

**United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator in Syria a.i.,
Mike Robson, statement on strikes on central Damascus**

Damascus, 21 February 2023

The United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria a.i., Mr Mike Robson, is deeply concerned about Sunday strikes on the Kafer Souseh neighbourhood in central Damascus.

The strikes in the early morning of 19 February hit a residential building, and reportedly killed a number of civilians, including one woman pharmacist, and injured at least five others. Several buildings in Kafer Souseh neighbourhood sustained significant damages and the residents in some of them had to be evacuated. The cultural centre in Kafer Souseh neighbourhood and two education facilities located inside the Damascus citadel - the Technical Institute for Applied Arts and the Intermediate Institute for Antiquities and Museums – also sustained significant damages in the strikes.

Civilians continue to suffer the tragic consequences of ongoing hostilities in parts of Syria, in addition to the tragic earthquake which hit Turkiye and Syria on 6 February.

Attacks must never be directed against civilians or civilian objects. We call on all parties to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law, including by taking all feasible precautions to spare civilians and civilian objects in the conduct of hostilities. It is also paramount that all States put in place all possible efforts within their power to ensure a de-escalation of military operations and protection of civilians and civilian objects in Syria.

It is imperative that the girls, boys, women and men of Syria are able to lead a life free from fear of violence and destruction and be given the chance for a brighter future.

For further information:

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