

## **Note to Correspondents**

**8 June 2012**

### **United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS) Observers enter village of Mazraat al-Qubeir**

UN observers today entered the village of Mazraat al-Qubeir to verify reports of mass killings in the village. After hours of coordination with local authorities and communities in the area, the group of over 20 observers was able to access the village at 3:30 local time.

Mazraat al-Qubeir was empty of its own residents and thus the observers were not able to talk to anyone who witnessed Wednesday's attack.

Upon the arrival of UN observers, villagers from a neighbouring town came and spoke of what they had heard and the relatives they had lost.

Armoured vehicle tracks were visible in the vicinity. Some homes were damaged by rockets from armoured vehicles, grenades and a range of caliber weapons.

Inside some of the houses, blood was visible across the walls and floors. Fire was still burning outside houses and there was a strong stench of burnt flesh.

The circumstances surrounding this attack are still unclear. The names, details and number of those killed are still not confirmed. The observers are still working to ascertain the facts.

The observers were not able to enter Mazraat al-Qubeir yesterday despite multiple attempts throughout the whole day. Their mission was obstructed by three factors:

- Observers were being stopped at Syrian Army checkpoints and in some cases turned back.
- Some of the patrols were being stopped by civilians in the area.
- Observers received information from residents of the area that their safety was at risk if they entered the village of Mazraat al-Qubeir.

The UNSMIS team in Mazraat al-Qubeir today has produced this video, which correspondents are welcome to use, crediting UNSMIS.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZw6fkqWkm4&feature=plcp>