



## ***Forced Displacement in Conflict Countries in 2019***

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*The Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue issues its annual report about forced displacement in conflict countries (Palestine, Syria, Libya, Iraq and Yemen) in 2019 as being a frequent violation against human rights and reveals how much is the sufferance faced by civilians in conflict countries in the Middle East.*

### ***Forced Displacement in International Law***

*Article no. 2 in the UN Convention defines forced displacement when governments, semi-armed forces or fanatic groups illegally displaced some individuals or populations from the areas where they live. The convention also includes it within war crimes, genocide crimes and crimes against humanity.*

*Accordingly, Article no. 7 of Rome Statute refers to deportation or forcible transfer of population as one of crimes against humanity. In addition, article no. 49 of the Fourth Convention of Geneva of 1949 “prohibits Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country... if the security of the population or imperative military reasons so demand”.*

### ***Palestine***

*Palestine condition is one of the oldest cases of forced displacement in the world as Israeli Occupation Forces repeat this crime systemically from Israeli villages and territories. Since 1948, Israel carried out a demographic change process for population in Palestine to remove and erase the Palestinian presence and replace the existence of Israeli settlements instead. A report of Central Agency of Palestinian Statistics reveals that the Israeli occupation forces forcibly displaced about 800.000 citizens from total of 1.4 million Palestinians who were residing in the occupied territories in 1948.*

### ***Syria***

*Syria is the most refugee-exporting country around the world as the number of Syrian refugees exceeds 6 million refugees. According to the statistics of International Organization for Migration in its report about international migration for 2020 which was issued in 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019, Syria has the greatest number of the displaced internally as their number reaches 6.1 million displaced.*

*In 27<sup>th</sup> August 2016, the population of Daraya city was completely displaced after concluding the agreement between the opposition and the Syrian regime when the armed men moved to Idlib in North Syria with their families while civilians moved to shelters in Damascus countryside. This was followed by the displacement of residents of Qadseya*



and Al Hama after a settlement agreement which resulted in the displacement of 2000 civilians to Idlib after a severe siege.

Page | 2 In 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016, 3000 civilians began to be displaced from Al Moadamyeh. In addition, Idlib received another 2000 civilians who were displaced in December 2016 from Al Tal town in Damascus countryside. In 11<sup>th</sup> April 2017, Al Sham Liberation Organization (Al Nasra Front previously) – supported by Qatar and representatives of Iran – reached an agreement which required the displacement of Madaya and Al Zabadani towns in Damascus countryside along with those who want from the civilians. Then the deal was completed in 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018 with the flee of the latest fighters and civilians from Al Fawaa and Kafraya towns which were occupied while the regime released 700 people from prisons.

### **Iraq**

The terroristic attacks carried out by Daaish armed men of The Islamic State Organization has been an important reason behind the rise of severity of forced displacement processes in Iraq by the wide attacks of the organization against cities in north, west and central of Iraq. Also Iraqi army used random bombing and explosive barrels in addition to the spread of militias crimes.

About 3 million displaced were distributed to 17 camps in Iraq the most of which are in Kurdistan and Baghdad. On the other hand, medical reports reveal the death of about (not less than) 100.000 Iraqi during 2014 and the injury of about 200.000 other Iraqis. Moreover, Christians were exposed to a great human disaster in Iraq since the terroristic militias have excluded 150.000 Christian families. This is just a part of great number of the displaced in Iraq since 2014 who are estimated by International Organization for Migration to exceed ne million displaced in more than 1380 areas along Iraq assuring that most of them were unable to reach safe places.

### **Libya**

Human Rights Watch declared that the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court should review the probability of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity against Tawergha residents within the investigations efforts exerted by the office to treat the severe violations in Libya. The number of Tawergha population is 48.000 people who are displaced from all over the country since the collapse of Libya when most of the residents flee upon the upcoming of Al Gaddafi supporting groups.

The International Criminal Court prosecutor has the authority to investigate crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide committed in Libya since 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011 when all committed violations went unpunished on local and international level including all committed violations against Tawergha residents such as long arbitrary group



*detention, torture, ill-treatment, forced displacement and illegal killing. The prosecutor of International Criminal Court must investigate the continuous crimes committed by all parties including serious crimes committed against Tawergha residents in addition to preventing all intended actions which impede their return. Along with the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Human Rights Office expressed its concern regarding the safety of thousands of displaced people of Tawergha in other camps in Tripoli including areas controlled by armed groups. Moreover, the Human Rights Office reminded Al Wafaq government of Libya's commitment towards human rights including preventing displacement and protecting and helping the displaced. The office also assured the necessity that the armed group should release the detainees immediately and called the authorities to provide shelter and protecting the displaced. Besides, the office called for conducting an independent, impartial and accurate investigation in regard to forced displacement and allegations related to human rights violations and bringing committers/criminals to justice.*

### **Yemen**

*A report by the International Organization for Migration revealed the number of forcibly displaced from the areas controlled by Al Houthi militias has risen to be 350.000 displaced people during 2019 only. In addition, Al Houthi militias treat Yemini in the areas they control as hostages. Yet what is more serious is the demographic change process which is done through the forced displacement for their opponents. The attacks against the displaced, their houses and damaging and robbing their properties are actions and practices which are classified as war crimes and crimes against humanity. In addition, Al Houthi groups have turned the areas they control to military areas where many crimes are committed not only forced displacement. A Yemeni human rights report revealed that Al Houthi militias displaced 3582 families in Taa'z in March 2015. The report also pointed out that more than 3000 families in Al Wazyaa were forcibly displaced, while the rest of the population had to leave because of fear of forced displacement. Moreover, the report shed light on forced displacement in Al Abos area in Haifan district where 142 families were affected by it, adding that forced displacement focused on the villages of Bawadya, Zabi, Harat and Doman. The report mentioned that the total number of displaced families from Al Sayar village in Al Salo district reached 250 families.*



## **Recommendations**

- 1- *Call the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur for the Displaced to investigate the incidents of forced displacement in Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen where governments or armed militias tried – violating the International Law – to occur demographic changes by forcibly displacement for the population to other areas or to camps for displaced and depriving them from their right to live in their original cities.*
- 2- *The Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue calls the International Criminal Court to investigate with the Israeli officials who are responsible for the crimes of forced displacement against Palestinians as being a crimes against humanity according to Rome Statute and UN Convention and to find an international mechanism that guarantees returning the victims of forced displacement to their villages and cities.*
- 3- *The international community should intervene to stop the Turkish plan of demographic change in North Syria by systemic displacement processes and bringing Turkey supporters in such areas.*
- 4- *The Forum for Development and Human Rights calls Iraqi parties to unify necessarily to stop the crime of forced displacement whether that committed by armed groups affiliated to Daaish or that committed by the popular. In addition, the forum calls UN mechanisms to provide aid to refugees and displaced people in Iraq.*
- 5- *The forum calls the international mechanisms to criminalize what is committed by Al Wafaq government in Libya in regard to its support to armed militias in Misrata which committed the crime of forced displacement against Tawergha residents. So international mechanism should work upon returning them to their cities and stop attacks against the displaced camps in Tripoli by militias of Al Wafaq government.*
- 6- *Stopping the processes of forced displacement committed by Al Houthi militias in Yemen in areas which they control and call them to account for these crimes and return the displaced people to their cities in Yemen.*