



2.4. Individuals with (perceived) affiliation to ISIL

2.4.1. Situation of individuals affiliated with or perceived to be affiliated to ISIL in detention in northeast Syria

Since 2019, tens of thousands of detainees, mainly children, but also men and women, affiliated with or perceived as affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), have been held in detention facilities and camps in northeast Syria run by the SDF (15 facilities) and its civilian arm DAANES (10 facilities), with support from the US-led coalition against ISIL. The detainees included Syrians, Iraqis and third-country nationals.[374](#)

Most detainees held in DAANES-run facilities were Syrians accused of ISIL affiliation and were tried and sentenced before the “People’s Defence Courts” on terrorism and national security charges related to northeast Syria. Due to DAANES’ non-state status, these courts only exercised jurisdiction over Syrian nationals.[375](#)

By the end of 2025, approximately 27 000 individuals, over 90 % of whom were women and children, were detained in the SDF-controlled Al Hol (Hawl) and Roj (Rawj) camps due to alleged links or family ties with ISIL members.[376](#) The detainee population consisted primarily of Syrian nationals (around 14 930), alongside approximately 2 320 Iraqi nationals and about 8 480 third-country nationals originating from roughly 59 countries. Additionally, approximately 9 000 men and boys allegedly linked to ISIL remained detained, often incommunicado and in dire conditions, in facilities across north-eastern Syria, including foreign nationals captured as children, some suffering life-threatening injuries.[377](#)

Most individuals held in Al Hol and Roj camps were detained for years without being charged or having access to individual or regular review of their detention.[378](#) Camp conditions included the forced separation of boys from their mothers,[379](#) while testimonies alleged that guards conducted near-nightly raids involving beatings and threats against detainees.[380](#) The UNCOI assessed that the detention amounted to unlawful deprivation of liberty and the camp conditions constituted cruel or inhuman treatment.[381](#) U.S. officials assessed that the continued spread of ISIL ideology and radicalisation in Al Hol camp could contribute to the group’s resurgence through a new generation of supporters.[382](#) U.S. military reported ISIL-related attacks in Al Hol[383](#) while Kurdish forces reported a large-scale escape attempt by some residents in the second half of 2025.[384](#)

In January 2026, the transitional government assumed control of Al Hol camp amid chaotic conditions, during which approximately 15 000 to 20 000 detainees³⁸⁵ reportedly fled and dispersed across Aleppo, Deir Ez-Zor and Idlib governorates, with some possibly leaving Syria.³⁸⁶ U.S. military sources assessed that local ISIL networks facilitated the smuggling of loyalists from Al Hol camp.³⁸⁷ Those who remained were transferred to Akburhan camp in Aleppo, under transitional government control, where the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) registered 731 families.³⁸⁸ As of March 2026, UNHCR maintained a presence in the camp carrying out protection monitoring³⁸⁹ while humanitarian actors, in coordination with local authorities, provided assistance to the camp population.³⁹⁰ The transitional government began security assessments to determine which families relocated from Al-Hol camp to Akburhan camp are eligible to leave, with 15 families approved as of March 2026. Those authorised to leave the camp included individuals requiring medical treatment, older persons, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable households.³⁹¹

Al Hol camp was fully evacuated and closed on 23 February 2026. As of March 2026, whereabouts, safety, and protection of the dispersed population remained unclear.³⁹² According to a report published by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, the population which fled Al Hol camp was largely made up of women and children and included 'from victims of the Islamic State to committed adherents to somewhere in between'.³⁹³

In the context of the U.S. phased withdrawal from bases in Syria³⁹⁴ and the SDF's handover of territory and prisons holding ISIL detainees to the transitional government in early 2026, the U.S. announced operations undertaken by the Global Coalition Against Da'esh (ISIL) aimed at transferring ISIL detainees from Syrian prisons to Iraq where they would be temporarily detained,³⁹⁵ to prevent the escape of more detainees.³⁹⁶ Transfers of ISIL detainees from prisons in Syria including from Ghwayaran prison (Hasaka governorate), reportedly holding former ISIL fighters,³⁹⁷ to Iraq were reported.³⁹⁸ By February 2026, the U.S. announced that 5 704 alleged ISIL detainees, including 3 526 Syrians and 157 children from 61 countries, were transferred to Iraq³⁹⁹ to stand trial.⁴⁰⁰ Organisations including the UNCOI raised serious concerns that the transfers of alleged ISIL detainees to Iraq would contravene to the principle of non-refoulement.⁴⁰¹

By the end of March 2026, the transitional government had assumed full operational control of all detention facilities in northeastern Syria previously managed by the SDF.⁴⁰² As of March 2026, Al Roj camp remained under SDF control,⁴⁰³ hosting around 2 000 third country nationals alongside Syrians,⁴⁰⁴ primarily women and children.⁴⁰⁵ The camp is expected to close.⁴⁰⁶

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