



A Global, Coordinated, and Enduring Response

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A Global Coalition to Counter ISIL has coalesced over the last several months around a common understanding: ISIL is not simply a Syria problem or an Iraq problem. We understand that ISIL and other extremists present a global danger which requires a global, coordinated, and enduring response.

As the citizens of Baga, Brussels, Ottawa, Sydney, Mogadishu and, most recently, Paris, experienced painfully – these threats are facing us – all of us – here and now. That is why the Coalition established in Wales last September has pursued a carefully-crafted and comprehensive strategy to weaken ISIL across multiple lines of effort – providing security assistance, disrupting the flow of foreign fighters, draining ISIL's financial resources, providing humanitarian relief to its victims, and defeating what ISIL represents – defeating ISIL as an idea. And along each of these lines of effort, our success depends upon the strength of local partners on the ground.

In December we convened over sixty Coalition partners in Brussels at the Ministerial level to formalize our cooperation and put in place mechanisms for coordination. Every one of the sixty-plus Coalition partners is continuing to make vital contributions to degrading and defeating ISIL. Whether sheltering refugees, training and advising frontline Iraqi troops, supporting military operations against ISIL in both Iraq and Syria, or speaking out against ISIL's hateful, false ideology, they are each making a difference and we need their support to succeed.

Just four months ago, ISIL was trumpeting plans for seizing Baghdad. Today, Baghdad has a new government – which has only been in power since September 8, 2014 – and which is already demonstrating its commitment to reform and determination to earn the confidence of all Iraqis.

As Iraq's government has taken critical steps towards reform, the United States has stepped up our support for Iraq's security forces. The United States donated 250 MRAPs to Iraq in response to their request for security assistance this month, a contribution which was in addition to the \$500 million in small arms and ammunition we delivered to Iraq last year, and the \$1.6 billion the U.S. Congress approved in December to train and equip Iraq's security forces.

Obviously, however, this is not just an American effort. To date, a dozen different nations have committed to train Iraq's Security Forces at five locations across Iraq.

And we cannot forget that building a secure and stable Iraq will require a sustained effort, even as we make important progress. The size of the contributions from the United States and our Coalition partners must continue to reflect the scope of the challenge we face.

In Syria, Coalition partners are working closely together to establish regional sites for training and equipping moderate Opposition forces, with the goal of training several thousand troops per year. Those training efforts will likely be underway this spring. The United States will continue to support our moderate Opposition partners because they are the best counterweight to extremists like ISIL. At the same time, we will continue to pursue the long-term, political solution necessary to address all dimensions of the Syrian crisis.

In both countries, the Coalition's air campaign continues. In total, five nations have participated in air strikes in Syria and eight in Iraq. More than 2,000 air strikes have been launched. And nearly every single time we have coordinated Coalition air support with forces on the ground, ISIL has been stopped in its tracks.

However, we cannot defeat ISIL through military efforts alone. That is why our nations are taking leading roles across the other lines of effort. For example, when it comes to countering the threats from foreign fighters, we have to recognize that this is truly an unprecedented, generational challenge. Through capacity building in the Balkans, criminal justice efforts in North Africa, and through a 20 million euro investment from the European Union to engage at-risk communities, we are making critical gains. But we must do more to undermine ISIL's ability to recruit and radicalize vulnerable populations.

We also recognize the imperative of squeezing ISIL's access to financial resources, and we have greatly diminished their access to oil revenues. Coalition partners have come together to share information and synchronize practices to block ISIL's access to banks – both in the region and globally.

Coalition partners are also supporting essential UN-coordinated efforts to meet the immediate needs of the millions of displaced men, women, and children from Iraq and Syria. The U.S. commitment to this effort has been clear and strong, with more than \$3 billion in humanitarian assistance provided since the start of the Syrian conflict.

In addition, Saudi Arabia donated more than a dozen medical camps; the EU established a 20 million euro trust fund to galvanize humanitarian assistance; Qatar sent planeloads of relief supplies to Syrian refugees in Lebanon; and numerous partners have made substantial investments in education for refugee and host community children, and have provided support for immediate needs to help refugees cope with what has been a particularly hard winter.

When there are more displaced people and refugees any time since the Second World War, and when nearly a quarter of these are from Syria or Iraq, the efforts of all the nations in the coalition, and beyond, will be vital to getting help to those who are in dire need of it.

Finally, we are working together to contest and de-legitimize ISIL's messages, and to challenge ISIL's toxic propaganda and savagery at every opportunity. We recognize that nations in the region have an important role to play in repudiating ISIL's distortion of Islam and putting an end to the religious incitement that ISIL uses

to recruit terrorists. And we have been very encouraged to see them taking the lead in this vein. Last October, Kuwait hosted the Coalition Partners Communications Conference, which was the first of many gatherings we will have on this topic. The United Arab Emirates also brought partners together in December to share best practices for messaging and also for reaching parties like clerics, teachers, parents, and religious leaders who can be invaluable partners in reaching out to vulnerable populations and showing the world that ISIL is not the true face of Islam.

It is still early days of what will be a long-term campaign. Aspects of that campaign, like degrading ISIL's nihilistic message, will be generational work. And even as we are encouraged by recent successes in Kobane, and the fact that ISIL's maneuver momentum in Iraq has been largely halted, we must recognize that there will inevitably be both good days and hard days in the coming months and years. But together with our friends, together with our partners; in contrast to the terrorists and nihilists who aim to destroy; we remain builders resolved to create for future generations a better world.