

# Kurdistan Regional Government

Presidency of the Council of Ministers

Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy



Clarification on Human Rights Watch (HRW) Report, *Kurdistan Regional Government: Allegations of Mass Execution*

March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018

### **Preliminary Comments:**

In its latest report Human Rights Watch (HRW) has published allegations against the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Peshmerga forces on critical matters. HRW claims there are many instances where the KRG has breached the rights of IDPs and ISIS detainees while also destroying civilians' homes and preventing their free movement in the liberated areas.

The KRG strongly denies allegations made by the HRW who are accusing Peshmerga forces in their report titled; *Kurdistan Regional Government: Allegations of Mass Executions*. These allegations against the Peshmerga show a false representation of what they stand for and are insolent to the sacrifices they have taken in protecting the region. This report is a response to clarify misconceptions that the HRW has about the KRG and its institutions.

Office of the KRG Coordinator for International Advocacy has communication with the HRW in providing them with information regarding their reports before and after being published. However, the HRW has been extremely unaccommodating by requesting information and statements with unrealistic deadlines and no regard for official holidays in the Kurdistan Region. These acts prove the partiality of their reports and their deliberate intentions to not include the KRGs response on concerning matters. When HRW does include information provided by the KRG, it is out of context and does not depict the KRGs comprehensive view of the topic.

HRW must be careful, accurate, and accountable for the information and reports that they publish when concerning institutions that are not related to their own. HRWs attempts to degrade the reputation of the Peshmerga who have been putting their lives on the line against ISIS, then the largest terrorist organization in the world, which in turn has made the national and international community a safer place.

Peshmerga and Iraqi forces, with the help of international coalitions, are responsible for saving millions of lives and in turn greatly contributed to the decline of international terrorist attacks. These unfounded allegations against the Peshmerga are extremely offensive and will not go unnoticed. Therefore, the HRW must show more culpability when publishing their reports. These false allegations illustrate an unwarranted image of the KRG and Peshmerga forces. The Peshmergas contributions have repeatedly been excluded from many major news sources when regarding the defeat of ISIS, they do not deserve these false and unjustifiable claims against them as well.

The Peshmerga suffered many casualties during the process of liberating areas under ISIS control. During the liberation of Zummar, in 2014, 50 Peshmerga forces were martyred. A total of 716 Peshmerga forces lost their lives while defending and liberating the West Tigris bank.

HRW supports its claims by evidence from biased sources of information. As evident from the report, HRW has used non-verified twitter accounts, satellite imagery that does not prove any wrong doing, and accounts from suspicious witnesses. There is no assurance that the witness is telling the truth considering that the area is full of ISIS sympathizers.

A joint security and military investigation committee was recently formed by the Ministry of Peshmerga to investigate into the allegations stated in HRW report and the bulk of evidence rejects the false accusations by HRW.

This report entails the findings as a result of the investigation with facts, figures, and concrete evidence. This report will also provide a detailed analysis on the relevant matters while highlighting a number of misconceptions in HRW reports over the past few years regarding the war against ISIS.

The KRG has always been keen to investigate any violations involving human rights in the region in order to stay committed to the international standards of preserving human rights for all.

#### **KRG Efforts for Recognizing ISIS Genocides:**

In its most recent report, HRW falsely accuses Peshmerga forces of war crimes against ISIS members. A huge misjudgment lies behind this statement as the Kurds, due to having diverse religious and ethnic components, have for many decades been the victims of mass killings and genocides committed by the Iraqi Baa'th regime and other totalitarian governments. The most recent was the Yezidi genocide perpetrated by ISIS, in which thousands of Yezidis were killed and thousands more were kidnapped and forced into slavery, many of which are still in ISIS captivity.

According to the latest data from the KRG Ministry of Endowment and Religious Affairs, the number of Yezidis before and after ISIS arrival was as the following:

Before ISIS Arrival	Displaced Yezidis	Yezidis killed by ISIS	Kidnapped by ISIS	
550,000	360,000	1293	men	women
			2870	3547

The Kurdistan Regional Government has continuously urged international institutions to investigate into the genocide that was perpetrated against Yezidis. This comes with lots of legal obstacles as Iraq is not part of the Treaty of Rome or the International Criminal Court. Iraq does not allow experts to investigate into these cases. For this reason, a special committee that consists of KRG representatives from various departments to appeal for the cause of the Yezidi genocide has been formed. The committee works to gather all relevant documents and information regarding the events that occurred after the arrival of ISIS. A large amount of evidence has been gathered and the KRG will continue

its efforts to collect more information while following all legal procedures to transfer them to the International Criminal Court, The Hague.

The KRG has put serious efforts forth by forming a special committee to rescue kidnapped Yezidis. The data for the rescued Yezidis up to February 2, 2018 is as the following:

Rescued					Still in ISIS Captivity		
Total	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Total	Women	Men
3,263	1,148	336	850	929	3,154	1,471	1,683

Yet instead of receiving praise for their exceptional efforts, Peshmerga forces are being falsely accused of violations that were never committed as they do not represent Peshmerga conduct. After all the adversity they have faced these allegations are extremely disrespectful when considering all sacrifices they have made to help make the region a safer place.

#### **Procedures for arresting ISIS suspects:**

There is a clearly defined arrest procedure by which individuals are brought into custody. This arrest procedure is initiated through intelligence and information gathered by or relayed to the Asayish regarding an individual who poses a security threat. The information is subsequently relayed to a judge who chooses whether or not to issue an arrest warrant for that designated individual or individuals. If the court decides to issue an arrest warrant, the Asayish security forces are then permitted to conduct the arrest.

Arrests carried out in this nature are in line with the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 3 of 2006. This Act was valid until July 16, 2016. The other laws that are currently implemented are Kurdistan Parliaments Act No. 21 and the amended Iraqi Penal Code No. 111 of 1969. There is a clearly defined arrest procedure which is subject to judicial jurisprudence and is thus not arbitrary. The following tables show statistics from KRG Judicial Council on the number of detainees during 2014-2016 in Kurdistan Prisons.

Cities	Arrested	Punished	Freed	Under Investigation
Erbil	675	619	56	_____
Sulaymaniyah	35	_____	22	13
Duhok	1,594	456	616	522

<b>Kirkuk</b>	348	35	176	137
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,652</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>672</b>

The following table shows data from the KRG Counter-terrorism department on ISIS detainees in Kurdistan in the second half of 2017:

Freed ISIS suspects	Punished	Pending cases	Under Investigation	Total
279	27	156	247	709

### **Allegations of Mass Execution and Mass Grave Cases:**

#### *Mass Executions:*

HRW report alleges that Peshmerga forces conducted mass executions of ISIS suspects and later buried them in mass graves. They depict the mass graves by showing satellite imagery of the locations. As a result of the joint investigation's follow-up on the event, the real story behind the killings was the launch of military liberation operations in the area where Peshmerga forces were trying to prevent ISIS leaders from fleeing to Syria. As a result of these operations, many ISIS fighters, including their leaders, were killed by the Peshmerga forces jointly with the Iraqi army and coalition forces.

Although HRW denies the occurrence of war during those dates, a press briefing by General Townsend Commander in Charge of multi-lateral Coalition against ISIS in Iraq and Syria in the US Department of Defense in August 31, 2017 in which he explains the Battle of Tal Afar on the same exact dates, proves HRW's statement incorrect. General Townsend said that during the defensive, 130-170 ISIS fighters were killed trying to cross Syrian border. All of these ISIS members died as a result of battles on the frontlines that Peshmerga were defending.

#### *KRG Ministry of Peshmerga statement:*

ISIS fighters and leaders were attempting to escape north towards Syria using several methods. One method was paying \$10,000 to smugglers in the area to help facilitate their escape. Another method they used to escape was by using Yezidi girls as human shields and threatening the Peshmerga forces of suicide bombings with the Yezidi girls.

