In 2014, the world witnessed the rapid birth and dominance of a brutal terrorist organization: ISIS (Islamic State of Syria and Iraq). This group invaded the majority Sunni holding province, Nineveh, and many other territories within Iraq. During the three years of occupation, ISIS implemented different strategies to sustain its regime. One of these strategies was the recruitment of children and teenagers between the ages of 4 and 17. These children are known as “Child Soldiers”; as ISIS called them, “Cubs of the Caliphate”. ISIS trained these children to become Jihadi fighters and suicide bombers. To achieve this purpose ISIS leaders relied on two basic strategies to recruit these children and youth: non-compulsory and compulsory. The non-compulsory method includes luring uneducated, low income, youths; many of which had already lost their parents during the ongoing conflict in Iraq. The compulsory method involves kidnaping and enslaving children from orphanages and vulnerable families. ISIS put these children in Clandestine Camps to train them on killing and fighting on the battlefield. This process implies using special curriculum (Jihadist lectures) and training on use of weaponry. These children were ISIS’s arsenal weapon.

In 2017, after the liberation of Nineveh city, the child soldiers were captured by the Iraqi army and held in the refugee camps at Qayyarah subdistrict south of Nineveh. Currently, there are between 1,600 to 2,000 child sliders, who are suffering from severe mental and health
conditions in the refugee camps. These children are also exposed to different kinds of sexual abuse and torture by the Iraqi guards in the camps. Further, the Iraqi government put all the ISIS children randomly in one place. For instance, the government put in one tent the children who slaughtered the innocent people with the children who worked as servants. This in turn make all the children mentally ready for radicalization. In fact, radicalization is spreading extremely fast inside the refugee camps. Thus, the paper will investigate

1. The future of ISIS’s child soldiers in the refugee camps in Iraq

2. The role of the refugee camps as incubators of the new generation of ISIS.

3. Providing recommendations about the methods that can be used to rehabilitee and integrate these children in the society.

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