Support provided to Yazidi survivors of kidnapping and sexual violence

(Baghdad, 30 April 2017): A group of 36 Yazidi survivors including women, men and children have recently been rescued from slavery, having been held in captivity by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) for nearly three years. The Yazidi survivors safely reached Duhok two nights ago. The Yazidi women and girls are currently being cared for at dedicated service points set up by UNFPA, with the support of the Dutch government, and have been provided with first response assistance, including lodging, clothing, medical and psychological first aid, even as they are being reunited with their families. These survivors will be referred for further specialised treatment and support at women’s centres especially established by UNFPA, with support from the Governments of Canada and the United States. At these centres, the survivors will receive a comprehensive range of services, including medical, psychological, psychiatric, and legal aid. It is assessed that up to 1,500 women and girls remain in captivity and may be exposed to protracted sexual abuse by ISIL.

“What these women and girls have endured is unimaginable,” said the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, Lise Grande.

“The UN, through UNFPA, is going to do everything possible to provide the kind of specialised medical and psychological support they need. We are incredibly grateful to the Governments of Canada, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States for supporting this work. The services UNFPA is providing give hope to the people who have been most brutalised by the conflict,” said Ms. Grande.

For further information, please contact:
Damian Rance, Communications Officer, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Iraq,
(rance@un.org / +964 (0)751 740 3858)