Peshmerga forces working alongside with the Iraqi Army and Coalition forces had prior knowledge about ISIS escape plans. Subsequently, Peshmerga forces organized an effective military operation plan to prevent ISIS from escaping the region. Many of the Peshmerga forces were martyred during this battle, which General Townsend has also mentioned in his press briefing on August 31, 2017.

A'yaziyah and Tal Afar were liberated by Iraqi security forces on August 26th, 2017. Peshmerga forces set up defensive lines to the north where they encountered ISIS members fleeing from Tal Afar who were battling and trying to force a path towards Syria to escape defeat. The battle lasted 72 hours and around 170 ISIS members died during the confrontation, a woman was among them who detonated a suicide vest killing two women and a child while also wounding many others.

Timeline and location details of the operations in Tal Afar and Ayadiyah between August and September 2017 that resulted in the killings of some ISIS fighters are explained below:

- 11-12/07/2017: Peshmerga forces killed 17 ISIS fighters who were trying to escape to Syria from Tal Afar in Muthalath village near Ayadiyah, coordinates (38S KF 575 572).
- 15/08/2017: Asayish forces killed 25 ISIS fighters in an area between Hardan and Gullat, coordinates (38S KF 424 362).
- 17/08/2017: Asayish forces killed 30 ISIS fighters, two of which exploded themselves near Qasrij village, coordinates (38S KF 771 480).
- 22-23/08/2017: Peshmerga forces killed a number of ISIS leaders in Kharbah Al Sa'dun area, coordinates (38S KF 766 528). The ISIS leaders were Badr Ismat Muhammed Salih Al-Hayum known as Abdal Yakhud Abu Ali Tal Afar Wali; Khalid Abdul Rahim Abdulla Al Khuwait known as Abu Dijanah, intelligence and finance officer of the Al-Jazirah district and Muhammed Nour Ibrahim Al Khuwait known as Abu Walid, demolition officer in the Al Jazirah district.
- 25/08/2017: Peshmerga forces killed 25 ISIS fighters near Khara'j village, coordinates (38S KF 601 390).
- 27/08/2017: Peshmerga forces ambushed four ISIS fighter who were approaching the Peshmerga front attempting to escape to Syria. Three of the ISIS fighters were killed while the other detonated himself near the Khara'j village border.

- 28/08/2017: Confrontation between the Peshmerga forces and ISIS fighters occurred in the following times:
  - @13:25: Peshmerga forces killed 8 ISIS fighters in Halum village, coordinates (38S KF 576 465)
  - @13:45: Peshmerga forces killed 11 ISIS fighters in Bishar village, coordinates (38S KF 613 459)
  - @14:35: Security forces ambushed 11 ISIS fighters who had crossed Peshmerga lines with a smuggler. All the ISIS members were killed in Sahl Al-Malih village, coordinates (38S KF 631 446).
  - @14:55: 4 ISIS fighters were killed in Kakhurta village, coordinates (38S KF 627 489).
  - @15:35: In an intense conflict between the Peshmerga forces and foreign ISIS fighters who were attempting to cross the Peshmerga lines, 27 ISIS fighters were killed near Bishar village.
  - @19:50: 9 foreign ISIS fighters attacked the Peshmerga front thinking it was weak, were killed near Bishar village border.
  - @22:20: Heavy conflict occurred between the Peshmerga forces and ISIS fighters in Sahl Al-Malih village, Ayadiyah. As a result, 36 ISIS fighters and leaders were killed.
  - @23:15: Peshmerga forces killed 2 ISIS fighters were killed in Khara'j village border.
- 29/08/2017: A female foreign ISIS suicide bomber who infiltrated with IDPs exploded herself in Sahl Al-Malih school (38S KF 63155 45101). As a result, one Peshmerga was killed and 3 were injured. Four IDP women and children were also killed as a result of the suicide bombing. Appendix A is the picture of one of the injured Peshmerga who was severely injured and lost his hand when screening the female suicide bomber.
- 29/08/2017: Peshmerga forces ambushed 12 ISIS fighters in Bishar village killing 10 while the other 2 detonated themselves.

- 29/08/2017: 3 ISIS fighters were killed in Bishar village.
- 29/08/2017: Peshmerga forces killed 25 ISIS fighters after intelligence information showed that they had crossed the Peshmerga lines in Qasba Al-Ra'i.
- 29/08/2017: Peshmerga forces killed 10 ISIS fighters in Sahl Al-Malh, Ayadiyah. A number of ISIS fighters escaped.
- 29/08/2017: One hour confrontation between Peshmerga forces and ISIS fighters, 19 ISIS fighters killed.
- 30/08/2017: Peshmerga forces killed an ISIS fighter who was holding two Yezidi and Arab women and 3 children as human shields. The ISIS fighter who had a suicide belt was threatening to explode himself with the women and children if the Peshmerga prevents him from escaping to Syria. The Peshmerga forces killed the ISIS fighter with a sniper and liberated the women and children.
- 31/08/2017: @23:25: Approximately 50 ISIS fighters who came from Qasba Al Ra'i attacked Peshmerga forces. In a heavy fighting in Sahl Al-Malih, Ayadiyah, the Peshmerga forces killed 20 ISIS fighters and their bodies were in the Peshmerga front.
- 31/08/2017: Two ISIS suicide bombers were killed in Bishar village.
- 01/09/2017: Peshmerga forces ambushed 3 ISIS suicide bombers in Khara'j village, two of them were killed and one exploded himself.
- 01/09/2017: @14:00: Seven ISIS fighters were killed in Bishar village border.
- 01/09/2017: A group of ISIS fighters not familiar with the area were approaching the Peshmerga frontlines in Qasba Al Ra'i and abruptly started shooting them. They were repelled by the Peshmerga forces and the next morning six ISIS bodies were found in the fighting area.
- 02/09/2017: @15:13: Three ISIS fighters conducted suicide attacks at the Khara'j village border.
- 02/09/2017: Peshmerga forces ambushed 8 ISIS fighters in Sahl Al Malih. 6 ISIS fighters were killed and 2 of them escaped.



- 03/09/2017: 15 ISIS fighters approached the Peshmerga lines and introduced themselves as civilians, but later started shooting the Peshmerga forces. 8 ISIS fighters were killed and two escaped.
- 04/09/2017: Two ISIS fighters were killed in Khara’j village.
- 04/09/2017: Peshmerga forces ambushed 16 ISIS fighters in Bishar village and ISIS fighters were killed as a result.
- 05/09/2017: Peshmerga forces ambushed 50 ISIS members near Sahl Al-Malih, coordinates (38S KF 631 446). All the ISIS fighters who were foreign leaders were killed in the ambush.
- 06/09/2017: @20:30: Two foreign ISIS fighters were killed.
- 07/09/2017: Peshmerga forces ambushed 20 ISIS fighters in Bir Al-Hlu (38S KF 569 485), 14 were killed and 6 escaped.
- 09/09/2017: Peshmerga forces killed three ISIS fighters who were attempting to escape to Syria in Qasrij village (38S KF 770 480).
- 11/09/2017: Peshmerga forces ambushed 23 ISIS fighters in Sahl Al Malh village, Ayadiyah. As a result, 13 ISIS fighters were killed, 3 of which were of foreign nationality. Two fighters exploded themselves and 8 escaped. The escapees were later targeted by Iraqi forces helicopters.
- 12/09/2017: @23:35: Peshmerga forces killed 5 ISIS fighters in Sahl Al-Malih, Ayadiyah who were trying to cross the Peshmerga lines and go to Syria.
- 15/09/2017: Peshmerga forces ambushed 12 ISIS fighters and in Sahl Al-Malih, Ayadiyah, and killed 10 fighters. Two ISIS fighters escaped.

