

How Many Buildings in Aleppo Are at Risk of Collapse?

04-11-2020

Aleppo's City Council is moving ahead with its campaign to demolish damaged and collapsing buildings, which number more than 3,000, according to an estimate by the Council's Public Safety Committee. Most of the threatened buildings are in the eastern neighbourhoods of Aleppo, which was under rebel control from 2012 to 2016, and suffered heavy damage during clashes and airstrikes.

September and October of this year saw a concentrated campaign of demolitions in eastern Aleppo, implemented by the Aleppo City Council and the [Ministry of Defence's Military Housing Establishment](#). The demolitions also targeted many buildings that were in violation of the construction code, in accordance with Decree No. 40 of 2012 on building violations. These buildings were not damaged or collapsing and were built after 2016.

According to reports from the Public Safety Committee, the campaign started in September in the Bustan Al-Qasr neighbourhood, and included removal, transport and demolition of concrete slabs and roofs that had collapsed and posed a danger to the streets below. The neighbourhood, which faced heavy air bombardment with barrel bombs between 2014 and 2015, saw many buildings demolished during the campaign. In mid-September, the demolitions extended to the Sukkari neighbourhood, where buildings were knocked down after residents evacuated. October then saw the demolitions reach the neighbourhoods of Seif Al-Dawleh, Al-Ansari and Al-Ameriyeh.

Many of the demolished buildings were still partially occupied by residents, who were forced to evacuate without any alternative housing provided for them. They either rented other housing or moved in with relatives, depending on their living conditions.

The number of collapsing buildings shared by the Public Safety Committee is not final, according to city council sources who spoke with *The Syria Report*. Building inspections are ongoing, and the number that was announced only reflects the buildings for which safety reports were prepared and were slated for demolition.

The actual number of buildings that are at risk of collapse is likely much higher than what has been announced. There are many factors that may contribute to more buildings being included on the list, including leakage in the water and sewage networks, and damage to foundations. The government still has not addressed damage to water and sewage networks in eastern Aleppo, despite regime forces having taken over the area four years ago, at the end of 2016.

Aleppo's city council in recent weeks formed a central committee to manage counting and evacuation of at-risk buildings, with the mission of determining the most dangerous areas due to several factors in order to evacuate residents. This move likely comes after numerous accusations of corruption directed at the Public Safety Committee by residents, who believe that the body's corrupt practices have led to the collapse of several buildings. Residents have also complained that the city council leaves behind the rubble of some of the buildings it demolishes. City council members prefer not to bear the costs of removal, instead hoping that residents themselves will transport the debris elsewhere at their own expense.

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