

# WHAT HAS CREATED THE “REFUGEE CRISIS”?

There were 60 million different stories behind the wave of humanity driven from their homes and homelands to seek refuge elsewhere in the world last year. But the refugees have one thing in common: they are victims of the workings of a global system: capitalism-imperialism, poverty, oppression, wars, and a whole set of hellish forces that this system sets loose as it exploits and oppresses the vast majority of humanity.



Kurds from Syria at a refugee camp inside Iraq, 2013. (AP photo)

The **KURDS** are an oppressed people whose nation was carved up into parts of Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran. The U.S. recently signed an agreement with the reactionary rulers of Turkey giving them an OK to launch a massive bombing campaign directed at Kurdish forces. The recent deal the U.S. made with Turkey unleashed massive terror on Kurdish people driving many people to attempt the desperate, dangerous journey to Europe.



A house in Afghanistan destroyed by a U.S. drone strike, 2012. (AP photo)

The U.S. invasion of **AFGHANISTAN** made conditions in a desperately poor, brutally oppressed country worse. Life for women in regions controlled by the pro-U.S. Islamist regime is—outside a few places in the largest cities—no better than life under the Taliban. And the death toll in the war between the U.S.-backed regime and the Taliban is growing. After 13-plus years of U.S. invasion and occupation, there were a record number of civilian deaths and injuries in 2014—more than 10,500. In 2014 there were over 2.5 million people driven from their homes in Afghanistan.



In **SYRIA**, the U.S. and its allies on one side, and Russia and Iran on the other, are backing reactionary forces in a horrific civil war that has brought death, suffering and chaos to Syria. The U.S. is supporting or set loose a whole slew of ISIS-style Islamic fundamentalists. And ISIS itself has been able to take advantage of the chaos unleashed by U.S. moves against Assad to seize power in large sections of Syria. Syria has been turned into a living hell in this multi-sided and ongoing civil war—11.6 million people there were driven from their homes by the end of 2014.



Syrian refugees trying to cross the border into Turkey. (AP photo)



Iraqis who have been displaced by war get shelter at a refugee camp in northern Iraq, 2014. (AP photo)

The U.S. invaded **IRAQ** in 2003, overthrew the Saddam Hussein regime, and then occupied the country for the next eight and a half years. The invasion and its aftermath resulted in over a million Iraqi deaths and the U.S. war and occupation forced 4.5 million Iraqis from their homes.



Women and children who had been forced to flee their homes, at a makeshift camp in Mogadishu, Somalia, 2012. (AP photo)

U.S. troops were driven out of **SOMALIA** in 1993, but today the armies of neighboring countries—trained, armed, and sponsored by the U.S. and the same European powers that persecute refugees—have invaded Somalia. They are fighting to install some version of order that will serve the interests of Western imperialism and against reactionary Islamic jihadists. War crimes and massacres of civilians characterize all the armed forces fighting in Somalia, including those sponsored by the U.S. Over 2 million Somali people have been driven from their homes.