



Jain International Residential
School MUN 2017
ISIS Crisis Committee



Letter from the Executive Board

Greetings Delegates,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2017 JIRS Model United Nations Conference. It is a privilege for us to be the part of the Executive Board of this prestigious conference.

The following pages intend to guide you in the research of the topics that will be debated at JIRSMUN in committee sessions. Please note this guide only provides the basis for your investigation. It is your responsibility to find as much information necessary on the topics and how they relate to the country you represent.

Delegates, you all are advised to go through the background guide properly. This document will help in your research. However, you all should realize that this guide is not the ultimate source of information. The aim of this guide is to provide clarity regarding the various aspects of the crisis as well as providing direction and to channelize your research. We sincerely hope that the simulation of the ISIS Crisis committee at JIRS MUN 2017 will help you gain experience to become better professionals and persons in future. Please do contact us if you need any help.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Chair: Vaishakh Garlu Datta.

Vice-Chair : Venkataraman Rengaswamy.

Background Guide: ISIS Crisis Committee

I. Introduction

In 2003, the United States and a coalition of allied nations invaded Iraq in order to remove Iraq's dictator, Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein had been the dictator of Iraq for several decades and had ruled the country with an iron fist. Hussein was captured soon after the invasion, and the nation witnessed a power vacuum as numerous groups within Iraq sought to expand their influence in the country. One such group was Jamaat al-Tahwid wa-i-Jihad which swore allegiance to Osama bin Laden and became Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). AQI was motivated to create a state which observed Islamic Sharia Law in Iraq and was willing to use any means necessary to do so. AQI split from Al Qaeda in 2006 in order to use more brutal techniques to achieve their goal and became the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI). In 2013, ISI was able to use the instability which existed within war-torn Syria to conquer territories within that country and became the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). There are many names for this group (ISI, ISIL, ISIS, IS, etc.), but we will use ISIS for the rest of this paper.

ISIS's objective is to take over the world and create a Sunni Islamic State which adheres strictly to its narrow interpretation of Sharia Law. ISIS has captured large swathes of territories within Iraq and Syria and have taken cities such as Fallujah, Ramadi, and Palmyra. In addition to taking territory, the group brutally murders anybody who disagrees with them, mostly by beheading them. To date, it is estimated over 170,000 people have been murdered by ISIS in Iraq alone. The brutality which ISIS operates cannot be overstated. This is an organization which is willing to kill almost everyone on Earth in order to achieve its aims.

One of the most troubling things about ISIS is the rate at which it has grown. As of the beginning of 2015, it is estimated there are over 100,000 ISIS fighters and that number could double by the beginning of 2016. ISIS has successfully utilized modern social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to spread its message of hate by posting photos, speeches, and video clips of beheadings and other violent acts. Thousands of angry people (mostly Sunni Muslims who feel

abused) are flocking to Iraq and Syria to join the fight. The movement is also spreading to other countries and has been identified in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Somalia, and Nigeria

The threat that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as IS or ISIS) poses to international security and global peace has been identified as a clear priority. While important steps have already been taken to address the issue, further action is required. Severe human rights abuses have been reported since ISIL seized control over parts of Syria and Iraq; in the last weeks alone numerous reports on massacres, beheadings, rapes, torture, sexual enslavement and kidnappings have been published.

While airstrikes by the United States and their allies have had some success in reconquering territory from ISIL, an extension of measures is needed to eject the terrorist group from their territory and prevent further human rights abuses. The raising awareness about the threat to security posed by returning jihadist fighters into the centers of western civilizations only increases the sense of urgency.

Led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the Sunni jihadist group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIS) has relentlessly reverberated its reputation for brutal rule in its territories since its foundation. For the past few years, the Sunni Jihadist group has been in conflict with the Middle-East. The group abides by an extreme interpretation of Sharia law, and their ultimate goal is to create a caliphate and expand Islamic influence around the world.