#### Mass Graves:

The identified graves that the HRW report mentions in Badriya village are most likely the bodies of the ISIS fighters who were killed during war operations, considering the intense situation they were buried there. In line with the International Humanitarian Customary Law, Rule 113, Treatment of the Dead, the Peshmerga forces on occasional basis buried the bodies of ISIS fighters in one place once the situation was controlled. Additionally, the Peshmerga forces considered all ethical, religious and environmental aspects in this

event when they buried their bodies in the graves. During intense war situations, these types of events are inevitable. Similarly, mass graves of Peshmerga martyrs have been found in the area prior to the liberation, not to mention the various mass graves and bodies of the Yezidi people that have not been found yet. The existence of mass graves in the area is an evident fact known to everyone in the region.

When the bodies of the killed ISIS members remain in Peshmerga defense lines, the Peshmerga are rightfully allowed to check the bodies to make sure that they are not detonated for protecting the safety of the forces and the front lines. They also check the bodies to recognize the identities of the ISIS fighters. However, the videos that are published depict the opposite intention of Peshmerga forces in carrying out these safety procedures. Appendix B shows Peshmerga forces who have found many suicide belts when they were checking the bodies of the killed ISIS members.

Thus, the KRG in fact encourages and supports impartial international investigations into atrocities committed against the population, including minorities, of the vast Nineveh Province.

### **The Displaced Persons:**

The battle of Tal Afar resulted in the displacement of many civilians and residents of the area. Like all other previous instances, Peshmerga forces cared for and guided all displaced persons then transferred them to where the Ministry of Migration and Displacement buses were parked. The buses transferred them to IDP camps in Hamam Al-Alil. According to data from the KRG Joint Crisis Coordination (JCC) from August 10, 2017 to September 6, 2017, 2,393 displaced persons were transferred to the Hamam Al-Alil and Giarre IDPs camps.

As stated, the general commander of Peshmerga forces issued a statement on August 29, 2017 conveying that the battle lasted 72 hours. Peshmerga forces inflicted huge losses to ISIS. Approximately 130 ISIS fighters were killed while trying to fight their way to Syria and escape.

These facts are also confirmed as referred above, by General Townsend in a Department of Defense press briefing which was also published on their website, August 31, 2017. In the briefing, he stated that, “somewhere between 1,000 and 1,200 enemy fighters we think that we've killed. The Kurdish Peshmerga have estimated they've killed somewhere between 130 and 170 fighters trying to flee through northward and northwest through the Kurdish defensive lines.”

General Townsend also praised the role of Peshmerga forces in the battle and admitted that they suffered many losses. “Some of these attacks involved women, female suicide

bombers who killed Peshmerga who were trying to let the women and children escape and instead female ISIS suicide bombers exploded themselves and killed the Peshmerga soldiers.”, Mr. Townsend said.

General Townsend went on to say that, “They’ve held a stalwart defense then north of Tal Afar and have shaped the battlefield there and attrite the escaping enemy to a significant degree. So, I’m pretty happy with the contributions of the Peshmerga.”

**Details of the recent Investigation by the Ministry of Peshmerga on the West Tigris bank attacks:**

Deeply concerned about the HRW accusations against Peshmerga forces and claims of violations, the Ministry of Peshmerga formed an official committee pursuant to decree (A/1/16801) to investigate into the events that occurred in Tal Afar. The committee is headed by senior military officers.

Pursuant to Human Rights Watch (HRW) allegations on breaches by the Peshmerga forces in Tal Afar, the committee began the investigation in coordination with KRG military unit commanders in the field.

After thorough discussion and investigation by the commanders, the following results were reached:

1. The Peshmerga forces did not have any ISIS hostages in their area of protection along 6 kilometers in Ayadiyah, Sahrij, and Southern Zummar; the events that occurred were only the result of the direct military confrontation with ISIS forces. When Peshmerga forces approached them, they were either injured or detonating the bodies by remote controls. As a result of that, many Peshmerga casualties and injuries occurred.
2. During the Tal Afar operation, which included the liberation of areas surrounding Tal Afar in Bir Alu and Ayadiyah areas, no ISIS member surrendered themselves to Peshmerga forces. In contrast to that, From August 20, 2017 to September 25, 2017, ISIS fighters attacked Peshmerga forces several times. In Khara’j, Halum, and Bishar villages, several ISIS fighters were killed and some detonated themselves. Some of their bodies were found near the Peshmerga front lines. In the confrontation, a Peshmerga, named Jalal Hassan Hussein was martyred and two others injured.

