeilbiyyeh. This Syrian Christian town was besieged for seven years by the Erdogan-controlled and midwived terrorist groups in northern Hama and Idlib, part of the US Coalition proxy forces that have invaded Syria since 2011.



Sqeilbiyyeh female defenders - mothers, wives, sisters and relatives of martyrs have taken up arms and trained with Russian forces to defend their city. Photo: Vanessa Beeley

The event was attended by an impressive number of Syrian and Russian dignitaries. General Ramadan Ramadan of the Ninth Division of the Syrian Arab Army and the Commander in Chief at the Russian base of Hmemim, General Alexander Chaiko was also in attendance and participated in the laying of the foundation stone. The Archbishop of Hama, Nikolai Baalbek and a number of other Orthodox Christian representatives gave their seal of approval.

The day before the event, Erdogan was particularly bellicose. He announced that “Turkish conquest is not occupation or looting - It is spreading the justice of Allah, if anybody wants to stand against us and pay the price, let them come”. The social media chatter from his client terrorists in Idlib echoed his belligerence and displeasure that Alabdalla was defying the neo-Ottoman diktats. Apologies for the [Memri/Israeli](#) clip but here is the speech with subtitles.

Alabdalla’s challenge to Erdogan certainly did not go unnoticed. Alabdalla has been a steadfast military opponent of Turkey and the US Alliance since the war against Syria began ten years ago. Not only has Alabdalla defended his own city against the threat of massacre by the sectarian hordes, he has also fought in many of the most arduous campaigns across Syria and he is considered a legend by his soldiers, many of whom have fought by his side in all the campaigns.

Nabel Alabdalla had the courage of his convictions. He had his detractors who believed the project was foolish but he has proven them wrong. The core belief that Alabdalla has upheld is that Christianity is an integral part of the middle eastern cultural tapestry and that a secular Syria must be defended at all costs.

It is that secular Syria that is now threatened by Erdogan’s terrorist proxy Junta that now

imposes the anti-minority policies that are undermining Syria's ancient history of inclusivity and co-existence.

HTS-affiliated Terrorists Attack Hagia Sophia Opening Ceremony



My section on UK Column News covering the heinous Turkish proxy terrorist attack on a Syrian Christian ceremony on Sunday 24th July. During the ceremony to open the Hagia Sophia replica church in Al Sqeilbiyyeh on Sunday, Idlib terrorist carried out a suicide drone attack on more than 1000 civilians, children, teenagers, foreign diplomats, Syrian dignitaries and faith leaders who had come together to honour Syrian and Russian martyrs who have given their lives in the 11 year war against Western-incubated terrorism:

In the midst of the ceremony just as a representative from the Syrian Al Waqf religious institution was [talking about forgiveness](#) and leniency towards those who have harmed Syria, the terrorists attacked. Four meters away from our seats the drone struck – a young National Defence Solider Hisham Elias took the full force of the blast shielding us all. The statue also protected us from the shrapnel and deadly debris. Hisham later died from his

dreadful wounds. Seven others were injured, soldiers and teenagers.

There was mass panic as people fled to any shelter they could find. Reports of more drones incoming forced us all to leave the vicinity and return to the town center. This is a new warfare funded by the US Coalition, technology most probably supplied by Turkey and training by NATO member state operatives on the ground in Idlib assisting the terrorists to kill Syrian civilians.

The Hagia Sophia Church in Al Sqeilbiyyeh survived this attempt to destroy its existence in Syria and it became the symbol of Resistance for the population of Sqeilbiyyeh who would later get married in the simple church or have their wedding photos taken in the beautiful grounds surrounding the church. Now HTS have concreted the door to the church blocking entry to all who found solace there.

I spent many months with the people of Al Sqeilbiyyeh, both during the terrorist siege and attacks and during the fragile peacetime that followed the Syrian Arab Army allied liberation of the areas surrounding the besieged town, pushing the terrorist groups into the Idlib Al Qaeda *haven*.

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I am proud to say that my name is engraved on the walls surrounding the church and I was offered a burial site in the grounds of the church when my time finally came to an end in this world. This is how connected I was to this tiny corner of Syria that represents the war against the worlds that would see Humanity destroyed and inclusivity consigned to memory under the HTS terrorist regime.

I will include just some of my reports from beautiful Al Sqeilbiyyeh where I consider the people to be family:

1. 2019 - Interview with the [Director of Al Sqeilbiyyeh National Hospital](#), Dr Issam Hawsheh - discussing the effects of the illegal US/EU economic sanctions, the White Helmet frauds and the daily terrorist attacks from the armed groups in Idlib and Hama countryside.



I asked Dr Hawsheh about the western propaganda which claims the Syrian government is deliberately targeting schools and hospitals in [#Idlib](#):

“It is impossible that our government would target our infrastructures after working for 40 years to establish this infrastructure including hospitals and schools.

