

Syria: UN relief officials condemn targeting of civilians, infrastructure as airstrikes hit Raqqa

22 August 2017 – Senior United Nations humanitarian officials for Syria today expressed deep concern over many civilians reportedly killed in airstrikes and other attacks in the last few days in Raqqa city, where coalition forces are fighting Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorists.

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](#), said a joint statement issued by Ali Al-Za'tari, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Syria, and Ramesh Rajasingham, the acting Regional Humanitarian Coordinator.

These unconfirmed accounts come on the heels of an increasing number of reported civilian casualties due to 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, the statement said.

An estimated 75,000 people have been displaced from Raqqa city, but 18,000 to 25,000 civilians who remain trapped risk being killed by ISIL snipers or mines if they try to flee, or being used as human shields or killed in indiscriminate airstrikes if they remain.