With the support of former Iraqi soldiers, who have become the ISIS fighters, this group has already expanded its territories throughout northern and western Iraq. However, in this process, it has claimed thousands of civilian lives – public executions, crucifixions, and other related acts have become common sights to those under ISIS's ruthless Sharia law. Western nations have only recently become involved in the fight against ISIS. The US—along with other powers—have taken a strong position against ISIS' humanitarian rights violations and their attempt to establish a caliphate. ISIS

has been waging war throughout Iraq and Syria—capturing several cities, towns, and oil fields.

Furthermore, an estimated 2,000 Westerners have migrated to the Middle-East to join ISIS. The United Nations has expressed the danger of this expansion in different held meetings stating its concern regarding the recruitment of foreign fighters by ISIL, El-Nusra Front (ANF) and other cells, affiliates, or derivatives of Al-Qaida. In the 7272nd meeting the United Nations Security Council stated that

“as designated by the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011), recognizing that the foreign terrorist fighter threat includes, among others, individuals supporting acts or activities of Al-Qaida and its cells, affiliates, splinter groups, and derivative entities, including by recruiting for or otherwise supporting acts or activities of such entities, and stressing the urgent need to address this particular threat” Security Council at its 72nd meeting on the 24 September 2014 .

ISIS has also promised that once they get a foothold in the Middle-East, they will attack the United States and other developed nations. In response, the United States and the UK have worked closely with the Iraqi government in recent months and insist they set aside longstanding rivalries to work with the peshmerga militia of Kurdistan to support foreign airstrikes by fighting ISIS on the ground.

II. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria :

The rise of modern Islamic radical groups began in the late 1960s in Palestine, with secular movements such as Al Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). As this deadly trend gained popularity among radical Muslims, more groups formed such as the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS), Al-Qaeda, and Harakat el-Mujahidin. The main group in international focus is ISIS, or the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria that was formed after a Jordanian jihadist by the name of Abu Musab Al- Zaraqawi

grew popular amongst Islamic militant organizations for his deadly suicide attacks on civilians and hostages.

A year after the US-led invasion of Iraq, Zarqawi pledged allegiance to Osama Bin Laden and formed al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), which became a major force in the insurgency. After Zarqawi's

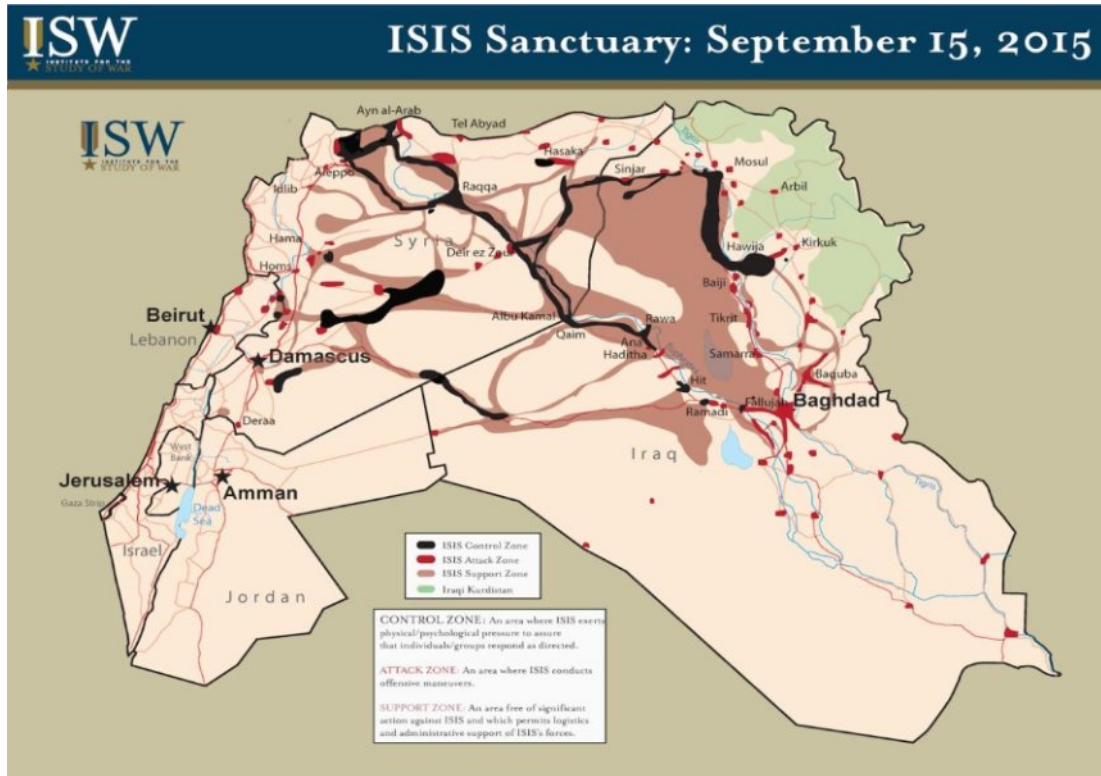
death in 2006, AQI created an umbrella organisation, Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). ISI was steadily weakened by the US troop surge and the creation of Sahwa (Awakening) councils by Sunni Arab tribesmen who rejected its brutality. After becoming leader in 2010, Baghdadi rebuilt ISI's capabilities. By 2013, it was once again carrying out dozens of attacks

