

Camps and Prisons Detainees ... The Risk of ISIS Legacy in North-East Syria



Studies

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Introduction

Thousands of detainees of the Islamic State (ISIS) are swarming, in a small geographical area of North-East Syria (NES), some of which carry mixed feelings between pain, fear, sadness, joy, dread, and regret, have found themselves as victims. Others hold feelings of hope, wish, and revenge within them, and despite its fall in Mosul, Raqqa, Deir Al-Zour, they believe that it is just a setback, and their state will continue, even in its last strongholds in Al-Baghuz. As their state is not just cities but also a thought that will continue in their places of detention and they will impose it on others.

Introduction

The Roots and Al-Jihad Duty

Despite the different names and religious titles of the militant groups, all of them belong, in its roots, to one tendency, which is the “Jihadi Tendency” The ideological idea is united regardless of the figures that stand for or the defects that occur in it, but it is a resumption and expansion of this ideology.

Despite the differences, it is being noted by referring to the ideological roots, the capability of ISIS ideas and to what extent it can be evolved and continued.

The beginning was with the announcement of the "Jama'at al- Wal-Jihad"(The Group of Monotheism and Jihad) organization joining Al Qaeda in 1999. It participated in the Iraqi resistance against the American invasion in 2003.

In 2004, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi announced the establishment of al-Qaeda in Iraq, and after his killing in a US raid on 7 July 2003, Abu Ayyub al-Masri assumed the leadership of the organization. The presence of al-Qaeda in Iraq on the ground was restricted to Fallujah and its surrounding Iraqi cities.

In October 2006, Abu Ayyub al-Masri announced the establishment of the Islamic State in Iraq, under the Emirate of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi.

In April 2010, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi took over the emirate after the killing of Al-Masry and Abu Omar Al-Baghdadi in a joint US-Iraqi operation targeting their headquarters.

From ideological thought to an Imposed Reality (the Caliphate)

Despite the role of ideology in the nature of ISIS's work, its new strategy began to tend toward other goals, such as possession of funds, resources, and power, so establishing the caliphate in Iraq and Syria was the true beginning of ISIS, and its end was unknown.

The extremist Islamic Organization has begun to engage with Al-Qaeda since 2013, it has introduced itself to become a real base for any Islamic Group, and it was keen on transforming the ideological goal of Al-Qaeda from virtual reality to a reality being lived, which

have made it a spot that was being attracted by donors and new elements.

In April 2013, the Islamic State in Iraq announced the integration of the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, Al-Baghdadi announced at that time the new name of the organization, which is the "Islamic State in Iraq and Sham". It has become known in the media as "ISIS", followed by control of several Iraqi cities, including the city of Al-Qaim on the Syrian border.

ISIS announced the establishment of the "Islamic caliphate", on 29 June 2014, and the abolition of the border between the lands that are under its control. As ISIS was controlling a large area of the land at that time, estimated at more than 34,000 square miles in Syria and Iraq, extending from the coasts of the Mediterranean to southern Baghdad, an area equivalent to the area of the United Kingdom, and ruling citizens whose population reached the population of Switzerland. It began to develop a structure for a state equivalent to the tasks of any other country, in addition to, imposing taxes and royalties on the millions of people residing in the territories under its controls.

The Falling of the Caliphate

The military gains and accomplishments achieved by ISIS resulted in an international intervention led by the United States to be confronted, they began cooperation with local forces the Syrian Democratic Forces(SDF), to impose a direct challenge to limit its ability to survive and expand. Since then, the area controlled by ISIS has begun to shrink.

The year 2019 was the most distinguished for the world and the most impacted on ISIS fighters and followers, where it suffered unimaginable losses. From the geographical aspect, it lost the last stronghold Al-Baghouz, and from the moral aspect, it lost the symbol and the founder of their State Abou Bakr Al-Baghdadi. Thus, their State had nothing left, but only a name that refers to a "State" that does not exist on the ground, after inspiring 40 thousand volunteers from around the world who joined them. Whereas, at some stage it reached about 1500 foreign fighters joining them every month.

With the regaining of the last enclave of Syrian territory that was under the control of ISIS by (SDF) and the International Coalition,

marked the official end of the terrorist group's short-term experience in managing State affairs. "This was the summary of the latest report of the Inspector General in Pentagon concerning "Inherent Resolve Operation"

The Continuation of the Caliphate Ideology

For a better understanding of the reality of the long-term goals of the organization, we notice it in the slogan that has resonated since its foundation, which is "remaining and expanding" and this gives only one fact that ISIS is not just a geographical area. However, an idea that seeks to establish a global influence that makes it as a project that settles in the minds and expands.

The difference between the fall of the Caliphate State and the continuation of the Caliphate Ideology is the geographical area and the imposed reality. Nevertheless, the common link between them is the continuation of ideological between those who are still joining and belonging to it in order to re-establish their State again at any opportunity that might be repeated either when leaders are present in prisons or concealed outside. Pre-existing structure and elements still carry the extremist ideology, because the mentality is still present, just as the killing of their Caliph did not deter them from moving forward, which is what these groups started since 1999, by making the caliphate hereditary when its leader was killed, which has not discouraged them from pursuing their approach in 2020. Therefore, despite the disappearance of its State in Syria and Iraq, ISIS will remain a global threat. Therefore, their support to "Abu Ibrahim al-Qurashi" confirms that the revival of their state is stronger, although they are the losing team and their Caliphate is over. However, (the Caliphate) will continue as a virtual one throughout continuing to launch attacks, and poses a great danger; the conditions that produced ISIS still exist, such as chaos, divisions, and weak economies, in addition to other factors that stimulate and help the emergence of a group that succeeds ISIS

Here, the study aims to analyze the most important factors that will contribute to the continuation of the Islamic State, despite its existential presence on the ground, but its forgotten legacy in northeastern Syria is more dangerous rather than its predecessors, which paves the way for a new caliphate, in light of their marginalization this way.

1- An assumed Caliphate in northeastern Syria

The announcement of the end of ISIS after its last pocket was restored, was not a real end, rather, he brought with him very exciting and disturbing details. In spite of ISIS lacking the ability to carry out large-scale military attacks, or controlling territory for long periods of time, its destabilizing activities, such as "assassinations, ambushes, suicide operations and burning crops" are increasing, aimed at cultivating fear and undermining local stability, and proving that The "Islamic State" still exists.

This is what the situation seems, in northeastern Syria, where it contains camps that housing thousands of ISIS families and children of fighters. In addition to fighters who were taking on sensitive and precise tasks, commanders, and supervisors hold in SDF prisons, it is not surprising that

ISIS is active in these camps by recruiting new members, in addition to a new restructuring planned for it in prisons, in light of the world's silence about their destiny, which constituted a complex that has been difficult to be solved so far, and they pose more danger rather than when they established their State. As noted above, the speed of the formation of ISIS and laying its foundations. However, the situation is different now, as it is ready in all respects, awaiting the opportunity to get out, it spreads faster than it was, where most of them bear a grudge and a spirit of revenge more than before. The killing of ISIS's leader, "Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi" does not end this organization. The tasks are transferred to another, so these detainees are prepared to announce the caliphate again as soon as its winds blow, especially after pledging allegiance to another leader immediately after Al-Baghdadi's death, who is "Abu Ibrahim al-Qurashi".

2- ISIS Detainees are the Main Pillar of the Assumed Caliphate

After regaining control of the lands that ISIS-occupied by the International Coalition and (SDF), the latter became in control of prisons and camps that house the organization's elements. However, with sufficient time, these detainees became a burden and a threat to the region and the forces overseeing them. The majority of those detained are foreign fighters in jihad campaigns,

and they have attracted people who want to live under their rule without fighting.

Some of them surrendered, and some of them escaped from their former strongholds in Syria, such as Manbij in the West of the Euphrates, and Raqqa in the East, down the extended towns, on both sides of the Middle Euphrates River Valley (MERV) in Deir Ezzor countryside. Which was for a long time a fundamental base for the organization, and eventually, everyone resorted to Al-Baghuz, which included thousands of residents of families and hundreds of fighters who refused to raise the white flag. In front of the progress of (SDF), where the elements of the organization fought until they run out of ammunition, and only then, they went out to surrender. They are considered to be one of the most loyal and wanted fighters for the organization; they insisted on their loyalty even after the collapse of their alleged State, and they maintained their opinion despite the horrific crimes committed during the years of its ruling in Syria and Iraq.

What is left of the fighters is estimated between 14000 - 18000 elements in both Iraq and Syria; it is believed that an estimated 3000 thousand foreign fighters amongst them. Therefore, the Organization is still maintaining an enormous number of soldiers, and it tries to reinforce these forces to return to their previous activity and attract new fighters through his activity in Social Media globally through its cells abroad. Whereas, prisons and camps in North-East Syria contain many of these media activists working on psychological teachings, fear and intimidation, to make these centers more like an isolated camp from the other world.

Therefore, it can be said that with the end of the battle of al-Baghuz, the "geography of the organization" complex has been resolved, but the vast amount of the human reservoir leaving from it. The rest of the liberated areas before, is sufficient to answer the existence of a new complex more dangerous than its predecessor, which is "the detainees and the cells of the organization". The main pillar of the supposed Caliphate, whose danger is the transformation of a group into decentralized parts, divided between camps and prisons in northeastern Syria. Therefore, the main objectives of the organization are no longer set, in the absence of central leadership. Individual members will be free to plan terrorist operations and their

target dates for striking are being planned within their group in their detention, which has turned into camps to revive their Caliphate throughout factors we will address them in detail.

3- (The camps) from detention centers to a founding rule for the Assumed Caliphate.

The vast number of people coming to the camps constituted a great burden on those in charge, as a large number of members of ISIS and their families posed a new terrorist threat. In this case, the camp will become the new kitchen for ISIS ideology, given to its intensive mobilization. In addition to ISIS families, there are many who supported the Islamic State when they were ruling on the ground, thus, they will form a support structure to continue the secret fighting. However, the fear remains of the difficulty of separating ISIS victims and those who collaborate with them because the fear and terror of evading is a very dangerous matter.

In the desert scene of the refugee camps, many of the sleeper cells are stationed and positioned in its surrounding areas, along with those who stay inside in North-Easter Syria. Fear of launching an attack to liberate who is inside or attack from inside is considered the most imperative for society, in general, and for the region and its administration, in particular.

In Al-Hol camp on the Syrian-Iraqi border, near the town of Al-Hol, its foundation was established in 1991 as a haven for Iraqi refugees. It was established by the United Nations High Commissioner in coordination with the Syrian government, this camp was opened by self-administration in mid-April 2016 to receive those fleeing from the areas controlled by ISIS, the camp now includes about 70,000 people, including about 30,000 Iraqis and 11,200 foreigners from 54 different nationalities.

Ain Al-Issa camp is 45 km north of Raqqa, which was established in March 2016, has a population of approximately 12,900 people, of whom 950 are non-Syrians, and inside it are kept families of the Islamic State, who want to renew their obsession with their State, believing that victory is their ally.

Near the city of Derek (Al-Malikiyah), there is RoJ Camp with around 500 families; the camp includes women leaders and members of ISIS of European and Asian nationalities and some Arab countries

such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco and some African nationalities.

They still adhere to ISIS Islamic Law and speak Standard Arabic, and in most cases, they prevent their children from participating in entertainment games under the pretext of Taboo.

When ISIS ended, many of these women and their children went out of the battles to these camps, and the impact of the defeat on most of them was like a dream, which turned into a nightmare by holding them in the camps. Because of the Caliphate State-Law controlled their ideas, they insisted on following the ideology of their State (ISIS) to deliver a message To all who are in the camp, in particular, and the world in general, that the caliphate is still continuing despite the fall of the State (the Caliphate State) and its features have emerged as follows:

3.1. Caliphate within the Camps

After the fall of ISIS on 23 March 2019, many of its members began to lay down rules related to the new life in the camp. For a period not exceeding seven months, the extremists in the camp were able to create a complex internal structure, in the same way; the Islamic caliphate was when it was announced in June 2015, dependent on:

a- ISIS Fighters' Families

The ISIS families represent a diverse group in a number of ways, such as the wives and widows of their fighters, as they pose more difficult problems than the fighters themselves. Some of them were brought with their husbands to Syria, and among them were those who came to Syria in search of jihadist husbands. Therefore, their experiences and attitudes differ, and it varies greatly according to an ideological obligation imposed by ISIS based on domestic activity to instruct their children and the children of others the tendency towards extremism and violence. In addition, activities of special units for various tasks imposed by the Islamic State to convert traumatized victims into committed fanatics.

b- Extremists Women

In its extremist ideology, ISIS has focused, particularly, on the minds of its female followers. Thus, they support some women, especially foreign women, to sow hatred against their societies. After its

military defeat, its only hope remains to get support, in his covert operations, from his female members in the camps, who had a major role in the establishment and growth phase in 2014. Despite their specific role on the fronts, such as fighting, most of them have played the largest role in other matters such as education, recruitment and carrying out terrorist operations, as well as securing sources of revenues. Women also had the biggest role in motivating many young men to join the Islamic State through social media, and the promise of marrying them, in addition to their role in educating children on extremism-based teachings of the Islamic State from their birth and many names emerged from them, they won famous titles in international channels and newspapers. They had the most impact in supporting and establishing the Islamic State, such as:

“Sally Jones” Called |” Umm Hussein al-Britani" and " Sakina Hussein" as she was called "The White Widow" in Syria, she was a British guitar player and singer, and in 2013 she joined the ISIS and then became one of the most famous British women who joined ISIS, for her role in organizing terrorist plots. In addition to being an advocate of recruitment into the ranks of the organization, it is believed that she was killed in a US airstrike in Raqqa.

Jones had little tactical value on the battlefield, but she was a great loss for the group, after gaining a bad reputation in the press due to her armed appearance and incitement to murder. She became a symbol of this group because of her influence on other women from foreign countries, the fact that her strength was based on the idea that it could reach to the British Society, in addition to describing herself as "the leader of the jihadist women's battalion."

"Jones" was only one model for many of her likes, which confirms that militant women are considered a pioneering movement among jihadist groups. They are now working to attract and lean all women trapped in the camp. More recently, in chaos, she founded a small group, including a model that mimics the Caliphate State in the camps of northeastern Syria due to their belief that the black flag has not dropped yet, and it is still looming on the horizon, they dream about and hide behind. Even inside their prison, they are still thinking about victory, the State, governance, Sharia, jurisprudence, slaughter, cutting, counting, and stoning. Their detention in the camps did not prevent them from dreaming about the victory of their

State (the caliphate / ISIS), and ISIS still controlling on their ideas, and they continued to adhere to ISIS law and control camps like the caliphate mentioned above by working to:

Selecting a Caliph inside the Camp

The lack of the element of men incited women from ISIS families in the camps to choose a leader for them to serve as the Emir or Caliph, according to one of the camp security elements. These women work to secure their Caliph or their princess in the same manner when they used to securing al-Baghdadi and hiding him, so every night this (chosen) woman is being moved to sleep in a different tent from the previous one to avoid being arrested.

Selecting Leaders

The same way as Baghdadi was doing in Bucca Camp, Iraq, by recruiting extremists and qualifying them to become leaders of the organization, women in the camps began to reinforce the role of foreign and local women to qualify them to become leaders and to be in charge of tasks. In the forefront of these "Russian" women who took control of the camp, are considered the most dangerous, to the point that many camp residents refuse to talk about them due to fears of taking revenge.

These militants have made a great impression, in their control of the camps, including the "ruling class (leaders)" and others whose roles have varied by working in the administrative and media staff, the security, logisticians, recruits, advocates and jihadists.

c- Establishing an army inside the camps

The camps that house the elements of the organization formed a fertile ground for the advocacy of extremism, in addition to the conspiracy operations between women to avenge those who do not join them or do not obey orders or those who deviate from the teachings of the alleged Caliphate. The huge number of loyalists in these camps of women and children, who are receiving the traditions of the organization, is sufficient to establish a new army based on extremist ideology and to transform the camp from a IDPs Camp to an army's camp.

Despite the high-security measures, these women established brigades inside the camp divided into four tasks, which are:

- The "Religious Patrols" Brigade is based on supervising religious garments, such as wearing the Niqab and performing the prayer.
- Brigade (informants), warns others when the Asayish (Security Forces) prepares for any raid.
- The (executioners) brigade who carry out death sentences and other penalties, such as burning shops, fetching weapons, and beating those who do not obey orders.

d- Organization's Children are (the Generation Trained on Brutality)

Children pose the most serious challenge, especially infants and young children, they have no ideological estimates and they are considered innocent, while adolescents have deliberately participated with fighters of the Islamic State and other irregular military formations in their violent campaigns. Where they filmed video clips, for the Islamic State, children executed prisoners or carrying victims' heads, which had been cut. These things were not just extraordinary events organized for the purpose of propaganda, but rather, they were part of an organized strategy to cultivate brutality amongst future generations. ISIS has sent thousands of underage children, 13 years old to training camps where they have been trained to use knives and behead blonde-haired people with blond hair as "infidel dolls", dressed in orange suits, the uniform worn by detainees of the organization. which has had an impact on their mental and emotional behavior, especially their ability to adapt to completely different standards from the world of childhood.

There are thousands of ISIS children, who have enrolled in their schools and received education about their ideology, in addition to many children, who have received the same education from their mothers and neighbors.

The two have become a new and more dangerous threat from those who were previously members of ISIS. These people have experienced violence and revenge since childhood. The level of this organization will certainly rise again and its expansion from inside

the camps, and it will extend to outside to become stronger and more widespread than before and will pose a danger to the region, in particular, and the world, in general. According to the data, the largest percentage of them are from Syria and Iraq, according to the UN report:

The population of Al-Holl Camp was 73782 people or 21331 families on 29 May in 2019.

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 91% are women and children | 65% are under the age of 12 | |
| Nationalities | | |
| 43% are Iraqis | 42% are Syrians | 15% are from other Countries |

The number is estimated at about 40 thousand minors who do not know the world outside the Caliphate, including about 10400 foreigners, and the rest are Syrians and Iraqis.

In addition to the above-mentioned, the lack of playing areas, education, and health are increasingly generating a hostility within them, which reflects in their behavior and allowing freedom of movement for these children in all parts of the camp. This leads to increased violence and exposing young children, who learn from their mothers to refuse the organization, to cases of assault by other militants at the incitement of their mothers, the camps witnessed cases of rape of young girls at the hands of older boys, at the incitement of their mothers.

Therefore, being exposed to extremism at a young age makes it difficult to get rid of it at puberty. The situation of these people remains more dangerous rather than the others, as it promotes the establishment of an army of extremists who have absorbed the teachings of the organization and have been brutalized and vengeful.

Their number is increasing, in spite of, deaths that occurred because of malnutrition or health reasons, or the exit of some of them. As Al-Hol camp, in particular, seems to be in continuous growth to the

extent that the number of residents of the camp has become ten times larger than the population of the city of Al-Hol itself, which is only one kilometer away.

4- The Detainees of (prisons)

The prisons in (NES) contains an estimated 11 thousand, 9 thousand of them from the local population (Syrians-Iraqis), and 2 thousand men of them from more than 50 other States, tens of them are Europeans from countries like Belgium, Britain, France, and Germany, and from Islamic countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen. The issue of these detainees is considered more difficult "crisis" than the camps one, which is the responsibility of (SDF).

The main risk of those detainees is the fact that there is not an alternative plan for their destiny so far, and that is what would constitute a source of permanent danger and anxious to all parties for many reasons some of them are:

4. 1. The Prison as a Separator and Main Center to the Assumed Caliphate

After the group's defeats, it has been trying to regroup since that time; the prison is the separator and main point of its strong emergence once again. At the beginning of the emergence of ISIS, they gained a lot of fighting power and fighters by opening prisons and releasing detainees in Mosul. Thousands of Fighters joined them, the leader of the organization, "Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi" had spent time in the US-managed detention camp, and the idea of the organization arose amongst the detainees within this camp, this is what the organization's leadership had been aware of; the capabilities and role of the prisoners, therefore, they organized a campaign to release them.

This strategy is very likely to be repeated. The United States is holding in that prisons one of the most famous leaders of ISIS, in northeastern Syria, and the most dangerous ones, some of them were Emirs (princes), ministers, judges in "Sharia Court", fighters, and others who were responsible for sensitive missions, killings, and torture, amongst them:

“Alexanda Kotey” and “El Shafee ElSheikh” two British amongst an ISIS band called “The Beatles”, which is an ISIS cell whose mission is to kill torture and decapitate. Furthermore, the slaughter of the hostages, crimes of mass murder, and these two were arrested by the (SDF), while the rest were killed during fights.

Elias Aiden: who is known as (Abou Obaida Al-Turki) is arrested by the (SDF); he joined to ISIS ranks in summer 2014 and escaped from ISIS in January 2017, due to disputes and civil war, where he had been arrested by (SDF) on 30-31 January on the border of Serekaniye (Ras-Al Ain) when he tried to escape to Turkey.

He is one of the most prominent officials in spreading the ideas of the organization and achieving its propaganda and those who is in charge of “Sharia camps” in “Al-Sham Wilaya.”

Throughout the confessions of this leader, he is still working certainly to spread and advertise the teachings of ISIS, among the arrested, especially that he played a strong influential role, to attract many fighters to him because the risk of his being in prisons in northeastern Syria is not different from his danger when he was outside.

“Muhammad Salih Nahi Al-Shammari”, nicknamed “Abu Sufyan Al-Shammari” and the owner of the most famous song (O Aseeb al-Ras Wink), which was popular among the majority of ISIS supporters and who was singing it. He is considered one of the first Saudis who joined the ranks of the Mujahideen in Syria since 2012, then joined ISIS; the terrorist organization, he was one of its most prominent leaders until he was arrested by the (SDF) at late 2017. He was one of the few members of the organization who met Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS; this confirms that he is not an ordinary soldier in ISIS. He was also a friend of the former military commander of ISIS Abu Omar al-Shishani, and a member of his group in the Migrants and Ansar Army in 2013.

Al-Shammari is one of the masterminds behind the implementation of abroad operations out of Iraq and Syria geographically, he has a strong influence on his supporters, carrying out operations inside Saudi Arabia and sending ISIS elements to France, Germany, and Britain is among the accusations against him; With the aim of carrying out operations in over there. It is easy during his detention

in prisons in northeastern Syria to work to provoke those inside the prison with him and to provoke them to carry out operations in their countries, at any opportunity they have to get out or escape to provoke those from abroad to carry out operations.

In addition to (al-Kuti, al-Shafi, al-Turki, and al-Shammari) there are thousands of detainees in prisons who were carrying sensitive tasks within ISIS i.e. prisons in northeastern Syria contain an administrative staff and an entire network of the Islamic State, waiting for any opportunity to come out and announce the return of ISIS, with even more strength. In which based on what the required strategy of ISIS, working to release some people who have a strong impact on people as they did in Iraqi prisons where ISIS has turned into a movement that seized not only the lands of Iraq and Syria but also organized and encouraged terrorist attacks in Europe and the United States.

The danger also comes from the other prisons that host detainees for other reasons not linked to terrorism, thus, ISIS members will seek to release them to join them into its ranks.

4.2. The Children Detainees (a Terrorist Generation Grows up inside the Prisons)

How would you kill your enemy? How would you be faithful to your leader or the leader of the organization? Two questions clarify regarding the generation that remained from the legacy of the Islamic State. ISIS taught them initially to answer these two questions, through several means.

It intends to prepare children through three schools, to prepare them for suicide operations,

Such as:

- The first schools are the most dangerous (religious) ones, to consolidate terrorist thought and sow hatred in them.
- The second school is (Combat), based on scientifically trained martial arts.
- The third school is (intellectual) to prepare them intellectually and psychologically, to slaughter their victims without mercy or

compassion, according to the testimony of some of them, the bloodshed has become a normal thing for them.

In North-East of Syria, small prisons were overcrowded with minors and underage children; 9-14 years old, who came to Syria with their families and were arrested in these prisons, where some reports indicated that one of these prisons includes about 86 minors from Syria, Iraq, Russia and other countries, whereas other prisons hold around 67 teenagers.

According to the above, those children in prisons and camps pose a danger to the world because they have received the teachings of ISIS ideology at the hands of their mothers and ISIS women, and the most dangerous are the children in prisons because they received those instructions in regular camps and they were trained to be armed as well. As many reports issued by the (SDF) indicated evidence indicating that many minors had received ideological training, under the name of “the Cubs of the Caliphate” or to turn them to fighters in the future. The State Army, the Caliphate Army and Adnan Army, affiliated with the Islamic State, included the largest number of children under the name of “Caliphate Cubs”, who are taught how and why to kill infidels and entice them to fight.

5. The International Community’s Position towards the Detainees’ Issue

5.1. The Most Difficult Challenge

The issue of ISIS detainees in the camps and prisons posed a great challenge to the international community, whether from their original governments or the region they live in, but these governments have failed to take a clear position concerning their destiny so far. At a time when it must hold its responsibilities towards ISIS elements, and not put the entire burden on the shoulders of the Autonomous Administration, ISIS elements sending back to their countries, subjecting them to fair trials, and rehabilitating them is among the basic steps to control the rest of them. However, foreign countries do not seek to return their citizens to their homeland, according to their estimation, they pose a danger to their societies, and positions and responses varied regarding this issue, we will mention some of them:

5.2. European Disability and Avoidance

Europe maintains a painful record of jihadist terrorism, as it has been subjected to repeated attacks on post-September 11 periods, in addition to ISIS attacks in Paris, which killed 130 people; it began to strengthen its measures to combat terrorism and to develop policies of dealing with terrorist detainees. The continuous destruction of the ISIS Caliphate on the ground was a blessing for Europe. The number of victims from terrorism reached about 14 people in 2018, a sharp decrease compared to the statistics of 2015, which killed more than 100 people. However, the remainder of the remaining elements is still being held in camps and prisons in North-Easter Syria, which posed a difficult dilemma and challenge for them because:

A- Judicial Weakness of Terrorism-related charges (mitigation of punishments)

Europe wants to implement punishments that allow the organization elements to be detained for a long time, but its law often convicts those accused of terrorism cases for short periods, unlike the United States, where the average prison sentence for terrorism-related sentences is approximately 15 years.

In Europe, the short conviction of young people connected with ISIS, who have a record of violence, and extremism is complicated and dangerous. When they leave, they are imprisoned at an early age, they become more extremist and dangerous, thus, according to the Europeans, returning them is considered a risk.

The preferred policy for the United States and many European countries is by suing them for a long time; this is why the United States initiated laws that preventing even the attempt to join any terrorist organization. The United Kingdom also adopted a similar law, and France authorized the trial of foreign fighters for their participation in a group formed for the purpose of terrorism. However, some other countries lack such laws, as they need strong evidence of actual participation in terrorist crimes such as kidnapping or killing, and it may be difficult to obtain such evidence, which may lead to short prison terms, as the jihadi sentence can range between 3-5 years before their return to the streets.

In Belgium, the average prison sentence for returning foreign fighters was five years, and in July 2019, a German woman who married an ISIS fighter was sentenced to 5 years in prison for joining a terrorist organization reveals a judicial weakness.

B- The Absence of Evidence

There are greater penalties for ISIS elements that can be prosecuted for longer periods, such as killing, torturing and enslaving civilians, but this requires clear evidence, a set of sources of evidence may be available. By linking defendants to violent crimes as testimony from victims, friends, or a family member, or evidence of Social Media, including photos and messages that the ISIS element boasts of killing, an attempt to recruit others, or evidence from the battlefield, or documents of their membership, such as mobile phones, hard drives, fingerprints on weapons, and intelligence sources. However, not all of this evidence is acceptable; for instance, Germany imposes restrictions on the use of social media posts as evidence.

In addition, collecting evidence in North-Eastern Syria poses major challenges, especially in the aftermath of the Turkish invasion, and European Governments are worried about escaping of ISIS foreign elements without evidence, or some of them are presented with incomplete evidence.

After the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 2178 in September 2014, which required states to pass laws to try foreign fighters, most European Countries have legislation that allows the prosecution of returnees for belonging to or supporting a terrorist group. Sweden has amended a law introduced in 2016 that criminalizes travel for terrorism purposes.

However, the big difference between the European Union States is how to define crimes, there are still precedents for these laws that European Courts condemn for registering men as fighters in ISIS documents. It is unlikely that sufficient evidence of conviction exists in areas that were controlled by ISIS, thus, many captive men claim to have performed non-combatant roles, such as drivers or chefs, in

many cases, it is difficult to refute these allegations when there is lack of the evidence.

Prisons are the Haven of Extremism

According to their analysis, one of the main challenges that European Countries afraid of is that many of their detainees have not traveled to Syria and Iraq, and they have no connection with ISIS or al-Qaeda, but they are inspired by these ideologies. Therefore, they see the return of ISIS detainees issue and putting them together with the other detainees, who have been involved in other cases, could turn everyone in the prison to become an extremist. Moreover, this exit with the extremists poses a grave danger and a burden on Security and its members. If the issue before required monitoring ISIS elements after the end of their sentence and their release from prison, they now have the mission of monitoring those who were accused of other issues not related to terrorism, for fear of being affected by the militants during the sentence periods. French Minister of Justice indicated that they expected 450 people to leave the French prisons, including 50 accused with terrorism cases and 400 as ordinary criminals, in this case, 450 people will be dealt with as an Extremist, which is a big challenge for them. In addition to the high cost of controlling them.

d. Popular Poll (Refusal)

Another matter that most European Countries rely on regarding the return of its citizens from ISIS is the popular rejection. A public survey was conducted in France for the return of its citizens' fighters who joined ISIS, where 89% opposed the return of adults and 67% opposed the return of children.

5.3. Useless Solutions

5.3.1. Keeping them away

The issue of ISIS detainees in North-East Syria caused a dilemma for the United States and the European states and other countries, due to the large number, seriousness, and difficulty of the solution. Therefore, it became a difficult choice for them, and they only found a choice that enables them to deport them:

Stripping Citizenship

This idea has gained political and emotional appeal, which reduces the risk of their returning to escape from justice or spend a short period in prison; therefore, having them stripped of their citizenship benefits politicians in any Western Country. Where any terrorism-related process is not related to Countries whose citizens were being stripped of their nationality, so they remain anonymous fighters who are no longer from the citizens of a Country, and the government consequently relinquished their responsibilities.

