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A total of 867 Iraqis were killed and another 1,459 were injured in acts of terrorism, violence and armed conflict in Iraq in May 2016*, according to casualty figures recorded by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

The number of civilians killed in May was 468 (including 19 federal police, Sahwa civil defence, Personal Security Details, facilities protection police, fire department), and the number of civilians injured was 1,041 (including 96 federal police, Sahwa civil defence, Personal Security Details, facilities protection police, fire department).

A total of 399 members of the Iraqi Security Forces (including Peshmerga, SWAT and militias fighting alongside the Iraqi Army but excluding Anbar Operations) were killed and 418 were injured.

The overall casualty figures have risen over the previous month of April, where a total of 741 were killed and 1,374 were injured.

The figures for May are likely to increase because they do not include the casualties from Anbar Governorate, scene of heavy combat in recent days and where the ongoing conflict has made any kind of verification extremely difficult.

The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG) for Iraq, Mr. Ján Kubiš, lamented the continuing loss of life, particularly among the peaceful civilians, as a result of terrorist attacks, and praised the population's resilience. He urged the Government of Iraq to take the necessary and more effective measures to protect civilians from such terrorist attacks.

"Iraqi civilians going about their daily life have been the target of terrorist suicide bombers and car bombs. In some of these attacks, pilgrims have been singled out. Residential neighbourhoods have sustained heavy damage. Armed clashes have spared no one. But the will of the Iraqi people, despite all the carnage, remains unshaken and this gives hope for the future. Joining the people of Iraq, in particular the residents of Baghdad where a number of attacks took place, I urge the Government to make every effort to prevent the occurrence of such outrages".

Mr. Kubiš noted the increase in the number of civilian casualties over the previous month and the likelihood of more civilian casualties owing to the ongoing fighting in Anbar Governorate, particularly in the city of Fallujah. The SRSG reiterated his call on the parties to undertake every effort to protect the lives of civilians and preserve Fallujah's infrastructure in accordance with the relevant principles of international human rights and humanitarian law. "Innocent civilians should not pay the price for the crimes of Daesh", he said.

According to the casualties recorded for May, Baghdad was the worst affected Governorate with 1,007 civilian casualties (267 killed and 740 injured. Ninewa 56 killed, Diyala 49 killed and 93 injured, Muthana 41 killed and 75 injured, Salahadin 35 killed and 55 injured, while Kirkuk had 7 killed and 62 injured.

* CAVEATS: In general, UNAMI has been hindered in effectively verifying casualties in conflict areas. In some cases, UNAMI could only partially verify certain incidents. UNAMI has also received, without being able to verify, reports of large numbers of casualties along with unknown numbers of persons who have died from secondary effects of violence after having fled their homes due to exposure to the elements, lack of water, food, medicines and health care. For these reasons, the figures reported have to be considered as the absolute minimum.

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