



Factsheet

ISIL (Da'esh) Crimes Committed in Tikrit, al-Dour, al-Alam and al-Dhuluiya

Launch of the investigation: mid-2021

SCOPE OF INVESTIGATION

The investigation focused on the crimes committed by ISIL (Da'esh) members in Tikrit, al-Alam, al-Dour and al-Dhuluiya between 11 June 2014 and 31 March 2015.

DESCRIPTION OF VICTIM GROUP

Residents of Tikrit, al-Dour, al-Alam and al-Dhuluiya are predominantly Sunnis. The majority of the residents of al-Alam and al-Dhuluiya belong to the Sunni al-Jubouri tribe.

The Sunnis represent one of the two major branches of the Islamic religion. The Sunni branch differentiates itself from the Shi'a branch in that they recognize the first four caliphs as the Prophet Mohammad's rightful successors. Sunnis have their own interpretation of Islamic history and theology as well as their own holy days of remembrance and holy sites. Sunnis make up approximately 40 per cent of the population in Iraq.

MAIN LOCATIONS/AREAS

Tikrit and surrounding neighborhoods, al-Dour, al-Alam and al-Dhuluiya, Salah al-Din governorate.

MAIN INVESTIGATIVE ACTIVITIES

As part of its work, the Investigative Team screened and/or interviewed more than 60 witnesses, including victims, relatives, eyewitnesses and perpetrators. It also collected documentary evidence, including dozens of judicial statements, audio-visual evidence, including dozens of videos and hundreds of photographs, forensic evidence, including satellite imagery, as well as significant amounts of open-source information, including social media posts.

COOPERATION

The Investigative Team substantially benefitted from its cooperation with the Salah al-Din Federal Appellate Court and the Investigative Court in Salah al-Din, courts which provided ample relevant evidence to the Investigative Team. The work undertaken by the Mass Graves Directorate and the Medico-Legal Directorate were incorporated in the Investigative Team's factual findings.

A confidential report on ISIL (Da'esh) crimes committed against residents of Tikrit, al-Dour, al-Alam and al-Dhuluiya was shared with the Iraqi Supreme Judicial Council in August 2024.



OUTREACH

The Investigative Team also reached out to the Tikrit community and organized meetings with local dignitaries and civil society representatives. During these meetings, the Investigative Team explained its work and invited community members to contact the Investigative Team if they had relevant evidence about crimes committed by ISIL (Da'esh).

The Investigative Team presented the main factual and legal findings of its investigation in a meeting held on 29 August 2024 with the deputy administrative governor of Salah al-Din, the mayors of Tikrit and al-Alam and other local leaders and dignitaries.

OVERVIEW OF FACTUAL FINDINGS

On 11 June 2014, ISIL (Da'esh) entered Tikrit, quickly defeating the few remaining security personnel who put up resistance. ISIL (Da'esh) fighters released prisoners from Tasfirat and other prisons, ransacked governmental and civilian buildings in the city, and entered the Presidential Palace Complex, making it its headquarters. On the same day, ISIL (Da'esh) also took over al-Dour.

Three days after taking over Tikrit, ISIL (Da'esh) attacked al-Alam. In the eyes of the armed group, al-Alam residents, especially members of the al-Jubouri tribe, were traitors because they supported the Iraqi government and helped fleeing security personnel and Tikrit Air Academy cadets. On 14 June 2014, negotiations took place between ISIL (Da'esh) and the local leaders of al-Alam, but the latter refused ISIL's (Da'esh) demands, and this way the siege of al-Alam began, lasting until 22 June 2014. ISIL (Da'esh) surrounded al-Alam from all directions; for about 10-12 days, ISIL (Da'esh) shelled al-Alam, hitting private houses, damaging or destroying them. Essential items, such as food and medical supplies, were not allowed into the town. On 22 June 2014, an ISIL (Da'esh) sniper shot and killed Umayyah Jabara, a prominent resident of al-Alam, who supported the resistance by frequently visiting the frontline, supplying food to and boosting the morale of the fighters. As a result, 40-50 al-Alam families tried to leave the town, but they were apprehended and detained by ISIL (Da'esh). New negotiations began, and in exchange for releasing the families, ISIL (Da'esh) was allowed to enter al-Alam. It did so on 23 June 2014, with a convoy of more than 100 vehicles that paraded through the town.

