

## Joint Statement on Civilian Casualties Due to Coalition Airstrikes in Ar-Raqqa City

**Damascus and Amman, 22 August 2017**

Ali Al-Za'tari, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria, and Ramesh Rajasingham, the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria a.i, express their deep concern over the significant number of civilians reportedly killed in the last few days due to the use of explosive ordnances, including through Coalition airstrikes, against targets of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in densely populated neighborhoods of Ar-Raqqa city.

These unconfirmed accounts come on the heels of an increasing number of reported civilian casualties as a result of intensified military operations, including airstrikes. In recent months, regular airstrikes and shelling in the city have reportedly resulted in scores of civilian casualties, including women and children.

An estimated 18,000 to 25,000 civilians remain trapped in the city and are increasingly exposed to hostilities. Civilians trapped in Ar Raqqa risk being killed by ISIL snipers or mines if they try to flee, or being used as human shields if they remain.

Since the beginning of the Euphrates Wrath operation in November 2016, over 271,000 men, women and children have been displaced from their homes, including an estimated 75,000 people from Ar-Raqqa city.

The UN condemns attacks directed against civilians and civilian infrastructure.

The humanitarian community reminds all parties to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law to protect civilians and to spare no effort to prevent civilian casualties.

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