

Committee/Council: Security Council

Issue: The question of the Islamic state of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

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Introduction

For almost 3 years the world has been facing a grave danger threatening to jeopardize international peace and security. The so called ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) or ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) or simply Islamic State has terrorized large swaths of Iraq and Syria in its drive to establish through 'ethnic cleansing' an Islamic state in the Middle East ruled by the strict law of a caliphate. Its actions have turned the media towards them and nowadays it ranks among the most dangerous terrorist organizations along with Al Qaeda.

ISIS is believed to have more than 30,000 fighters, mostly consisting of Sunni Muslims and former jihadists, but this number is expanding as more and more people flee from their countries to fight along with the ISIS.



It originates from Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and used to be a branch of that organization until 2013 when a high executive, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi changed its name to ISIS. Since then Al Qaeda distanced itself from ISIS as it grew increasingly violent and intolerant even of Muslims.

On March 2015 ISIS had control over territory occupied by 10 million people in Iraq and Syria, as well as limited territorial control in Libya and Nigeria. With the UN reporting 24,000 and thousands of injured only in Iraq a massive genocide is to be expected in the following years unless the international community takes serious action and puts a halt to the actions of ISIS. This study guide will provide you with some basic information about the organization and give insight about recent events. However, keep in mind that due to the fact that each and every day we have news from the ISIS and new brutalities are being committed with a high frequency you will have to keep yourself up to date with the news if you wish to be productive and efficient during the debate.

Definition of Key-Terms

Al Qaeda

AL Qaeda is a radical Sunni Muslim organization dedicated to the elimination of a Western presence in Arab countries and militantly opposed to Western foreign policy founded by Osama bin Laden in 1988.

Holy War

Holy War is a war that is fought to defend or spread one group's religious beliefs

Boko Haram

Boko Haram is a branch of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. It has been active in Nigeria since 2009. The name of the group means "Western" or "non-Islamic" education is a sin.

Jizya

Jizya is a special tax, paid by Christians who live in ISIS held territories in exchange for their life.

Baya'a

Baya'a is an allegiance to a religious social contract and commitment to a society of Muslims, whether ruled by a caliph or not.

Apostate

Apostate is someone whose beliefs have changed and who no longer belongs to his former religious or political group.

Caliphate

A caliphate is a form of Islamic government led by a caliph —a person considered a political and religious successor to the prophet Muhammad and a leader of the entire Muslim community.

Terrorism

There is no accurate definition of terrorism. However the UNGA has referred to it as "criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes."

Pesh Merga

Pesh Merga is a member of a Kurdish guerilla organization that fights for a free Kurdish state.

Background Information

ISIS origin

The Islamic State has released a video in which it traces its origins to Bin Laden and Al Qaeda. The group was widely known as Al Qaeda in Iraq before it seceded to become the self-proclaimed ISIS. It acknowledges two main personalities that played a key role in the forming of the organization: the now dead head of Al Qaeda in Iraq Abu Musa' b al Zarqawi and the current leader of ISIS Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

After the death of Saddam Hussein and the withdrawal of US military troops from Iraq, the country was left in limbo and political instability. This predicament paved the way for terrorist organizations to blossom and led to further jeopardizing in the area as well as neighboring countries. This power vacuum following the toppling of Saddam Hussein was initially the beginning of all evil that is now happening in Iraq.



Photo of Bakr al-Baghdadi

However, ISIS could not so easily grow out of political instability. It needed something more extreme to hold onto and spread. So in 2009 they found the solution and turned their attention to Syria and the civil war, where the government of Assad fought against the so called Syrian Freedom fighters. The only problem was that there was a third front also in opposition to Assad, Al Nusra, a branch of Al Qaeda operating in Syria. ISIS then found the opportunity to merge with this group. The international community naively made the mistake to send military assistance to the Syrian Freedom Fighters. Of course, about a year later these weapons ended up in the militant hands of the ISIS. It was on June 2014 that ISIS from a minor organization seemingly not able to threaten the international community turned into a well-organized terrorist group fed by the international ignorance.

Returning to Iraq, ISIS militants conquered key regions including Mosul and of course captured the US military equipment that was left there from USA's invasion. This made ISIS the wealthiest terrorist organization with reports claiming that they make out 2 million dollars per day from oil trade.



ISIS Ideology

As mentioned before, ISIS seeks to create a caliphate consisting of only 'loyal' Sunni Muslims that are willing to obey and die for their leader and destroy the Western Civilization. On 29 June 2014 the group proclaimed itself a worldwide caliphate, with Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi being named its caliph. Of course the idea of a caliphate has been widely criticised and condemned, by the United Nations, various governments, and mainstream Muslim groups all refusing to acknowledge it.

The group is intolerant of other religions and disobedience. Muslim "apostates" are the most common victims. Exempted from automatic execution, it appears, are Christians who do not resist their new government. Baghdadi permits them to live, as long as they pay a special tax, known as the jizya, and acknowledge their subjugation. The Koranic authority for this practice is not in dispute.

ISIS usually uses the Koran in order to justify their actions misrepresenting their meanings. They act under the spectrum of the 'Holy War' notion. "We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women," Adnani, the spokesman, promised in one of his periodic valentines to the West. "If we do not reach that time, then our children and grandchildren will reach it, and they will sell your sons as slaves at the slave market."

The Islamic State may have medieval-style punishments for moral crimes (lashes for boozing or fornication, stoning for adultery etc.) and women are considered as submissive creatures only useful for reproduction. The group therefore treats women and girls with particular brutality. According to several news reports, militants gang rape women prisoners and marry off young girls to fighters.

Islamic law permits only temporary peace treaties, lasting no longer than a decade. Similarly, accepting any border is anathema, as stated by the Prophet and echoed in the Islamic State's propaganda videos. Dialogue of course is also out of the question because according to an ISIS spokesman "to send an ambassador to the UN is to recognize an authority other than God's."

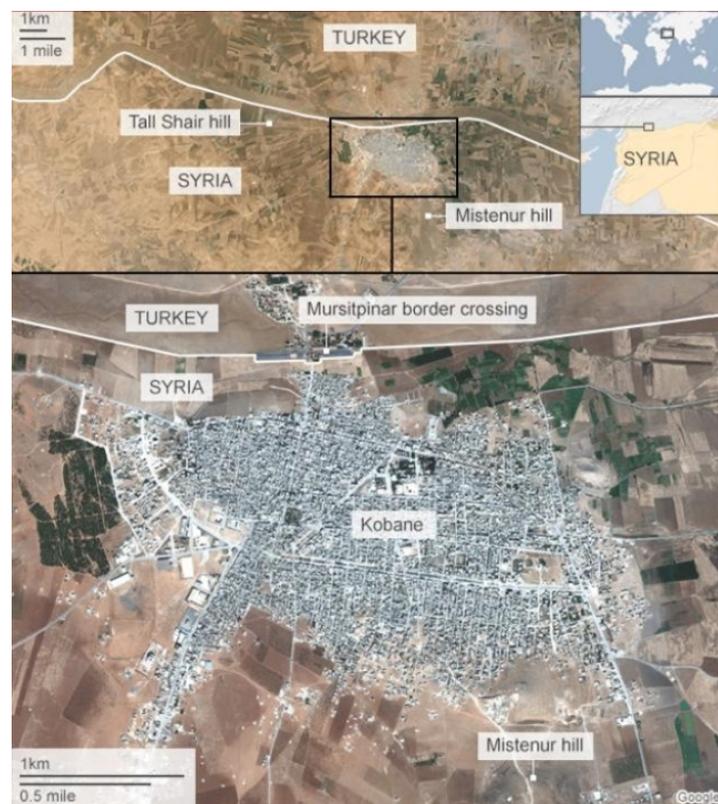
ISIS in Syria

As the intractable civil war in Syria is prevailing ISIS militants based on their military and financial strength took advantage of the situation and gained control over several towns in northeast Syria. Of course this intrusion didn't go unnoticed by the other rebel groups operating in the area. Indeed, the heated confrontation with the Free Syrian Army and Ahrar al-Sham, another rebel group led to the execution of the leaders of the two afore-mentioned rebel forces. In January 2014, Al Nusra joined the other rebel forces so as to drive ISIS out of the region and managed to cause ISIS a significant defeat. However, ISIS managed to recover and gain control of the Aleppo province, an important military point of the other rebel groups. This was the moment that Al Qaeda fell apart with ISIS due to the brutality of the latter group even against Muslims.

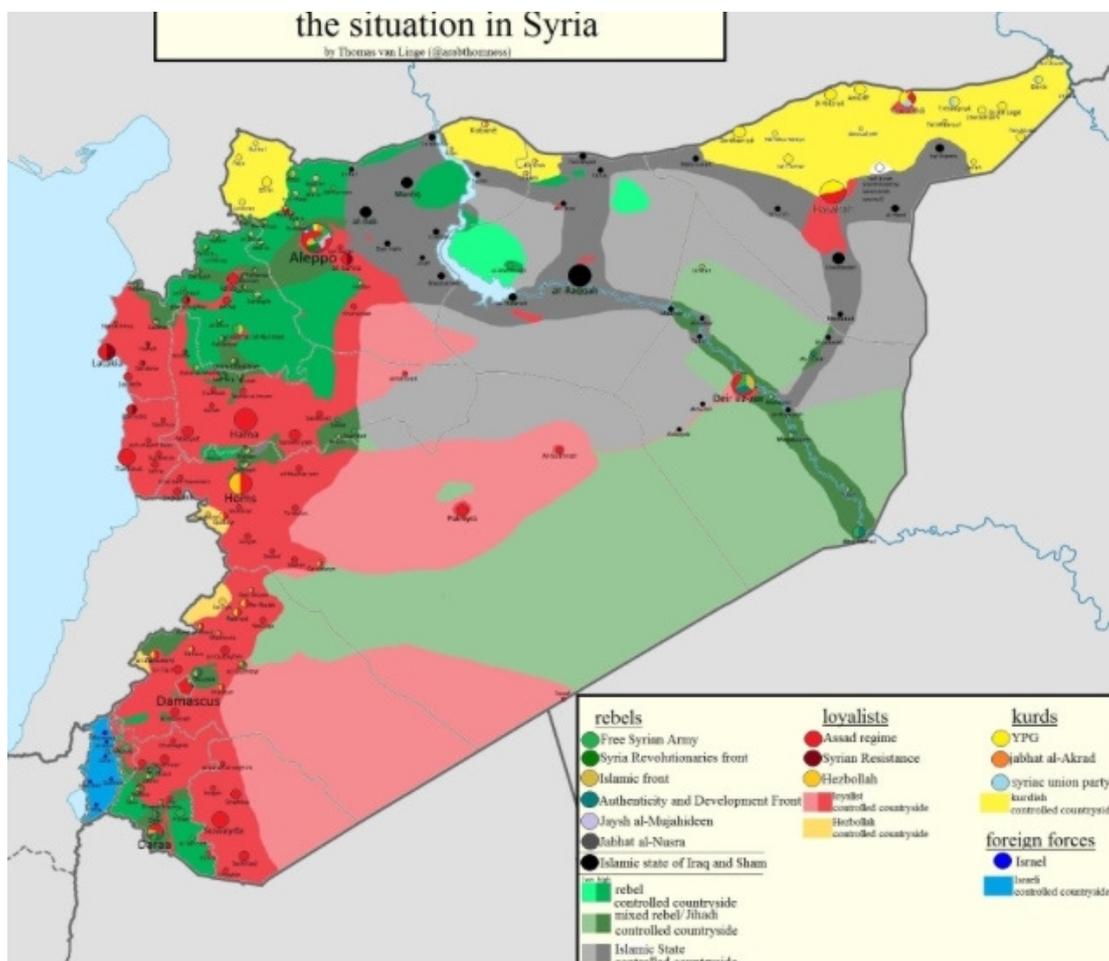
The group has seen considerable military success. In March 2013, it took over the Syrian city of Raqqa - the first provincial capital to fall under rebel control. The success of the Islamic State in Syria worked as a wake-up call for all the countries, hence the beginning of the airstrikes on September.23, 2014, with Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates joining the U.S. in its campaign against ISIS bases and training-camps in Raqqa. Since then 60 countries have joined the anti-ISIS coalition.

The strikes didn't manage to startle the group though, even worse, this triggered their rage which in turn fed their arrogance and therefore they chose to lead a siege to Kobani, a Kurdish-dominated town in north-central Syria that borders Turkey, causing about 130,000 Kurdish refugees to flood into Turkey. The immense influx of refugees caused a humanitarian crisis and led Turkey to close its borders leaving thousands of Kurds in their own fate, after 1 million refugees having already entered Turkey.

After five months of fighting, in January 2015 Kurdish militants, backed by 700 US-led airstrikes liberated Kobani from ISIS. This



was of course no easy victory nor did it put the problems of Kurds to a halt since the city was left devastated by the airstrikes and ISIS attacks, which left nothing behind but ruins. The losses from both sides were immense, with 400 Kurds being killed in the conflict and reports showing a 1,000 jihadists lost on the part of ISIS. Since then Turkish Kurds who are members of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) joined Syrian Kurds in defending Kobani.



ISIS in Iraq

After the success with which the invasion in Syria was met, ISIS decided to return to Iraq to continue with its violent actions and take control of several cities there. Indeed, in early January 2014, ISIS took control of several Iraqi towns, including Falluja, Ramandi and both cities in Anbar Province. Government troops managed to retake Ramadi but the other areas still remain under ISIS control.

In June 2014, ISIS achieved its biggest success so far with the siege of Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq and an important hub in the country's oil industry in northern Iraq. This siege was unexpected. Sunni insurgents were released from imprisonment, banks were looted of about \$425 million, and an airport was occupied along with several other important governmental and military premises

and a police station. Government troops abandoned the fight and joined civilians fleeing the city. Reports claim 500,000 people having fled Mosul.

After that, ISIS continued with its strikes and managed to take Tikrit, assuming control of the country's largest oil facility in Baiji. Thousands of Shiites joined the ISIS resistance and hundreds of them were massacred after taking up arms. ISIS continued to seize more territories provoking the US and other nations to consider further air-strikes. On June 21, President Barrack Obama said 300 military advisers would be sent but no combat groups would be deployed.

A month later, ISIS changed its name to Islamic State and declared all the territories under its control a caliphate. In August, the militants threatened to kill all Christians in Mosul who did not convert to Islam. Nearly all Christians, numbering 60,000, fled Mosul.

After winning brutal battles with the Kurds' coalition known as the Pesh Merga, ISIS took control of Sinjar, Zumar and Wana in northern Iraq. ISIS threatened to execute all Yazidis, people who practice a religion based on Zoroastrianism and are considered heretics thus apostates by ISIS, leading to the fleeing of the group to Mount Sinjar without food, water or other supplies.

The US authorized further airstrikes in the city of Erbil as an answer to the brutalities of the group and dropped medical supplies and food to Yazidis stranded on Mount Sinjar. Obama said these airstrikes could last for months.

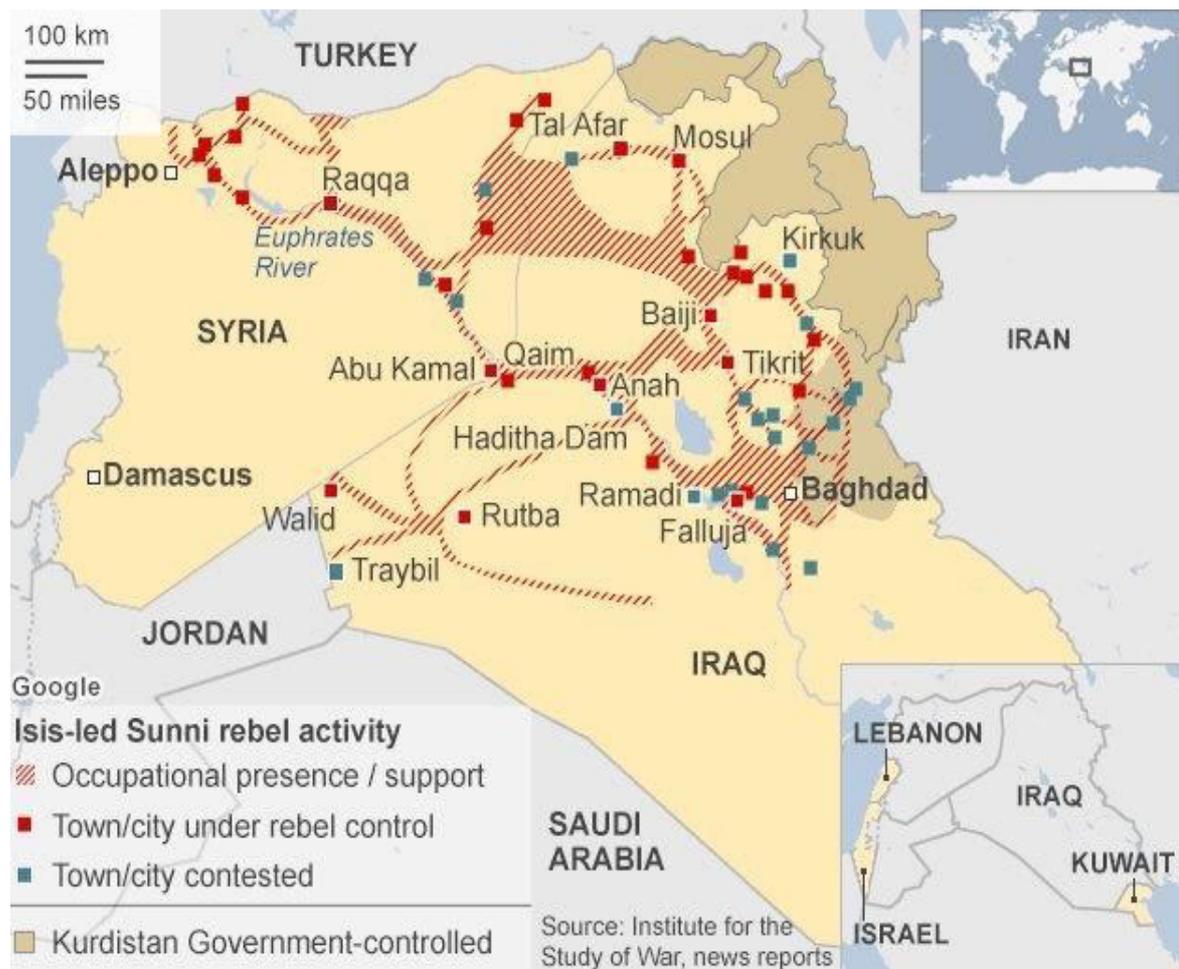
In August 2014, ISIS gained control of the largest but unstable area and it is vulnerable to the collapse of a dam in Iraq that provided electricity for all of Mosul and water to the surrounding areas. Pesh Merga took immediate action and managed to recapture the dam. In September, a Shiite coalition managed to deliver ISIS its first setback in Iraq when they cause a siege in Amerli to fail.

In order to stop ISIS from taking the city of Baghdad, US authorized even further airstrikes in September



2014. The strikes managed to prevent the siege of the city but did little to thwart the advance of ISIS in the North. Indeed, the group even opened a school preaching about Islamic values and indoctrinating younglings into the idea of conquering the world and establishing a caliphate. France authorized airstrikes in September. By the end of the month pesh merga troops, backed by US and British airstrikes took control of the Syrian Border crossing in the Rabia district from ISIS fighters. The pesh merga forces made gains in other areas, including Daquq, south of Kirkuk, and several other towns.

In January 2015, government militants managed to force ISIS out of their stronghold in Diyala province and, three months later, Shiite militants consisting of 20,000 men drove ISIS out of Tikrit, handing ISIS a significant defeat. Conflicts in Iraq are still in progress every day with cities being captured and recaptured constantly. One is for sure: ISIS is not at all willing to give up on Iraq so easily and airstrikes alone will not be able to force them out of the region. New measures have to be implemented and an anti-ISIS coalition needs to be further aided in order to find a final and effective solution and stop the bloodshed.



ISIS in Egypt and Libya

In November, Ansar Beit al-Maqdis, the most virulent militant organization in Egypt, pledged allegiance to ISIS thus expanding the area of ISIS influence to the region and constituting the Ansar Beit al-Maqdis powerful enough to wage war against the government.



Taking advantage over the political chaos in Libya caused by regional terrorist groups, ISIS pledged allegiance to at least three of the aforementioned regional groups and beheaded 21 Egyptian Christians. In response, Egypt launched airstrikes on Derna, a militant stronghold in eastern Libya. However, ISIS continued with further beheadings and executions.

ISIS and Boko Haram Alliance

The announcement of the allegiance came by the Boko Haram leader in a well-produced audio message that shocked the international community. More specifically he said: “We announce our allegiance to the caliph...and will hear and obey in times of difficulty and prosperity” and “We call on Muslims everywhere to pledge allegiance to the caliph.” This action was however to be expected since both groups share the apocalyptic “end of days” vision. Both groups even share the same background since they emerged as Al-Qaeda branches.

For ISIS, the alliance will facilitate its African expansion, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, and strengthen al-Baghdadi’s global legitimacy and influence. This allegiance doesn’t serve Boko Haram in practical terms due to the geographical distance of the two groups (one operating in Iraq and Syria and the other in Nigeria) but from the propaganda point of view, it will add up to its integrity and sufficiency as well as deliver a strong message to all western countries.

Fraction with the Taliban

The Taliban forces operating in Afghanistan have written a letter to IS cautioning the organization to back off Afghanistan. It also mentioned that if the two militant groups started a rivalry, decades of the Taliban fighting the government and external forces would be undone. Therefore, the leader of the Taliban advises ISIS to leave the country to the Taliban.

In March 2015, UN's special envoy reported to the Security Council that the Islamic State's "presence is of concern, but that [its] significance is not so much a function of its intrinsic capacities in the area but of its potential to offer an alternative flagpole to which otherwise isolated insurgent splinter groups can rally."

Since then, fighting between two militant groups has been reported in towns in Afghanistan. In May, a truck exploded leaving 11 men dead and before that IS had beheaded 10 Taliban prisoners captured during the battle. Of course the conflicts are still in progress.

ISIS and the Media

ISIS is renowned for its skills in media manipulation and propaganda, using social media, videos, even a magazine, Dabiq, to spread the word of the caliphate and keep the world up to date with the brutalities they exercise every single day. Videos include montage of successful attacks on US bases and equipment, beheadings of apostates, aid workers, civilians and journalists as well as battle prisoners. Distraction of several heritage sites is also depicted in those videos. The group also uses social media such as Facebook and Twitter to promise to all those that join them a steady salary and shelter as well as a share in the vision of the caliphate. The US State Department reported that the group releases about 90,000 tweets a day. The group appeals to the religious fervency of young, impressionable Muslims and lures them to Syria and Iraq to become radicalized and fight for the cause. Their hacking skills are also advanced as they managed to hack Twitter and YouTube accounts on January 2015, according to US reports.

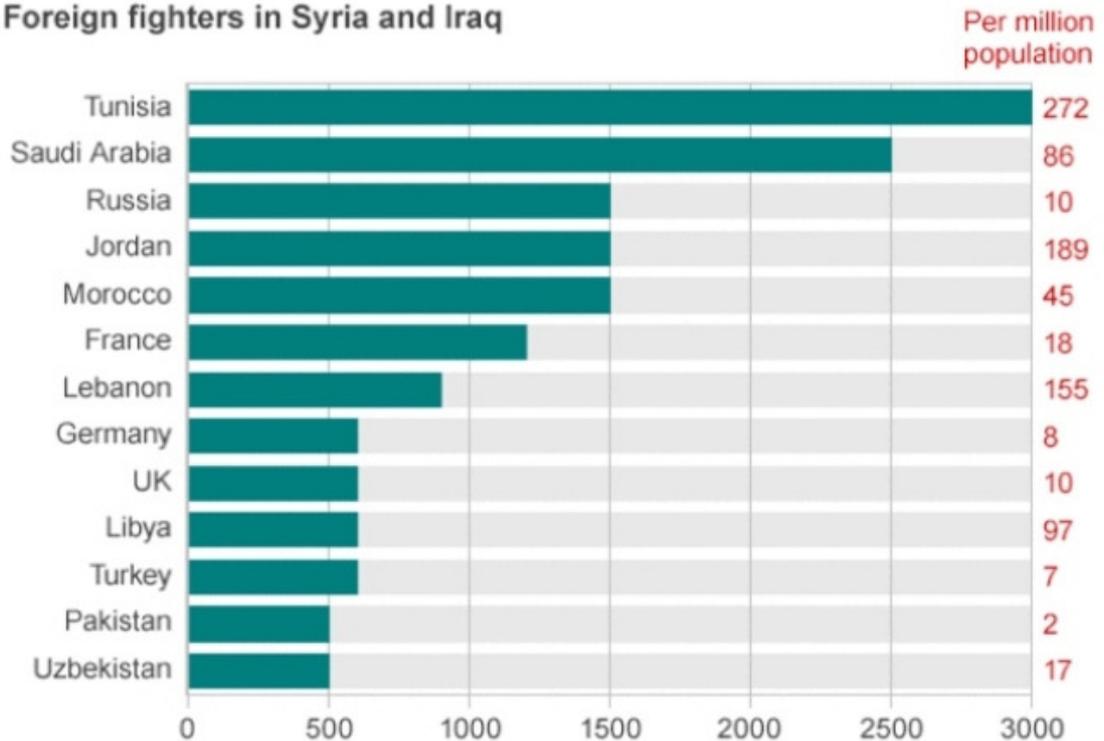
There is, though, a counter campaign led by USA and other allies but even those efforts don't seem to be as effective as desired. Reports show that current outreach on social media from the USA, Britain, the United Arab emirates and others was overshadowed by material put out by IS.

ISIS Q&A

Who makes up ISIS?

Many of the ISIS fighters come from the ranks of the party of Saddam Hussein. Many of the ISIS current leader's lieutenants were highly ranked people from Saddam Hussein's regime including intelligence officials. That said, there are many foreigners that have joined the group with reports estimating about 12,000 people and 3,000 of them westerners having joined IS.

Foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq



Note: Upper estimates used. Countries with fewer than 500 fighters not included

Source: ICSR, CIA World Factbook

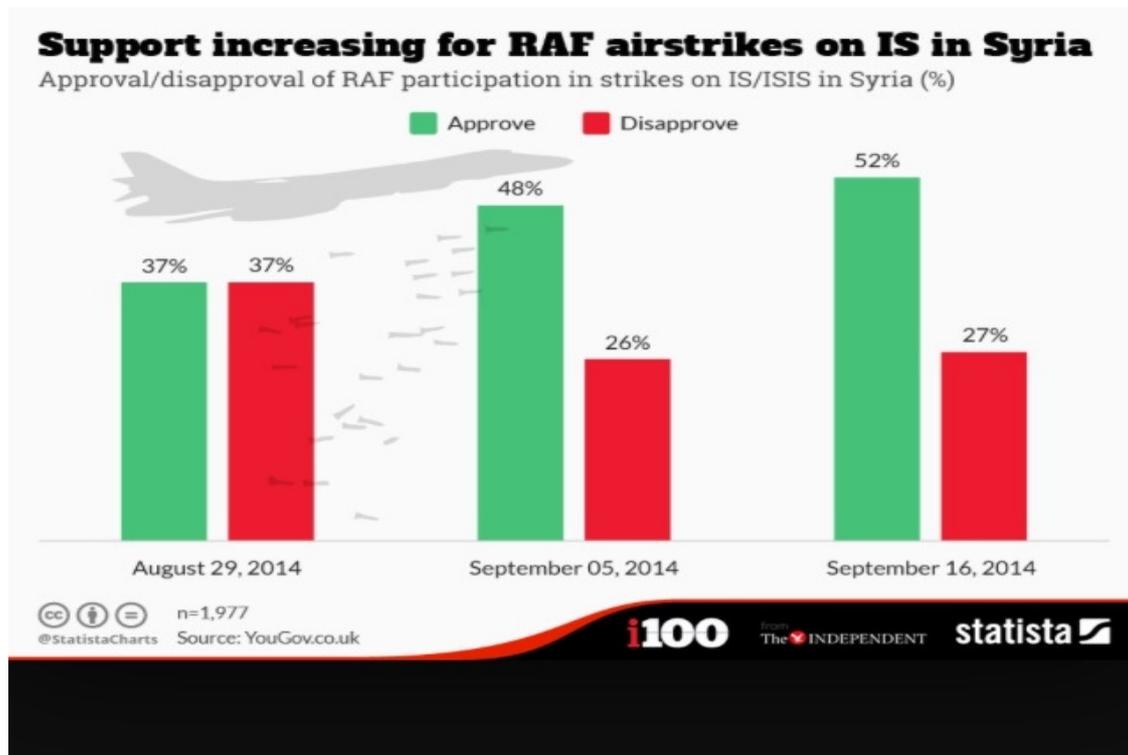
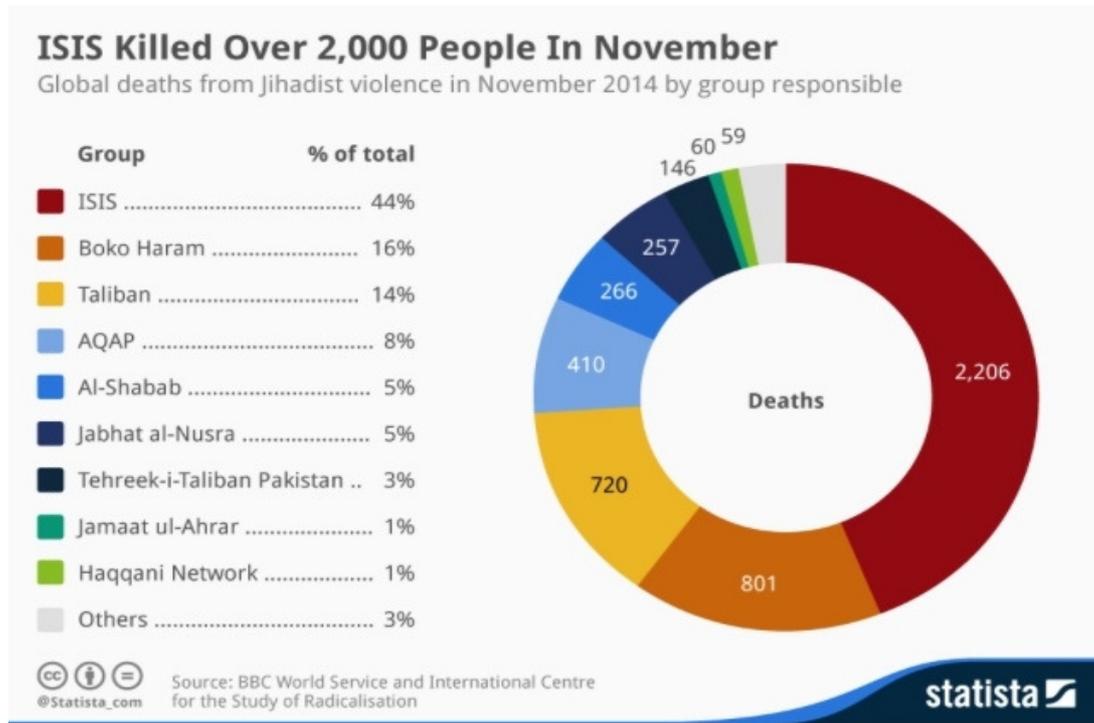
Where does ISIS get its money?

ISIS makes more than \$10 million each month through extortion, the collection of taxes and fees in areas under their control, selling oil from fields it controls, and through looting the homes of people who fled under threat of the militants.

Who supplies ISIS with weapons?

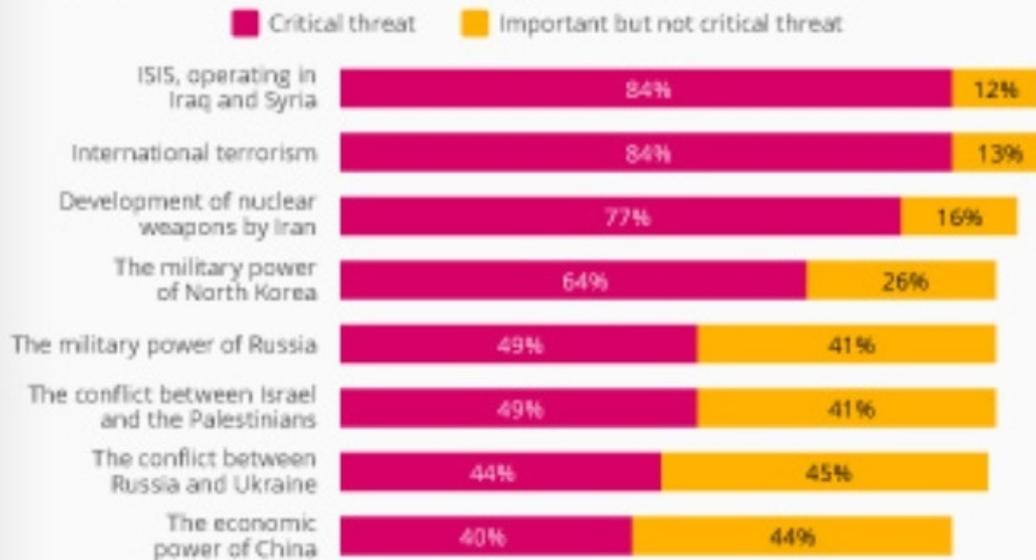
The group upon taking control of some important towns and military points in Iraq and Syria enriched its military equipment with US weapons left derelict in the region of Iraq and Syria. The group has also reportedly received funding from wealthy individuals in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Turkey, and Qatar and then used the money to buy arms on the black market. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Qatar have passed legislation banning such aid, but the governments have done little to enforce the laws. According to a Dec. 2013 study by the Brookings Institution, donations are funnelled through Kuwait and make their way to militant groups. "Today, there is evidence that Kuwaiti donors have backed rebels who have committed atrocities and who are either directly linked to Al Qaeda or cooperate with its affiliated brigades on the ground," the report said.

Here to follow are some more statistics related to the issue of ISIS:



Americans View ISIS As Their Greatest Threat

% of people in the United States considering the following a critical/important threat



Source: Gallup

statista

COALITION VERSUS THE ISLAMIC STATE

Estimated strength of coalition and ISIL forces

ISLAMIC STATE

Estimated number of fighters: 10,000 - 31,500

Assorted artillery, tanks and small arms captured from Syrian and Iraqi inventories*



Fighters in Iraq and Syria: 31,500



COALITION

Kurdish peshmerga 375,000 fighters
Iraqi Army 270,000 active personnel



US Navy
USS Philippine Sea 47 Tomahawks
USS Arleigh Burke



USS George HW Bush 48 F/A-18 Hornets/Super Hornets
4 EA-18G Growlers



USAF
6 F-22 Raptors
B1 Lancers*
F-15E Strike Eagles*
F-16s*
Predator/Reaper drones*



Australia 8 F/A-18 Super Hornets
Bahrain F-16s
Belgium 6 F-16s
Canada 6 CF-18 Hornets
Denmark 7 F-16s
France 6 Rafales
Jordan F-16s*
Netherlands 6 F-16s
Saudi Arabia 5 F-15S Strike Eagles
UAE F-16 Desert Falcons*
UK 6 Tornado GR4s



* Precise numbers unknown



Sources: Defence ministries, CIA, CBS, News reports

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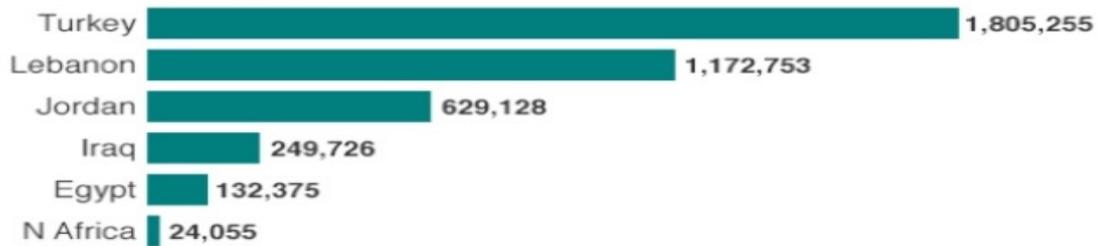
The INDEPENDENT

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ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) Statistics	Data
Total number of ISIS soldiers	45,000
Number of nations with which ISIS has engaged in direct fighting	5
Value of the Islamic State's cash and assets	\$2,000,000,000
Daily revenue from the Islamic State's oil and gas resources	\$3,000,000
Number of Yazidi women taken as slaves	300
Total number of Iraq civilians killed by ISIS	110,000
Total number of Syrian civilians killed by ISIS	140,000
Percent of Americans who support military action against ISIS	53 %
Annual Report Released by ISIS in 2013	Number
Total number of operations carried out by ISIS	9,540
Assassination	1,083
IEDs	4,465
Armed Attack	336
Cities taken over	8



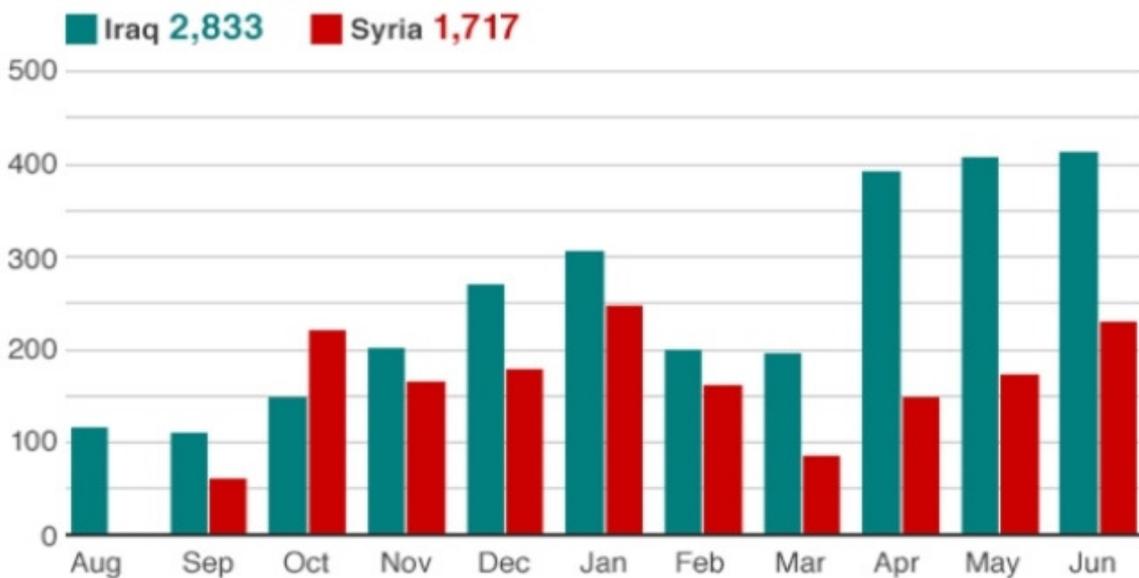
Refugees: 4 million



Source: UNHCR, Reliefweb (Figures up to 9 July 2015)



Air strikes in Iraq and Syria



Figures are up to 30 June 2015

Source: US Central Command



Major Countries and Organizations Involved

The anti-ISIS coalition consists of 62 nations that have been mobilized mostly by the US to take action against the terrorist group. Here to follow are some of those nations and their contribution to the coalition:

Italy

It has sent weapons and ammunition valued at \$2.5 million to Kurdish fighters in Iraq, along with 280 troops to help train them, according to Foreign Policy magazine.

U.S.A

USA is the prime mover. It has launched air strikes against ISIS in Iraq and Syria since the end of August.

Canada

Canada has sent about 60 members of the Canadian Armed Forces to Iraq. Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) also provided airlift support to Albania, delivering 230 tons of military supplies to Iraq. It also sent \$15-million for security.

Iraq

Authorized France to use its air space and welcomed coalition support in battling ISIS.

Jordan

Jordan has destroyed several ISIS targets through air strikes in Syria. It also worked to cut off funding to extremist and terrorist organizations.

Bahrain

Carried out air strikes against ISIS in Syria.

Saudi Arabia

Participated in air strikes in Syria. Has frequently condemned ISIS and given \$100-million to the UN Counter-Terrorism Center and \$500-million in humanitarian aid.

United Arab Emirates

Took part in air strikes on Syria. With other Persian Gulf nations has condemned ISIS and offered support to the coalition.

France

Bombed a warehouse occupied by ISIS in Iraq. French Air Force has also carried out reconnaissance flights over Iraq and vowed to take part in future air strikes "if needed." It has also sent 59 tons of humanitarian cargo to Erbil, further deliveries due soon.

Germany

Sent 40 paratroopers to Iraq to provide weapons training to Kurdish fighters. Also sending 16,000 assault rifles, hundreds of anti-tank weapons and armored vehicles — enough to arm 4,000 peshmerga soldiers. Some Kurdish fighters are also being trained in South Germany. Sending 36 tons of humanitarian aid.

Netherlands

The Dutch government sent F-16 fighter jets to bomb ISIS targets and troops to help train Kurdish forces. As of early February, Dutch warplanes had conducted nearly 300 strikes on ISIS targets, the Defense Ministry said.

Egypt

The country struck ISIS targets in Libya on Monday after the group reportedly executed 21 Egyptian Christians, and called on anti-ISIS coalition partners to do the same, saying the group poses a threat to international safety and security. Egypt had previously agreed to join the anti-ISIS coalition, but details about its role, if any, have been scarce. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has said Egypt has a critical role to play in countering ISIS ideology, and Egypt's grand mufti condemned the terror group, saying that its actions are not in line with Islam, Al-Arabiya reported.

Other

Also contributing to the anti-terrorism campaign in one way or the other are the Arab League and the European Union as well as the nations of Albania, Andorra, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Panama, Poland, Portugal, South Korea, Romania, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan and Ukraine.

Some countries -- such as Kuwait -- are providing bases. Some, like Albania, the Czech Republic and Hungary, have sent weapons and ammunition. Others are providing humanitarian support, taking legal steps to curb recruitment or providing other, unspecified aid.

YPG

However, there are some other organizations that do not belong to the aforementioned anti-ISIS coalition but still, they play a significant role in the fight against ISIS. An example of this is the People's Protection Units or YPG, an armed Marxist Kurdish wing consisted by both men and women and operating mainly in



the region of Syria. In 2014, the YPG collaborated with the Free Syrian Army in order to fight ISIS and deport all ISIS militants from Syria. They have taken part in brutal conflicts with ISIS, some of which have already been acknowledged in the Background Information about ISIS in Syria. Keep in mind, though, that this group is being recognized as a terrorist one from several nations such as the US.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
2003 March	US-led invasion topples Saddam Hussein's government, marks start of years of violent conflict with different groups competing for power.
2004	Abu Musab al-Zarqawi establishes al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI).
October 2006	AQI leader Abu Ayyub al-Masri announces the creation of Islamic State in Iraq (ISI), and establishes Abu Omar al-Baghdadi as its leader.
April 2010	Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi becomes leader of ISI after Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Ayyub al-Masri are killed in a joint U.S.-Iraqi operation.
April 8, 2013	ISI declares its absorption of an al Qaeda-backed militant group in Syria, Jabhat al-Nusra, also known as the al-Nusra Front. Al-Baghdadi says that his group will now be known as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS).
February 3, 2014	Al Qaeda renounces ties to ISIS after months of infighting between al-Nusra Front and ISIS.
May 2014	ISIS kidnaps more than 140 Kurdish schoolboys in Syria, forcing them to take lessons in radical Islamic theology.
June 10, 2014	ISIS takes control of Mosul.
June 11, 2014	ISIS takes control of Tikrit.

June 21, 2014	ISIS takes control of Al-Qaim, a town on the border with Syria, as well as three other Iraqi towns.
June 29, 2014	ISIS announces the creation of a caliphate (Islamic state) that erases all state borders, making al-Baghdadi the self-declared authority over the world's estimated 1.5 billion Muslims. The group also announces a name change to the Islamic State (IS).
June 30, 2014	The Pentagon announces the United States is sending an additional 300 troops to Iraq, bringing the total U.S. forces in Iraq to nearly 800.
July 2014	In Syria, all the cities between Deir Ezzor city and the Iraq border have fallen to ISIS, says Omar Abu Leila, a spokesman for the rebel Free Syrian Army.
July 3, 2014	ISIS takes control of a major Syrian oil field, al-Omar. It is the country's largest oil field and can produce 75,000 barrels of oil daily.
July 24, 2014	ISIS militants blow up Jonah's tomb, a holy site in Mosul.
August 2014	ISIS fighters storm the northern Iraqi town of Sinjar, home to the Yazidis, a minority group. Hundreds of Yazidi men are killed, thousands of Yazidi women and girls are captured and raped and sold into slavery, and more than 40,000 are stranded in the Sinjar Mountains.
August 8, 2014	Two U.S. F/A-18 jet fighters bomb artillery of Sunni Islamic extremists in Iraq. President Barack Obama has authorized "targeted airstrikes" if needed to protect U.S. personnel from fighters with ISIS. The U.S. military also could use airstrikes to prevent what officials warn could be genocide of minority groups by the ISIS fighters.
September 11, 2014	The CIA announces that the number of people fighting for ISIS may be more than three times the previous estimates. Analysts and U.S. officials initially estimated there were as many as 10,000 fighters, but now ISIS can "muster between 20,000 and 31,500 fighters across Iraq and Syria," a CIA spokesman says.
September 23, 2014	The United States carries out airstrikes against ISIS. The bombing is focused on the ISIS stronghold of Raqqa, a city in northern Syria.

November 3, 2014	The Iraqi government announces ISIS militants have killed 322 members of the Abu Minr tribe in a recent series of executions. According to Sheikh Nabil Al-Ga'oud, a leader in the Abu Minr tribe, the latest of these incidents occurred November 1, in which 75 members of the tribe were killed near the town of Hit.
November 14, 2014	The U.N. Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria concludes that ISIS has committed war crimes and crimes against humanity, and leaders of the militant group should be held accountable by organizations such as the International Criminal Court.
January 18, 2015	According to Iraqi Kurdistan officials, ISIS has released about 250 Yazidis, who were captured during ISIS attacks on the minority group in August 2014. Many are children and the elderly.
January 22, 2015	U.S. diplomatic officials say that coalition airstrikes have killed thousands of ISIS fighters to date, including half of the top command of the terror group. The number may be as high as 6,000 or higher, according to U.S. ambassador to Iraq Stuart Jones.
February 3, 2015	Video and still images posted online by ISIS supporters apparently show Jordanian military pilot Moath al-Kasasbeh being burned alive while confined in a cage. Jordanian state TV says that al-Kaseasbeh was killed on January 3.
February 5, 2015	Jordanian fighter jets carry out airstrikes over Syria, reportedly hitting ISIS training centers and arms and ammunition depots in ISIS's de facto capital, Raqqa.
February 11, 2015	U.S. President Barack Obama asks Congress to formally authorize use of military force against ISIS.
February 15, 2015	In a new propaganda video released by ISIS, the group appears to behead 21 Egyptian Christians on a Libyan beach. On February 16th, Egyptian warplanes stage airstrikes against ISIS targets in Libya in retaliation.
February 20, 2015	Three simultaneous suicide car bomb blasts kill at least 30 and injure more than 40 in Gobba, Libya. Wilayat al-Barqa, the Libyan branch of ISIS, claims responsibility for the explosions.
February 22, 2015	ISIS releases a new propaganda video, which appears to show at least 21 Kurdish Peshmerga fighters in cages paraded down Iraqi streets. The last scene of the video shows them alive, but

	a man threatens, "We say to the Peshmerga: Leave your jobs or your fate will be like these, either the cage or under the ground."
March 7, 2015	In an audio message purportedly from leader Abubakar Shekau, Boko Haram pledges allegiance to ISIS.
March 12, 2015	In an audio message, a speaker purportedly identified as ISIS spokesman Abu Mohammed al Adnani, claims the caliphate has expanded to western Africa and that ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi has accepted Boko Haram's the pledge of allegiance. On the same day, ISIS blows up the Iraqi army headquarters north of Ramadi, killing at least 40 Iraqi soldiers.
April 4, 2015	Iraqi forces recapture Tikrit.
April 8, 2015	According to Iraqi Kurdistan officials, ISIS has released more than 200 Yazidis, consisting of women, children and the ill or elderly.
May 17, 2015	ISIS seizes control of the key Iraqi city of Ramadi after government security forces pull out of a military base on the west side.
May 21, 2015	ISIS takes control of Palmyra, a 2,000-year old city in the Syrian Desert, and the Tunes border crossing, the last Syria-Iraq border crossing that was under control of Syrian troops, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Relevant UN Treaties, Resolutions and Events

S/RES/2170

Under the binding Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Council condemned in the strongest terms what it called "gross, systematic and widespread abuse" of human rights by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as ISIS) and Al-Nusra Front.

It called on Member States to take national measures to prevent fighters from travelling from their soil to join the groups, reiterating obligations under previous counter-terrorism resolutions to prevent the movement of terrorists, as well as their supply with arms or financial support. It expressed readiness to consider putting on the sanctions list those who facilitated the recruitment and travel of foreign fighters.

SC resolution 12.February 2015

Urging global cooperation “to impair, isolate and incapacitate” terrorist threats, the United Nations Security Council today approved measures targeting sources of funding for the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al-Nusra Front (ANF), condemning those buying oil from the groups, banning all trade in looted antiquities from Iraq and Syria, and calling on States to end ransom payments.

S/RES/2178

The Security Council in this resolution underlined the obligations of Member States to take steps to prevent terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria from benefiting from trade in oil, antiquities and hostages, and from receiving donations.

S/RES/2170

Calling on all United Nations Member States to act to suppress the flow of foreign fighters, financing and other support to Islamist extremist groups in Iraq and Syria, the Security Council in this resolution put six persons affiliated to those groups on its terrorist sanctions list.

S/RES/2199

This resolution was on ISIS and Al-Nusra’s illicit funding via oil exports, traffic of cultural heritage, ransom payments and external donations.

S/RES/2178

This resolution expanded the counter-terrorism framework by imposing obligations on member states to respond to the threat of foreign terrorist fighters.

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

The international community has been struggling to find a solution and put an end to the violent actions of ISIS. Hence the creation of the coalition as mentioned before. It consists of 62 countries that have aided the anti-ISIS campaign both financially and militarily. Even those nations that haven’t joined the coalition or were not able to afford its financing have expressed their support towards it and have claimed that they would do anything in their power to help the fight. Multiple air-strikes have been carried out but no troops have been deployed in the region yet. The USA is extremely hesitant since it knows all too well that if it chooses to deploy troops it will trigger a conflict much greater than that against the Saddam Hussein regime. The UN has urged all countries to prevent their people from fleeing their countries to join ISIS at any cost but this is not as easy as it may sound and the measures that have yet been implemented are not effective enough. The UNSC has pushed for a bombing campaign on 18/10/2014 in Iraq. Yet, no peaceful solutions have ever been put on the table. Characteristic is Barack Obama’s statement that the USA is not willing to “negotiate with terrorists”.

Humanitarian aid is also being sent by several countries but only a small part of it actually reaches civilians due to the fact that ISIS does anything in its power to prevent it from reaching the general population. The aid-mainly food and medical equipment-is funded mainly by the anti-ISIS coalition, the U.S Agency for International Development, European donors, and the United Nations as well as its affiliated humanitarian organizations.

Possible Solutions

When you think of the solutions available you need to take into consideration the complexity of the issue since there are many factors that make up ISIS. Of course, being a delegate of the UN you should promote peaceful solutions as non-peaceful ones often do more harm than good and maybe fighting fire with fire is not the best option. Still, opponents argue that terrorists are committed to brutalities and violence is the only thing they understand, hence they claim that violent measures should be implemented as an evil good. It is true that air-strikes have been effective so far in preventing ISIS from taking control of several areas but let's not forget that these airstrikes more often than not result in the death of innocent civilians and feed the rage of ISIS towards the International Community. Of course which path you want to follow is your decision but you should always think about the consequences of your decisions. Following are some solutions that cover both sides and that you should consider when writing your resolution:

- The promotion of an anti-ISIS media campaign and the implementation of media campaigns in order to prevent people from joining the ranks of ISIS and let the general population be aware of the brutalities of the group
- The implementation of specific international legislations for people who in any way pledge allegiance to the group through social media or violent actions (e.g. the bombing of Charlie Hebdo headquarters).
- The sending of further humanitarian aid as well as the enforcement of measures in order to make sure that this aid will reach civilian's hands and protect the cargo from ISIS militants.
- The authorization of the sending of peacekeeping troops in non ISIS held territories in Iraq and Syria to ensure stability in the region and protect civilians from any possible ISIS attacks.
- The enforcement of an embargo on oil-trade in the regions held by ISIS. This will be a significant blow to ISIS since it is highly dependent on its oil-resources to function. Perhaps you should also consider some penalties for all those nations that fail to follow the measures proposed by the afore-mentioned embargo.

- The initiation of a more concerted effort to end Syria's civil war and support the creation of a transitional government
- The financing of Iraqi military as well as the Free Syrian Army so as to be able to upgrade their weaponry and fight ISIS militants more efficiently. If those forces manage to overpower ISIS militarily it will cease to exist. Al-Qaeda is ineradicable because it can survive by going underground. The Islamic State cannot. If it loses its grip on its territory in Syria and Iraq, it will cease to be a caliphate.
- The authorization of further airstrikes in ISIS-held territories. The imposition of well thought-out limitations here is advisable since you should consider unarmed civilians that may also be in danger by the airstrikes. The airstrikes should target only ISIS military bases and not inhabited regions.
- The training of government forces by experts specialized in the "war on terror". The training should include teaching soldiers how to disarm bombs, how to evacuate civilians from the combat zone as quickly and efficiently as possible, the method terrorists use to fight (guerilla war, suicide missions etc.) , first aid skills etc.

Bibliography

Videos are also included in some of the following links. The last link will give you a greater insight into the possible solutions to the ISIS crisis but I suggest you go through all of them if you wish to delve into and learn more about the organization:

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