Those in Idlib are Syrian citizens. If they were given the choice now, none of them would stay for one minute in areas controlled by the terrorists. They are our people, the people of the Syrian government.

If a stone sheltering a terrorist were targeted, the world would be outraged. But our children are deprived of their education every day. They are deprived of health care. They are not allowed to go to the parks because of the terrorist missiles manufactured in Europe [...] they are being murdered by shells and weapons manufactured by the West.

What I know (about the White Helmets) is that they are a fake organisation, a deceiving group, established by British Intelligence.

(White Helmets) claim that they represent humanitarian values and serve all mankind – they claim that they help children and rescue people – but they are actors who adhere to the terrorist ideology...”

2. Exclusive Interview with Syrian women NDF volunteers on Idlib borders



Young wives have lost their husbands early in their married life which should be a time of joy and companionship. Sisters have lost their brothers and mothers their sons.

Fadi Ibrahim Salloum was the only son of one of the mothers who speaks to me. As she left the room, his mother reached out to touch the photo of her son displayed among those of all the NDF martyrs from Al Skeilbiyyeh that have given their lives defending the town, she stroked his face in the photo gently before leaving.

“I hope that every mother would understand that if she had children and she loves her homeland, it is her right to defend her homeland when evil threatens it” she told me.

Please watch the faces of these unbelievably brave women as their friends are speaking, just to understand their suffering and pain - despite which they have chosen to stand in solidarity with their brothers in the National Defence Forces and the Syrian Arab Army.

3. UK [“vows to protect Christians”](#) while still financing terrorism in Syria

Ford [Peter Ford, former UK Ambassador in Syria] made the same point - *“Not only has the British government ignored Syrian Christians but it has tried to stifle their voice, by for example refusing visas for Syrian bishops to visit Britain just to put their case.”*

Where, for example, are Hunt’s or Johnson’s condemnations of the massacre of civilians on a

regular basis in the Syrian Christian towns of [Al Sqeilbiyyeh](#) and [Mhardeh](#) and [villages](#) in the surrounding countryside? These towns and villages are in the Syrian government-secured areas bordering Al Qaeda-dominated northern Hama and Idlib.

For eight years, these Syrian towns have been shelled and threatened with ethnic-cleansing invasion by the terrorist gangs marketed as “*rebels*” in the West and staunchly defended by Hunt and Johnson.

Women in these towns, wives, sisters, daughters of “martyrs” –the young men who have sacrificed their lives in the volunteer National Defence Forces to defend their communities against the sectarian hatred camped on their doorstep– have, themselves, taken up arms and trained as fighters to protect their people. The brutal gangs who would drive them from their homes and their land are, effectively, promoted and financed by the British government. As Ford says:

“It is the height of hypocrisy for the British government to affect concern for Christians when, in its obsession with overthrowing Assad, it has completely ignored the plight of Syrian Christians, who regard Assad as their sole bulwark against persecution. Worst of all, the British government continues to this day to support to the hilt jihadi groups in Syria”

4. Syria – on the frontline against International Terrorism

Nabel has often spoken of “holding the candle of peace and love in one hand, with the other hand on the trigger of the gun” – this is the spirit of these Syrian soldiers who fight for peace and the return of love and unity to this land.

My interview with Nabel Alabdalla shortly after a series of terrorist mortar attacks on residential areas of Al Sqeilbiyyeh:

5. Amnesty International [silent on Al Qaeda](#) war crimes to criminalise Syrian government

After March 9, the merciless attacks against civilians and infrastructure in Mhardeh and Al Suqaylabiyah continued unabated. On [March 16](#), terrorists targeted another residential area in Suqaylabiyah. Salma Boutros Khalil was seriously injured by shrapnel, her home was destroyed. Her daughter in law, Ayat Al-Mahmoud, a Palestinian originally from Damascus, was killed. Ayat was pregnant, her baby was due in one week. Salma’s grandson was also terribly injured by shrapnel and was rushed to Hama National hospital. Two other children were grievously wounded in this attack.

These attacks do not target military centers, they target only residential areas and civilians. They are, in many instances, war crimes, but according to Amnesty International, these attacks never happened.

On March 26, according to the Amnesty report, Syrian government forces fired rockets “*at a school in Sheikh Idriess.*” Again the context is non-existent. On March 23, a suspected chemical weapon attack was carried out by HTS against villages around 10km to the

northwest of Al Suqaylabiyah – al-Rasif, al-Aziziyeh, al-Khandaq, and al-Jayyid. The attack came in from the north, in fact close to Sheikh Idriss.

I was in Al Suqaylabiyah when this attack took place and I was able to [visit the local hospital](#) that received the 34 victims which included three children, one severely affected with respiratory problems. Victims complained of breathing difficulties, skin blisters, eye sensitivity, nausea and shock syndrome after the attack. One victim, Nawfal Tawbar, described the 1m high dense white smoke that enveloped the area after the mortars had exploded:

Finally, I will include a gallery of some of the photos I have taken in Al Sqeilbiyeh:



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