

Syria Houla Massacre: Government Investigation Blames Anti-Regime Forces For Killings

By [Global Research](#)

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BEIRUT, May 31 (Reuters) – Syria said on Thursday a preliminary investigation showed that anti-government armed groups carried out a massacre last week in Houla region with the aim of encouraging foreign military intervention against the government.

Brigadier General Qassem Jamal Suleiman, head of the investigation committee formed by the government, said the victims were families “who refused to oppose the government and were at odds with the armed groups”.

He said that before the massacre, 600 to 800 armed men attacked posts of the security forces in the area while armed men from outside Houla murdered the families, adding that many of the victims were relatives of a member of parliament.

“The aim is to bring foreign military intervention against the country in any form and way,” he told reporters at a news conference in Damascus that was aired on television.

The massacre in Houla, in which 108 people were killed, was condemned around the world. Western powers expelled Syrian diplomats and Syrian rebels, aiming to topple President Bashar al-Assad, urged Kofi Annan to declare his seven-week-old ceasefire plan a failure.

But Foreign Ministry spokesman Jihad Makdissi said Syria wanted the peace plan to succeed in ending the violence so the 14-month-old crisis could be resolved through political dialogue.

He also called on opposition groups that reject foreign intervention to come to Syria for talks with the government.

(Reporting by Mariam Karouny; Editing by Kevin Liffey)

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