The media has focused on this issue and carried out on several people, including:

Huda Muthana is an American citizen from Yemeni origins; she joined ISIS since 2014, during her arrival with some of the women who had American, British, Canadian and Australian passports, she claimed that they would burn these passports because they would not need them anymore. After roughly 3 years, Huda Muthana had been arrested by the (SDF) during her attempt to escape, and she was transported to Al-Hol Camp, that is where she sought for going back to the US for being an American citizen. However, the latter denied the fact that she had citizenship, according to what Secretary of State, Pompeo pointed out on 20 February 2019, "claiming that she had not got an American passport. She was not accepted for travel on the pretext that her father was Yemeni Diplomat in the US, and the law does not give the American citizenship to the Diplomats' children who were born in the US". However, some of the Lawyers stated, "Huda Muthana's father had not got any diplomatic status when she was born, in which his diplomatic service had ended before she was born, denouncing the policies of Trump's Administration of stripping its citizens from their citizenship illegally.

Shamima Begum is called the ISIS Bride, a young British woman, she had spent four years inside ISIS and had international attention, she did not show any regret about joining ISIS, and a big argument had occurred around her in Britain, in which many Ministers insisted against allowing her return to the UK. others warned that she still poses a possible threat, which led the Authorities to have her citizenship stripped on the pretext that she is a dual-citizenship citizen and has Bangladesh citizenship, although the latter had

denied the fact that she is one of its citizens, which means that she is a person without citizenship, and that is an illegal procedure based on the International Law.

The Risk of Stripping Citizenship's Resolution and its Consequences

In practice, stripping a person of his/her nationality, especially Europeans and Americans, do not prevent his infiltration into the Country, but will make it more difficult, especially since border controls have become more fragile because many of those who have been stripped of their nationality may be regretful or repentant for joining ISIS. Thus, they may feel resentment and return to extremism, in this case, and those fighters and others who have been stripped of their nationality and have no legal affiliation, have become more dangerous than those who are legally returned to their Countries.

6. The Challenges of Handling them in the Region

6.1. Difficulty in Securing them

The latest incidents of the Turkish incursion in October 2019 showed to what extent the security risks in the area that holds the detainees. In spite of the fact that prisons and camps were being controlled by the (SDF), the US decision of withdrawal has changed the power balance. Although the (SDF) was capable to secure these prisons and camps, the deployment of its fighters as guards may not continue during these conditions, due to the repeated Turkish attacks on it, this would enable ISIS fighters to take advantage of this chaotic situation to attempt to escape and to target these prisons and camps.

6.2. The Shortage of Services Increase Violence

Instability and lack of services and medical care in the foreign attachment to camps and prisons lead to fueling and escalating violence day after day. The outbreak of daily and regular confrontations between women detainees and between officials of these centers and relief workers, where security risks prevented relief groups from providing adequate services and the region became a scene of a humanitarian disaster, full of diseases, its population does not have access to sufficient food and clean water.

These circumstances have a great impact on the children, the limited opportunities to get access to health care affects them; in Al-Hol Camp many cases of severe diarrhea had been reported amongst the children due to malnutrition, as well as Tuberculosis, Measles and Hepatitis on a large scale, and many death cases resulted in Pneumonia and Hypothermia.

6.3. Difficulty in Finding Alternative Courts

Syria and Iraq

From a legal perspective, both Countries have the right to demand Jurisdiction on those foreign volunteers who joined the Islamic State for being guilty of crimes had been committed on their territories.

While Iraqi and Syrian Institutions guarantee the right of a fair trial, the torture and abusing are forbidden, the Western Countries find that the trial system in these two Countries is weak and unable to ensure the needed guarantees, consequently, these States cannot intervene to protect their citizens who have been tried in Syria or Iraq. In addition, to their inability to intervene in kind of the prescribed penalty, for being prescribed by recognized governments, this would increase the fears of the original States of the detainees, from issuing light sentences or acquitted.

Turkey

The disastrous consequences of Trump's policy in Syria had left dangerous ramifications for ISIS detainees; his withdrawal decision and allowing Turkey's incursion on condition of handling ISIS detainees issue did not work. Based on previous Turkish experiences, ISIS detainees do not stay for a long time in their captivity, in which they were being set free and they would fight within its ranks, thus this scenario does not work.

In addition, Turkey's guardianship plan of the detainees is unwise and fraught with problems, as it lacks the laws on the status of fighters, in addition to the fact that the Turkish judicial system suffers from the accumulation of thousands of cases and others, resulting from the attempted coup in 2016, and others. The prison sentence has no more than seven years if the convicted person is proven a member of or a terrorist organization or supporting it.

On the other hand, Turkey dismissed thousands of prosecutors and judges, who were the most experienced Counter-Terrorism Officers in the country following the failed coup. That is what confirms the fact that the judiciary is not efficient: many ISIS elements had been released because there was no evidence as they alleged, and then they have been arrested and tried again in their country with related-terrorism charges.

6.4. The Complex of Establishing an International Court

Many Western leaders supported the suggestion of the (SDF) to establish an international court in Iraq or Syria, in which the Belgian Government endorsed this idea, and the National Security Council in Belgium called on the International Court to prosecute all European fighters arrested by the (SDF) and the Iraqi Government. This should be done in consultation with other countries facing the same problem, if terrorist fighters should be detained in the camps of the region, and underage children; ten receive assistance to be returned to their homelands, but above the age of years old their situation will be separately analyzed one by one.

