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Alarm grows over thousands trapped by Syrian fighting

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The safety of thousands of civilians trapped by fighting in the northeastern Syrian city of Al Raqqa is giving serious cause for concern, UNHCR, the [UN Refugee Agency, said on Friday](#).

Those who managed to escape spoke of deteriorating conditions in the city, where food, water, medicine and electricity were scarce, UNHCR spokesperson Andrej Mahecic told a press briefing in the Palais des Nations.

"UNHCR is deeply concerned for the safety and well-being of the civilian population in Al Raqqa city, where an estimated 8,000 people remain trapped by ongoing fighting," he said.

He added that the agency was reiterating its call that civilians trapped by the fighting be allowed safe passage to reach safety, shelter, and protection.

"These people face the bleak choice of staying in the city engulfed by conflict or fleeing through the fighting - with either choice risking death."

Nearly 270,000 people have fled their homes in the Al Raqqa governorate in the past six months. Most of them --- about 209,000 - had been displaced inside the governorate. Up to 40,000 had found shelter in the city of Aleppo, 13,000 in Idlib, 6,600 in Deir ez-Zor and 1,400 in Hama.

"In the neighbouring Deir ez-Zor governorate, we are equally alarmed by the ongoing fighting and the consequences for civilians," Mahecic added.

"In the first week of October alone, an estimated 95,000 men, women and children were reportedly displaced by fighting to 60 locations across the governorate, as well as the nearby governorates of Al-Hassakeh, Al Raqqa and Aleppo."

In the west of the country, UNHCR has completed the delivery of humanitarian supplies to several towns in rural Hama for the first time in more than a year. The area had been difficult to reach because of fighting.

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