

《叙利亚大规模炮轰：92名孩子丧生》

联合国周六称多于92人在激进分子所描述的由政府武装组成的炮火射击中丧生，这是联合国减少叙利亚起义流血和平计划开展以来遇到的最遭的暴力活动。

BEIRUT - The United Nations said on Saturday that more than 92 people were killed in what activists described as an artillery barrage by government forces in the worst violence since the start of a UN peace plan to slow the flow of blood in Syria's uprising.

The bloodied bodies of children, some with their skulls split open, were shown in footage posted to YouTube purporting to show the victims of the shelling in the central town of Houla on Friday. The sound of wailing filled the room.

The carnage underlined just how far Syria is from any negotiated path out of the 14-month-old revolt against President Bashar al-Assad.

"This morning UN military and civilian observers went to Houla and counted more than 32 children under the age of 10 and over 60 adults killed," the head of UN team monitoring the ceasefire - which has yet to take hold - said.

"The observers confirmed from examination of ordinances the use of artillery tank shells," Major General Robert Mood said in a statement, without elaborating. "Whoever started, whoever responded and whoever carried out this deplorable act of violence should be held responsible."

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton condemned the attack. "Those who perpetrated this atrocity must be identified and held to account," she said in a statement. "And the United States will work with the international community to intensify our pressure on Assad and his cronies, whose rule by murder and fear must come to an end."

In a statement, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon demanded "the government of Syria immediately cease the use of heavy weapons in population centres."

Activists said Assad's forces shelled the town of Houla on Friday evening after security forces killed a protester and following skirmishes between troops and fighters from the Sunni Muslim-led insurgency fighting Syria's rulers, who belong to the minority Alawite sect.

A British-based opposition group, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said Houla residents fled, fearing more shelling. It said one person was killed in the northern town of Saraqeb when troops fired on a protest against the killing.

Syrian state television aired some of the footage disseminated by activists after the killing in Houla, calling the bodies victims of a massacre committed by "terrorist" gangs.

It also showed video of bodies with what looked like gunshot wounds to the head, sprawled on bloodstained mattresses.

Activists distributed footage appearing to show protests in Aleppo, the largest city in the north.

Families killed

A member of the fragmented exile group that says it speaks for Syria's political opposition said Assad's forces had killed "entire families" in Houla in addition to the shelling.

"The Syrian National Council (SNC) urges the UN Security Council to call for an emergency meeting ... and to determine the responsibility of the United Nations in the face of such mass killings," SNC spokeswoman Bassma Kodmani said.

Although a 6-week-old ceasefire plan negotiated by former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan has failed to stop the violence, the United Nations is nearing full deployment of a 300-strong unarmed observer force meant to monitor a truce.

The plan calls for a truce, withdrawal of troops from cities and dialogue between the government and opposition.

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius condemned the violence as a "massacre" and said he wanted to arrange a meeting in Paris of the Friends of Syria, a group that brings together Western and Arab countries keen to remove Assad.

UK Foreign Secretary William Hague said he was coordinating a "strong response" to the killings and would call for the Security Council to meet in the coming days.

United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahayan requested an urgent meeting of the Arab League while Arab League head Nabil Elaraby called the killing in Houla a "horrific crime".

Elaraby urged the UN Security Council to "stop the escalation of killing and violence by armed gangs and government military forces."