During its control of the area, ISIL (Da'esh) members detained and mistreated hundreds of residents in Tikrit, al-Alam and al-Dour. Those apprehended and detained were perceived by the armed group as enemies of the organization, especially police and security forces as well as government personnel. Civilians with none of the aforementioned affiliations were also apprehended if seen as non-compliant. Residents were apprehended from their home or the street and taken to various ISIL (Da'esh)-run detention centers, where they were held for hours, days, weeks or even months. During such detentions, detainees were often deprived of food, water, access to restrooms, medicine or medical facilities. At least dozens of detainees were mistreated. During the same time, dozens of executions took place in Tikrit, al-Alam and al-Dour. Residents were hanged, beheaded or shot, often in the presence of a crowd that was forcefully gathered to witness the killing. Some executions were also photographed or filmed by ISIL (Da'esh). Members of the armed group also engaged in arbitrary searches and unlawful appropriation and/or destruction of private property in Tikrit, al-Alam and al-Dour. ISIL (Da'esh) members also severely damaged



the Shrine of the *Arba'een* (40) in Tikrit and destroyed the Shrine of Abu Ajja in al-Awja, near Tikrit. Several other religious and historical monuments as well as tombs in Tikrit's graveyards were damaged or destroyed. Likewise, ISIL (Da'esh) members destroyed the Shrine of Imam Mohammed Durri and the Shrine of Saleh Ibrahim in al-Dour. During this period, thousands of residents of Tikrit, al-Alam and al-Dour left their homes because they feared for their and their loved ones' life and safety.

In contrast with the events in Tikrit, al-Alam and al-Dour, ISIL (Da'esh) never fully managed to take control of al-Dhuluiya. Members of the armed group briefly entered al-Dhuluiya on or about 12 or 13 June 2014, but they were beaten back from the southern part of the town by residents, primarily members of the al-Jubouri tribe, who took up arms to defend their home. As a result, ISIL (Da'esh) retreated to the northwest area of the town. A 10-15-day truce was established, which ended on or about mid-June 2014. For the next six months, southern al-Dhuluiya was encircled by ISIL (Da'esh) fighters and attacks were launched on a daily basis. Many of the injured and deceased were civilian men, women and children struck by shelling and mortar attacks far from the battlefield. Many private houses, a mosque and a school/makeshift hospital were damaged or destroyed. ISIL (Da'esh) members also cut electricity and other basic supplies from residents of al-Dhuluiya. On or about 14 September 2014, ISIL (Da'esh) members shot chlorine gas shells at the frontline near the city center of al-Dhuluiya. Victims experienced suffocation, extreme nausea, vomiting and other symptoms within minutes of exposure. Many continue to endure serious health issues today.

OVERVIEW OF PRELIMINARY LEGAL FINDINGS

The Investigative Team found that there were reasonable grounds to believe that the crimes committed by ISIL (Da'esh) between 11 June 2014 and 31 March 2015 may amount to the:

- **crimes against humanity** of imprisonment, other inhumane acts, torture, murder and forcible transfer committed against residents of Tikrit, al-Alam and al-Dour;
- **crime against humanity** of persecution committed against individual residents of Tikrit and al-Dour, and against all residents, predominantly belonging to the al-Jubouri tribe, in al-Alam and al-Dhuluiya;
- **war crimes** of arbitrary detention, cruel treatment, torture and murder committed against residents of Tikrit, al-Alam and al-Dour;
- **war crimes** of unlawful attacks against civilian objects, pillage, damage or destruction of cultural property and acts or threats of violence the primary purpose of which is to spread terror committed against residents of Tikrit, al-Alam, al-Dour and al-Dhuluiya;
- **war crime** of unlawful attacks against civilians committed against residents of al-Alam and al-Dhuluiya during the siege of these towns; and
- **war crime** of use of poisonous weapons and/or the use of asphyxiating weapons committed on or about 14 September 2014 against residents of al-Dhuluiya.



RELEVANT PUBLIC DOCUMENTS

[ISIL \(Da'esh\) Crimes Committed in Tikrit, al-Alam, al-Dour and al-Dhuluiya \(August 2024\)](#)

[Damage and destruction of cultural heritage by ISIL \(Da'esh\) in Iraq \(September 2024\)](#)