

P R E S S R E L E A S E**SAVE THE CHILDREN STATEMENT ON RECAPTURE OF RAQQA**

Berlin, 17.10.2017. As the city of Raqqa is recaptured from ISIS, Save the Children is warning that the humanitarian crisis in northeast Syria is rapidly escalating.

Some 270,000 people who have fled the Raqqa fighting are still in critical need of aid, and camps are bursting at the seams. With high levels of destruction reported in and around Raqqa, most families have little or nothing to return home to and will likely be stuck in camps for months or years to come. In addition, more than 10,000 people a day are now fleeing ongoing fighting in ISIS strongholds around Deir Ezzour, 140km to the southeast.

Substantial investment will be required to reconstruct the city's destroyed homes, health facilities and schools, and to remove unexploded mines, before people can safely go home. Children have missed out on years of schooling under ISIS and urgent funding will also be needed to help get them back into education. Many are plagued by nightmares from witnessing horrific violence and will need extensive psychological support.

Children in camps around Raqqa have told Save the Children of witnessing executions and decapitations, seeing friends and relatives blown up by landmines, and homes reduced to rubble by bombing. The psychological damage could take years to heal.

Sonia Khush, Save the Children's Syria Director, said:

"The military offensive in Raqqa may be coming to an end, but the humanitarian crisis is greater than ever. Fighting still rages nearby and thousands more children are streaming into already overcrowded camps every day. Conditions in the camps are miserable, and families do not have enough food, water or medicine. But it is not yet safe for them to go back, and many of their homes are now turned to rubble. These children have suffered for years under ISIS and must not be forgotten once the fighting subsides. We must ensure that they have a future to look forward to. The international community invests vast amounts of money on military action, but only a fraction of that for helping the children and families who suffer the consequences."

Contact:

Save the Children Deutschland e.V.

Press office – Anna Blässer

Tel.: +49 (30) 27 59 59 79 – 490

Mail: presse@savethechildren.de

For more information, follow us online:

www.savethechildren.de



[@stc_de](https://twitter.com/stc_de)



[Save the Children Deutschland](https://www.facebook.com/SaveTheChildrenDeutschland)

About Save the Children

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. Around the world, we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. When crisis strikes, and children are most vulnerable, we are always among the first to respond and the last to leave. We ensure children's unique needs are met and their voices are heard. We deliver lasting results for millions of children, including those hardest to reach.

We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.