

# Academy Bergstraße

for Resources, Democracy and Peace Studies

Analyses & Recommendations

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## Fight against civilians in Mosul

By Henrik Paulitz and Winfrid Eisenberg

Supposedly the so-called Islamic state (IS) is fought in the Middle East. On close inspection, however, a crude war, particularly directed against the civilian population, is recognised.

Strangely enough, there is talk of "liberation" in reports on the war in the North-Iraqi city of Mosul. But indeed, the world public understands subsequent to a report of the news agency Associated Press (AP) dated 2nd of July, 2017, that the population of Mosul was not evacuated in spite of the fights ahead – tens of thousands of civilians were "captured" in the Old Town, large areas of which were laid „in ruins“. It is reported that at the end of June and the beginning of July, 2017, aircrafts have flown 20 raids every day on a territory of the town sized only one square kilometer.

Furthermore, the agency report published in the "Handelsblatt" dated 2nd of July, 2017, contains a sentence the world public should think and discuss about very intensely [translated]:<sup>1</sup>

„In Mosul, soldiers often asked for air support, simply to eliminate groups of two to three fighters with light weapons.“

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<sup>1</sup> Handelsblatt (Associated Press): Luftangriffe auf Altstadt von Mossul. Reporter beobachten Hunderte teils schwer verletzte Zivilisten. 02.07.2017. <http://www.handelsblatt.com/politik/international/luftangriffe-auf-altstadt-von-mossul-reporter-beobachten-hunderte-teils-schwer-verletzte-zivilisten/20009962.html> (02.07.2017).

In other words: The civilian population in the Old Town of the city of Mosul with more than a million inhabitants is systematically bombed.

As a justification serve groups of two or three people „with light weapons“. This would normally result in a very limited action on the ground – provided this justification really applies.

Are supposed "positions" of alleged military opponents used as legitimization to bomb and to expel the civilian population in a large extent?

The Berlin political scientist and conflict researcher Prof. Dr. Herfried Münkler outlines the character of the „new wars“ as confrontations not between warring parties, but as a war against the civilian population [translated]:

„There are no more front lines, and, therefore, fights are rare and battles don't take place at all, so that the military forces don't rub against each other and are not annihilated, rather they spare each other, and inflict violence instead on the civilian population.“

The fact that in the new wars „the use of violence shifts away from the enemy forces to the civilian population, is, according to Münkler, „the result of calculated planning“.<sup>2</sup>

To perceive deliberate killing of civilians as a characteristic of current wars, and to unmask it as the true aim of the wars, is an important means to delegitimize wars. This is to be placed on the political agenda.

Read more (in German):

Henrik Paulitz: Anleitung gegen den Krieg - Analysen und friedenspolitische Übungen  
Editor: Dr. Winfrid Eisenberg, Akademie Bergstraße für Ressourcen-, Demokratie und Friedensforschung, 2016, 2. Auflage 2017, Paperback, ISBN 978-3-981-85250-9

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<sup>2</sup> Herfried Münkler: Die neuen Kriege. Rowohlt. 2002. S. 11, 94 f. u. 146.