
US Coalition Killed 744 Iraqi, Syrian Civilians in June: Report

13/07/2017



War monitoring group Airwars claims June was the second deadliest month for civilians in Iraq and Syria since the start of Coalition attacks in 2014.

At least 744 civilians were killed in strikes in Iraq and Syria last month by the U.S.-led Coalition fighting the Islamic State group, an independent organization said on Wednesday.

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“Across Iraq and Syria, Airwars tracked a record 223 alleged Coalition casualty events during June, likely killing a minimum of between 529 and 744 civilians – a rise of 52 percent on May’s estimated totals,” the London-based group of researchers and journalists said.

“June was the second deadliest month for civilians in Iraq and Syria since the start of Coalition actions in August 2014,” according to the report.

The reported death toll is higher than that claimed by the U.S.-led Coalition.

In the monthly report released on Friday, the Coalition said its strikes had unintentionally killed at least 603 civilians between August 2014 and May 2017. The Coalition, battling to defeat Islamic State group militants in Iraq and Syria, claims it goes to great lengths to avoid civilian casualties.

The liberation operation of Mosul in Iraq officially came to an end on Monday when Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi [declared victory](#) in the city, three years after the Islamic State group seized it.

A top U.S. general in Iraq strongly rejected an Amnesty International [report](#) accusing the coalition of violating international law in the battle for Mosul.

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"I reject any notion that coalition fires were in any way imprecise, unlawful or excessively targeted civilians," Lieutenant General Stephen Townsend told a news briefing in Washington.

He added that he believed the fight against the Islamic State group was the "most precise campaign in the history of warfare."

Operations are still underway from various fronts to liberate the city of Raqqa in Syria.

The United Nations has raised concern about the situation of up to 50,000 civilians who remain trapped in the region.

"Availability of food, water, medicine, electricity and other essentials has been dwindling, with the situation rapidly deteriorating," U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees spokesman Andrej Mahecic said in Geneva.

"It is imperative that trapped civilians are able to secure safe passage out — to reach safety, shelter and protection."
