
RAQQA BOMBING WAS 'BARBARIC' - RUSSIA

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What has Russia said?

The Russian Defence Ministry, which has itself repeatedly been forced to deny accusations from activists and Western politicians of bombing Syrian civilians, said it looks like the West is now rushing to provide financial aid to Raqqa to cover up evidence of its own crimes.

Major-General Igor Konashenkov, a spokesman for the Defence Ministry, said in a statement that around 200,000 people had lived in Raqqa before the conflict in Syria.

However, no more than 45,000 remain.

Raqqa has inherited the fate of Dresden in 1945, wiped off the face of the Earth by Anglo-American bombardments, Konashenkov said.

Although he said Russia welcomed Western promises of financial aid to rebuild Raqqa, Konashenkov complained that numerous Russian requests for the West to give humanitarian aid to Syrian civilians in other parts of the country had been rejected in recent years.

What is behind the rush by Western capitals to provide targeted financial help only to Raqqa?, Konashenfov asked. There is only one explanation □ the desire to cover up evidence of the barbaric bombardments by the US air force and the coalition as fast as possible and to bury the thousands of civilians liberated from ISIL in the ruins.

Why is Raqqa in the news?

Because US-backed Syrian militia declared victory over ISIL there last week. The battle in what was the capital of the self-proclaimed caliphate had lasted four months.

The US-led coalition says it is careful to avoid civilian casualties in its bombings against ISIL in both Syria and Iraq. All allegations are investigated.

It has previously denied killing civilians in air strikes on Raqqa, saying its goal is zero civilian casualties.

What happened at Dresden?

Most of the German city was destroyed in Allied bombing raids just before the end of the Second World War.

An estimated 25,000 people were killed.

Post-war debate on whether the bombing was justified has led to it becoming a moral cause-célèbre.

Kaynak/Source: