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**IS Caliphate Encompasses Half of Syria a Year after Its Proclamation**

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The Syrian Human Rights Observatory on Sunday published a summary of the barbarous acts committed over the past year by the IS and the extension of its caliphate, comprising eight “Islamic provinces” in Syria.

Specifically, those provinces include Aleppo, Al Raqa, Homs and Hama, as well as Damascus, but the IS also has a strong presence in the provinces of Al Hasaka, Deir Al Zur and Al Sueida and has loyal factions in southern Deraa province.

The jihadists have taken control of most of Syria’s petroleum and gas deposits, except the Shaer and Yezl fields in eastern Homs, which remain under the Bashar al-Assad regime’s control, and the Remilan field controlled by Kurdish militias.

Meanwhile, the IS has opened hundreds of schools where it is teaching tens of thousands of children the Islamic vision of Saudi Arabia’s Mohammed Abdelwahab, based on the strict application of “Sharia,” or Islamic law.

The terrorist group has also created numerous offices to recruit children under 18 years of age to be sent to the battle fronts.

Fourteen of those children have been reported killed in combat so far this month, while other minors have been forced to execute prisoners and some have been murdered or tortured themselves, the Observatory said.

The NGO also said that several days ago the jihadists kidnapped 42 Yazidi women and sold them to IS fighters for between \$500 and \$2,000 as “wives” and/or “slaves.”

The IS is currently holding more than 4,000 civilians hostage and has executed at least 3,027 people, including women and children, along with rebels and troops loyal to Assad’s regime.

The terrorist group, headed by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, on June 29, 2014, proclaimed a caliphate in territories under its control in Syria and Iraq.

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