

UN report reveals over 200 mass graves of Daesh victims found in Iraq



Geneva, November 8 (RHC)-- The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) says more than 200 mass graves, containing the remains of thousands of people, have been discovered in territories previously controlled by the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group in Iraq.

"The UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the UN Human Rights Office have documented the existence of 202 mass grave sites in the provinces of Nineveh, Kirkuk, Salahuddin and Anbar in the northern and western parts of the country," the OHCHR said in a report.

The UN body further noted that there are may be more mass graves, and it is difficult to determine the total number of people in the mass graves. "The smallest site in west Mosul contained eight bodies, while the biggest is believed to be the Khasfa sinkhole in south of Mosul which may contain thousands," the report pointed out.

"Evidence gathered from these sites will be centralized to ensure credible investigations, prosecution and convictions in accordance with international due process standards.

“Meaningful truth and justice requires the appropriate preservation, excavation and exhumation of mass grave sites and the identification of the remains of the many victims and their return to the families,” the OHCHR highlighted.

Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq Jan Kubis said: “The mass grave sites documented in our report are a testament to harrowing human loss, profound suffering and shocking cruelty.

“Determining the circumstances surrounding the significant loss of life will be an important step in the mourning process for families and their journey to secure their rights to truth and justice,” he said.

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, said: “Daesh's horrific crimes in Iraq have left the headlines but the trauma of the victims' families endures, with thousands of women, men and children still unaccounted for.”

She added, “These graves contain the remains of those mercilessly killed for not conforming to Daesh’s twisted ideology and rule, including ethnic and religious minorities.” “Their families have the right to know what happened to their loved ones. Truth, justice and reparations are critical to ensuring a full reckoning for the atrocities committed by Daesh,” Bachelet noted.

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