



Statement by Commissioner Stylianides on the humanitarian situation in Western Mosul and other conflict areas in Iraq

Brussels, 17 February 2017

The military operations in Mosul have so far been conducted with due attention to the protection of civilians. This is despite the challenges of fighting ISIL in densely populated areas. We commend Iraqi authorities and military forces for having put protection of civilians at the core of their military strategy. As the offensive on western Mosul is to start soon, we call for the continued commitment to do everything possible to protect the hundreds of thousands of civilians and to help them to access safe areas, including establishing safe evacuation routes. We also renew our call for humanitarian access, for the urgent delivery of principled, lifesaving aid to civilians in all active conflict areas and for facilitating medical evacuation of the wounded and sick and for the provision of emergency medical services.

We must live up to the challenge of assisting the people most in need, during and after the military operations. This is why we have been and we will continue to be at the forefront of advocacy efforts and humanitarian response in Iraq, including to emergency medical needs. We do this through our partners and together with Iraqi authorities and other donors. The European Union is a leading donor in the international response to the Iraq crisis with €159 million in humanitarian support in 2016 and 266 tons of in-kind assistance (shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene as well as health aid), recently delivered through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. We will continue to do our best to help those civilians still trapped in conflict areas, who will remain or may be forced to flee as a result of the fighting.

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