



17 November 2014 – Based on 300 first-hand victim and witness accounts, the UN report ‘[Rule of Terror: Living under ISIS in Syria](#)’ paints a devastating picture of civilian life inside ISIS-controlled areas in the northeast of Syria, concluding the armed group seeks to dominate every aspect of their lives through the ‘calculated use of public brutality’.

Public executions, lashings and amputations have become a regular occurrence. Interviewees have remarked that there are ‘always’ heads and bodies on display in larger towns, serving as a warning to local residents.

Minorities have been forced either to assimilate or flee. Some have been forced to marry an ISIS fighter; others have been sold into sexual slavery. The Islamic State openly acknowledged the slavery industry in their online [magazine Dabiq](#) , stating it was reviving a Shariah custom.

According to Matthew Barber, a member of the Sinjar Crisis Management Team, ISIS has

already [abducted over 5,000 Yazidis](#) , most of them women and girls.

In addition, the armed group uses education as a tool of indoctrination, aiming propaganda at children to foster a new generation of recruits. In many areas, the school curriculum has been amended to reflect ideological priorities and weapons training.

Deliberate and calculated

The report concludes that the crimes committed by ISIS against Syrians have been deliberate and calculated, and recommends an engagement of international accountability mechanisms, including the International Criminal Court, to hold individuals, including ISIS commanders, responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

'The commanders of ISIS have acted wilfully, perpetrating these war crimes and crimes against humanity with clear intent of attacking persons with awareness of their civilian or hors de combat status', said [Commissioner Carla del Ponte](#) . 'They are individually criminally responsible for these crimes.'

The report also emphasized that the lack of a political process had allowed extremism to fester and it was urgent to reach a sustainable solution to the on-going armed conflict in Syria through an inclusive and Syrian-led political process.

'The international community and the Syrian Government must engage in this process without further delay', concluded Commissioner Karen Koning AbuZayd.