



File Photo: Mosul/Al Jazeera

Saturday, the 21st of July, marked the closure of all military operations of the Iraqi Army to oust the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) from Mosul and officially retake governance over the area after having lost control of it to ISIL from June 2014 to July 2017.

The ISIL's rule in Mosul came with a heavy humanitarian burden with immense violence, human suffering, and widespread physical destruction. However, the United Nations' Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq - Marta Ruedas feels that a year later, many 'humanitarian achievements' can be observed.

Investigations conducted by the UN and other humanitarian organisations have revealed that hospitals, schools, bridges, water treatment plants and many other civilian and municipal installations have been destroyed and contaminated with enormous quantities of explosive hazards and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) left behind by the ISIL. Close to a million civilians were forced to flee the region because of the conflict. However as per Ruedas 8,70,000 people have now returned to Mosul.

This step in the right direction, as per the UN have been due to some key achievements of the organisation in the region. Some notable ones include the UN High Commissioner for Refugees establishing camps for displaced Mosul residents, the UNICEF re-opening local schools, the UN Development Programme re-building local infrastructure, the World Health Organisation providing local ambulances and other UN bodies like the World Food Programme and UN Population Fund making commendable improvements to the lives of Mosul residents.

Despite these advancements, the need extensive need for such aid remains not only in Mosul but also Iraq. There still exist hundreds of thousands of ex-residents who have chosen not to return or are unable to because they are facing a multitude of other challenges. Plus, the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan is only 54% funded. Humanitarians urgently require over \$260.5 million to further meet the needs of Iraqis.

Source: UN News

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