

**UNAMI - Report on the Protection of Civilians in the Armed Conflict in Iraq: 11 December 2014 – 30 April 2015**

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Office of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq  
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This Report on the Protection of Civilians in the Armed Conflict in Iraq is published jointly by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). It covers the period of 11 December 2014 to 30 April 2015.

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During the reporting period, 11 December 2014 to 30 April 2015, a minimum of 10,768 civilian casualties resulted from the ongoing violence, including at least 3,345 persons killed and 7,423 wounded. Baghdad was the worst affected governorate, with a minimum of 5,724 civilian casualties (1,586 killed and 4,138 wounded) followed by Anbar and Diyala governorates. The hostilities continue to cause massive displacement of civilians. From January 2014 through 25 April 2015, a total of 2,834,676 persons had become internally displaced in Iraq, including an estimated 1.3 million children. The Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) continues to host a large number of IDPs, with 38 per cent of the total. In the rest of Iraq, Dohuk governorate hosts the largest number of IDPs, with 452,496, followed by Anbar with 422,586, Baghdad with 412,200, and Kirkuk with 375,120.

(...)

UNAMI/OHCHR continued to receive reports of the so-called “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL) committing violations of international humanitarian law and gross human rights violations and abuses, with an apparent systematic and widespread character. In some instances, these may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and possibly genocide.

(...)

Those who are perceived to question ISIL authority or refuse to align themselves with the group are punished and often killed. Civilians continued to be murdered, often in grim public spectacles, and were subjected to ill-treatment (including amputations and executions) subsequent to decisions of ISIL self-appointed courts. Members of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious communities continued to suffer from a range of violations at ISIL hands. These groups, including Christians, Faili Kurds, Kaka'e, Sabaeans, Shabak, Shi'a Arabs, Turkmen, Yezidi and others, have been systematically persecuted.

(...)

Women and children have also been specifically targeted. UNAMI/OHCHR continues to receive reports of rape and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated against women, girls and boys, as well as the recruitment and use of children in military operations. ISIL and associated armed groups also murdered captured soldiers and other security forces or government personnel. As many as 3,000 to 3,500 men, women, and children remain in ISIL captivity predominantly from the Yezidi community but also from other ethnic and religious communities, where they are subjected to physical, sexual and other forms of violence and degrading treatment on a daily basis.

UNAMI and OHCHR have grave fears for the safety and security of these individuals. Those who have managed to reach areas of safety consistently reported lack of basic necessities, such as food and sanitary items, and alleged that they were subjected to forced labour, forced religious conversions, ill-treatment, murder, and physical and sexual violence including sexual slavery and the trafficking of women and children

(...)

Reports were received that ISIL had used chlorine gas in attacks in a number of places, such as in Duloeiyah and Tikrit, however, these claims could not be verified by UNAMI/OHCHR. UNAMI/OHCHR also received some reports alleging violations of international humanitarian law and human rights violations or abuses committed by ISF and affiliated armed groups that occurred during the reporting period. These included air strikes, shelling and conduct of particular military operations or attacks that may have violated the principles of distinction and proportionality under international humanitarian law. Armed groups affiliated to or supporting the Government also carried out targeted killings, including of captured fighters from ISIL and its associated armed groups, abductions of civilians, and destruction of property. In a number of

cases, it has been impossible to identify the perpetrators of violations and abuses committed during the reporting period. These included instances of murder, intimidation and threats, abductions, and the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), Vehicle-borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIEDs) and suicide bombers to target civilians or civilian infrastructure.

(...)

Of main concern are women, female-headed households, children, people with disabilities, the elderly, and members of diverse ethnic, cultural or religious groups. Parties to the conflict must take steps to ensure the protection and care of the most vulnerable among the civilian population, and are required to prevent violations and abuses from taking place. The Government of Iraq is required to hold alleged perpetrators of serious violations and abuses to account, in particular those that amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity. In order to ensure accountability, UNAMI/HRO strongly urges the Government of Iraq to consider legislative amendments to grant Iraqi courts jurisdiction over crimes under international law (war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide) no matter where or by whom those crimes are committed, and that it consider becoming a party to the Statute of the International Criminal Court or referring the current situation in Iraq to the International criminal Court under article 12 of the Court's Statute.

UNAMI/HRO also recommends that the Government of Iraq must do all it can to stabilise areas recently liberated from ISIL by ensuring the restoration for security to civilian authorities from those areas and to facilitate the restoration and provision of basic services to ensure the safety, security and well-being of residents of those areas and to ensure that any displaced persons can return to their homes in safety and dignity.

Read full report [here](#) .