

Extensive War Crimes: The U.S. Is Responsible for the Humanitarian Catastrophe in Raqqa

By [Firas Samuri](#)

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

First published in March 2018. See also the recently released Amnesty Report.

Currently, the attention of mainstream media is focused on the situation in the battered enclave of Eastern Ghouta. More than 80,000 civilians have already fled the region via humanitarian corridors despite numerous threats from terrorists, and the humanitarian situation there is being improved day by day. However, the same cannot be said of Raqqa that lies in ruins.

Almost four years since 2013 till 2017 Raqqa was run by ISIS terrorists. The residents who were unable to flee the city had to obey the diktats of the jihadists. Those who had refused to comply with the rules of ISIS were subjected to torture or publicly executed on the city's streets.

In October 2017, after five months of grueling battle, the U.S. backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) ended the battle for the de facto ISIS capital. However, the U.S. media were silent about the price of victory in Raqqa.

Yet, during the city's assault, several Syrian experts pointed to the irresponsible and ill-considered actions of the U.S.-led international coalition. The coalition strikes frequently [led to](#) numerous victims among civilians and extensive destruction of civilian infrastructure instead of the elimination of terrorists.

On October 19, 2017, [USA Today](#) quoting the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that the total civilian death toll was more than 1,800, and around 80% of the city had been completely destroyed.

Actually, much more people suffered from terrorist attacks as well as actions of the so-called liberators. This is evidenced by mass graves containing bodies of dozens of civilians and Syrian servicemen [found](#) in the outskirts of Raqqa.

At the same time, a woman [told](#) France 24 journalists that all her relatives had been killed by a coalition airstrike and their bodies were still under the rubble of her house. She also said the Kurdish commanders had tried to extort money for the alleged reconstruction of Raqqa instead of any assistance or support.

Notably, due to the rise of daily temperatures, the dead bodies lying under the rubble start

to decompose very rapidly. Then putrefaction enters to the soil and groundwater that led to numerous disease outbreaks and epidemics.

Indeed, after the so-called “liberation” of Raqqa by SDF and American servicemen, the locals are still oppressed. This time the acts of aggression come from US supported Kurdish rebels.

Nowadays the locals face yet another threat in the shape of improvised explosive devices, left behind by the terrorists. According to [Human Rights Watch](#) statement, homemade landmines have killed and injured at least 500 civilians, including more than 150 children, in Raqqa, Syria since the Islamic State (also known as ISIS) was pushed out of the city in October 2017.

Such information sounds shocking and raises many questions pertaining to the SDF ‘engineering units’ that started demining works only one month after Raqqa’s full liberation.

Nowadays Raqqa looks like a ghost town with ruined and uninhabitable houses as the restoration works have not started in full swing. Moreover, the water and electricity supply have not yet been restored.

In comparison, demining and dismantling the explosive devices in Aleppo by the Syrian sappers with the support of the Russian colleagues began just after the liberation of the city and took only three months.

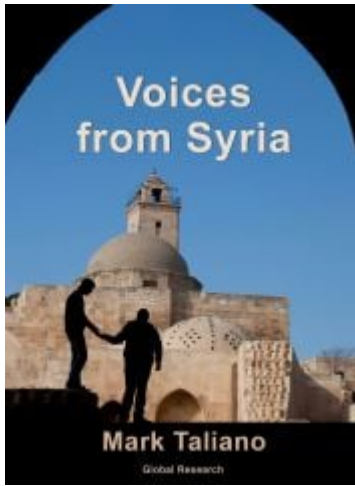
Furthermore, the American authorities have repeatedly [stated](#) their intention to take an active role in the restoration, mine-clearance as well as assistance to the locals after the full liberation of the city from ISIS. After the city fell under the control of SDF Washington preferred to [break](#) its promises.

So, the U.S. is directly responsible for the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Raqqa. Turning the city into ruins Washington tries to cover up the war crimes committed by its proxy forces while also [blocking](#) the humanitarian aid sent by the UN.

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