3. Qasba Al Ra'ii village, in which 12 ISIS fighters were killed. No ISIS fighters submitted themselves during the battle. Outside the Peshmerga frontlines, a total of 20 ISIS fighters were killed as a result of Iraqi forces airstrikes, and their bodies were left there.
4. The Peshmerga forces had confronted ISIS jointly with other forces, especially during the battle that took place in Qasba Al Ra'ii village, in which 12 ISIS fighters were killed. No one was unlawfully treated during the battle. He also stated that the foreign ISIS fighters surrendered themselves to the Iraqi security forces and the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF).

On an additional note, ISIS members did not surrender themselves to Peshmerga forces in the mentioned border. The only people whom the Peshmerga received on that border were civilians who were well-treated by Peshmerga forces. They were provided with food, water, and other basic needs. Later they were transferred to the Iraqi Ministry of Migration and Displacement with proper documentation.

#### **Transfer of ISIS Detainees to the Iraqi Federal Authorities:**

According to information provided by the Directorate of Erbil Security (Asayish) a number of ISIS detainees were transferred to Iraqi Federal authorities and another group is pending to be transferred.

The number of 853 ISIS detainees, some of which were formerly detained by the Counter-Terrorism Department, was recently transferred to the Iraqi federal authorities by the following decrees:

- Erbil Security-Investigation Court decided to transfer 277 detainees to the Nineveh Investigation Counter-Terrorism Department according to Article 7/3, five groups of detainees, each group consisting of approximately 55 ISIS detainees, were transferred by this decree.
- Erbil Security-Investigation Court decided to transfer another 576 ISIS detainees to the Rassafa Investigation Court, in Baghdad. This process was based on Article 4 of the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005. The process of transferring these ISIS detainees was facilitated by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior. There were five groups, each consisting of around 120 ISIS detainees and transferred by flights.

Furthermore, 328 more detainees are currently waiting to be transferred to the Investigation Court of Rassafa in Baghdad, according to Article 4 in Counter-terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005.

Detainees still under investigation:

A number of 640 ISIS suspects are still under investigation and their cases are pending on a court decision.

Convicts:

Since the beginning of ISIS war in the beginning of 2015, 508 detainees have been convicted in the region and were transferred to the reformatory centers to serve their sentences.

The KRG security has a mandate of protecting all the residents and civilians in the Kurdistan Region which includes all religious as well as ethnic components. Therefore, those relevant government departments investigate those who break the rules. In terrorism cases, Article 7/3, Article 4/2, Article 5/3, Article 1/2 of Counter-Terrorism Act No. 3 of 2006 and Articles 1 and 2 of Kurdistan Parliament Act No. 8 of 1992 are implemented for the cases.

Asayish prisons provide access for the ICRC and UNAMI to enter the detention facilities as well as prisons when required. For instance, from February 1, 2018 to February 19, 2018, ICRC visited the Erbil Security Directorate's prisons 10 times in February 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th, of 2018.

**Official Transfer of ISIS Detainees from the Kurdistan Region to the Nineveh province Investigation Court, Terrorism Department:**

- 11/06/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil transferred 50 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 7/3 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their investigation.
- 16/08/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil transferred 50 detainees who were convicted based on Article 7/3 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their investigation.
- 01/10/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred criminal Basim Hussein Ali Hussein Al-Jiburi who was on the wanted list based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005.

- 01/10/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil transferred 50 ISIS detainees who were all convicted under Article 7/3 Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005.
- 18/11/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil transferred convicts, Khalaf Hussein Ahmed Hussein and Haitham Brish Jabir Mehdi who were convicted based on the Iraqi Penal Code No. 421.
- 18/11/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 15 detainees who were convicted under Article 7/3 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005.
- 18/11/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 59 ISIS detainees who were convicted under Article 7/3 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005.
- 11/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil Transferred 50 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 7/3 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005.