a month in Iraq. It had also joined the rebellion against President Bashar al-Assad in Syria, setting up the al-Nusra Front. In April 2013, Baghdadi announced the merger of his forces in Iraq and Syria and the creation of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). The leaders of al-Nusra and al-Qaeda rejected the move, but fighters loyal to Baghdadi split from al-Nusra and helped ISIS remain in Syria. At the end of December 2013, ISIS shifted its focus back to Iraq and exploited a political stand-off between the Shia-led government and the minority Sunni

Arab community. In June 2014, ISIS overran the northern city of Mosul, and then advanced southwards towards Baghdad. At the end of the month, after consolidating its hold over dozens of cities and towns, ISIS declared the creation of a caliphate and changed its name to Islamic State.

The Islamic State (IS) is a radical Islamist group that has seized large swathes of territory in eastern Syria and across northern and western Iraq. Its brutal tactics - including mass killings and abductions of members of religious and ethnic minorities, as well as the beheadings of soldiers and journalists - have sparked fear and outrage across the world and prompted US military intervention. The group aims to establish a "caliphate", a state ruled by a single political and religious leader according to Islamic law, or Sharia. Although currently limited to Iraq and Syria, IS has promised to "break the borders" of Jordan and Lebanon and to "free Palestine". It attracts support from Muslims across the world and demands that all swear allegiance to its

leader - Ibrahim Awad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarrai, better known as Abu Bakr al- Baghdadi.



Islamic militant group ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant), which has been increasing its influence and power in the Syrian civil war, has taken Iraq to the brink of a sectarian civil war. This extremist organization has proven to hold an unprecedented amount of resources and military capability. Furthermore, it now controls 35% of the Syrian territory and most of the Syrian oil and gas fields as well as a great part of the Iraqi territory. The organization may be added to the UN war crimes list for committing public executions, tortures, mass killings and other harsh and inhuman punishments for those disobeying the law. ISIS sharpens the sectarian conflict between Sunni and Shia and represents an existential threat for the Christian community in the Middle East. As the power of ISIS is continuously on the rise, the atrocities are likely to get even worse.

ISIS is setting up expansion plans to foster affiliates in the Middle East, North Africa, and

Southern Asia and is aiming to inspire and resource polarizing terror attacks in the whole world.

III. Background

ISIL has already been designated as terrorist organization by the UN in October 2004. After the seizure of a significant amount of territory in Iraq and Syria - inhabited by approximately eight million people - in the summer of 2014, ISIL proclaimed a worldwide caliphate, assuming its leader Caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as the successor of the prophet Mohammed to have religious, political and military authority over Muslim populations worldwide.

It is known for its advanced use of social media for violent propaganda, featuring videos of beheadings. In the course of its conquests, ISIL has conducted uncountable human rights abuses. Official representatives of various Islamic communities have condemned ISIL's activities; the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia has declared ISIL as the enemy number one of Islam.



IV. Past Actions:

Luckily, the international community has taken note of the serious threat ISIS poses and has worked hard to counter it. Twelve countries (including the USA, UK, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia) have launched airstrikes against ISIS targets in Iraq and Syria. Another thirty countries (including such diverse countries as Germany, Chad, Singapore, and Estonia) have aided in defending territory against ISIS invasions and/or arming and training enemies of ISIS. Numerous rebel groups from within Iraq and Syria (such as Jaysh al-Islam, Iraqi Kurds, and the Islamic Front) have targeted ISIS resources. Even other terrorist groups (such as Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and Hezbollah) are fighting against ISIS.⁷ Though these various groups have done much to beat ISIS back, the group is far from being destroyed and more needs to be done to ensure its demise. Though ISIS poses a threat to nearly every MDG, the ones it most directly challenges are MDGs 2, 3, 4, and 5. Part of ISIS's ideology is the belief in subordinating the rights of women in society. Consequently: girls are not permitted an education, women are expected to forfeit all decision-making to the men who lord over them, and women are not allowed to have a say on their reproductive health and welfare. Also, ISIS does not spare killing women or children when they conquer an area. As long as the men responsible for said women or children defy ISIS, nobody is spared.

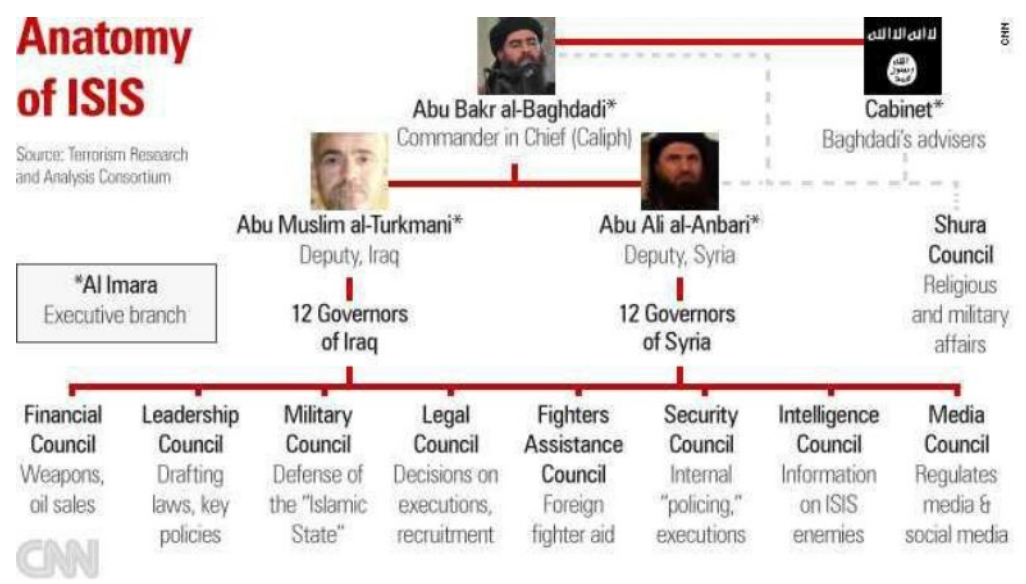
V. Organizational Structure

ISIL is run by caliph Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and his deputy leaders Abu Ali al-Anbari and Abu Muslim al-Turkmani, which are responsible for governing the Syrian and Iraqi territory respectively. Twelve governors rule over different regions in both countries, and thematic councils on finance, leadership, military matters, legal matters, fighters' assistance, security, intelligence, and media, compose the overall regime. A Shura council ensures the compatibility of decisions with the sharia. ISIL is mainly financed by exporting oil from occupied oil fields, selling archeological finds and women, collecting taxes and tolls, and demanding ransom for hostages.

Donations from
Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi
Arabia and the

United Arab Emirates add to ISIL's income.

ISIL's success is partially due to its seizure of military Equipment from Syrian rebels and Iraqi soldiers, including a significant amount of US arms.



The CIA estimated that up until September 2014, between 20,000 and 30,000 jihadist fighters have joined ISIL, more than 15,000 of whom travelling from foreign countries into Syria and Iraq. US intelligence predicted that 1,000 foreign fighters will continue to enter Iraq and Syria every month. While the majority of these fighters come from countries near the conflict zone, the number of fighters from the West remains a cause for concern. Estimates of Western foreign fighters range between 2,000 and 5,000.

VI. Formation & Military Activities 2003-2014

ISIL started out as sub-group of al-Quaeda in 2003, and claimed responsibility for numerous attacks, suicide bombings and murders, which were captured on videos and then published on jihadist websites, between 2003 and 2006. In 2007, ISIL extended its activities to the entire Iraq territory, killing approximately 520 people in 2008 alone. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi took over power in May 2010, further increasing the number of attacks. After entering in the Syrian civil war in 2011, ISIL started fighting against the Assad regime and simultaneously Assad's enemy, the FSA, in January 2012, alongside the al-Nusra front, an al-Quaeda branch operating in Syria and Lebanon,



until both groups got involved in a power struggle in April 2013. During the second half on 2013, ISIL captured several Syrian cities and built up its headquarters in the city of Mosul (Iraq), while continuing with attacks on various other cities in both Syria and Iraq, targeting mostly Christian and Alawite communities. According to a report by Human Rights Watch, ISIL was involved in

massacres at the end of August 2013, killing at least 190 civilians, and taking over 200 hostages,

November 2013 , ISIL confirmed opening of a training camp for

underage fighters from the age of ten. In December 2013, a report was released by Amnesty International, according to which ISIL systematically uses torture, lashings and targeted killings in prisons. Since January 2014, the FSA has launched several large-scale attacks on ISIL in Syria. By February 2014, ISIL had lost all of their Syrian allies, including the al-Nusra front. 29 June 2014 marked the beginning of ISIL calling itself an Islamic State. Over the year, ISIL consistently extended its territory in both Iraq and Syria; the most important victory being the conquest of Mossul (Iraq) in June 2014, with ISIL capturing money and military equipment worth approximately 1.5 billion USD, as well as several oilfields. In July 2014, all Christian inhabitants of Mossul were requested to either convert to Islam, pay a religious levy - jizya -, or leave the city, otherwise they were to be killed. The Iraqi army offered little resistance in all of the cities attacked. In the city of Tikrit, 3,000 Iraqi soldiers surrendered to ISIL; they were subsequently divided into Sunnis and Shiites, then all Shiites were killed. In August, September and October 2014, videos of the beheadings of journalists James Foley, Steven Fotloff, and David Haines, as well as aid worker Alan Henning were published on the internet to avenge the continuing US airstrikes that had started on 8 August, and the UK's transfer of weapons to the Kurdish Peshmerga. In September, ISIL attacked the Syrian city of Kobani near the Turkish border, which received significant international attention. After significant international pressure, Turkey opened its border for refugees from the attacked areas. With the support of US airstrikes, Kurdish forces were able to defend the city to date.

VI. ISIS Activity Timeline

May 2007: Iraqi officials reports the death of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, head of the Islamic State in Iraq

April 2008: Footage of AQI trainings released

June 2009: Alleged-AQI bombings

April 2010: Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi takes the reins of ISI.

March 2011 to March 2013 : Pro-democracy unrest in Syria evolves into a revolution that erupts into a civil war. Islamist groups including Al-Qaeda and the Nusra front. Fighters loyal

to Baghdadi cross into Syria exploiting the power vacuum to seize territory. At the same time ISI starts carrying out a long spate of bombings in Iraq.

January 2014: ISIS begins making advancements in the Iraqi towns Fallujah and Ramadi in the Anbar Province.

June 2014: ISIS proclaims that it is establishing a caliphate and names their caliph as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

August 2014: Make advancements in Syria including capturing a government air base.

December 2014: The Iraqi government and the leadership of the Kurdish Region sign a deal on sharing Iraq's oil wealth and military resources, amid hopes that the agreement will help to reunite the country in the face of the common threat represented by Islamic State.

February 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.

March 2015: Boko Haram, the Islamist militant group in northern Nigeria pledges allegiance to Isis. Isis accepts.

- Isis takes responsibility for a suicide bombing that kills 137 people and wounds over 300 in Yemen.

April 2015: Fighters in Isis' Wilayat Khorasan province claim responsibility for a suicide bombing in Afghanistan that kills 33 people and injures over 100.

May 2015: Isis kills 300 Yazidi captives in Iraq.

- The group claims an attack in Garland, Texas, where two gunmen opened fire on a contest to draw the Prophet Mohamed.
- Abu Alaa Afri, the deputy leader of Isis, is killed in US-led coalition air strike.

Isis takes control of the ancient city of Palmyra, Syria

July 2015 : • The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reports it has received a video showing

ISIS militants executing 25 captives in the Syrian city of Palmyra.

- As Iraqi civilians celebrate the end of the Ramadan holiday in Diyala Province near

Baghdad, ISIS detonates an ice truck in a crowded marketplace, killing at least 120 people and wounding at least 160 more.

August 2015: ISIS destroys antiquities in the historic city of Palmyra in Syria, including the nearly 2,000-year-old Temple of Baalshami. UNESCO, the U.N.'s cultural organization, calls the destruction of the temple a "war crime.

January 2016:

- ISIL releases a video showing the execution of five Syrian men who they allege were British spies. In the video, a masked, British-accented militant, believed to be Siddhartha Dhar, taunts UK Prime Minister David Cameron before shooting the "spies" in the head. The footage later features one of the group's English-speaking child soldiers.
- Two ISIL suicide bombers perpetrate the 2016 Sayyidah Zaynab bombings. At least 60 are killed near the Sayyidah Zaynab Mosque in Damascus, one of Shia Islam's holiest sites. The attackers reportedly targeted a bus carrying Shi'ite militiamen.
- ISIL releases a video showing a French militant executing an alleged spy. The Francophone fighter threatens attacks that will make ISIL's adversaries "forget September 11 and Paris", while re-asserting ISIL territorial claims over the Iberian Peninsula.

February 2016: The Tiger Forces along with the NDF, Desert Hawks Brigade and Ba'ath Brigades captured Al-Si'in. In the evening of 3 February, Syrian government forces stormed the village of Tayyibah. Soon afterwards, ISIL reportedly started to withdraw from the village, while fighting still continued in Tayyibah. Meanwhile, Syrian government troops bypassed the Aleppo Thermal Power Plant, due to dozens of improvised traps, mines, and highly entrenched ISIL fighters in its vicinity

March 2016:

- **19 March** Rebel forces captured two villages (Toqli and Mregel), north of Aleppo, from ISIL. The following day, Ahrar ash-Sham and the Sultan Murad Division exchanged artillery and mortar fire with ISIL. At the end of the battle, ISIL recaptured the villages of Toqli and Mregel after inflicting heavy casualties on the rebels. The two sides also launched shells at the villages of Qara Kopri and Ghazl, causing civilian casualties. On 30 March, rebel forces once again seized Toqli and Mregel. Concurrently, Turkish artillery shelled ISIS positions in the village of Jakkah.
- **22 March** ISIS claims responsibility for two bomb attacks in Brussels, Belgium that left at least 31 dead and more than 220 injured. The attacks

occurred at Zaventem Airport (at least 10 dead and 100 wounded) and at Maelbeek metro station (at least 20 dead and 130 wounded) near EU buildings.

April 2016:

- Government forces captured 13 villages previously held by ISIL, near the southern bank of Lake Jabbūl, forcing ISIL to set up a new defensive line east of the lake.
- **10 April** ISIL launched a counter-attack, which included a three-pronged attack against the town of Mare', and quickly recaptured eight villages. Still, the rebels once again seized four of the villages several hours later. During the day, the international Coalition conducted at least 22 air-strikes on ISIL positions as ground fighting continued. On 11 April, ISIL continued with its counter-attack and retook al-Rai and four other villages. In all, ISIL had recaptured in the previous two days, beside al-Rai, 17 other villages. The ISIL counter-offensive included attacks by 11 suicide car-bombers against rebel positions. At the end of the day, the rebels managed once again to retake control of eight villages.

JULY 2016:

- **26 July** A hostage taking incident by two individuals, who were later killed by police, at the Église St.-Étienne, a 17th-century Catholic church in Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray, during the Holy Mass, leaves the priest dead and another hostage very critically injured. The attack was done in the name of ISIS, and an ISIS news channel claimed they were its "soldiers", similar to what happened after other recent European attacks, but there is no independent confirmation, or firm evidence, as of yet that they were directly linked to ISIS.

August 2016:

- **24 August** The IS launched a new assault on the eastern countryside of Aleppo Governorate, targeting the SAA's defenses just north of the Kuweires Military Airport.

- **24 August** Turkish troops and militia backed by US air strikes captured the Syrian border town of Jarablus in 24 hours. Turkish sources reported that they had secured the last remaining 91 km stretch of IS occupied Syrian border region next to the Turkish border between Azaz and Jarablus

November 2016:

3 November – In the early hours, a joint raid with Afghan and NATO troops that targeted top Taliban commanders took place in Kunduz Province. After they were surrounded and came under enemy fire, the Afghans requested foreign airstrikes – despite Afghan forces providing initial air support, U.S. aircraft carried out the airstrikes. Two US soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 10th SFG were killed and 4 others wounded and 4 Afghan special forces troops were also killed and 7 were wounded. A Kunduz provincial police spokesman said that as of Friday morning (November 4), there were 24 civilian fatalities, including women and children, as many as 10 others were injured during the operation, which occurred in the village of Buze Kandahari, a Taliban-dominated area. A Kunduz police chief said the two senior Taliban commanders who were the target of the raid were killed in the fighting along with 63 other insurgents

On 6 November, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stated that 33,996 people had been displaced from the Mosul District. 63 percent of families are missing civil documentation and 21 percent of families are headed by a female. The previous 48 hours saw a 53 percent increase in displacement. The following day, WHO announced it had established 82 "rapid response teams" to prepare for possible concerns among civilians fleeing Mosul, including health epidemics such as cholera, and exposure to chemicals. A particular concern is potential disease outbreaks young children who have not been immunized since ISIL took over the city in June 2014.

29 November 2016 Ohio State University attack: A man named Abdul Razak Ali Artan rammed his car into a group of students at the Ohio State University. The perpetrator then proceeded to stab several others with a knife. Artan was killed on scene and was confirmed to be an OSU student and Somali refugee. The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the

attack. Law enforcement officials stated that Artan was inspired by terrorist propaganda from the Islamic State and Muslim cleric Anwar al-Awlaki.

December 2016:

3 December At least 24 people were killed in an attack by the Islamic State militant group in the Iraqi city of Mosul on Saturday

8 December ISIL launched the offensive in the northeastern countryside of Homs on 8 December 2016, targeting the SAA's defenses near the village of Huwaysis and the Jazal Mountains located north of Palmyra. The group began the attack by sending two waves of fighters to storm its defenses near Huwaysis, resulting in heavy clashes. It was however unable to penetrate the first line of defense and was forced to withdraw. Local media reported that 60 militants were killed, while eight of their armored vehicles were destroyed. The group launched another assault later in the day, with simultaneous attacks near the Jazal, Mahr and Shaer oil and gas fields as well as the areas of Huwaysis, Arak, Palmyra Silos, al-Hayyal Mount, al-Sekkary, the ancient al-Hallabat Palace and the abandoned battalion near the T4 airbase. It was able to capture 7 checkpoints from the Army which withdrew after heavy clashes. In addition, it also captured the al-Hallabat Palace, al-Hayyal Mount, South Sawamea and Huwaysis. At least 34 pro-government fighters were killed and four, including an officer, were captured. With these advances, the group came within 4 kilometres (2.5 mi) of Palmyra. The group also captured grain silos northeast of Palmyra as well as the Jazal village and its oil fields

20 December 2016 Berlin attack: 12 people have died after a truck ploughed into a Christmas market in Berlin, German police have said. The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack. On 21 December, police announced a nationwide search for a specific suspect, after personal documents of a Tunisian man, apparently a notice for temporary stay in Germany, were found in the lorry's cab. Later that day the police announced that it had been stepped up to a Europe-wide search. According to investigators, the suspect entered Germany from Italy in 2015 and belonged to a Salafist network with the name True Religion,

around recently interred Abu Walaa, who was known as a recruiter for the Islamic State in Germany

Turkish military stated on 21 December 15 ISIL fighters were killed in Turkish airstrikes on the previous day. It later stated that the rebels had gained complete control of the highway between Al-Bab and Aleppo. It also stated that 14 Turkish soldiers were killed in clashes and by ISIL suicide attacks, while 33 were wounded. 138 ISIL fighters were also killed in Turkish airstrikes on 67 ISIL targets according to it. Rebels advanced in the hospital area of the town after an ISIL counterattack on them in Aqil Mount as well as the hospital itself.

Assassination of Andrei Karlov: A gunman killed Russian ambassador in Turkey. He was transported to hospital in critical condition. Three bystanders were also injured. Islamic State are suspected to be behind the attack. The gunman was shot and killed on the scene.

Additional Reading:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27838034>

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2014/10/isil-us-syria-airstrike-coalition-uae-saudi-2014101142731382476.html>

<http://edition.cnn.com/2014/08/08/world/isis-fast-facts>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/19/isis-demoralised-us-air-strikes>

<http://web.archive.org/web/20131019134254/http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2011/sc10263.doc.htm> <http://www.dw.de/isis-declares-leader-al-baghdadi-caliph-of-the-muslims-changes-name/a-17745538> <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/media/digital/2014/06/24/How-has-ISIS-conquered-social-media-.html>

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/08/19/Saudi-mufti-ISIS-is-enemy-No-1-of-Islam-.html> <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2014/10/30/charting-the-murky-leadership-structure-of-the-islamic-state/> <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/18/world/meast/isis-syria-iraq-hierarchy/> <http://themuslimissue.wordpress.com/2014/08/12/how-isis-is-funded/>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3154680/The-astonishing-FIFTY-FOUR->

[countries-groups-battling-ISIS-haven-t-crushed-already.html#ixzz3mxuoDI51](#)

<http://www.projecthope.org/where-we-work/humanitarian-missions/syrian-refugee-crisis.html>

<http://warontherocks.com/2015/02/how-many-fighters-does-the-islamic-state-really-have/>

With references to guides from Hamburg Model UN and Hiedelberg National.