

Alarming numbers of people fleeing western Mosul city

(Baghdad, 18 May 2017): Since military operations began in Mosul city seven months ago, nearly 700,000 people have been displaced from their homes, including 500,000 people who have been forced to flee from the western neighbourhoods of Mosul city alone. As fighting has intensified in western Mosul, the number of people fleeing the west of the city has increased sharply.

“The numbers of people fleeing their homes in western Mosul are overwhelming,” said Lise Grande, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq. “We are talking about very large numbers of families who are leaving everything behind. They are fleeing under very difficult circumstances. Many are food insecure and haven’t had access to safe drinking water and medicines for weeks or months.”

“The Government is leading the operation, providing transport and aid. Humanitarian partners are doing their best to provide support along the routes out of the city and to help families when they reach emergency sites and camps,” said Ms. Grande.

“The numbers of people who are moving are now so large, it’s becoming more and more difficult to ensure civilians receive the assistance and protection they need. As military operations intensify and move closer to Mosul’s old city area, we expect that up to 200,000 more people will flee,” said Ms. Grande.

“It’s incredible to see the generosity of people in other parts of Mosul city who are opening their homes and looking after displaced families from western Mosul. Without this support, the camps would have been overwhelmed long ago,” said Ms. Grande.

“The military battle in Mosul isn’t over yet and even when it is, the emergency will continue for months. We have no choice—we have to re-double our efforts to mobilize more resources and get assistance to the people who need it the most,” said Ms. Grande. “Hundreds of thousands of lives are at stake.”

As of 18 May, the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for Iraq, requesting US\$985 million, is currently only 28 per cent funded. Under the 2017 HRP, approximately \$331 million is being sought for the Mosul operation.

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