The SDF has supported the idea of trying the detained terrorist elements, to break this stalemate and hesitation amongst many governments that refuse to return their citizens. The lack of legitimacy of these forces and their lack of logistical support to secure these detainees, in the long term, the SDF leaders see that the best solution is to create an international court for them because the prosecutions of international crimes can be more effective when they are held within the society in which the crimes were committed. However, this alternative solution poses legal and practical challenges, as it requires political will and strong ability in the legal system, so the International Court needs extensive negotiations and broad political and financial support to achieve success.

According to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in 2015, despite the presence of foreigners who participated in crimes against humanity and war crimes, the Islamic State was primarily led by citizens of Syria and Iraq (and the two are not parties to the ICC's founding treaty) and the responsibility primarily lies with the national authorities. The court has no territorial jurisdiction on its soil. However, under the Rome Statute, the court may exercise personal jurisdiction over those alleged to have only committed crimes by the

citizens of any state party in the treaty. Therefore, it is the court's policy that most persons responsible for war crimes currently adopt it. In other words, the leaders, which leaves thousands of other fighters without any trial according to its policy.

The Prosecutor concluded that the basis for the necessary jurisdiction to open a preliminary examination of this case was very limited. In the event that member states feel that there is an urgent need to help identify viable avenues, a decision must be issued by the countries concerned (not parties to the treaty) or by the United Nations Security Council to grant jurisdiction to the Court and this is completely independent of its statute.

Nevertheless, what makes it hard is that prosecution, which takes place in the International Criminal Court takes years, and institutionally, the court will not prosecute large numbers of people. In addition, the idea in the European Union lacks consensus. Therefore, there is no international court to solve the problem of the ISIS detainees in Syria and Iraq, unless all states agree, in advance, to take their citizens, and at the same time, it is illegal to hold citizens in the prisons in another country and not to be tried by their courts in accordance with their own laws.

6.5. The Free Sleeper Cells

Under International law, prisoners of war must be released and repatriated after the fighting has ended (except for those who have committed war crimes). As for those detained for other reasons, the Law does not recommend or impose - their release at the end of the conflict, in the absence of reasons that do not warrant their arrest.

However, in Syria and Iraq, the hostilities did not end, despite managing the threat of extremism and regaining the lands that it seized, but its leaders and many of its fighters are still free. They were forced to work secretly, as they returned to the villages where they formed sleeper cells to continue the armed struggle, at the same time; ISIS exercised a coercive influence to some extent in the areas it had lost.

The speaking applies especially to foreign fighters who have come to Syria and Iraq to fight as jihadists. They will not tend as local residents to survive or as underground fighters, they can redeploy on other fronts, and this is a feature of global jihad, as fighters

migrate from the battlefield to another in this way, the global conflict will not end for years.

The Conclusion and Recommendations

In the end, it must be said that the facts are not limited to compliments or good news. The recapturing of cities and the killing of the head of ISIS (Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi) does not hide the fact that he left behind an organized, systematic and prepared group whose mission is to kill and burn. They appear as an explosive belt that encircles everyone. They are "ISIS Remnants" of sleeper cells and the detainees will remain a curse that will chase everyone, take lives, and occupy lands under the name of "jihad" unless everyone moves to solve it from the roots. In light of this shortage, all that we can do is to make some recommendations that may solve part of the complex of ISIS remnants, which are:

- The stability of the situation in northeastern Syrian; an instability increases the risk of ISIS elements escape from different countries and join new groups, in addition to carrying out new attacks and recruiting many elements in either the Middle East or Europe.

- Creating and intensifying educational workshops to rehabilitate ISIS families, children and the displaced, which reduces the nature of their violence.

- Solutions related to the abolition of citizenship are among the most dangerous matters. Abolishing citizenship or finding no alternative ways for these elements encourages them to restore extremism because there is no other place to resort to, as the only way for them to join ISIS in Syria or extremist groups in other places. Therefore, it would be better to bring them back to their original homeland and bring them to justice.

- The rehabilitation of former ISIS members, including women and children, as a necessary step to prevent the emergence of Extremism and to end violence. Ignoring them would make them a threat to their countries and even the local communities in Syria, which would further destabilize the region.

- Governments who have citizens held in Autonomous Administration must work with them to develop legitimate justice mechanisms, such as building facilities to safely and humanitarian detention of the detainees, until their decisions are made.

-Prosecuting ISIS members, in the same regions where they committed crimes, and gaining legitimacy to prosecute them through coordination between the (SDF) and the Syrian Government, or seeking to establish an International Court to prosecute the perpetrators of crimes and the other detainees. This should be on one condition that this Court should have international advisers, and the prosecution should include the rest of convicted of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, and not only who belong to terrorist groups.

- Working on arrangement based on filtering and separating of many arrested or convicted in some areas in which they are detained. Under the auspices of the same governments that participated in the Coalition Campaign against ISIS, and considering it a necessary element in its mission.

-Initial evaluation to assess the required resources, such as (interviews, trainees, improving the infrastructure to create a safe environment, improving camp conditions, isolating the residents), which will prevent potential humanitarian and psychological crises.