**Number of ISIS detainees whom KRG officially transferred, along with court documents, to the Baghdad province of Rassafa's Investigation Court:**

- 03/12/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 100 ISIS detainees to Rassafa court.
- 26/12/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 67 ISIS detainees who were transferred and convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 26/12/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 43 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 26/12/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 50 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 26/12/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 50 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.

- 28/12/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred convicts Farhan Atallah Hussein Ali and Abd Khalil Abd Rewdhan. They were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 28/12/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred convicts Fadhil Newaf Fadhil Debis and Naif Newaf Fadhil Debis. They were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 28/12/2017: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 23 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 22/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 44 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 22/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 46 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 22/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 18 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 3 of 2006 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 22/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred convicts Fadhil Mahmood Aziz Salih Mahdi and Firas Faris Tirki Mahmood. They were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 3 of 2006 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 22/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 7 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 3 of 2006 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 22/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred convicts Selwan Sabir Abdul Rahim Salih and Ferhan Sabir Abdul Rahim Salih. They were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.

- 29/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 39 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 13 of 2005 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 29/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 38 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 3 of 2006 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 29/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred convicts Wa'd Ali Salih Shahin and Nida Younis Hamed Wehab. They were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 3 of 2006 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 29/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred 38 ISIS detainees who were convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 3 of 2006 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 29/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred convict, Saif Merwan Othman Ahmed. He was convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 3 of 2006 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.
- 29/01/2018: The Directorate General of Asayish, Erbil, transferred convict, Muhammed Ali Muhammed Hussein. He was convicted based on Article 4/1 of the Counter-Terrorism Act No. 3 of 2006 for the purpose of completing their trial procedures.

#### **Official Decree by President Masoud Barzani to the KRG military commanders:**

An official decree was issued by President Masoud Barzani on March 17, 2016, immediately after the commencement of liberating ISIS controlled areas. The decree contains the following instructions pursuant to the Kurdistan Region's amended Presidential Law of 2005 and with consideration to the KR's security situation in its fight against the terrorist organization, ISIS. To protect human rights during battle and preserve the respectable stance of the reputable Peshmerga forces, President Barzani instructed all the Peshmerga officers and commanders of the following:

1. Reiterating the implementation of Decree No. 120 of August 21, 2014 that was forwarded to the Ministries of Peshmerga and Interior, commanding to commit to high values during war against ISIS and protect civilian lives in the liberated areas.



2. Reaffirming that civilian lives must be protected and prevent the lootings, and destruction of their houses and villages in the liberated areas.
3. Remembering that civilians must not be arrested without a court warrant and sufficient evidence and their cases must be dealt in a legally timely manner.
4. Insisting that civilians must not be displaced from their areas without legal and military support.
5. The free movement of civilians in the areas, except in the areas near battle with ISIS, should be permitted.
6. Calling on respecting humanitarian laws and principles when treating with civilians in defense and front lines.
7. Warning that any violators of the above points will be held accountable.

**Restatement:**

KRG reiterates commitment to the international standards for human rights and expresses its readiness to carry out investigations on breaches of law in any relevant matters, if legally reported with sufficient and reliable evidence by any international entity.

KRG puts into practice an open approach to all members of the international community while being in the center of fight against global terrorism in and around its borders. Observations and monitoring of our governance standards and human rights practices by numerous international monitoring groups has always been critical to KRG and shall continue to be in a democratic governing system. We shall remain open to adapting to new standards and practices in execution of our policies and encourage an open dialogue discussion with our fellow government counterparts to ensure transparency and an open line of communication.

**Appendix A: Photo of the Peshmerga who got severely injured in the event in Sahl Al-Malih when a female ISIS member detonated herself:**





**Appendix B: Photo Album of the Peshmerga forces finding suicide vests when checking ISIS fighter bodies:**

















