

# *Non-Governmental Organizations Say Fallujah Facing Humanitarian Disaster*

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Baghdad, June 20 (RHC)-- The Daesh-held Iraqi city of Fallujah is facing a “humanitarian disaster” as many of its hunger-stricken residents remain trapped with no “safe passage” to make their way out, a prominent NGO warns.

“There is absolutely nothing safe for civilians fleeing Fallujah. No safe exits, no safe passage, no safe haven without risking their lives,” said the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), which works with refugees and internally-displaced Iraqis.

Besides Mosul, Fallujah, a city in Anbar Province located roughly 69 kilometers west of the capital Baghdad, is one of the last two remaining bastions of Daesh in Iraq. Since May 23, Iraqi forces have been engaged in a massive military operation to take back the city. They have liberated significant parts of southern Fallujah since the beginning of June.

Having suffered heavy blows at the hands of Iraqi troops, Daesh terrorists have now resorted to hostage taking among civilians, using them as human shields in order to blunt the advance of Iraqi armed units.

The aid body's chief, Jan Egeland, also said "thousands fleeing the cross-fire after months of besiegement and near starvation deserve relief and care, but our relief supplies will soon be exhausted."

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) recently said over 430,000 people have been uprooted from their homes since the beginning of the Fallujah liberation operation in late May. Meanwhile, reports coming out of the Fallujah battlefield indicate that Iraqi forces continue their advances against Daesh militants holed up there, and have now reached a central street in the city.

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