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## Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve Monthly Civilian Casualty Report

**SOUTHWEST ASIA-** During the month of December 2016, CJTF-OIR received 12 new reports and assessed 11 reports of possible civilian casualties resulting from Coalition strikes in Iraq and Syria in the fight to defeat ISIL. Coalition strikes are defined as ground artillery or air strikes conducted as part of the Coalition Air Tasking Order.

CJTF-OIR takes all reports of civilian casualties seriously and assesses reports as thoroughly as possible. Although we are unable to investigate all reports of possible civilian casualties using traditional investigative methods, such as by interviewing witnesses and examining the site, we do interview pilots and other personnel involved in targeting decisions, review aircraft video if available, and analyze information provided by government agencies, non-governmental organizations, partner forces and traditional and social media. In addition, we consider new information when it becomes available in order to promote a thorough and continuous review process.

After a thorough review of the facts and circumstances of each report, CJTF-OIR assessed that the following seven reports are non-credible at this time. An assessment that a report is non-credible means that there is not sufficient evidence available to determine whether, more likely than not, a Coalition strike resulted in the reported civilian casualties.

- 1. Feb. 15, 2016, Hama Province, Syria, via social media report: Date correction. This report was previously incorrectly released as Feb. 2, 2016 in the Jan. 2, 2016 monthly report. No Coalition strikes were conducted on that day in the geographic area of the reported civilian casualties.
- 2. July 20, 2016, near Manbij, Syria, via social media report: This report of civilian casualties was assessed to be a duplicate of a previous report released as July 18, 2016, near Manbij, Syria, in the Dec. 1, 2016, monthly report.
- 3. Oct. 6, 2016, near Al Shadadi, Syria, via self-report: After a review of available information and strike video it was assessed that no civilians were harmed in this strike.

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- 4. Nov. 25, 2016, near Ar Raqqah, Syria, via self-report: After a review of available information and strike video it was assessed that no civilians were harmed in this strike.
- 5. Dec. 1, 2016, near Al Qa'im, Iraq, via social media report: After a review of available information it was assessed that no Coalition strikes were conducted in this geographic area that correspond to the report of civilian casualties.
- 6. Dec. 7, 2016, near Al Qa'im, Iraq, via social media report: After a review of available information it was assessed that no Coalition strikes were conducted in this geographic area that correspond to the report of civilian casualties.
- 7. Dec. 25, 2016, near al-Ba'aj, Iraq, via media report: No Coalition strikes were conducted on that day in the geographic area of the reported civilian casualties.
- 8. Dec. 29, 2016, near Mosul, Iraq, via self-report: After a review of available information and strike video it was assessed that no civilians were harmed in this strike.

Although the Coalition takes extraordinary efforts to strike military targets in a manner that minimizes the risk to civilian casualties, in some incidents casualties are unavoidable. Four reports were assessed to be credible resulting in the unintended death of 11 civilians. A credible assessment means that, it is more likely than not, a Coalition strike resulted in a civilian casualty. In each of the reports below, it was assessed that even though feasible precautions were taken and the decision to strike complied with the Law of Armed Conflict, unintended civilian casualties unfortunately occurred.

- 1. Oct. 25, 2016, near Mosul, Iraq, via self-report: During a strike on ISIL fighters in a moving vehicle it is assessed that one civilian was unintentionally killed when the target vehicle passed his location at the time of the munition's impact.
- 2. Dec. 3, 2016, near Mosul, Iraq, via self-report: During a strike on ISIL fighters firing a mortar on partnered forces it is assessed that one civilian was unintentionally killed.
- 3. Dec. 7, 2016, near Ar Raqqah, Syria, via social media report: During a strike on a compound occupied by ISIL fighters, it is assessed that seven civilians in the buildings were unintentionally killed.

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4. Dec. 9, 2016, near Mosul, Iraq, via self-report: During a strike on ISIL construction equipment in the process of repairing cratered roads it is assessed that two civilians were unintentionally killed by the munition's strike blast when they entered the target area just prior to the munition's impact.

Currently, 10 reports of civilian casualties are still being assessed:

- 1. Sept. 20, 2015, near Mosul, Iraq, via media report.
- 2. Sept. 17, 2016, near Al Tabqah, Syria, via self-report.
- 3. Nov. 14, 2016, near Tal Afar, Iraq, via self-report.
- 4. Nov. 19, 2016, near Ar Raqqah, Syria, via media report.
- 5. Nov. 27, 2016, near Dayr Az Zawr, Syria, via self-report: Date and location correction. This report was previously released as Nov. 24, 2016, near Omar Gosp, Syria in the Jan. 2, 2016, monthly report.
- 6. Dec. 11, 2016, near Dayr Az Zawr, Syria, via self-report.
- 7. Dec. 20, 2016, near Al Tabqah, Syria, via media report.
- 8. Dec. 22, 2016, near Ar Raqqah, Syria, via media report.
- 9. Dec. 29, 2016, near Mosul, Iraq, via self-report.

10. Dec. 30, 2016, near Mosul, Iraq, via social media report.

To date, based on information available, CJTF-OIR assesses that, it is more likely than not, at least 199 civilians have been unintentionally killed by Coalition strikes since the start of Operation Inherent Resolve. We regret the unintentional loss of civilian lives resulting from Coalition efforts to defeat ISIL in Iraq and Syria and express our deepest sympathies to the families and others affected by these strikes.

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