

## Who will Save the Starving Children of Madaya?

### News:

In recent days, international media and social media has been awash with the most heart-wrenching images of the starved, skeletal-like bodies of Muslim men, women, and children from the Syrian village of Madaya. The town has been under siege since July from the brutal Assad regime and other forces loyal to it who have prevented food, medicines and other basic needs from entering it. Consequently a dire humanitarian crisis has developed in the village, with reports of severe malnutrition and deaths from starvation, including of infants. Medecins Sans Frontieres stated that 23 patients in just one of the health centres it supported had died from starvation since 1<sup>st</sup> December. Children have been reduced to feeding on grass or the leaves of trees to survive while their fathers rummage through rubbish to find anything to sustain their families. There have even been reports of parents feeding their children cats and dogs to keep them alive. Mothers are so malnourished that they are not producing milk to feed their babies. The onset of winter has worsened conditions, with individuals resorting to eating earth because there is nothing left to consume due to the death of all vegetation caused by snow. Umm Mohamad, aged 52, a citizen of Madaya who hasn't had a meal in months said, *"My only dream is to have a piece of bread."* The Syrian regime has also surrounded Madaya with landmines and snipers to prevent anyone from escaping the town.

### Comment:

Despite these desperate scenes of emaciated, starving children, the international community and regimes of the Muslim world have watched as mere spectators of this grotesque crime, unwilling to take any action to bring it to an end. This reflects their utter lack of humanity and absence of a semblance of a conscience. It seems that heart breaking images that mirror scenes from Nazi concentration camps, or the repeated use of starvation as a weapon of war by the conscienceless Assad regime that blatantly violates their own redundant international laws and conventions is not enough to evoke a response to save the starving children of Madaya. Clearly, protecting innocents from a slow agonising death is not listed within the self-serving agenda of Western and Muslim governments or the UN for Syria.

On Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January, the UN said that it had been given permission by the Syrian government to take food aid into Madaya and planned to deliver enough to sustain the 40,000 citizens of the town for 1 month, as if this offers any respite for the indescribable suffering of Madaya's Muslims who see no end in sight for their nightmare. What kind of possible humanitarian action is this - keeping Madaya's citizens alive for a few weeks, then abandoning them again to suffer further months of severe hunger and desperation at the hands of the Assad regime? Furthermore, in October, when the UN was given safe passage to take aid into Madaya, they delivered a shipment of 'moldy and rotten' biscuits which were past their sell-by-date, causing widespread food poisoning. How can hope ever be placed in such an incompetent, powerless, and redundant organisation to save the starving children of Madaya or the other Muslims of Syria? Furthermore, it is utterly reprehensible that the governments of the Muslim world can form a 34 country coalition to fight so-called 'terrorist organisations' but are paralysed from taking action to save the Muslims of Madaya or the

rest of Syria from one of the greatest terrorists this world has ever known, and who has the blood of hundreds of thousands of innocent Muslims on his hands. All this should be a stark reminder that absolutely no good can come for the Muslims of Syria from any initiative or solution proposed by the UN, the US or any of these governments who have sat idle, allowing Assad to execute his merciless crimes upon the innocent Muslims of Syria.

So who will save the children of Madaya from their unbearable suffering? This great, great duty rests upon the shoulders of this noble Ummah, and especially those within the Muslim armies. Every pang of hunger that these children endure and every act of oppression that our brothers and sisters in Syria have been subjected to under this Pharun will surely form a case against us on the Day of Reckoning unless we work with urgency for a solution that will bring their suffering to an end. This solution is nothing but the Khilafah Rashidah (Caliphate) upon the method of the Prophethood that will uproot every tyrant from our lands and replace fear and oppression with justice, protection and guardianship under the System of Allah (swt).

So we ask the Commanders, Generals, and soldiers of Iman in the Muslim armies – how can you bear to witness these horrific scenes of your starving brothers and sisters without moving to their defence? Do these images not burn a hole in your heart and haunt your mind? How will you answer to Allah (swt) for failing to protect the believers when they are crying out to you to answer their screams of anguish? Rise now to your duty of defending your Ummah and give the Nusrah for the Khilafah Rashidah without delay for surely every day that passes where your brothers and sisters writhe in agony due to the absence of this state only increases the burden that you will have to bear on Yawmul-Qiyama for your inaction. The Prophet (saw) said,

«المسلم أخو المسلم لا يظلمه ولا يسلمه. من كان في حاجة أخيه كان الله في حاجته، ومن فرج عن مسلم كربة فرج الله عنه بها كربة من كرب يوم القيامة، ومن ستر مسلماً ستره الله يوم القيامة»

**“A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim – he does not wrong him nor does he forsake him when he is in need; whosoever is fulfilling the needs of his brother, Allah is fulfilling his needs; whosoever removes distress from a believer, Allah removes from him a distress from a distressful aspect of the Day of Resurrection; and whosoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults on the Day of Resurrection.”**

**Written for The Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by**

**Dr. Nazreen Nawaz**

**Director of the Women’s Section in the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir**