LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

MARCH 31, 2016

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL MISSION

The Lead Inspector General for Overseas Contingency Operations will coordinate among the Inspectors General specified under the law to:

- develop a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight over all aspects of the contingency operation
- ensure independent and effective oversight of all programs and operations of the federal government in support of the contingency operation through either joint or individual audits, inspections, and investigations
- promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness and prevent, detect, and deter fraud, waste, and abuse
- perform analyses to ascertain the accuracy of information provided by federal agencies relating to obligations and expenditures, costs of programs and projects, accountability of funds, and the award and execution of major contracts, grants, and agreements
- report quarterly and biannually to the United States Congress and the public on the contingency operation and activities of the Lead Inspector General

(Pursuant to section 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended)

FOREWORD

We are pleased to submit the Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) quarterly report to the United States Congress on Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). This is our fifth quarterly report on the overseas contingency operation (OCO), discharging our individual and collective agency oversight responsibilities pursuant to section 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended. OIR is dedicated to countering the terrorist threat posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq, Syria, the region, and broader international community. The U.S. counter-ISIL strategy includes support to military operations associated with OIR, as well as diplomacy, governance, security programs and activities, and, separately, humanitarian assistance.

This quarterly report provides information on key events involving OIR as well as an update on the nine Strategic Lines of Effort to Counter ISIL, covering the period from January 1, 2016, through March 31, 2016. This report also features oversight work conducted by the Lead IG Offices of Inspector General and partner oversight agencies for the biannual period, October 1, 2015, through March 31, 2016, and ongoing and future oversight work, as of March 31, 2016. Going forward, the Lead IG report will provide oversight information every quarter instead of on a biannual basis.

We remain committed to providing effective oversight and timely reporting on OIR to the United States Congress, U.S. government agencies, and U.S. taxpayers. Our collective oversight work, and its summation in this report, demonstrates our collaborative approach to providing effective oversight regarding the OIR contingency operation.

Glenn A. Fine
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense

Steve A. Linick
Inspector General
U.S. Department of State and the
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On the cover: (clockwise from top left) Female Zeravani soldier training near Erbil, Iraq (U.S. Army photo); Peshmerga soldiers training in Iraq (U.S. Army photo); Apache helicopters carrying U.S. Marines over Taji, Iraq (U.S. Marine Corps photo); Sailors inspect ordnance in the Arabian Sea (U.S. Navy photo); F-16 Fighting Falcon refuels over Iraq (U.S. Air Force photo); Secretary of State John Kerry with Iraqi Foreign Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari in Baghdad (U.S. Department of State photo).

MESSAGE FROM THE LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL

Glenn A. Fine

I am pleased to present to the United States Congress the fifth report on Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). This report summarizes the quarter's key events, and also describes recently completed, ongoing, and planned Lead IG and partner agency oversight work relating to this operation.

As our report describes in more detail, since January 1, 2016, U.S.-backed forces have helped stabilize the recently liberated city of Ramadi, engaged the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in a battle for the important town of Hit in Anbar province, and continued preparations to free the key city of Mosul. As of early April, about 20,000 Iraqi soldiers had completed at least one multi-week cycle of Coalition training. Our oversight activities continue to focus on these training efforts as well as various Department of State (DoS) governance activities in Iraq, including communication activities and grant programs, and U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) foreign disaster assistance programs.

To observe OIR's challenges first hand, I travelled to Iraq in February 2016, along with Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Inspector General (OIG) staff who are focused on OIR oversight. We met with the Coalition's commander, Lieutenant General Sean MacFarland, and other officials. I am grateful for the time he and his staff provided to support our trip.

With regard to oversight of OIR, Lead IG agencies released 11 reports from October 1, 2015, to March 31, 2016. There were also 36 ongoing oversight projects. In addition, the criminal investigative components of the DoD, DoS, and USAID OIGs had 35 ongoing investigations, as of March 31, 2016.

This quarterly report includes both descriptions of events relevant to the OIR mission, as well as descriptions of each OIG's oversight work related to OIR. We intend to report on both areas in future quarterly reports, rather than only including descriptions of our oversight work in a biannual report. We hope this will provide a more useful and comprehensive document each quarter.

My Lead IG colleagues and I remain committed to conducting effective oversight of OIR. We especially thank the teams from across the OIG community who conduct this oversight.

Glenn A. Fine
Lead Inspector General for Operation Inherent Resolve
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Defense

U.S. Army AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopters escort two CH-47 Chinook helicopters carrying U.S. Marines with Task Force Spartan, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), over Taji, Iraq, as they head to Kara Soar for their mission. (U.S. Marine Corps photo)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This quarterly report is issued pursuant to section 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on a contingency operation. The Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General is the designated Lead IG for Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). The Department of State (DoS) is the Associate Lead Inspector General for OIR. This report contains information from the three Lead IG agencies—DoD, DoS, and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)—as well as partner oversight agencies. The OIR aspects of this report cover the period from January 1, 2016, through March 31, 2016; the Lead IG oversight activities cover the 6-month period from October 1, 2015, through March 31, 2016.

In early 2016, the military campaign conducted by the U.S.-led Global Coalition to Counter ISIL liberated territory in Iraq and Syria from the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), yet terrorists pledging support to ISIL attacked with suicide bombings in the Middle East, North Africa, and Western Europe.[1] These ISIL attacks—including major strikes in Belgium, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Turkey, and Yemen—demonstrated the international reach of the organization's terrorist networks and the ideology that drives it. Speaking at the Department of State, President Barack Obama characterized operations against ISIL as "a difficult fight." "The situation in Syria and Iraq is one of the most complex the world has seen in recent times," Obama said. "This is a tough situation with a lot of moving parts."[2]

The strategy to counter ISIL includes military support for OIR carried out by the Global Coalition, as well as diplomatic, governance, security programs and activities and, separate from OIR, humanitarian assistance. In the second quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, a wide range of actions by the Global Coalition of 65 nations combined in pursuit of the OIR mission to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL.

In January 2016, U.S. officials estimated that ISIL has lost about 40 percent of the territory in Iraq and more than 16 percent of the territory in Syria that it had controlled.[3] Airstrikes against the Omar oil facilities in Syria and

President Obama delivers a statement on the global campaign to degrade and destroy ISIL, with Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter. (U.S. Department of State photo)

the Qurrayah oil facilities in Iraq significantly reduced the organization's production of oil, which is its major source of income.[4] The strain on ISIL's finances was visible as ISIL reportedly cut salaries paid to its fighters by up to 50 percent.[5] Meanwhile, ISIL's senior chemical weapons expert was captured in February 2016, and subsequent airstrikes targeted ISIL's ability to produce chemical weapons, such as mustard and sarin gas.[6] Other ISIL leaders were killed in March, including a top military commander, who died in an airstrike, and the group's so-called finance minister, who was killed by U.S. Special Operations Forces.

As Coalition pressure on ISIL continued, the terrorist group struck back with attacks in Iraq and Syria, targeting military forces and civilians with suicide bombers and Vehicle-borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIED). For example, in a terror attack in Iraq on March 25, a teenaged ISIL member detonated a bomb vest at a soccer game in Iskandariya, killing 43 people, including 29 boys.[7] Internationally, senior Turkish officials attributed two attacks in Istanbul this quarter to ISIL sympathizers. These two attacks killed a total of 17 people. On March 22, ISIL struck Zaventem Airport and Maalbeck metro station in Brussels, Belgium, killing 32 and injuring more than 300 civilians.[8] *(See map entitled ISIL: Attacking and Under Attack, on page 6.)*

This quarter, the Coalition continued to focus on a strategy laid out in 2015 by Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, which he called the "three Rs"—Raqqa, Ramadi, and raids. Coalition-backed forces closed in on the ISIL stronghold of Raqqa in Syria. Additional U.S. Special Operations Forces were deployed to continue raids. And the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), supported by the Coalition,

AT A GLANCE

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

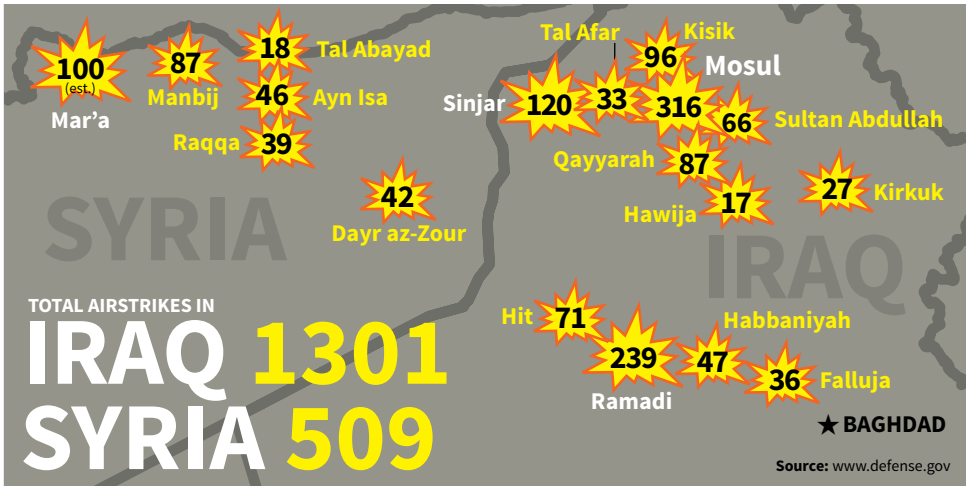
MISSION: Operation Inherent Resolve began on August 8, 2014, when U.S. forces hit the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) as it threatened the Iraqi city of Erbil. Roughly a month later, on September 10, 2014, a Global Coalition to Counter ISIL was created to provide diplomatic, economic, informational, and military power to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL. The Coalition now includes 65 members.

HISTORY: ISIL—formerly known as al-Qaeda in Iraq and Islamic State of Iraq—was established in April 2004 by Sunni extremist Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi. This was during Operation Iraqi Freedom 2003-2010. ISIL was declared in Syria in 2013 and was disavowed by al-Qaeda in 2014. The United States pledged to help Iraqi leaders push back ISIL after the group captured Mosul on June 10, 2014.

COALITION AIRSTRIKES

Jan. 1, 2016-March 31, 2016

The map shows the cumulative number of strikes directed at targets in and around major cities and towns in Iraq and Syria. From January to March, the focus gradually shifted from Ramadi to Hit, with Mosul being targeted throughout the quarter.



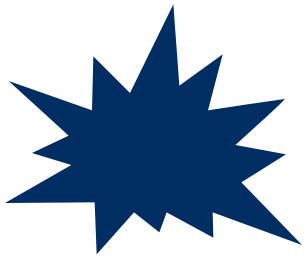
$11.5 Million

Average daily cost of OIR operations

COALITION LEADERS

Brett McGurk has been in charge of the diplomatic effort to defeat ISIL since Nov. 13, 2015, when he was appointed Special Envoy to the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL. A former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iraq and Iran, McGurk was a chief architect of a strategy to reduce violence in Iraq known as "the Surge."

U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Sean MacFarland has been Commanding General of the CJTF-OIR since Sept. 22, 2015. In 2006, he played a key role in efforts to secure the city of Ramadi during "the Surge" and fostered the Sunni Awakening, a campaign to incorporate Iraqi tribes in Anbar province into the fight against ISIL.



10,962

Total number of U.S. and coalition airstrikes since OIR began.

Sources: Defense.gov; State.gov; NCTC.gov.

continued operations against ISIL in and around Ramadi after ousting it from the city center on December 28.[9]

In January, Secretary Carter outlined a sequence of actions to lay the groundwork for a Coalition assault on Mosul, the largest ISIL stronghold in Iraq. ISIL's capture of Mosul in June 2014, driving back the ISF in disarray, prompted the creation of the international Coalition. But after two years of fighting, by most estimates, the earliest that Coalition-backed forces could retake Mosul is by the end of 2016.[10]

Further, Secretary Carter listed priorities for Coalition forces in the months ahead, including: (1) an accelerated pace and targeting of airstrikes; (2) the use of U.S. Special Operations Forces in Iraq and Syria targeting ISIL leaders; (3) the training and equipping of the ISF and Syrian rebels; (4) preparation for Coalition-backed forces to attack the key ISIL strongholds of Mosul in Iraq and Raqqa in Syria; and (5) attention to stabilization efforts in liberated areas, such as Ramadi in Iraq.[11] In the first section of this report, we detail recent efforts toward these five priorities.

To support the Global Coalition and efforts to defeat ISIL, The United States Congress has authorized more than $11 billion to OIR and related activities since FY 2014, and more than $7 billion has been obligated and $4.9 billion disbursed, as of February 2016. The training mission for Coalition-backed forces largely occurs at six training sites in Iraq, where 19,915 ISF fighters had been trained by the end of this quarter.[12] DoD stated that there are 3,500 U.S. military troops in the OIR theater as of March 31, 2016, although additional military assets and personnel are involved in the OIR mission.

To support the Global Coalition and efforts to defeat ISIL, The United States Congress has authorized more than $11 billion to OIR and related activities since FY 2014.

Selected Key Events, Jan. 1, 2016–Mar. 31, 2016

January 13
Secretary of Defense Carter publicly sets forth priorities for the next stage of the effort to counter ISIL.

Early February
Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) begin to arrive at Makhmour to prepare for battle against ISIL in Mosul.

February 9
ISF ends operations in Ramadi after retaking the city from ISIL.

February 16
Syrian Democratic Forces begin successful offensive to seize the town of al-Shaddadi.

February 25
President Obama addresses the nation on the status of the fight against ISIL.

February 27
A UN-sponsored "cessation of hostilities" begins in Syria, but does not include ISIL or other terrorist groups.

February 28
Russia resumes bombing Syrian opposition forces near the besieged city of Aleppo.

Multiple ISIL bombings in Baghdad kill over 70 and injure more than 100.

March 6
ISIL truck bomb kills more than 60 in the southern Iraqi city of Hilla.

MILITARY EFFORTS MAKE HEADWAY IN A COMPLICATED BATTLEFIELD

The fight against ISIL in Iraq and Syria involves a complicated array of combatants over a vast warzone nearly the size of Texas.

In Iraq, ISIL is fighting the ISF which includes Peshmerga forces of Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG); and Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), mainly constructed from Shia militias, but officially under command of the ISF and including an increasing number of Sunnis. The Coalition assists with airstrikes and the training of local forces, but this quarter, a small U.S. Marine fire base was established to support Iraqi forces outside Mosul. In March, an ISIL rocket attack struck this base, killing one Marine and wounding several others.[13] The Coalition's training and equipping of Iraqi forces is continuing, and the Coalition announced this quarter that many trained troops will undergo a second training cycle, which generally runs 6-9 weeks, depending on the courses delivered and the pre-existing capabilities of the trainees.

In Syria, ISIL is opposed by the Coalition-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), a mix of Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) that make up the majority of the SDF, and a much smaller number of Sunni Arabs and various anti-regime minority factions. DoD announced on April 1 that it had resumed its program to train Syrian opposition fighters as part of a smaller program than originally envisioned. ISIL is also opposed by the Syrian government of Bashar al-Asad, which is supported by Iran, Russia, and the Lebanese Shia militia, Hezbollah. However, al-Asad forces were accused early in the quarter

March 11
Massive protests in downtown Baghdad calling for political reform.

March 12
Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr gives the Iraqi government a 45-day deadline to implement extensive reforms.

March 14
Russian President Vladimir Putin announces his intention to start withdrawing "the main part" of his forces from Syria.

March 17
Secretary of State John Kerry declares ISIL assault on Yazidis, Christian, and Shia Muslims in Iraq as genocide.

March 22
ISIL attack in Brussels kills 32.

March 24
ISF begins offensive south of Mosul, which it later suspends in the face of ISIL resistance.

March 28
Syrian forces, supported by Russia, recapture Palmyra from ISIL.

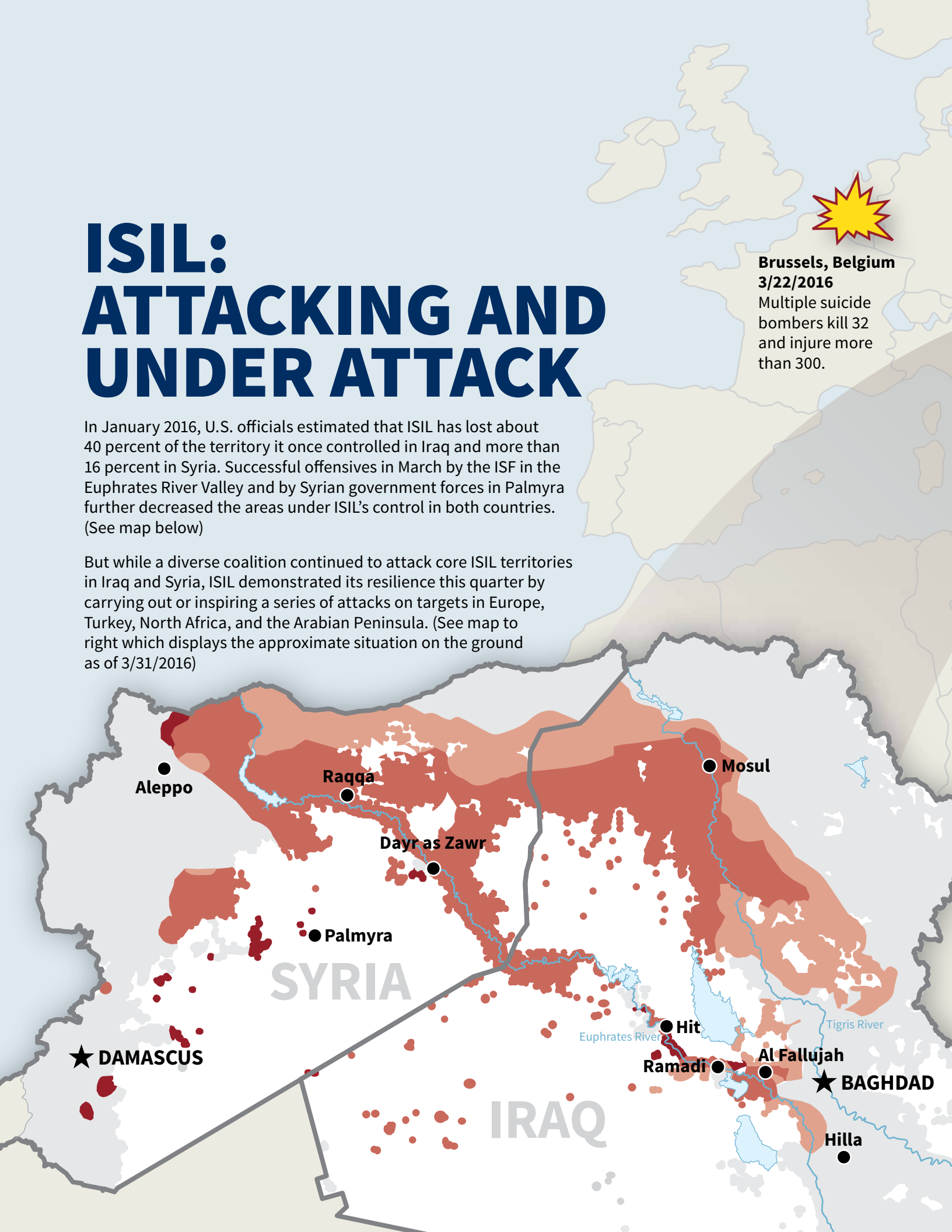
March 30
DoS officials meet with INTERPOL Secretary General to coordinate efforts to counter ISIL.

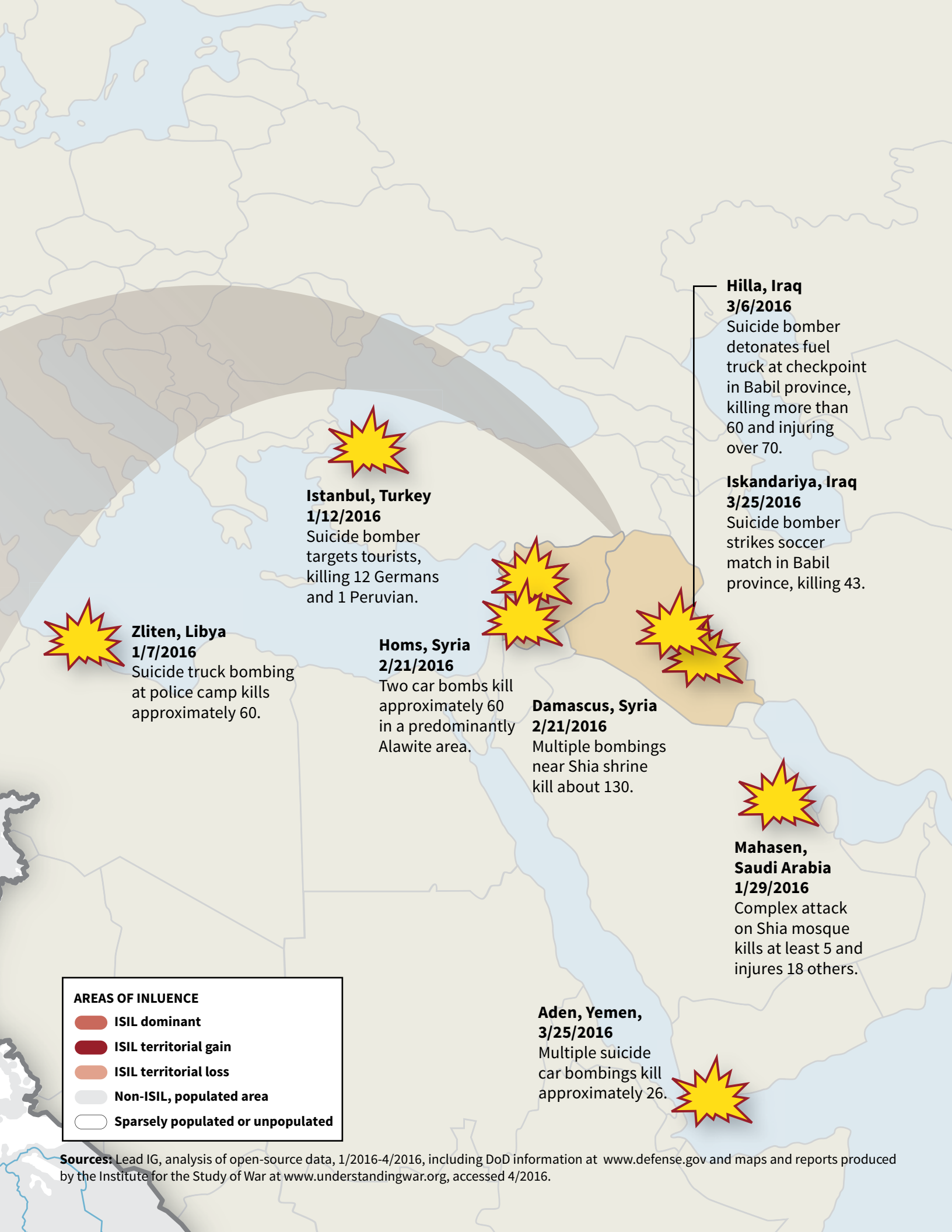
March 31
Iraqi Prime Minister al-Abadi proposes a slate of new cabinet members.

ISIL: ATTACKING AND UNDER ATTACK

In January 2016, U.S. officials estimated that ISIL has lost about 40 percent of the territory it once controlled in Iraq and more than 16 percent in Syria. Successful offensives in March by the ISF in the Euphrates River Valley and by Syrian government forces in Palmyra further decreased the areas under ISIL's control in both countries. (See map below)

But while a diverse coalition continued to attack core ISIL territories in Iraq and Syria, ISIL demonstrated its resilience this quarter by carrying out or inspiring a series of attacks on targets in Europe, Turkey, North Africa, and the Arabian Peninsula. (See map to right which displays the approximate situation on the ground as of 3/31/2016)





Sources: Lead IG, analysis of open-source data, 1/2016-4/2016, including DoD information at www.defense.gov and maps and reports produced by the Institute for the Study of War at www.understandingwar.org, accessed 4/2016.

of concentrating their attacks not on ISIL, but on Coalition-backed forces—many of whom were fighting al-Asad in the Syrian civil war that preceded ISIL's rise. In addition to ISIL, al-Qaeda affiliate Jabhat al-Nusra is in Syria and is targeted by Coalition-backed forces.[14]

Russia sent military forces to assist the al-Asad regime in September 2015 and has since shored up Syrian government forces with airstrikes.[15] Russia announced on March 14, 2016, that it would withdraw most of its military contingent in Syria "within days," but the effect on the ground appeared to be limited. About half of Russia's estimated 36 fixed-wing military jets flew out of the country, but airstrikes in support of al-Asad continued. Further, Russia continued to operate an air base in Hmeymim and a naval facility at Tartus. Russian President Vladimir Putin said Russia will continue operating both facilities and protect them with ground contingents.[16]

Coalition-backed and al-Asad forces have separately pushed back ISIL this quarter, with U.S-backed forces capturing the eastern Syrian town of al-Shaddadi in mid-February. This victory constituted an important step in efforts to disrupt ISIL's control of territory linking Mosul in Iraq with Raqqa in Syria.[17] In late April, ISF and allied local forces also retook the town of Hit in Anbar province, working to break up ISIL-held desert areas of the province that link Iraq to Syria.[18] Meanwhile, the Syrian army and its allies gained control of territory in western Syria, retaking the historic city of Palmyra on March 26, which had been captured by ISIL in mid-2015.[19]

DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS PRODUCE A LIMITED CEASE-FIRE IN SYRIA

On February 22, 2016, the United States and Russia, as co-chairs of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG), issued a joint statement announcing that a "cessation of hostilities" would commence in Syria on February 27. The Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy (OSD(P)) reported on April 4 that the cessation of hostilities had "produced a significant reduction in violence." [20] However, the cessation of hostilities appeared to have broken down by mid-April, with fighting renewed in Aleppo and elsewhere in northern Syria.[21] And although Syrian opposition groups and the Syrian government resumed UN-backed peace talks in Geneva, Switzerland, in March, the talks ended without the parties reaching any concrete agreements.[22]

STABILIZATION EFFORTS AIM TO SECURE LIBERATED AREAS

As Iraqi and Coalition forces liberated areas from ISIL, the need for immediate stabilization efforts came to the forefront. For example, basic services such as electricity, water, and security had to be restored. Coalition stabilization goals have generally focused on the following goals:[23]

- reestablishing rule of law
- reestablishing a safe and secure environment
- ensuring the ability of the populace to participate in a stable economy bounded by laws
- ensuring fulfillment of basic needs and restoration of basic services

Stabilization efforts varied from town to town, depending on each area's ethnic and sectarian make-up, economic resources, the amount of destruction sustained in the fighting, and the percentage of the population that had fled. Immediate stabilization efforts proceeded after demining, a priority in recently-liberated cities, such as Ramadi and Tikrit, and in agricultural areas. Early stabilization efforts also focused on restoring local governments and police forces.[24]

Despite the challenges, the U.S. government continues to work with the Iraqi government and the international community to stabilize these areas. But, to date, results have been mixed, and largely dependent on local conditions. In Tikrit, for example, stabilization efforts have been highly successful, as 95 percent of the population that fled the city after ISIL temporarily captured it have returned.[25] By contrast, the city of Ramadi continued to face serious challenges to stabilization following liberation by the ISF in December 2015. Stabilization efforts in Sinjar, which is controlled by a Kurdish-led force, have been hampered by political tensions and the proliferation of explosive devices left by ISIL.

QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS OF U.S. COUNTER-ISIL STRATEGY

In September 2014, President Obama announced a comprehensive strategy to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL, setting out nine Strategic Lines of Effort (LOEs) to counter the organization. This quarter, the efforts produced the following results:

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IN IRAQ

As Prime Minister al-Abadi announced changes to reform his cabinet, protesters seeking legislative support for reforms descended on the Green Zone. Meanwhile, the UN, the U.S., and the Coalition have helped Iraq advance stabilization efforts for areas liberated from ISIL.

DENYING ISIL SAFE-HAVEN

The DoD announced on April 1 that the Coalition had killed top ISIL leaders Tarkhan Batirashvili, known as Abu Omar al-Shishani, and Abd al-Rahman al-Qaduli, known as Haji Iman. Al-Shishani was a Georgian Chechen who served as an ISIL commander in Syria. Haji Iman functioned as ISIL's minister of finance.

BUILDING PARTNER CAPACITY

In March, the Coalition resumed efforts to train and equip Syrian opposition fighters to become "force multipliers" able to successfully confront ISIL. A previous effort to train members of Syria's opposition was suspended in Oct. 2015 after evidence mounted that only a few dozen fighters had been adequately trained.

ENHANCING INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION ON ISIL

Coalition forces continued reconnaissance flights to gather intelligence against ISIL in Iraq and Syria, as evidenced by the crash on March 5 of a small manned plane in the Kurdistan Region of northern Iraq. The accident was due to a mechanical problem and the four-person crew was uninjured and recovered by U.S. Special Operations Forces. The mission remains classified.

DISRUPTING ISIL'S FINANCES

Coalition warplanes bombed at least five cash storage facilities in ISIL-held territory in Iraq and Syria this quarter, destroying millions of dollars that the terrorist group used to pay its fighters. According to some reports, ISIL's diminished cash supply has forced it to cut the wages of its troops.

EXPOSING ISIL'S TRUE NATURE

President Obama signed Executive Order 13721 on March 14 directing the Secretary of State to establish the Global Engagement Center to counter messaging and diminish the influence of international terrorist organizations, including ISIL and al-Qaeda. The Center is charged with coordinating communications directed at foreign audiences abroad.

DISRUPTING THE FLOW OF FOREIGN FIGHTERS

The Homeland Security Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives estimated this quarter that about 6,900 Westerners had joined ISIL in Syria and Iraq, and another 1,900 Europeans who had fought alongside ISIL in ISIL-controlled territories had returned home. The committee, which released the information as part of its Terror Threat Snapshot on March 16, noted that German and Italian authorities had arrested more than 40 suspected militants as they attempted to enter Europe posing as Syrian refugees, and that Belgium had the highest per capita number of residents of a Western country who had traveled to join ISIL.

PROTECTING THE HOMELAND

A former U.S. Air Force serviceman was found guilty on March 9 of trying to support a foreign terrorist organization. Federal prosecutors said Tairod Pugh, 48, had attempted to travel to Syria and Iraq to join ISIL, presenting evidence in court that he had purchased a ticket to Istanbul and had drafted a letter to his wife in Egypt telling her that he planned to "establish and defend the Islamic State."

HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT

To assist those affected by conflict in Syria and Iraq, USAID and DoS supported assistance efforts throughout both countries, providing aid that included emergency food aid, healthcare, psychological support, winterization support, protection, and shelter assistance. As of March 31, 2016, U.S. government financial commitments to the Syria complex crisis totaled more than $5.13 billion and $624 million to the Iraq complex crisis.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ AND SYRIA

The U.S. government continued to provide humanitarian assistance in Syria and Iraq during the quarter as conflict led to the displacement and death of civilians in both countries. Since the beginning of fiscal year 2015, USAID and DoS have obligated a total of $2.24 billion in support of humanitarian response efforts to the Syria and Iraq complex crises.[26]

In Syria, conflict between the Syrian government, opposition groups, and United Nations (UN)-designated terrorist groups continued to drive the humanitarian situation. During the first two months of the reporting period, more than 200,000 people were displaced by conflict.[27] To assist those displaced by conflict, the USAID Offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), and Food for Peace (FFP), and the Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) supported assistance efforts throughout all of Syria's 14 governorates, providing emergency food aid, healthcare, psychological support, protection, and shelter assistance.[28] FFP and PRM also provided support to Syrian refugees residing in neighboring countries, such as Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon.[29] The late-February 2016 ceasefire reportedly led to a significant drop in violence and increased access to hard-to-reach and besieged communities.[30] The UN, with the support of OFDA and FFP, reportedly reached nearly 350,000 people in such locations during the reporting period.[31] Notwithstanding this improvement, access to many in need remained limited as the Syrian government did not grant humanitarian agencies permission to access several areas.[32] By the end of the quarter, 6.6 million Syrians had been internally displaced, 13.5 million had been identified as in need, and 4.8 million had fled the country.[33]

Conflict between the Iraqi government and ISIL forces continued to be the primary cause of the humanitarian crisis in Iraq.[34] By late March 2016, 3.3 million Iraqis had been internally displaced and approximately 10 million had been identified as in need. [35] The Iraqi government's fiscal difficulties, resulting in a decrease in public services and worsening conditions for those in need, and the growing threat of a breach of the Mosul Dam further endangered the lives of Iraqis.[36] To assist those affected by the conflict, OFDA, FFP, and PRM supported assistance efforts throughout the country, including healthcare, education, protection, winterization support, and emergency food aid.[37] These efforts had a particular focus on areas of continuing conflict, such as the Anbar province, and areas with large populations of internally displaced persons (IDPs), such as Iraq's Kurdistan Region.[38]

LEAD IG OVERSIGHT

The Lead IG agencies released 11 reports from October 1, 2015, through March 31, 2016, related to oversight of OIR. These reports range from a Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General (DoD OIG) assessment of efforts to train and equip Iraqi Sunni Popular Mobilization Forces (a classified report) to a Department of State Office of the Inspector General (DoS OIG) audit of efforts by the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad to counter ISIL's messaging. In February 2016, U.S. Agency for International Development Office of the Inspector General (USAID OIG) issued a report surveying selected programs administered by its Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance in Iraq. Table 1 lists reports issued this quarter.

Table 1.

Lead IG Agency Reports Released, as of 3/31/2016

Department of Defense Office of Inspector General Oversight	
DoD Components Did Not Properly Use the Acquisition and Cross Service Agreement Automated Tracking and Reporting System (DoDIG-2016-067)	3/24/2016
U.S. Army Central and U.S. Army Contracting Command-Rock Island Need to Improve Facility Maintenance at King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center (DoDIG-2016-065)	3/23/2016
Equipping and Training Iraq and Afghan Security Forces U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Train, Advise, Assist, and Equip Iraqi Sunni Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) (DoDIG-2016-055)	2/29/2016
The Army Did Not Fully Document Procedures for Processing Wholesale Equipment in Kuwait (DoDIG-2016-056)	2/24/2016
U.S. Army Central Did Not Implement Controls to Effectively Manage the Shared Cost of Administrative Support Functions in Iraq (DoDIG-2016-048)	2/17/2016
Department of State Office of Inspector General Oversight	
Evaluation of Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Iraq Programs in Support of Line of Effort 1 of the President's Counter-ISIL Strategy (ISP-16-09)	3/1/2016
Evaluation of Embassy Baghdad's Implementation of Line of Effort 6 in the President's Strategy to Counter ISIL: Exposing ISIL's True Nature (ISP-I-16-10)	3/1/2016
Evaluation of Embassy Baghdad's Implementation of Line of Effort 1 in the President's Strategy to Counter ISIL: Supporting Effective Governance in Iraq (ISP-S-16-11)	3/16/2016
Audit of Bureau of Diplomatic Security Worldwide Protective Services Contract Task Order 8 — Security Services at U.S. Consulate Erbil (AUD-MERO-16-30)	3/28/2016
Audit of Bureau of Diplomatic Security Worldwide Protective Services Contract Task Order 3 — Baghdad Embassy Security Force (AUD-MERO-16-28)	2/25/2016
U.S. Agency for International Development Office of Inspector General	
Survey of Selected USAID/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance Programs in Iraq (8-267-16-001-S)	2/10/2016

In addition, the Lead IG agencies and oversight partners have 36 projects ongoing and six more planned as of March 31, 2016. Future oversight reports will focus on the training and equipping of anti-ISIL Iraqi, Kurdish, and Syrian forces that must provide the boots on the ground to defeat ISIL. This includes four DoD OIG planned oversight projects.

As of March 31, 2016, the Lead IG agencies have 35 ongoing OIR-related investigations. The bulk of these investigations relate to procurement fraud. Several ongoing investigations resulted in over $1 million in savings, a partial termination of an award, and multiple suspensions. In addition, the Lead IG Hotline investigator coordinates the hotline activities among the Lead IG agencies and other OIR-related organizations. During the reporting period, the Lead IG Hotline investigator received and coordinated 84 contacts related to OIR and opened 102 cases. These contacts were referred within DoD OIG, the Lead IG agencies, or other investigative organizations for review and, as appropriate, investigation.

For more detailed information on oversight, see the Completed Oversight Activities and Ongoing and Planned Oversight sections of this report, beginning on page 115.

This Lead IG Report to the United States Congress relies on information supplied by federal agencies in response to questions from the Lead IG agencies, as well as information announced by federal agency officials in open-forum settings. Where available, as noted in this report, the Lead IG agencies have also consulted reputable open source reporting in an effort to verify and assess such information. However, in light of the operational realities and dynamic nature of OIR, the Lead IG agencies have limited time to test, verify, and independently assess all of the assertions made by these agencies. This is particularly true where the Lead IG agencies have not yet completed oversight of these assertions through audits, inspections, or evaluations. The Lead IG agencies are using the information provided by their respective agencies to determine where to conduct future audits and evaluations.

Future oversight reports will focus on the training and equipping of anti-ISIL Iraqi, Kurdish, and Syrian forces that must provide the boots on the ground to defeat ISIL.

Coalition-provided light medium tactical vehicles (LMTV) await transfer to the Iraqi 7th Army Division at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

In addition, the Lead IG agencies also share the responsibility to ascertain the accuracy of the information related to OIR, and have begun a series of projects to meet this requirement. The USAID OIG plans to test financial data from a sample of awards related to humanitarian assistance in the region, and DoS OIG is identifying approaches to obtaining and analyzing financial information obtained from DoS. A DoD OIG audit, slated for issuance next quarter, is reviewing financial systems tracking costs related to OIR and determining whether reporting of war-related obligations in DoD's Cost of War report meets reporting and legislative requirements.

Also, for information on the Lead IG:

- Appendix A: Lead Inspector General Statutory Requirements
- Appendix B: The Lead Inspector General Model

U.S. Air Force airmen deliver fuel to coalition bases in Iraq in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. (U.S. Air Force photo)

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

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FUNDING FOR OIR ACTIVITIES

Since OIR began in FY 2014, the U.S. government has authorized more than $11 billion for DoD for OIR and related U.S. programs and activities to counter ISIL. Of the authorized funding, over $7 billion has been obligated and $4.9 billion disbursed, as of February 2016.[39]

DoD funding for OIR has increased markedly since FY 2014, as shown below (amounts affected by rounding):[40]

- **2014:** $281.7 million appropriated, $281.7 million obligated, and $246.9 million disbursed
- **2015:** $5.8 billion appropriated, $5.8 billion obligated, and $4.2 billion disbursed
- **2016:** $5.3 billion appropriated, $986.4 million obligated, and $529 million disbursed

OIR and related missions are funded from DoD Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding, which also funds Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS) and related missions for Afghanistan. The total of OCO funding appropriated for FY 2016 was $58.6 billion, and $58.8 billion has been requested for FY 2017. Of those amounts: [41]

- OIR had $5 billion authorized for FY 2016, and has $7.5 billion requested for FY 2017
- OFS received the bulk of OCO funding, with $42.9 billion appropriated in FY 2016, and $41.7 billion requested for FY 2017

In addition, some DoD OCO funding went to increasing efforts to support European allies and to support partnership-focused approaches to counterterrorism.[42]

OIR programs include monies for building the capacity of the ISF; assisting vetted elements of the Syrian opposition; and bridging critical ISF capability gaps by providing air support and conducting intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions. DoD OCO funds also pay for OIR-related costs associated with sustaining U.S. personnel deployed to the Middle East; replenishing expended munitions; and financing air, ground, and naval operations.[43]

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016 (P.L. 114-113) provides funds to DoD, DoS, and USAID, among other agencies, for baseline and OCO ("supplemental" funds) in accordance with the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) of 2015.[44] The BBA raises the government's debt ceiling and suspends sequestration-level spending caps until March 15, 2017. The United States Congress provided sequestration relief in the amount of $50 billion for 2016 and $30 billion for 2017, to be split

evenly between defense and non-defense programs. The defense OCO portion increased funding by $7.7 billion in 2016 and $5.2 billion in 2017 and enabled DoD to plan and conduct operations beyond a 1-year time horizon.[45]

DoD Funding

The $5 billion in OCO funds authorized for FY 2016 for OIR covers the costs of critical DoD functions, such as force protection, in-theater support, and the training and equipping of the ISF and certain anti-ISIL Syrian opposition groups. The latter activities are done through the Iraq Train and Equip Fund (ITEF) and the Syrian Train and Equip Fund (STEF). Additional funds come from other categories of OCO funding, which provide monies for both OIR and OFS. For instance, the Operations/Force Protection amount of $8.8 billion appropriated for FY 2016 provides for U.S. personnel operation in Afghanistan and in the Iraq-Syria area. This would include pay for mobilized forces, pre-deployment training, body armor, and personal protection gear, among other things.[46]

The table below, from the Defense Budget Overview for FY 2017, shows the latest figures for DoD OCO funding.

Table 2.

DoD OCO Functional/Mission Category Breakout (in billions)

OCO Budget	FY 16 Enacted	FY 17 Requested
Operations/Force Protection	$8.8	$8.7
In-theater Support	14.8	17.0
Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Fund	0.4	0.3
Afghanistan Security Forces Fund	3.6	3.4
Support for Coalition Forces	1.4	1.4
Iraq Train and Equip Fund (ITEF)	0.7	0.6
Syria Train and Equip Fund (STEF)	-	0.3
Equipment Reset and Readiness	10.1	9.4
Classified Programs	8.1	8.1
Counterterrorism Partnership Fund (CTPF)	1.1	1.0
European Reassurance Initiative (ERI)	0.8	3.4
National Guard and Reserve Equipment/Military Readiness	1.5	
Subtotal	**$51.3**	**$53.6**
Prior-Year Cancellation	-0.4	-
Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) of 2015 Compliance	7.7	5.2
Grand Total	**$58.6**	**$58.8**

Source: Fiscal Year 2017 DoD Budget Request.

An examination of some of the above funds shows how OIR is funded directly and indirectly by OCO appropriations:

- **Iraq Train and Equip Fund (ITEF)**
  The National Defense Authorization Act of 2016 (NDAA) authorized $715 million in funding for the ITEF bringing the total ITEF authorized to $2.3 billion. Between October 1, 2015 and February 2016, $350 million has been obligated and $304 million disbursed from FY 2015 appropriations. The ITEF provides material equipment, training, and operational support for the ISF to liberate and stabilize territory lost to ISIL, protect Iraq's borders and the population, and, ultimately, defeat ISIL.
- **Syria Train and Equip Fund (STEF)**
  The program is allocated up to $350 million to continue training, equipping, and sustaining vetted Syrian opposition forces to counter ISIL. On March 21, 2016, a prior approval reprogramming request was submitted to The United States Congress requesting the transfer of $300 million from Syria train and equip. As of March 31, 2016, congressional approval is pending. The train and equip program seeks to enable the DoD to build capacity of partners on the ground and reinforce battlefield successes by providing equipment, supplies and targeted training to vetted opposition forces in the fight against ISIL in Syria.
- **Operations/Force Protection**
  This funding covers the full spectrum of military operations requirements for U.S. personnel operating in OIR and OFS. These operations include supporting deployed forces; sustaining Special Operations Forces, combat-aviation units, and ground-based personnel; and covering communications and transportation costs.
- **In-theater Support**
  This fund enables units stationed outside of Iraq and Afghanistan to provide critical assistance to personnel in the two theaters, including air and naval support, intelligence resources, and dedicated unmanned air vehicles. Under this category, $80 million in OCO funds are dedicated to the Office of Security Cooperation – Iraq (OSC-I) for this fiscal year. OSC-I's mission focuses on the longer-term goal of building a sustainable military-to-military relationship between the United States and Iraq.

Vehicles supporting the 72nd Iraqi Army Brigade line up during a combined arms breach training exercise at Besmaya Range Complex, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

- **Equipment Reset**
  This fund enables the replenishment, replacement, and repair of equipment and munitions expended, destroyed, damaged, or degraded due to prolonged use in combat operations.
- **Counterterrorism Partnership Fund (CTPF)**
  In FY 2016, The United States Congress appropriated $1.1 billion for the CTPF, a Presidential initiative to create a sustainable, partnership-focused approach to counterterrorism (CT). The CTPF enables the DoD to assist allied countries in defending against violent extremism and crisis response activities. U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) is allocated $375 million for CT in the Middle East, Arabian Peninsula, and Central Asia. U.S. Africa Command is allocated $375 million for CT efforts in East Africa, the Lake Chad Basin, and the Sahel-Maghreb region. On March 21, 2016, DoD submitted a prior approval reprogramming request was submitted to The United States Congress requesting the transfer of $300 million for Syria training and equipping. As of March 31, 2016, congressional approval is pending, and none of the FY 16/17 funds has been obligated or disbursed. The DoD only considers the Syria training and equipping portion of the CTPF as part of OIR. The non-Syria portion of CTPF is part of DoD's global response to CT.

Department of State and USAID Funding

The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2017, released in February 2016, included foreign assistance funding for DoS and USAID for Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon totaling $1,982.4 million, to counter ISIL and address the crisis in Syria by promoting regional stability and security, and providing economic assistance. [47]

Table 3.

Breakdown of funding for FY 2017, compared to FY 2015

Program ($ in millions)	FY 15 Actual[a]	FY 16[b] Estimate	FY 17 Request[c]	FY 15 vs. FY 17 Change	Percent
Bilateral Funding (broken down as follows)	1,452.1	N/A	1,982.4	580.3	37%
Iraq[c]	229.8	N/A	510.4	280.6	122%
Syria	45.0	N/A	238.5	193.5	430%
Jordan	1,011.0	N/A	1,000.0	(11.2)	-1%
Lebanon	166.3	N/A	233.5	67.2	40%

Sources: [a]Congressional Budget Justification, Foreign Operations, Appendix 3, FY 2017, pp. 160-189 and 208-213.

[b] FY 2016 estimates not available from DoS at end of reporting period.

[c] The FY 2015 actual allocation figure does not include $20.0 million for Iraq or $114.0 million for Syria of prior-year funds.

The following details the major components of the budget request by country, not including funds requested for humanitarian assistance to address the crisis in the region.

- **For Iraq:** The budget request totaled $510.4 million for Iraq. Of this amount, $150 million is for Foreign Military Financing for Overseas Contingency Operations (FMF-OCO) to strengthen the security capacity of the Iraq Security Forces. The request also includes $332.5 million in Economic Support Funds for Overseas Contingency Operations (ESF-OCO) to help degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL. These funds would also support Iraqi stabilization efforts; assist moderate, democratic actors to reinforce Iraq's constitutional system and promote inclusive governance; and support measures to strengthen Iraq's position as it pursues reforms outlined in agreements with international financial institutions. The remainder of the funds were requested for the International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Non-proliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related (NADR) programs.

- **For Syria:** $238.5 million was requested for Syria. This amount includes $50 million in OCO funds to support peacekeeping operations with the aim of building the capacity of moderate partners inside Syria to counter ISIL, enhancing security and stability in local communities, and fostering conditions that could lead to political settlement in Syria. According to the request, this would enable DoS to continue to provide non-lethal assistance to the vetted, moderate, armed Syrian opposition as well as strengthen the linkages between armed and civilian actors, complementing DoD train and equip efforts. The request would provide $175 million in ESF-OCO to assist the vetted, moderate Syrian opposition groups with critical needs resulting from the ongoing crisis by advancing a political transition, countering violent extremist groups such as ISIL, and supporting local communities in liberated areas to maintain basic services. The remainder of the funds were requested for the International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) and NADR programs.

- **For Jordan:** The request seeks $1 billion for Jordan, including $350 million in FMF-OCO funding to support the Jordanian Armed Forces' efforts to improve border and maritime security, their capacity to control national territory and counter internal and external threats, and their interoperability with the United States to participate in coalition operations, including operations to counter ISIL. The request includes an additional $632.4 million in ESF-OCO for Jordan to continue to mitigate the economic strains that Jordan faces due to regional instability, the ISIL offensive, and the influx of refugees from the crises in Iraq and Syria. The remainder of the funds were requested for the IMET and NADR programs.

- **For Lebanon:** Lebanon would receive $233.5 million under the request. $105 million in FMF-OCO is to support the Lebanese Armed Forces' ability to secure the border and national territory against extremist threats, including ISIL and al-Nusra. Funding designated for Lebanon also includes $110 million in ESF-OCO to support Lebanese institutions that advance internal and regional stability, combat the influence of extremists, and promote transparency and economic growth. According to the request, these funds would also provide support to communities through programs that bolster Lebanon's ability to provide basic services and governance, like water infrastructure and basic education, which are under strain due to the influx of Syrian refugees. The remainder of the funds were requested for the INCLE, NADR and IMET programs.

For more funding information:

- Appendix C: Other U.S. Funding

ONGOING CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISIL

Coalition vs. ISIL in Iraq and Syria

On January 13, 2016, Secretary Carter outlined U.S. priorities in the effort to counter ISIL during an address to soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division, stating the Coalition is focused on three interrelated efforts: destroying ISIL in Iraq and Syria, safeguarding the home countries of Coalition members, and eliminating ISIL affiliates based outside of Iraq and Syria. The Secretary focused on five main points:[48]

- Accelerating the campaign against ISIL through a variety of military and non-military measures, including targeting ISIL's financial resources, such as infrastructure and warehouses full of cash
- Targeting key ISIL leaders and infrastructure in Iraq and Syria in operations carried out by U.S. Special Operations Forces
- Training local Iraqi and Syrian forces, which will be challenging, but is essential to the success of the mission
- Liberating Mosul in Iraq and Raqqa in Syria, considered ISIL's centers of gravity, which Secretary Carter emphasized "will not be quick"
- Focusing attention on stabilization and reconstruction effort in areas liberated from ISIL control by partnering with allies and the broader international community. *For more information on this issue, see the section on stabilization efforts on page 58.*

AIRSTRIKES DEGRADE ISIL

This quarter, Coalition airstrikes increasingly concentrated on targeting ISIL's oil and cash infrastructure, degrading ISIL forces in the Iraqi cities of Hit and Mosul, and supporting ISF efforts to complete the clearing of insurgent holdouts in Ramadi, whose city center was recaptured from ISIL last December.[49]

According to CJTF-OIR, from January 1 to April 1, 2016, the Coalition launched more than 1,300 airstrikes in Iraq and Syria. The weekly strike totals ranged from 89 to 142 in Iraq and 17 to 59 in Syria. Nine countries carried out airstrikes on targets in Iraq, and 10 countries conducted airstrikes against targets in Syria.[50]

Among the areas that saw the most airstrikes in Iraq from January 1 to March 25 (latest available date of this information) were:[51]

- Mosul: 293
- Ramadi: 237
- The Manjib pocket (near the Syria-Turkey border): 84

Two United States Navy F-18 Hornet aircraft fly over Iraq to assist and support the Iraqi Security Forces efforts to degrade and defeat ISIL. (U.S. Air Force photo)

Coalition aircraft also conducted airstrikes along the strategically important "Mar'a Line" in northwest Syria, including at least 31 strikes carried out during a 20-day period in January. Manning this line are U.S-backed Kurdish opposition forces, who are under heavy pressure from ISIL to the west, and Syrian government forces from the south. Coalition airstrikes enabled these U.S.-supported groups to maintain a presence in the northwest of Syria, despite the sustained progress made by Russia and Syrian government forces.[52]

By the end of March, Coalition airstrikes were increasingly targeting Hit in Anbar province, as well as Mosul. From March 12 to March 18, the Coalition conducted 25 airstrikes on ISIL positions in Hit, as ISF ground units gradually moved up the Euphrates Valley toward that city.[53] *For a detailed map showing the location and frequency of Coalition airstrikes this quarter, see At A Glance on page 3.*

The Coalition conducted at least 247 airstrikes on ISIL-control oil production sites as of April 1. DoD estimated that by April 2016, Coalition and Russian airstrikes, taken together, had cut ISIL's daily oil production to 34,000 barrels per day from a high of 45,000 barrels per day before bombing began to increasingly target oil sites and the beginning of Russia's military intervention in Syria. DoD added that, while it is too soon to assess the effect of these airstrikes on ISIL's oil revenue, ISIL is generating "significantly less than the roughly $40 million/month" it previously derived from the sale of oil.[54]

In a similar vein, ISIL's cash stockpiles are also being targeted more frequently, with at least nine strikes by Coalition aircraft destroying millions of dollars in cash stored in warehouses in recent months. The increased focus

on destroying ISIL cash stockpiles constitutes one of the main "accelerants" introduced in recent months to combat ISIL, with the potential result of reducing morale, dissuading potential recruits, and making it more difficult for ISIL to acquire spare parts on the black market. Unconfirmed reports suggest that, in response to these new financial constraints, ISIL has been forced to cut the salaries of its frontline fighters by half.[55]

On March 14, U.S. officials confirmed that ISIL commander Tarkhan Batirashvili, also known as Abu Omar al-Shishani, or Omar the Chechen, died of wounds he suffered in an earlier airstrike near al-Shaddadi, Syria. Al-Shishani had often been described as ISIL's "secretary of defense," and the U.S. government had placed a $5 million reward for information leading to his capture. According to media reports, he had served as commander of ISIL forces in northern Syria since May 2013.[56]

SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES TARGET HIGH-VALUE ISIL LEADERS

On January 13, Secretary Carter stated that "the specialized expeditionary force [he] announced in December is now in place and is preparing to work with Iraqis to begin going after ISIL's fighters and commanders, killing or capturing them wherever we find them, along with other key targets."[57] This force of about 100 U.S. Special Operations soldiers, which Secretary Carter described before The United States Congress in December 2015, is also known as the Expeditionary Targeting Force.[58] According to Secretary Carter, a similar unit of approximately 50 Special Operations Forces is active in Syria, where it primarily advises and assists moderate Syrian opposition forces in the north.[59]

DoD officials announced on March 10 that the capture of ISIL operative Dawud al-Bakkar, who reportedly possesses significant knowledge about ISIL's embryonic chemical-weapons capabilities, was accomplished by U.S. Special Operations Forces in Iraq.[60] According to DoD officials, al-Bakkar was subsequently transferred to Iraqi custody.[61] DoD also reported that U.S. Special Operations Forces killed ISIL's finance minister, Abd al-Rahman Mustafa al-Qaduli (who was also known as Haji Iman) in a March 2016 raid in Syria.[62] U.S. officials described him as a key advisor to ISIL's leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and an active member of ISIL's predecessor organizations since 2004.[63] In May 2014, the U.S. Department of the Treasury had placed al-Qaduli on the Specially Designated Global Terrorist list, offering a $7 million reward for information leading to his capture.[64]

COALITION EXPANDS TRAINING MISSIONS

Iraq: According to DoD, the training sites form the core of the Coalition training effort. As of late March, approximately 3,500 U.S troops are reportedly stationed in Iraq, with the majority focused on the train, advise,

Table 4.

Coaltion Troop Strength, as of 4/2016

Of the 65 Global Coalition to Counter ISIL members, 18 countries, including the United States, have troops in Iraq conducting various advisory and training missions. This table provides the approximate force strength of the 17 non-U.S. countries who have about 3,100 total military personnel in Iraq supporting the Build Partner Coalition and Advise and Assist missions.

Country	Estimated Troop Strength
Australia	460
Italy	440
Spain	340
United Kingdom	240
France	240
Netherlands	130
Denmark	130
Hungary	120
Germany	120
New Zealand	110
Norway	80
Canada	70
Finland	50
Sweden	30
Portugal	30
Belgium	20
Latvia	10

Source: DoD, CJTF-OIR, response to Lead IG data call, 4/19/2016.

Female Zeravani soldiers kneel in a 360-degree formation during a tactical movement class under the supervision and instruction of Italian soldiers near Erbil, Iraq.
(U.S. Army photo)

and assist mission.[65] The sites are located at Baghdad, Taji, al-Asad, Taqadum, Besmaya, and Erbil. While the United States takes the lead in this mission, at least 17 other countries have trainers on the ground at the sites.[66]

As of early April, the Coalition had trained personnel from at least six ISF brigades and 13 Peshmerga battalions, for a total of just over 19,915 ISF personnel of all types (including police and Sunni tribal forces), with 4,827 ISF personnel still in training.[67] The training program generally runs for 6-9 weeks, depending on the skills imparted. The classes are tailored to the participating units. Plans are also being developed for Italian Carabinieri to train 2,000 police officers before their scheduled departure in December. Examples of some of the classes delivered at the six sites include:[68]

- Baghdad: special-operations training for Counter Terrorism Services (CTS) recruits
- Taji: non-commissioned officer training and sniper tactics
- Al-Asad: combat medicine and infantry tactics
- Taqadum: advanced small-unit tactics
- Besmaya: combined-arms operations
- Erbil: 10-week “modern brigade course” and specialized courses for female security forces

However, in February 2016, the CJTF-OIR spokesman stated that most of these troops will be run through a second full training cycle. Furthermore, to generate the estimated 10 brigades (of about 3,000 each) deemed necessary by Coalition planners for the liberation of Mosul, at least 10,000 more troops will have to be trained.[69] The number of trained personnel is only part of the anti-ISIL forces. According to a March 2016 study compiled by Iraq analyst Michael Knights on behalf of the Al-Bayan Center, the ISF is made up of an estimated 190,000 personnel, including the regular military, the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), police, militia, and other auxiliaries. The same study estimates security forces for Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government at 108,000 personnel.[70]

The process of equipping the ISF is continuing, with the United States supplying Iraqi forces with a wide variety of material both through the U.S.-funded Iraq Train and Equip Fund and the Iraq-funded Foreign Military Sales process. Examples of ITEF-purchased equipment on its way to the ISF as of late March included:[71]

- "brigade sets" containing the small arms, vehicles, communications, medical, and ancillary gear needed to equip eight Iraqi Army brigades
- AK-47s, rocket-propelled grenades, and communications gear for Sunni tribal forces (also known as PMFs)
- a battalion equipment set for the elite CTS
- anti-tank weapons systems
- mine-clearing line charges

Syria: On April 1, DoD announced that it had resumed training "dozens" of Syrian opposition fighters as part of a "relatively small" program.[72] The United States had "paused" its efforts to train Syrian opposition fighters in October 2015 after fewer than 150 had completed the program and were ineffective in the field.[73] The new version of this program will involve extracting individual fighters for training, not whole units, as was previously attempted.[74]

DoD also provides a limited amount of equipment to the Coalition-backed Syrian Arab Coalition, one of the groups composing the umbrella opposition group known as the Syrian Democratic Forces. The Coalition equipment is given to the Syrian Arab Coalition and not to the YPG. The equipment includes ammunition, medical supplies, and commercial communications gear, and is provided based on the immediate needs of the particular unit and the particular operation.[75] DoD also continues to train "a small number of counter-ISIL forces in southern Syria."[76]

Department of Defense OIG Oversight of the Building Partner Capacity Mission

The DoD OIG has assessed OIR's train and equip mission in several previous reports. This quarter, the DoD OIG issued one classified report on the Coalition efforts to train Sunni PMF in Iraq (groups the report refers to as Tribal Resistance Forces, or TRF). A brief unclassified summary of the DoD OIG assessment report stated that it contained five findings and three observations resulting in eight recommendations. The report issued findings relating to the:

- adequacy of Iraqi government operational and logistic support to the TRF
- progress toward TRF integration into the ISF—army and police
- logistic sustainment of Coalition-purchased equipment after issue to TRF
- sufficiency of Coalition measures of TRF development and performance
- implementation of processes and procedures for vetting TRF

In addition, the report identified three areas for continued improvement:

- U.S. and Coalition forces plan to leverage TRF operational success
- command guidance for recurring Leahy human-rights vetting of TRF
- Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy mandatory progress reporting

The details of the report remain classified.

A DoD OIG report in September 2015 evaluated the effectiveness of DoD/CENTCOM and Coalition plans, operations, and resources to train, advise, and assist the Iraqi Army to initiate and sustain combat operations. That report identified several areas for improvement, including logistics, and noted that the Iraqi Army brigades "have significant internal deficiencies and will require adequate leadership and support by the Government of Iraq and its Ministry of Defense. They will require U.S. and Coalition air support." The report made five unclassified and two classified recommendations to commands to correct issues.[77] ■

Iraqi army soldiers at a position on the front line near Makhmour, Iraq. (Seth Robson/ Stars and Stripes photo)

The Ground Campaign in Iraq and Syria

As Secretary Carter has repeatedly noted, the isolation and eventual liberation of Mosul and Raqqa remain the dual focal points of the Coalition's mission to counter ISIL. This quarter, diverse anti-ISIL forces—including those supported by the United States (for example, the ISF) and those not (such as the Syrian army)—made modest progress toward achieving these objectives, but, for now, ISIL retains control of both cities.

Mosul: Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi has been more optimistic in his projections, but in his February testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency stated that Mosul would probably remain under ISIL's control until 2017.[78] Whatever the timing, the Ninewa Operations Center, with U.S. assistance, began to establish a logistics hub in February 2016 in Makhmour, a small village south of Mosul. Iraqi officials reportedly have stated that at least 4,500 Iraqi troops will ultimately be based there, part of a planned assault force of about 30,000 soldiers. Among the troops at Makhmour are soldiers from the Coalition-trained Iraqi Army, and an unspecified number of U.S. advisors and force-protection units, including members of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit. On March 19, an ISIL rocket attack on the Marines' Fire Base Bell killed one Marine and wounded several others.[79]

Airstrikes against targets in and around Mosul intensified in early 2016, as part of a broader effort to isolate the city and deprive ISIL of access to recruits, weapons, and cash, with the number of airstrikes targeting Mosul more than doubling from the week beginning March 5 (12 strikes) to the week beginning March 19 (25 strikes).[80]

On March 24, Prime Minister al-Abadi, announced the start of the "first stage" of operations "to liberate areas surrounding Mosul."[81] Using ISF units trained by the Coalition, the offensive focused on clearing several villages west of Makhmour.[82] This stage of the offensive appears to be following one of Iraq's main arteries, Highway 1, which goes west from Makhmour, before crossing the Tigris River at the oil-rich town of Qayyara, and then turning north to Mosul—a distance of at least 113 kilometers.[83] U.S. forces supported the ISF with airstrikes and fire-support missions conducted by U.S. Marine Corps personnel (Task Force Spartan) stationed at Fire Base Bell, near Makhmour.[84] In April, DoD stated that it is considering whether opening additional fire bases would accelerate the pace of anti-ISIL operations.[85]

But the offensive failed to live up to expectations. It started promisingly, with a spokesman for the ISF's Joint Military Command informing reporters on March 24 that ISF had liberated several small hamlets on the outskirts of Makhmour during the first day of the operation.[86] But as March drew to a close, the offensive bogged down east of the Tigris, with ISF units stymied

Iraqi army soldiers discuss plans on the front lines near Makhmour, Iraq. (Seth Robson/ Stars and Stripes photo)

by snipers, IEDs, and other booby traps that ISIL has had almost two years to emplace. Further slowing the offensive, bad weather limited Coalition air support.[87] Other reports indicated some Iraqi soldiers may have deserted, mingling with the flood of civilian refugees fleeing the battle.[88] Acknowledging the offensive's lack of progress, in early April, ISF commanders suspended the operation until they received reinforcements.[89]

The assault on Mosul will be a more difficult campaign than the campaign to free Ramadi from ISIL. The Ramadi campaign took months of preparation and about 6 weeks of ground operations before ISF troops gained control of the city center. Mosul has four times the population of Ramadi, is more than three times the geographic size, and contains potentially 10 times as many ISIL troops, who have had substantial time to dig in and prepare their defenses. *See the table below for a comparison of Ramadi and Mosul.*

Continuing Conflict in Anbar province: As preparations continued to isolate Mosul and Raqqa, the ISF and allied PMF worked to sustain military gains made in Iraq's Anbar province. Although Prime Minister al-Abadi conducted a widely-reported visit to central Ramadi on December 28, 2015, it took 6 weeks for the ISF to clear the city's suburbs of ISIL forces and most of the IEDs and unexploded ordnance left in the battle's aftermath. As noted earlier, extensive Coalition airstrikes were still hitting targets near Ramadi in early 2016, weeks after ISIL was officially evicted from the city center.

Table 5.

Ramadi to Mosul Comparison

	Ramadi	Mosul
Size	180 sq. km. (Wichita Falls, TX is about 183 sq. km.)	647 sq. km. (El Paso, TX is about 661 sq. km.)
Pre-ISIL population	500,000	2 million +
Post-ISIL population	10,000	700,000
ISIL troop strength	600-1,000	5,000-10,000
ISF forces involved	10,000 (but the CTS was by far the most heavily engaged)	At least 30,000
Ethnic/Sectarian composition	Sunni Arab	Sunni Arab, with some Kurds
Length of major ground operations	About 6 weeks	Unknown

All estimates are based on best-available information as of March 2016.
Source: Lead IG, analysis of open-source data, 4/2016.

As of March 31, Falluja and dozens of small villages and farming compounds surrounding it, remained under ISIL control. Falluja is essentially surrounded by ISF and PMF units, creating a loose cordon around the ISIL stronghold. In early March, one Iraqi Army officer estimated that the city still contained about 2,000 ISIL fighters, many of them foreigners.[90] While ISIL remains capable of using Falluja as a base for terrorist attacks against nearby cities, such as Ramadi and Baghdad, the ISF troop presence precludes ISIL from using Falluja to seize nearby towns.

Approximately 300,000 people resided in Falluja prior to ISIL seizing control of it in 2014, but as of early April, Human Rights Watch estimated that just "tens of thousands remain."[91] However, the loose ISF cordon also chokes off most of the supply routes into the city and, as a result, food prices in Falluja have skyrocketed, with a single sack of flour priced at about $750, and many food items unavailable at any price.[92] As the battle for Ramadi amply demonstrated, when ISIL has time to ensconce itself in a fortified urban area, the price for reclaiming such territory is high, with trapped civilians suffering alongside ISIL fighters.[93]

In late February, the ISF began to make preparations for the recapture of Hit, which lies to the west of the Falluja-Ramadi area. This is one of the terrorist group's last major enclaves in western Anbar and the key to controlling the Euphrates River Valley that ISIL uses to move forces between Syria and Iraq. In late April, the Iraqi government announced that it had largely liberated Hit, though clearing operations were likely to continue for some time.[94]

Raqqa: In a major victory for the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the majority of whom are Kurdish fighters affiliated with the People's Protection Units (YPG), the SDF liberated the Syrian town of al-Shaddadi in late February, with assistance from at least 71 coalition airstrikes. This offensive kicked off on February 16, with a pincer movement on the town from the northeast and northwest. The SDF captured the town 3 days later, and exploited their newfound momentum to capture multiple other towns south of al-Shaddadi. The blitz was interrupted on February 21, however, when ISIL launched an unsuccessful series of counterattacks.

The capture of al-Shaddadi further isolates Raqqa from ISIL-held lands in Iraq, and further complicates ISIL's already-stressed supply lines. In his March 8 Senate testimony, however, General Joseph Votel, Commander of CENTCOM, stated that there "is currently not a plan" to take Raqqa, nor one to "hold" it if and when it is liberated from ISIL control.[95]

In addition to operations conducted by U.S.-supported Syrian opposition groups this quarter, Syrian government forces, supported by their Russian and Iranian allies, recaptured the central Syrian city of Palmyra from ISIL in late March.

ISIL Capabilities

Senior U.S. military officers differ on the number of ISIL fighters in Iraq and Syria. On March 25, General Joseph Dunford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, estimated ISIL's strength in Iraq and Syria at about 35,000 fighters.[96] One week later, a DoD spokesman placed the total number of fighters there at between 20,000-25,000.[97] As for the ISIL's arsenal, DoD provided an updated assessment in April, which addressed ISIL's capabilities including:[98]

- **Chemical and Biological Weapons**
  ISIL has a limited amount of mustard-gas shells looted from Syrian stockpiles, and has developed a modest indigenous capacity to produce additional mustard gas. ISIL has also employed "toxic industrial chemicals," such as chlorine, against opposing forces. According to DoD, it is unlikely that ISIL could effectively weaponize large quantities of chemical weapons to cause mass casualties on the battlefield. Instead, DoD maintains that ISIL uses chemicals largely as terror weapons in the hopes of demoralizing opponents.
- **Anti-air Capability**
  ISIL possesses an array of Russian-built anti-aircraft guns captured from Syrian and Iraqi depots. More significantly, ISIL also has a supply of shoulder-launched air-aircraft missiles that it has employed against Syrian warplanes.
- **IEDs**
  DoD characterizes ISIL's ability to construct and employ IEDS as having "increased dramatically" over the past several years. In recent operations, such as Ramadi, ISIL has placed "hundreds" of IEDs in defense belts to slow the progress of opposing forces. Coalition abilities to interdict the supplies needed to construct these weapons are limited, as most of the parts are commercially available or easy to build. However, Coalition airstrikes target IED-manufacturing facilities, but new ones sprout up on a regular basis, allowing ISIL to "retain the capacity to produce large numbers of IEDs."
- **Indirect-fire Systems**
  ISIL's inventory includes towed artillery pieces that formerly belonged to Iraqi and Syrian government forces, conventional and improvised mortars, rockets, and a limited number of Multiple Rocket Launching Systems, which are essentially updated versions of the Katyusha rockets used by the Soviet Army to saturate German defenses in WWII.
- **Drones**
  ISIL has a number of commercially available drones that it uses for reconnaissance missions. ■

Russia Complicates the Battlefield

The Russian intervention in Syria provided the Syrian regime with much-needed reinforcements, enabling pro-regime forces to shift to offensive operations. In early 2016, these operations resulted in the isolation of Aleppo and the recapture of Palmyra from ISIL. No longer penned in with their backs to the Mediterranean, al-Asad's troops and allies appear to have regained the initiative on the battlefield. Because Russian and Coalition air forces overlap in Syrian airspace, the Russian and U.S. militaries continue to deconflict their air campaigns to avoid accidental engagements.

Russian President Vladimir Putin announced in September 2015 the deployment of Russian aircraft and a limited number of ground units to support al-Asad's regime. Russian military assets deployed to Syria included an advanced S-400 air-defense system, modern fighter-bombers, attack helicopters, artillery, special-forces units, and an array of armored vehicles, including some of Russia's most modern tanks.[99] President Putin announced in mid-March that he was ordering the pullout of the "main part" of Russian forces from Syria. But as of March 31, Russia shows no signs of withdrawing all of its aircraft from Syria, and appears determined to continue to provide air support to the Syrian government. According to one late March report, Russia is also continuing to send freighters loaded with military supplies to its Tartus naval base on Syria's Mediterranean coast.[100]

DoD officials reported this quarter that the majority of Russian airstrikes before a February 27 agreement to cease hostilities struck opposition groups unaffiliated with ISIL, and stated that U.S. officials have consistently urged Russia to focus its efforts on ISIL and pressure the al-Asad government to support a "genuine political transition."[101] Russian airstrikes in early 2016 targeted areas ranging from ISIL-controlled, oil-rich areas in Deir ez-Zour province; to Aleppo, Syria's largest city; to Palmyra, where Russian air power played a major role in supporting the Syrian government's recapture of the historic city.

Russian-backed Syrian forces successfully retook the desert city of Palmyra in a three-week campaign this March. Until then, pro-regime forces largely ignored Palmyra, concentrating on more immediate threats posed by rebels operating in the western part of Syria and near Damascus. In addition, Syria's largest gas fields are located near Palmyra, making its recapture in late March an event of both military and economic significance to the al-Asad regime.[102]

As of mid-April, however, the Syrian government and its allies were still demining areas in outlying villages in the vicinity of Palmyra. Much as is the case in Ramadi, ISIL seeded Palmyra with IEDs, landmines, and other

booby traps, obstacles that pro-regime forces must remove before displaced residents can return to their homes.[103]

Russian operations in Syria have had a deleterious impact on its relationship with North American Treaty Organization (NATO) ally Turkey. Turkey remains opposed to the Syrian regime and continues to support a number of Sunni Arab opposition groups operating in Syria, groups which have been repeatedly targeted by Russian airstrikes.[104]

This quarter, tensions between Russia and Turkey persisted, with Turkey shelling YPG positions across the border in northern Syria. The relationship soured in November 2015 when Turkey shot down a Russian Su-24 military aircraft that flew into its airspace. Turkey considers the YPG, supported by Russia (and, indirectly, by the United States since it is part of the Syrian Democratic Forces coalition), to be closely affiliated with the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), a Kurdish terrorist group that has waged a decades-long campaign against the Turkish government.[105] In February 2016, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated that he believed the cessation of hostilities agreement reached in February should be interpreted to allow attacks not only on ISIL and al-Qaeda, but also on the PKK.[106] In addition, on March 18, Turkey and the European Union (EU) agreed to a plan to "end" irregular migration to Europe from Turkey, where 2.7 million Syrians displaced by the conflict reside.[107] The EU estimates that 20,000 relocations of Syrian refugees will be completed by mid-May 2016.[108]

Diplomacy for a Peaceful Resolution in Syria

During the first three months of 2016, diplomatic efforts to reach a political settlement to the conflict in Syria continued. These include:

- Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, as co-chairs of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG), brokered an agreement to cease hostilities between members of the Syrian Opposition, represented by the High Negotiations Committee (HNC), and the Syrian government.[109]
- The United Nations, represented by UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura, hosted the first round of peace talks between the HNC and the Syrian government.[110]

Cessation of Hostilities

On February 22, the governments of the United States and the Russian Federation released a joint statement announcing the terms for a cessation of hostilities in Syria. The announcement established the ISSG Ceasefire Task Force, co-chaired by Russia and the United States, and set out the roles and responsibilities of the respective parties to the ceasefire. According to the terms, Russia and the United States are responsible for establishing mechanisms for promoting and monitoring the ceasefire, including the establishment of reporting and information-sharing capabilities between the two countries. The Syrian armed opposition groups and Syrian government forces committed to the following: [111]

- full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2254, including the readiness to participate in the UN-facilitated political negotiation process
- cessation of attacks of all kinds against parties to the ceasefire agreement
- refraining from acquiring or seeking to acquire territory from all parties to the ceasefire agreement
- allowing humanitarian access to areas under the parties' respective areas of control
- the proportionate use of force when responding to a threat in self-defense

The ceasefire agreement did not include ISIL or al-Qaeda's Jabhat al-Nusra, as both of those groups have been designated as terrorist organizations by the UN Security Council.

In accordance with the terms of the agreement, the ceasefire began on the February 27, 2016. Despite reported infractions by both sides and escalating instability, the ceasefire remained in place. On March 24, 2016, while acknowledging that violations of the ceasefire had occurred, Secretary Kerry stated in a press conference that "there has been a fragile but nevertheless beneficial reduction in violence – some say as much as 85 to 90 percent – in Syria. It's also true that the cessation in hostilities has produced the first significant flow of humanitarian assistance to people, some of whom haven't seen that assistance in several years."[112]

The fragility of the agreement was underscored on March 21, 2016, when Russia threatened unilateral airstrikes against "rebels who fail to comply with the ceasefire arrangements."[113] On March 31, 2016, the DoS issued a statement condemning airstrikes on a school and hospital in a Damascus suburb allegedly carried out by the al-Asad regime.[114] The cessation of hostilities appeared to have broken down in mid-April with resumption of widespread fighting in northern Syria.[115]

Geneva Peace Talks

This quarter, the international community succeeded in convincing the Syrian opposition High Negotiation Committee and the Syrian government to participate in peace talks in Geneva, Switzerland. After an aborted attempt to commence these talks in late January, they finally began on March 14, ending 10 days later with the parties unable to agree on any concrete proposals.[116] Statements to the media made by both sides directly before the resumption of talks indicated a fundamental point of disagreement centered on the role of Bashar al-Asad in any future Syrian government.[117] At the conclusion of the talks, Special Envoy de Mistura issued a paper describing 12 points of commonality between the two sides that the he had noted during the negotiations *(see Appendix D)*.[118] On the same day that the first round of negotiations came to a close in Geneva, Secretary Kerry announced in Moscow that he and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov had agreed to a "schedule for establishing a framework for a political transition and also a draft constitution, both of which we target by August."[119]

Case Study: Aleppo

The battle for Aleppo illustrates the complexity of the conflict in Syria, of which ISIL is only one facet, and the challenges facing U.S. military, diplomatic, and humanitarian efforts. Aleppo is a large city in northern Syria, the capital of the Aleppo Governorate, and lies about 45 km from Turkey. It is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, dating back possibly to the 6th millennium B.C.

What began in early 2011 as a political uprising against Syrian President Bashar al-Asad quickly became a nation-wide armed insurgency in the face of regime repression. Fighting in Aleppo since 2012 between opposition groups and al-Asad's forces (including the regime's repeated use of barrel bombs) has wrought massive destruction on many neighborhoods, and the destruction of most of the UNESCO World Heritage Site known as the Ancient City of Aleppo. According to a February 2016 report by the Institute for the Study of War, about 50 armed opposition factions now operate in and around Aleppo, ranging from radical Sunni jihadist groups to Kurdish forces and U.S.-supported "moderate" forces. According to the Congressional Research Service, the internal conflict has caused the fracturing of Syria's diverse community of Sunni and Shia Arabs, Kurds, Alawites, and some Christian and other groups.[120] It has also fostered the rise of more extremist violent groups, such as ISIL and al-Qaeda affiliate Jabhat al Nusra, and brought in over 25,000 foreign fighters from more than 100 countries primarily to fight alongside ISIL.[121]

With the Russian intervention in the fall of 2015, al-Asad used the presence of Jabhat al Nusra in Aleppo to launch an offensive on that group and Syrian opposition forces in the city, which was largely in the hands of forces opposing the Syrian regime. Al-Asad was also supported by Iranian advisors, Hezbollah, and Shia militias from Iraq and Lebanon.[122]

In early February, Russian airpower supported a successful offensive by pro-regime forces to sever one of the opposition's main supply lines running north of the city to the Turkish border. On February 28, notwithstanding the day-old cessation of hostilities agreement, Russian forces resumed airstrikes against al-Qaeda's Jabhat al-Nusra and opposition groups in Aleppo, despite the agreement's prohibition on targeting non-al Qaeda and non-ISIL groups.[123] The Russian strikes enabled the regime, as well as Syrian-Kurdish fighters, to make incremental advances in the northern suburbs of Aleppo. The tangled nature of the Syrian conflict is especially evident here, as the YPG is, at least on this battlefield, operating as the de facto allies of Russia and the Syrian regime and against U.S.-backed Syrian Arab opposition groups under siege in Aleppo.[124] Meanwhile, Turkey remains steadfastly opposed to the YPG and any hint of outright Kurdish independence in either Syria or Iraq.

As of March 31, 2016, fighting continues around Aleppo, with the city becoming increasingly isolated by regime, Russian, ISIL, and YPG forces. In a March 28 statement, a member of Aleppo's Local Council stated that the "fierce onslaught on Aleppo city from Russian forces

(continued on next page)

Case Study: Aleppo *(continued from previous page)*

and their allies [has] led to … the possibility of a siege," which he described as an "imminent threat."[125] He said that the Council is working with opposition groups to stockpile food and fuel and maintain a functional healthcare system.[126] He also described a city-wide effort to make use of all tillable land to grow food, but noted that rationing is inevitable.[127]

In early April:

- To the north of Aleppo, a coalition of U.S.- and Turkish-backed Arab opposition groups seized the border town of Al-Rai from ISIL. Al-Rai had served as a key transit hub for foreign fighters seeking to join ISIL, as well as for smugglers supporting the terrorist group. The seizure of this town came as part of an opposition offensive that captured about 16 villages along the western rim of the 98-kilometer stretch of the Syrian-Turkish border still controlled by ISIL. However, after a two-day battle, ISIL recaptured the town on April 11.[128]
- To the south, a different coalition, this time composed of Jabhat al-Nusra and some U.S.-backed Arab-opposition groups, briefly retook the small village of Al-Eis from the regime at the beginning of April. In the fighting, anti-regime forces managed to shoot down a Syrian Air Force plane. But the victory appears to have been short-lived, as reports indicate pro-regime forces, including Hezbollah, recaptured the strategic town that lies just to the east of the M5 highway linking Aleppo to southern Syria.[129]
- Inside of Aleppo, U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces skirmished with Jabhat al-Nusra during the first week of April, further exposing the fissures between these groups.[130]

While the prospects of a humanitarian crisis loom over Aleppo, pursuant to the Cessation Agreement, the al-Asad regime has allowed delivery of a limited amount of food, medicine, and other relief supplies to areas of Aleppo under siege by pro-regime armed groups. Recent U.S.-supported humanitarian assistance initiatives involving at-risk populations in the Aleppo area include:[131]

- As of February 18, USAID implementing partner the World Food Programme had delivered 30,220 food parcels to eastern Aleppo
- A March 21 convoy delivered health, nutrition, and other relief items for 50,000 people in Aleppo. ■

ISIL ATTACKS GLOBALLY

This quarter, ISIL continued a widespread campaign of bombings against civilians and combatants in Iraq and Syria, as well as internationally.

Thousands of Civilians and Combatants Killed in Iraq and Syria

In Iraq, the number of civilians and combatants killed in terrorist attacks ranged from 849 in January to 670 in February to at least 1,119 in March. The breakdown in March was 575 civilians, police, and Sunni tribal forces killed and 544 ISF and Peshmerga killed. Baghdad province suffered the highest number of casualties in March, with 259 killed and 770 injured.

In Syria, the chaos of combat and multiple opponents fighting in numerous locations can make it difficult to assign blame for killings. However, the Syrian Observatory of Human Rights documented that 2,658 people were killed in March alone—during reduced combat due to the cease-fire—and that 588 were civilians, including 125 under the age of 18, and 89 women over 18 years of age. Causes of death ranged from barrel bombs dropped by Syrian regime helicopters to snipers, IEDs, landmines, and executions.[132] In one incident, ISIL killed at least 135 members of the Syrian armed forces, their relatives, and their allies on January 17, including 85 members of their families, in the village on Bghailiye.[133]

ISIL Attacks Reach Turkey and Belgium

Terrorism in Turkey: According to the Turkish government, ISIL was responsible for two bombings in Istanbul this quarter, killing a combined 17 people.[134] However, ISIL did not claim credit for these attacks, and Turkish officials' attribution of these attacks to ISIL remained unconfirmed by independent sources, as of March 31. DoD ordered the evacuation of all military dependents at the U.S. military air base at Incirlik, which is a key staging area for Coalition anti-ISIL operations.[135] About 2,500 U.S. troops are based at Incirlik.[136]

The PKK continued its long-running war against the Turkish government this quarter, with Turkish officials blaming it for several attacks, including a March 13 bombing in Ankara that killed at least 37 people.[137] In retaliation, Turkey launched another round of airstrikes against alleged PKK targets in northern Iraq, where the U.S.-designated terrorist group has long maintained a mountain bastion.[138] On March 25, Turkish President Erdogan stated that Turkish security forces have killed or captured more than 5,300 anti-government Kurds since July 2015.[139] He also stated that the PKK has killed at least 355 Turkish soldiers and police officers over the same time period.[140] The Turkish President provided no evidence to support either assertion.

Table 6.

Among the most devastating attacks this quarter linked to ISIL

January 11: Two bombings killed at least 25 people in Muqdadiyah, located in the ethnically mixed province of Diyala, northeast of Baghdad. On the same day, four ISIL gunmen stormed a mall in Baghdad killing about 30.
February 21: Two car bombs killed approximately 60 in a predominantly Alawite area of Damascus province.
February 25: A suicide bomber killed at least 31 people in a Shia neighborhood in Baghdad. Three days later, two bombs in Sadr City in Baghdad killed more than 70 and injured 112.
February 28: ISIL also launched a coordinated attack on Abu Ghraib, involving dozens of terrorists. This assault killed more than 20 Iraqis.
February 28: A suicide bomber killed 40 in Muqdadiyah. This assault was followed by a series of reprisals by Shia militias against local Sunnis.
March 6: A truck bomb at a checkpoint in the Shia city of al-Hilla, south of Baghdad, killed more than 60 people and injured over 70.
March 12: ISIL employed chemical munitions against the civilian population of the small village of Taza, near Kirkuk. The attack—the second such assault on Taza in March—injured about 600 people and killed a three-year-old girl.
March 25: An ISIL suicide bomber struck a soccer match just outside of Baghdad that was sponsored by a PMF-affiliated Shia militia, killing at least 40 and wounding more than 100.

Source: Lead IG, analysis of open-source data, 1/2016-3/2016.

The conflict between Turkey and the PKK complicates Coalition counter-ISIL efforts in Syria, because the PKK is closely aligned with one of the most effective groups fighting ISIL in northern Syria—the YPG. YPG receives assistance from Russia.[141] In February, the Kurdistan administration in northern Syria announced it would open its first-ever foreign office in Moscow.[142]

Terrorism in Belgium: On March 22, multiple suicide bombers struck in Brussels, Belgium, killing 32 and injuring more than 300 in attacks on the city's international airport and subway system. The attackers planned these assaults from safe houses inside largely Muslim sections within Brussels and carried them out in the shadow of major European Union facilities, killing at least four U.S. citizens. Reports linked the Brussels cell to the group that conducted the November 13, 2015 attacks in Paris.

A January 18, 2016 European Police Office (Europol) report produced in the aftermath of the Paris attacks analyzed the transnational threat posed by ISIL affiliates and those claiming to be associated with the group, concluding that "[t]here is every reason to expect that [ISIL] … will undertake a terrorist attack somewhere in Europe again." The report also noted that ISIL has

On March 22, multiple suicide bombers struck in Brussels, Belgium, killing 32 and injuring more than 300 in attacks on the city's international airport and subway system.

Europol on Radicalization and Foreign Fighters

The January 2016 Europol report also concluded that:[143]

- potential domestic suicide bombers are indistinguishable from potential foreign fighters
- the ever-larger Syrian diaspora in Europe may be vulnerable to radicalization
- ISIL followers are becoming more sophisticated in their use of online communications
- many new ISIL adherents are drawn from the criminal element within French and Belgian Muslim communities
- attacks in Europe are not necessarily directed from any "[c]entral command in Syria"
- the entire civilian population of the European Union is a "soft target"

While Europol did not produce a list of detailed recommendations, its final sentence stated that a "regular exchange of strategic intelligence is essential to any up to date assessment of the situation" and such assessments must be shared among all Member States.[144] ■

likely "developed an external action command trained for special forces style attacks in the international environment," whose capabilities included undertaking attacks, striking multiple, geographically dispersed targets with a mix of explosives and small-arms fire, as was done by Pakistani-linked terrorists in the Indian city on Mumbai in December 2008. The Europol analysis stated that such attacks would "most likely [occur] in France or in Belgium," a prediction that came to fruition just two months later.

ISIL's Foreign Fighters Are a Global Threat

Disrupting the flow of foreign terrorist fighters to Iraq and Syria has been a primary goal of the Coalition since its inception in 2014, and remains one of the nine LOEs that define the mission to counter ISIL. Recent terrorist attacks in France and Belgium have highlighted the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters who return to their home countries after fighting alongside ISIL in the Middle East.

Salah Abdelsalam, arrested in March by Belgian authorities, is one of seven individuals allegedly involved in the Paris attacks last November who is thought to have fought with ISIL in Syria or Iraq.[145] At least some of the terrorists identified as part of the March 22 suicide bombings at Brussels' Zaventem Airport and Maalbeck metro station in Belgium are believed to have traveled to Syria and received training from ISIL.[146] Returned terrorist fighters

have conducted other terrorist attacks in Europe, including the May 2014 attacks on the Jewish Museum of Brussels and the January 2015 attacks in Paris on the offices of the satirical journal, Charlie Hebdo, and the subsequent attacks on a kosher supermarket by the same cell.[147]

While accurately measuring the number of foreign fighter returnees is challenging, a December 2015 report by The Soufan Group, a consulting company focused on the Middle East, estimated that between 27,000-31,000 people have travelled to Syria or Iraq to fight alongside ISIL.[148] Sunni Arab countries have provided the greatest number of fighters, with a combined 10,500 coming from Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. A March 2016 report issued by the House Committee on Homeland Security placed the number of terrorist fighters at about 38,200 from 120 countries—significantly higher than The Soufan Group's estimate, and more than 7 times the number of foreigners who traveled to Afghanistan in the 1980s to fight the Soviet occupier.[149]

The House Committee on Homeland Security also examined the more narrow question of how many Westerners have joined ISIL in Syria or Iraq and how many of these men and women have subsequently returned to their countries of residence. According to the Committee report, about 6,900 residents of Western countries have supported ISIL on the battlefield, with about 1,900 of them later returning to various European countries.[150] The Committee also found that the number of ISIL-linked plots against the West from February 2014 to March 2016 stood at 79 (23 within the United States), a 39 percent increase from last fall, when the Committee reported 57 such plots.[151]

With regard to foreign terrorist fighters from European Union member states, an April 2016 report by The Hague-based International Centre for Counter-Terrorism estimated that between 3,922-4,294 individuals had traveled to Syria or Iraq to fight with ISIL.[152] Of these, the Centre found that about 30 percent (1,176-1,288) had returned to their countries of origin.[153] Table 7 provides data on some of the countries examined in the Centre's report.

To address the clear and present danger posed by foreign fighters and returnees to the security of the European Union, member states have agreed on a four-pronged strategy, which includes:[154]

- preventing radicalization and extremism of persons living in European Union countries
- sharing information with other member states and with other countries, including the United States
- detecting and disrupting aspiring foreign terrorist fighter travel plans

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- investigating and prosecuting criminal acts committed by returned foreign fighters

The March attacks in Brussels, however, illustrated that information-sharing among countries remains a problem, with the insular nature of many European Muslim communities presenting a profound challenges for those agencies charged with disrupting nascent attack plans before they can be carried out.

Brett McGurk, the Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, stated in March that ISIL is losing territory, and while the problem of foreign fighters remains in those two countries, it is also moving elsewhere. According to McGurk, there are currently about 19,000-25,000 ISIL fighters in Iraq and Syria, the lowest assesment since 2014, and they are increasingly dominated by foreign fighters. "It is much harder for them [foreign fighters] to get in now [to Iraq and Syria] than it was even six months ago," McGurk said in an interview in The New Yorker. "We can track that by the numbers but also by the information we're seeing from ISIL's own sources. Their open sources—like *Dabiq* magazine—are saying, "Think about going to Libya now." So we're seeing a migration out of Syria, out of Iraq, because life is pretty horrible for ISIL inside Syria and Iraq. It's much harder for them to get in, and, once they're in, much, much harder for them to get out. The entire Syria-Turkey border, a year ago, was controlled by ISIL. Now it's a ninety-eight-kilometer strip of border, and we're going to work to make sure that continues to shrink."[155]

Table 7.

Number of Foreign Fighters in the European Union

Country	Fighters traveling to fight with ISIL	Returned FTFs
Austria	230-300	>70
Belgium	420-516	55-130
Denmark	125	62
France	>900	246
Germany	720-760	250
The Netherlands	220	40
Spain	120-139	25
United Kingdom	700-760	>350

Source: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, "The Foreign Fighter Phenomenon in the European Union," 4/2016.

U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. (U.S. Department of State photo)

Countering ISIL Messaging and Exposing Its True Nature

This quarter, DoS reorganized much of its efforts aimed at countering ISIL's messaging and pushing back against violent extremism.[156] In addition, DoS OIG published its evaluation of Embassy Baghdad's counter-ISIL messaging activities, finding that many Iraqi citizens held unfavorable attitudes and beliefs about U.S. policies.[157]

THE GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT CENTER

On March 14, 2016, President Obama signed Executive Order 13721, establishing the interagency Global Engagement Center (GEC) to replace the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC). The GEC will lead the "coordination, integration and synchronization" of government-wide communications activities directed at foreign audiences to "counter the messaging and diminish the influence" of international terrorist organizations. In addition, the GEC will:[158]

- focus on empowering and enabling partners, governmental and nongovernmental, who are able to provide a credible alternative to ISIL's nihilistic vision
- use modern data analysis to develop communications strategies
- engage with a wide range of foreign and domestic communications actors and entities to counter the radicalization and recruitment activities of violent extremists abroad.

For FY 2015, the CSCC's budget was $9.6 million. For FY 2016, the GEC's budget is $15.9 million, and its budget request for FY 2017 is $18.1 million.[159]

On March 14, 2016, President Obama issued Executive Order 13721 establishing the new inter-agency Global Engagement Center (GEC) to "coordinate, integrate, and synchronize" the U.S. Government's counter-ISIL messaging to foreign audiences.

DoS OIG Meeting with Global Engagement Center Director Michael Lumpkin

On April 18, 2016, DoS OIG officials met with Michael Lumpkin, the Director of the Global Engagement Center. Rather than focus on direct communications by U.S. entities, the GEC will attempt to reach foreign audiences by empowering and enabling a variety of partners, including governments, NGOs, civil-society groups, and individuals with first-hand knowledge of ISIL depravities. He stated that the GEC will employ a "partners-first" approach, employing credible voices across the Middle East who are not being fully tapped for the counter-ISIL effort.

The Current Threat: Crowdsourcing Terrorism

According to Director Lumpkin, ISIL uses a more decentralized communications strategy than the tight messaging-control approach favored by al Qaeda. According to Director Lumpkin, ISIL's three-tiered strategy involves:

- high-level messaging created by central media hubs for a global online audiences
- widely distributed information offices that adapt and localize the messaging
- a broad base of supporters who amplify the messages by posting, "liking," and re-tweeting, and commenting on them

He characterized ISIL as a "sophisticated full-service news operation"—making news, packaging it, and disseminating it to a diverse array of audiences through social media and other networks. Consequently, ISIL is essentially able to "crowdsource" terrorism.

Current Activities

According to Director Lumpkin, the GEC is pursuing three basic activities:

- coordinating the various U.S. government agencies involved in counter-ISIL messaging
- developing content for "meat-cleaver messaging" built around the narratives of credible partners similar to last year's campaign featuring a series of interviews highlighting the stories of ISIL defectors
- developing more narrowly targeted messages directed at individuals who may be on the pathway to radicalization, and forging better tools to identify such persons

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DoS OIG Meeting with Global Engagement Center Director Michael Lumpkin *(continued from previous page)*

Analytical Tools

Executive Order 13721 refers to the need for "rigorous research and modern data analysis," and Director Lumpkin stated that the GEC is now building an analytics team committed to making use of such analytical tools. He cited the use of Quality Control Reporting (QCR) as an example. Originally developed by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. QCR is a software tool that analyzes social-media data. QCR is also capable of assessing the level of a message's audience engagement, or "resonance," as well as other social-networking patterns and characteristics.

Director Lumpkin added that the GEC is interested in engaging social scientists to gather data to develop resonant counter-radicalization themes. For example, he cited research produced by a Lebanon-based marketing group, Quantum, categorizing ISIL members and supporters into nine broad motivational groups. But Director Lumpkin cautioned that while the GEC is working on developing more sophisticated analytical tools, "we're not there yet."

Building Private-sector and Government Partnerships

One major difference between the CSCC and the GEC is the latter has three new, senior-level positions: Chief Partnership Officer, Chief Content Officer, and Chief Analytics Scientist. The Director emphasized that these individuals will be involved in initiatives to "bring in seasoned people from the private sector … [noting that] money is important, but human talent is the most important resource."

The GEC will also draw on personnel detailed from different federal agencies, including the intelligence community and the defense community, as well as DoS's own cadre of public-diplomacy officers and career civil servants.

Challenges

In Director Lumpkin's view:

"Despite the best effort of past leaders of CSCC, our response to [ISIL] propaganda has been under-resourced, too slow, and too cautious. There have been many extraordinarily talented, creative people working on this issue, but in the face of a nimble, adaptive opponent who is unconstrained by truth or ethics, our people have been left swimming in bureaucracy, using outdated technology. The bottom line is that we have not put the required priority and resources against this problem-set. As a result, the United States and our allies have been conceding the information battlespace to a far less capable enemy."

Putting the GEC's annual budget in context, Director Lumpkin referred to the multiple airstrikes required to eliminate a single prominent ISIL official, which may cost as much as $300 million, about 19 times the GEC 2016 budget. ■

Department of State OIG Evaluation of Embassy Baghdad's Messaging Function

In March 2016, DoS OIG issued an evaluation of Embassy Baghdad's messaging efforts in support of Line of Effort 6 in the President's Strategy to Counter ISIL: "Exposing ISIL's True Nature." Embassy Baghdad's Public Affairs Section (PAS) is responsible for countering ISIL communications activities. The evaluation's two findings relate to an absence of formal strategic planning.[160]

- the planning and performance management tool, the Integrated Country Strategy (ICS), fails to address public-diplomacy goals or specific counter-ISIL messaging objectives
- the Embassy did not develop a required Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan

DoS OIG recommended both be completed, citing the value of the ICS as an aid in coordinating interagency activities and allocating resources, and the utility of the Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan in linking public-diplomacy activities with ICS strategic objectives. Beyond its specific recommendations, the report noted that Embassy Baghdad's Facebook page expanded its audience by 40 percent from January to October 2015 (from 250,000 to more than 400,000) and that Embassy Baghdad had appropriately adjusted its messaging content to target more specifically Iraqi audiences. Given that ISIL's brutal nature is well known in Iraq, Embassy Baghdad focused on debunking the myth of ISIL's military invulnerability, highlighting ISF battlefield gains and ISIL setbacks, and underscoring U.S. and Coalition assistance in to Iraqi military and police forces.[161]

However, evaluators reported that the Embassy's messaging efforts are undermined by the dramatically unfavorable attitudes of many Iraqis toward U.S. policies.[162] Recent DoS polling found that about 40 percent of Iraqis believe the United States is working to destabilize Iraq and control its natural resources; nearly a third believe that America supports ISIL, or supports terrorism in general; and roughly half of Iraqi Sunnis and Shia now say they completely oppose the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL.[163] For more on this evaluation, see the Completed Oversight Activities section.

Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism

The Secretary of State has directed the Bureau of Counterterrorism to coordinate DoS policies and programs aimed at Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). It soon will be known as the Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism.[164] To reflect this expanded role, DoS will be allocating the Bureau additional staff. USAID is also establishing a CVE Secretariat to coordinate and synchronize its CVE efforts.[165]

The comprehensive CVE strategy has five primary objectives:[166]

- expand international political will, partnerships, and expertise to better understand the drivers of violent extremism
- encourage and assist partner governments to adopt more effective policies and approaches to prevent and counter the spread of violent extremism
- employ foreign-assistance tools to reduce factors that contribute to community support for violent extremism
- empower locally credible voices capable of convincing key demographic segments to oppose violent extremist groups
- strengthen the capabilities of governments and nongovernmental actors to assist individuals caught in the cycle of radicalization

In consultation with The United States Congress, DoS is also establishing a new Deputy Coordinator position for CVE and the new Office of Countering Violent Extremism to perform this expanded work.[167] The Office of Countering Violent Extremism within the Bureau will serve as a hub for DoS CVE policy planning, assistance coordination, and external engagement.[168] The Office will also facilitate more strategic coordination with USAID's CVE Secretariat and the domestically focused Interagency CVE Task Force, based at the Department of Homeland Security.

Pursuing ISIL Off the Battlefield

U.S. government agencies, such as the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Department of the Treasury, and DoS, were engaged in early 2016 in efforts to counter ISIL by arresting and prosecuting accused ISIL supporters, as well as designating ISIL leaders as terrorists and proclaimed branches of ISIL as terrorist organizations.

DOJ reported that its activities related to the overall U.S. effort to counter ISIL from January to March 2016 included:[169]

- obtaining the conviction of Tairod Nathan Webster Pugh, a U.S. Air Force veteran, for providing material support to ISIL and for obstructing justice
- obtaining a guilty plea from Joseph Hassan Farrokh, an aspiring foreign terrorist fighter, for providing material support to ISIL
- obtaining a guilty plea from John Booker, who was charged with planning to detonate what he believed was a vehicle packed with explosives on behalf of ISIL in an area frequented by U.S. soldiers near Fort Riley, Kansas
- obtaining a guilty plea from Abdirizak Mohamed Warsame, who was charged with funding and supporting foreign terrorist fighters
- indicting a Maryland man on charges of conspiring to provide supplies to ISIL

On January 14, 2016, DoS designated ISIL-Khorasan (ISIL-K) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

- indicting a Missouri resident for using the internet to threaten to commit violent acts in support of ISIL
- extraditing from Malaysia a Kosovar citizen who was charged with hacking into the official files of more than 1,000 federal employees

DOJ officials also regularly brief and train domestic and foreign law-enforcement personnel on ISIL-related matters. This quarter, the DOJ met with anti-terrorism officials and prosecutors from more than a dozen countries, including Algeria, Turkey, Germany, the Philippines, Sweden, Albania, and Indonesia. The sessions focused on exchanging information about ISIL and assisting these foreign law-enforcement agencies with their own domestic counter-ISIL activities. DOJ continues to cooperate with international agencies involved in the fight against ISIL, such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the European Union, and the UN.[170]

Meanwhile, on February 11, 2016, the Department of the Treasury (Treasury) designated as terrorists three individuals affiliated with ISIL. Pursuant to Executive Order 13224, Treasury's designation enables U.S. law-enforcement authorities to freeze any property or interest in property held by these designees within U.S. jurisdiction. The Executive Order also bans U.S. citizens from engaging in any transactions with designated persons. The three designees are:[171]

- Faysal Ahmad 'Ali al-Zahrani, a senior official in ISIL's oil operations
- Husayn Juaythini, who facilitates the movement of foreign terrorist fighters into Syria
- Turki Mubarak Ahmad al-Binali, an ISIL recruiter who assists ISIL cells operating Bahrain and other Gulf states

Treasury made these designations in advance of the February 14 joint session of the Financial Action Task Force and the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL Finance Group, the purpose of which was to facilitate the sharing of information among the leading international bodies focused on disrupting ISIL revenue streams.[172]

On January 14, 2016, DoS designated ISIL-Khorasan (ISIL-K) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act. The group is based in Afghanistan and Pakistan and is composed primarily of former members of Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban. The senior leadership of ISIL-K has pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIL. The consequences of the Foreign Terrorist Organization designation include a prohibition against knowingly providing, or attempting or conspiring to provide, material support or resources to this organization.[173]

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHALLEGES IN IRAQ

In February 2016, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi announced that he intended to put forward a list of "technocratic," non-partisan cabinet nominees.[174] This was pursuant to proposals al-Abadi made in mid-2015 to curb corruption and mismanagement in the Iraqi government—proposals that were not enacted by the Council of Representatives. The new cabinet members would replace current members whose appointments were largely based upon political and sectarian affiliation.[175]

Starting in February, Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr ordered thousands of his followers into the streets to demand the implementation of these reforms, and called for the incorporation of Shia militias into the departments of defense and interior.[176] Large-scale Sadrist protests and sit-ins resulted in February and March. On March 18, thousands of Sadr's followers in Baghdad pushed past barbed wire and security forces to stage a sit-in at the outer wall of the Green Zone, demanding implementation of the cabinet re-shuffle. [177] The Green Zone sit-in lasted for more than a week. Sadr's supporters also demonstrated in the southern city of Basra. On March 27, Sadr himself staged a sit-in inside the Green Zone, demanding action.[178]

On March 28, facing mounting public pressure, the Iraqi parliament gave Prime Minister al-Abadi four days to nominate new cabinet members or face a vote of no-confidence. On March 31, al-Abadi submitted a list of cabinet nominees.[179] He stated that the individuals on the list "were chosen on the basis of professionalism, competence, integrity, and leadership ability."[180]

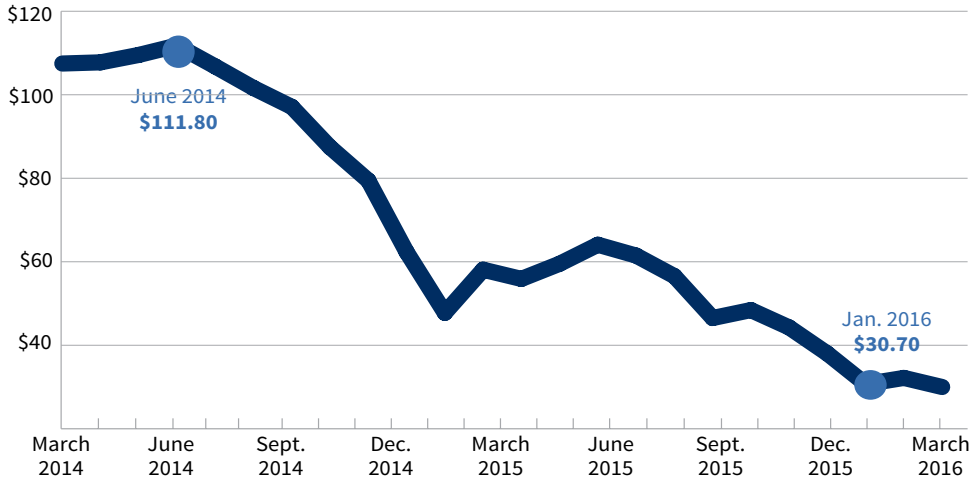
In an April 12 session of the Council of Representatives, the prime minister's initial list of nominees encountered significant resistance, and no vote was held. The session closed with disgruntled parliamentarians storming the speaker's rostrum. By late April, the Council of Representatives had approved only nine cabinet changes, and Iraqi citizens demonstrated and entered the Green Zone where the parliament and embassies are located.[181]

The political logjam further complicates the fragile state of Iraq's economy, as all parties are competing for a slice of a shrinking pie. While oil prices rebounded in April, lower oil revenues continued to reduce the Iraqi government's ability to pay for critical government activities to support its population and fight to expel ISIL from its borders. For example, according to IHS-Jane's Defence, Iraq's defense budget dropped by 26.3 percent from 2015 ($10.7 billion) to 2016 ($7.9 billion), and there are no guarantees the Iraqi government will collect sufficient revenue to fully fund its defense budget.[182] Moreover, just 4.9 percent of the 2016 defense budget is slated to be spent on

The political logjam further complicates the fragile state of Iraq's economy, as all parties are competing for a slice of a shrinking pie.

Figure 1.

Price of oil per barrel (Brent benchmark), 3/2014 - 3/2016



Source: U.S. Energy Information Agency

procurement, with most of the rest allocated to paying and maintaining the existing force structure.[183]

A March 2016 International Monetary Fund report found that Iraq's economy contracted by 2.1 percent in 2015 while its current-accounts deficit widened, depleting its foreign reserves from $67 billion at the end of 2014 to $54 billion at the end of 2015. IMF officials attributed this slowdown to the ongoing conflict with ISIL and a "deterioration of investor confidence" in the stability of the Iraqi state.[184]

Just as the financial crunch brought about by low oil prices is exacerbating Baghdad's political problems, it is also adversely impacting the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), which is facing a $100 million monthly deficit according to Qubad Talabani, KRG deputy prime minister. The KRG had cut its budget by 46 percent and public sector salaries by 39 percent, even though it was contending with the challenge of about 1.8 million internally displaced people and refugees.

In a hearing before the KRG parliament in January 2016, the KRG Chairman of the Finance, Economic Affairs and Investment Committee estimated the KRG's total debt at $14 billion-$20 billion. Annual military expenditures to defend a mountainous front of more than 1,000 kilometers against ISIL costs approximately $2 billion. The financial problems have left the KRG in arrears in paying the salaries for their Peshmerga fighting ISIL.[185]

The economic crisis facing the KRG may have significant effects on its ability to maintain its central role in the struggle against ISIL. First, salary interruptions to frontline fighters can affect morale. Second, a lack of money can interrupt KRG funding much-needed infrastructure programs and maintaining a functional bureaucracy. Third, the region's financial troubles could deepen the long-standing fissures between the Erbil-based, and generally pro-Turkish Kurdistan Democratic Party and its generations-long rival in Sulaymaniyah, the more pro-Iranian Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. Finally, it could place added pressure on an already-stressed Baghdad government to prop up the region with financial and other help. [186]

DoS Governance Grants in Iraq

DoS's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) leads the U.S. efforts to promote democracy, protect human rights and international religious freedom, and advance labor rights globally. As part of DoS's efforts to promote effective governance in Iraq, DRL has awarded grants to recipients

Table 8.

Active DRL Governance Grants in Iraq

Grant Program Description	Grant Award Amount
Women's Empowerment in Politics	$962,354
Supporting and Strengthening Rights of Victims of Enforced Disappearances	$4,500,000
Consolidating Media Freedom	$1,015,233
Supporting Human Rights and Rule of Law Through Enhanced Cooperation Between Police and Communities	$1,945,148
Assisting Democratic Transformation	$1,922,000
Documenting Human Rights Abuses	$1,600,000
Capacity, Response, and Respect Initiative: Mitigating Conflict in Iraq Host Communities Due to the Influx of Iraqi Returnees, Internally Displaced Persons, and Syrian Refugees)	$2,490,000
Strengthening Iraq's Religious and Ethnic Minority Communities	$2,000,000
Supporting Iraq's National Strategy and National Action Plan on United Nations Security Resolution 1335 (Women, Peace, and Security)	$2,200,760
Victim Support and Reconciliation	$1,500,000
Mobilizing Iraq Youth for Peace – Countering and Preventing Violent Extremism	$1,735,000
Strengthening Political Institutions to Help Deliver Democracy	$20,508,137
Total	**$42,378,632**

Source: DoS, response to DoS OIG request for information, 4/2016.

In March 2016, DoS OIG issued its report entitled "Evaluation of Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Iraq Programs in Support of Line of Effort 1 of the President's Counter-ISIL Strategy."

aimed at strengthening democratic political institutions and supporting vulnerable populations. As of fall 2015, DRL had 12 active grants supporting the effective governance in Iraq line of effort, with a total award value of $42.4 million.[187]

In March 2016, DoS OIG issued its report entitled "Evaluation of Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Iraq Programs in Support of Line of Effort 1 of the President's Counter-ISIL Strategy." DoS OIG found that all DRL grants files contained monitoring plans, risk assessment or contingency plans, and performance indicators. However, DRL did not report grant recipient performance indicator data, relying instead on narrative performance summaries. DoS OIG recommended that DRL report performance indicator data to the DoS Office of Foreign Assistance, so that DoS and Embassy Baghdad can evaluate fully whether the grants are meeting their program objectives and are consistent with U.S. governance policy objectives. The DoS OIG also found that, contrary to federal procurement policy, the DoS Bureau of Administration, Office of Acquisition Management had designated contractors to serve as Grants Officer Representatives for four of the 12 DRL grants reviewed (and two of the Grant Officer Representatives were not certified). The DoS OIG therefore recommended that DoS appoint certified Grant Officer Representatives for these six Iraqi grants. [188]

The DoS OIG evaluation noted that Embassy Baghdad participates in DRL requests for project proposals and grants recipient selection, but is not responsible for monitoring DRL-funded projects, which are managed from Washington. No DRL or Embassy employees have conducted site visits to DRL recipients since 2013, relying instead on local contractors. The DoS OIG also noted that, as a result of the worsening security situation in Iraq, in June 2014, the DoS Bureau of Administration issued a notice to partially suspend all DRL project activities in Iraq. DRL then revised scopes of work for the grants, and changed operational locations, and all but one grant recipient resumed full operations by December 2014.[189]

DoS OIG Review of Governance

DoS OIG conducted an evaluation of Embassy Baghdad's diplomatic engagement in implementation of LOE 1 (governance) in Washington from September 8 to October 14, 2015, and in Baghdad from October 16 to November 10, 2015. Building democratic governance in Iraq has been a central U.S. policy objective since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003, long predating the counter-ISIL strategy announced in September 2014. Complex, interrelated crises affect Iraq's governance issues, further complicated by the military and security situations, the ongoing humanitarian crisis, the political environment, and fiscal constraints.

Embassy Baghdad and its country team have primary responsibility for implementing LOE 1, assisted by Consulates Basrah and Erbil, through engagement with officials from the Iraqi government, the Kurdistan Regional Government, Iraqi provinces, partner countries in the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, and multilateral organizations.[190] In Washington, DoS's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs formulates overall Iraq policy in an interagency process, under the direction of the National Security Council and in coordination with the Special Presidential Envoy to the Global Coalition.

The DoS OIG report, issued March 16, 2016, assesses the extent to which the Embassy has developed quantitative and qualitative performance metrics for activities associated with LOE 1 implementation. In addition, the report assesses whether the DoS has identified financial resources, expected outcomes, risks, and interagency roles related to stabilization activities across Executive Branch agencies for Iraq stabilization. The remainder of the report's findings and recommendations are classified and not available in this setting.

USAID Governance Awards in Iraq

In the second quarter of FY 2016, USAID supported three governance awards in Iraq that focused on improving capacity within the Iraqi government.[191] To increase the capacity of the Iraqi government and improve the delivery of public services, USAID supported the Taqadum and Tarabot projects, and one activity under the Asia and the Middle East Growth Best Practices (AMEG) program.[192] The Taqadum and Tarabot projects predate ISIL activity in Iraq. All three efforts were not designed to counter ISIL.

- The Taqadum project is intended to improve the delivery of public services at the provincial and local level by cultivating better planning, management, and oversight in provincial governing bodies.[193] The project has also aimed to transfer the fiscal and functional service delivery responsibilities from the national to the regional level, in accordance with Iraq's 2008 Provincial Powers Act (Law 21), as amended.[194] In late January 2016, the Taqadum project hosted a decentralization conference attended by Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi.[195] During the conference, local governments agreed on a decentralization roadmap and central government ministries committed to the plan.[196] Since the conference, the Ministry of Finance has reportedly authorized provincial governments to establish financial management units and bank accounts, key steps in the decentralization process, according to USAID.[197]

- The Tarabot project was designed to enhance the government's administrative procedures, such as those related to service delivery, human and fiscal capital management, and the administration of public institutions.[198] During the quarter, the Tarabot project reportedly facilitated the approval of several Ministry of Planning procedures and the adoption of the Iraq Development Management System, which is intended to enhance the government's accountability and improve the management of Iraq's capital investment portfolio.[199] This project also continued to focus on improving efficiencies in Iraq's oil sector. The recent drop in global oil prices set off a financial crisis, as 90 percent of the government's revenue comes from oil.[200] As a result, the U.S. Embassy in Iraq has made revenue generation from oil production a priority. To support this effort, USAID's Tarabot project provided increased technical assistance to the Ministry of Oil to deliver quick improvements in revenue capture and generation within the industry.[201]
- Initiated in 2015, USAID has provided the Ministry of Finance with technical advisors to improve debt and budget management under the AMEG program. Over the past two quarters, these advisors assisted the government in managing Iraq's current fiscal crisis. AMEG advisors have, for example, provided recommendations on revenue estimates and budgets for Iraq's 2016 Budget Law. USAID reported that recommendations from AMEG advisors were included in the final draft of the law.[202]

STABILIZATION

There is no "one-size-fits-all" strategy or doctrine for planners and decision makers to follow to address stabilization operations in areas of Iraq reclaimed from occupation by ISIL. Generally, stabilization goals will focus on the following end states:[203]

- Establishing a safe and secure environment so the population can go about their daily lives without fear of systematic or large-scale violence.
- Establishing rule of law to ensure the population of equal application of laws and a trusted system of justice.
- Allowing all people access to enjoy the collective benefits of services of the government or state.
- Ensuring the ability of the people to pursue opportunities and obtain benefits from a stable economy bounded by laws.
- Ensuring all people their basic needs and restoration of basic, essential services for the communities to live peacefully with opportunities for advancement.

Iraq has suffered political, economic, and violent turmoil for the past several years as the result of ISIL aggression. In 2014, when ISIL occupied nearly one-third of Iraq, over 3 million Iraqis were displaced. Since the peak of ISIL occupation, the Iraqi government, with support from Coalition forces, has successfully reclaimed communities in the provinces of Salah al-Din, Ninewah, Anbar, and Diyala.

According to General Terry Wolff (U.S. Army, Retired), Deputy Special Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, most people return to their homes in an area liberated from ISIL when their local leadership advises that the following conditions are met:

- The right tribal or village leadership is in place;
- Basic amenities such as electricity and water are functioning, and some shops are open;
- Ethnic strife has been mitigated or contained; and
- Trusted (local) security forces are in place.[204]

The concept of stabilization can encompass immediate relief (for roughly the first six months of liberation), intermediate relief (for roughly the first two years), and reconstruction (long-term). Each type of stabilization assistance has different goals and funding mechanisms. The UN estimates that more than 3.4 million Iraqis were displaced between January 1, 2014 and March 31, 2016.

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The UNDP works with provincial authorities and residents to assess needs and prioritize activities for the first six months after liberation from ISIL.

Immediate Stabilization Help

The areas liberated from ISIL control normally need immediate stabilization help, including repairs to basic health, water, and electricity facilities.

In April 2015, Iraqi Prime Minister al-Abadi, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Stabilization Working Group of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIL agreed to create the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization (FFIS), whose objective was to support the Iraqi government's ability to respond quickly to citizens' basic needs in areas cleared of ISIL. As of early January, $21 million had been committed to projects in Salah al-Din, Ninewa, Diyala, and Anbar provinces benefiting thousands of Iraqis, including recent stabilization help in Ramadi, Baiji, and Sinjar.[205]

USAID provided assistance to the FFIS under the UNDP during the quarter.[206] This effort, which is funded by a coalition of 19 international donors, is intended to support the Iraqi government's efforts to stabilize areas recently liberated from ISIL control.[207] The UNDP has aimed to do this primarily by assisting residents and authorities and the provincial and local levels in reinstating basic services and reviving local economies. FFIS channels resouces through four primary areas of engagement, or "windows": light infrastructure repair, livelihoods, local government capacity support, and community reconciliation.[208]

In determining where to execute stabilization activities, an FFIS steering committee considers several key factors. These factors include the strategic importance of an area, the size of the displaced population, the demographic make-up of the area, and the degree of destruction witnessed in the specific area.[209] Once an area is selected for stabilization support, the windows of engagement pursued in that area are guided by UNDP assessments that collect information and data on the area's needs and conditions.[210] As of March 31, 2016, FFIS targeted 13 locations in the four Iraqi provinces for stabilization assistance.[211]

UNDP has received $67.6 million as of March 2016 from 16 contributing nations. The United States has contributed $15.3 million. In addition, there are pledges of $46.1 million from 6 nations. *(See Table 9 and Table 10)*.

The UNDP works with provincial authorities and residents to assess needs and prioritize activities for the first six months after liberation from ISIL.[212] Despite some delays, work has repaired water plants, health centers, schools and local agriculture production. At the same time, this work has employed

Table 9.

Funding Overview: Contributions and Expenditures, as of March 2016

Donor	Commitment (Currency of agreement)	Received (Currency of agreement)	To be received (Currency of agreement)	Received as of March 31, 2016 (USD)
Japan	USD 17,078,140	USD 17,078,140		USD 17,078,140
U.S.	USD 15,300,000	USD 15,3000,000		USD 15,3000,000
Germany	EUR 11,000,000	EUR 11,000,000		USD 12,089,824
Netherlands	EUR 5,000,000		EUR 5,000,000	
Norway	NOK 41,000,000	NOK 41,000,000		USD 4,712,102
Sweden	USD 4,000,000	USD 4,000,000		USD 4,000,000
UK	GBP 2,500,000	BP 2,500,000		USD 3,613,512
Italy	EUR 2,500,000	EUR 2,500,000		USD 2,747,253
Korea	USD 2,000,000	USD 2,000,000		USD 2,000,000
Australia	AUD 2,000,000			USD 1,433,691
Canada	USD 1,200,000	USD 1,200,000		USD 1,200,000
France	EUR 1,000,000	EUR 1,000,000		USD 1,096,491
Austria	EUR 1,000,000	EUR 1,000,000		USD 1,058,201
Denmark	DKK 7,000,000	DKK 7,000,000		USD 1,026,393
Czech Republic	CZK 5,000,000	CZK 5,000,000		USD 201,597
Slovakia	EUR 50,000	EUR 50,000		USD 56,243
Total				**USD 67,613,447**

Table 10.

Additional pledges to FFIS, not yet signed

Donor	Commitment (currency of agreement)	Estimated counter value in USD
Italy	EUR 4,500,000	USD 4,850,000
Korea	USD 3,000,000	USD 3,000,000
Germany	EUR 10,000,000	USD 11,300,000
EU	EUR 14,000,000	USD 15,820,000
UAE	USD 10,000,000	USD 10,000,000
Finland	EUR 1,000,000	USD 1,130,000
Total		**USD 46,100,000**

Source: UNDP, Funding Facilty for Immediate Stablization, Q1-2016.

returning residents. As a result of FFIS-funded immediate stabilization efforts, significant numbers of displaced persons have returned to:[213]

- Sa'adiyah, in Diyala province
- Rabia, in Ninewa province, where about 80,000 people had returned (over 90 percent of the original population), and 30,000 had been employed in stabilization efforts
- al-Dour, in Salah al-Din province, where 49,000 people had returned, or 75 percent of the original population
- Mkeishifa in Salah al-Din province, where 95 percent or more of its original population had returned.

While progress has been made in areas, such as Ramadi, the future of stabilization efforts in Iraq remains uncertain. UNDP reported there was insufficient capacity to address the scale of IED contamination across the country and that stabilization efforts were not fully integrated with other "post-liberation efforts." UNDP also expressed concern that the international community may not be able to secure funding quickly enough to execute stabilization efforts in newly liberated territories and that a slow response on this front could provide the basis for ISIL to regain lost territory.[214]

By the end of the reporting period, USAID obligated nearly $224 million in Economic Support Funds for Iraqi governance and stabilization activities, including the Taqadom and Tarabot projects, once activity of the AMEG program, and FFIS. Since their start, more than $190 million has been disbursed. Of this, $8.7 million was obligated and $8.3 million disbursed during the reporting period.[215] USAID reported that it provided oversight of these activities with the support of 11 personnel based in Baghdad, Iraq. Personnel included a mix of U.S. direct hire staff, U.S. personal service contractors, foreign-service nationals, and a third-country national.[216]

Longer-Term Stabilization

While the FFIS funds projects designed as the immediate response to post-liberation needs,[217] the affected areas need much more and longer-term stabilization and reconstruction help. To help bridge the period between immediate stabilization and reconstruction, the UNDP recently developed the Funding Facility for Expanded Stabilization (FFES) to fund projects in areas liberated from ISIL.[218]

UNDP has identified 22 projects in the four target provinces (Salah al-Din, Ninewa, Anbar, and Diyala) that will cost $577 million. The Coalition and the UN are seeking support for the FFES and stabilization in Iraq, including from

the Gulf Cooperation Council (a regional political organization that includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates).[219]

Tikrit: The Test Case

"One lesson to be learned from Tikrit is that people want to go home."
Joseph S. Pennington, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iraq.[220]

The UNDP has called Tikrit, liberated from ISIL in March 2015, its "test case for stabilization."[221] The ISIL occupation, and the intense fighting toward liberation, had damaged or destroyed many buildings in Tikrit, and most residents of the city had fled.

While the long-term stability of the city remains uncertain, initial indicators appear positive. As of February 2016, the mayor of Tikrit reported that about 90 percent of families displaced by ISIL had returned to their homes.[222] He credited the UNDP with assisting his staff in restoring water, electricity, and healthcare to the city, and noted that the UNDP's Cash for Work program had provided jobs and income to unemployed youths.[223] So far, $8 million[224] in FFIS-funded projects have enabled nearly 65,000 residents to once again have access to safe drinking water and 30,000 to have access to primary healthcare services.[225] The UNDP also reported that more than 40,000 Tikritis have benefited from what UNDP characterizes as a "better" electricity supply.[226]

FFIS-funded projects in Tikrit include:[227]

- $2.5 million to repair two water stations
- $2.2 million to restore electricity to some areas of the city
- $730,000 for the Cash for Work program and loans to small businesses
- $600,000 to reestablish health services

Particularly noteworthy was the reopening of Tikrit University. Founded in 1987 in Saddam Hussein's hometown, Tikrit University long served as the flagship educational institution of Salah al-Din province. When ISIL commandeered the university to serve as a base, it ceased operations (July 2014).[228]

Cognizant of the university's symbolic and practical importance to Tikrit, the UNDP made its restoration a focal point of stabilization efforts in Salah al-Din. Using the FFIS, the UNDP partnered with two local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to refurbish nine buildings on the university campus. Unfortunately, the classrooms were completely looted, and lacked computers, machines, and even desks.[229] The NGOs recruited approximately 120 volunteers to work alongside university students and staff to clean away debris and repair campus buildings.

On December 16, 2015, the UNDP and Tikrit University co-hosted a ceremony to commemorate the university's reopening for the 2015-2016 academic year. The workers managed to restore the Colleges of Law, Literature, Political Science, and Education, the library, and a dormitory for female students. While some sections of the campus remain closed due to battle damage, approximately 16,000 students now attend classes.[230]

Ramadi: An Unfinished Victory

One of the largest and most contested locations targeted for stabilization assistance in Iraq was the capital of the Anbar province, Ramadi.[231] According to USAID, efforts relating to Ramadi's stabilization began in early 2015 as the FFIS began procuring materials needed for the city's stabilization, such as power generators. The governor of Anbar coordinated a stabilization plan by the fall of 2015. In December 2015, the city returned to Iraqi government control after ISIL was forced from the city by ISF and allied forces. However, ongoing conflict in the area and the widespread presence of IEDs in the city prevented UNDP and Iraqi officials from gaining access to the city and engaging in further stabilization efforts until late March 2016.[232] Early assessments by UNDP indicated that damage to the city was extensive and that residents may not be able to return for months. UNDP reported that at least 50 percent of buildings were damaged or destroyed, and that water, electrical, and health systems were functioning at severely reduced capacities, if at all.[233] By the end of the quarter, according to the UNDP, the single largest obstacle to stabilizing Ramadi

U.S. Marine Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr., center left, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Iraq Counter Terrorism Service Director, Gen. Talib Shegati al-Kenan, listen to a brief about the Iraqi Army's recent efforts in Ramadi. (DoD photo)

was the pervasive presence of IEDs.[234] Despite these conditions, about 5,000 people have reportedly returned to the city.[235]

In coordination with local Iraqi government authorities, FFIS recently developed a revised plan for Ramadi that focused on neighborhood rehabilitation and clearing the city of unexploded ordnance.[236] Under the plan, Anbar authorities reportedly began flagging hazardous areas, prioritizing IED clearance by neighborhood, removing rubble and rehabilitating water, electrical, and health infrastrcture. Near the end of the quarter, UNDP reported that it had conducted needs assessments for the first phase of rehabilitation and began preparing equipment for 24 projects in the health, water, and energy sectors.[237] By March 31, 2016, FFIS had reportedly procured 64 electrical generators, with five delivered to neighborhoods in Ramadi, 33 prepositioned at a nearby storage facility, and 26 moving through customs in Basrah. Further, tenders for U.S. government-funded water rehabilitation projects were advertised by the end of the quarter.[238]

Incorporating lessons learned from Tikrit, under the plan, priority will be given to restoring the water and electrical systems, proving cash grants to local businesses, repairing healthcare facilities, and providing short-term employment to jobless local residents.[239] Another improvement from the Tikrit experience is to determine the role and function of PMFs at the onset of any operation. The Iraqi government applied this in Ramadi, and saw a more developed plan for providing local security following the departure of the Iraqi military forces.[240]

On March 25, the Governor of Anbar, Sohaib al-Rawi, and UN officials travelled to Ramadi to assess conditions there and mark the beginning of FFIS-supported stabilization activities by delivering three generators to boost the supply of electricity. During this trip, local officials informed the delegation that IEDs remain a threat to the population and to security forces rooting out any stay-behind ISIL cells. Ramadi officials estimated that at least 48 people—civilians and security personnel charged with removing or destroying unexploded ordnance—have been killed by IEDs, and 83 wounded.

The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of Iraq told reporters accompanying the group that "[t]he reality is that many, if not most, neighborhoods in Ramadi aren't safe yet." UN officials further noted that the time-consuming process of clearing IEDs, a necessary predicate to the stabilization and reconstruction process, is delaying the return of displaced persons to their homes and also pushing back the start date for FFIS-funded infrastructure repairs.[241]

Thousands of IEDs left behind by ISIL complicate the return of approximately 11,000 families who remain displaced as of the end of March.[242] Governor al-Rawi conceded that the resettlement process will be difficult, commenting

Ramadi officials estimated that at least 48 people—civilians and security personnel charged with removing or destroying unexploded ordnance—have been killed by IEDs, and 83 wounded.

An M58 Mine Clearing Line Charge (MCLC), fired by Iraqi soldiers with the 72nd Iraqi Army Brigade, explodes during a combined arms breach training exercise at Besmaya Range Complex, Iraq, Jan. 24, 2016. MCLCs are long lines of explosive material that are usually fired into a minefield and detonated to clear a path for troops and vehicles to move through. (U.S. Army photo)

that while he "understands the pressing need for [displaced persons] to return home, [the local government] will not allow a chaotic return resulting in more casualties."[243] According to a survey conducted by the UN, about 5,700 buildings in Ramadi had been damaged, the main hospital and train station destroyed, and 64 bridges blown up.[244]

Demining

As Ramadi illustrated, unexploded ordnance, mines, and IEDs constitute one of the primary obstacles to stabilization operations and the resettlement of displaced persons. The problem is particularly acute in agricultural areas. For example, approximately 450,000 acres of farmland near Sinjar still lie fallow because of the threat posed by mines, despite Sinjar's liberation from ISIL by Kurdish and Yazidi forces in late 2015. Similarly, in Tameem (Kirkuk) province, the provincial head of the Agricultural Directorate stated that, of the 250,000 acres of farmland, ISIL still controlled 40,000 acres, as of early April. He added that the presence of ISIL, when combined with the inability to sow fields still littered with mines, has led to a sharp uptick in food prices, with the

price of onions more than tripling and the price of apples more than doubling from their 2014 levels.[245]

To address this issue, the United States and the Coalition are working with the Iragi government to provide financial or other support to remove and destroy mines and other explosives, and to educate citizens about the dangers they pose. As of November 2015, these projects had cleared land mines and other explosives from more than 65 million square meters of land, destroyed nearly 62,000 pieces of dangerous munitions of all types, and educated more than 38,000 Iraqis about how to avoid such devices.[246]

In furtherance of these objectives, DoS announced on April 4 that it was allocating $5 million to the U.S.-based firm Janus Global Operations to help safely clear explosive hazards in Ramadi. Janus will work in partnership with the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq to clear IEDs and unexploded ordnance from several Ramadi neighborhoods, as well as from the city's main water station. According to DoS, demining operations should begin in late April or early May 2016.[247]

UNDP Work Carries On Despite Insecurity

FFIS is conducting stablization activities in other locations without U.S. government funding. These activities were also hindered by insecurity and the presence of IEDs. In Ninewa, Diyala, and Salah al-Din provinces, FFIS-funded stabilization efforts were either delayed or had not started by the end of the reporting period due to security conditions. In the towns of Sinjar (Ninewa province), and Baiji (Salah al-Din province), security conditions and widespread IED contamination prevented the start of stabilization efforts by the end of the reporting period.[248] In the town of Sa'adiyah, in Diyala province, work began in February 2016 after months of delays. Initial FFIS-funded efforts in Sa'adiyah focused on repairing the main water plant and health center.[249]

FFIS-funded efforts in other towns have reportedly yielded more results. In Ninewa province's town of Rabia, approximately 30,000 residents received improved electrical service, while others benefitted by rehabilitated local agricultural production and employment opportunities in cleaning the city.[250] By the end of the quarter, nearly 80,000 people had returned to the city, representing more than 90 percent of the original population.[251] In al-Dour, FFIS funds were reportedly used to provide 40,000 residents with access to revitalized healthcare clinics, schools, and a rehabilitated water system.[252] As of March 31, 2016, 49,000 people had returned to al-Dour, 75 percent of the town's original population.[253] By the end of the reporting period, according to UNDP, the towns of Tikrit and Mkeishifa saw 95 percent or more of their original populations return in the wake of FFIS-funded activities.[254] In Mkeishifa, these activities included the renovation of several schools, the town's water station, and a primary healthcare center.[255] ■

Building Stabilization Forces for Deployment in Sunni Areas

While allegations of atrocities committed by Shia PMFs on supposed Sunni collaborators in the wake of Tikrit's liberation remain unconfirmed, the charges underscore the need for the Iraqi government to raise and employ predominantly local tribal (Sunni) forces in Sunni areas recaptured from ISIL. For example, an OIR spokesman stated that, as of mid-February, Ramadi was being patrolled by a combination of forces, including Sunni tribal fighters and local police, "both of whom have been trained … in one way or another."[256]

According to Joseph Pennington, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iraq, local security forces are key to getting displaced residents to return to their homes after liberation. "It depends on who is in charge of the street," he said in an interview with Lead IG personnel. As an example, he stated that many of the Sunni residents of Tikrit were reluctant to return while the Shia PMF were still providing security in the city. Once they learned from a trusted government source that the Sunni police forces were in charge, the Sunni population began to return.[257]

As of March 31, DoD reported that the Iraqi government could muster approximately 8,000 Sunni PMFs (or tribal fighters).[258] To fund the expansion of this program, the 2016 Iraqi budget requires the Iraqi agency overseeing the PMFs to commit to accepting up to 30 percent of their personnel from the predominantly Sunni areas where "military operations [are ongoing]."[259] An OIR spokesman noted that Italian Carabinieri based in Iraq have trained more than 2,000 police officers, many of whom are present in Ramadi.[260] As of March 21, the Coalition was also training 334 Iraqi Federal Police officers (a mostly, but not exclusively, Shia force) at the Al Asad's Build Partner Capacity site. This training focuses on enhancing the Federal Police's ability to hold cleared areas and maintain security behind the frontlines.[261]

According to an OIR spokesman, the Ramadi model is generally applicable in other Sunni areas, with the Iraqi Army, including the elite Counter Terrorism Services, taking the lead in seizing an area, and then redeploying and being replaced either (or both) by Sunni tribal fighters trained by the Iraqi government or by Iraqi police.[262]

The liberation of Mosul will test the capacity of the Iraqi government to stabilize that area. Mosul is a largely Sunni city, more than three times the size of Ramadi. ISIL will have had more than enough time to booby-trap the city. The necessary Iraqi government support for local tribal forces (Sunni) may be affected by economic and political factors. *(For more detailed information, see the section Political and Economic Challenges in Iraq on page 52.)*

The liberation of Mosul will test the capacity of the Iraqi government to stabilize that area.

Sectarian Issues and the Struggle to Restore Jurf al-Sakhr

Jurf al-Sakhr, once a Sunni enclave within the predominantly Shia province of Babil, is now largely depopulated, as its displaced Sunni residents remain unable to return to their homes almost 18 months after a joint ISF-Shia PMF forced recaptured it from ISIL. Jurf al-Sakhr lies astride the main highway running south from Baghdad to the cities of Karbala and Najaf. ISIL occupied it in July 2014, marking the terrorist group's deepest penetration into the Shia heartland of central and southern Iraq. After repeated attempts to recapture it, the ISF, with significant assistance from Shia PMF units and Iranian advisors, liberated the town in late October 2014.[263]

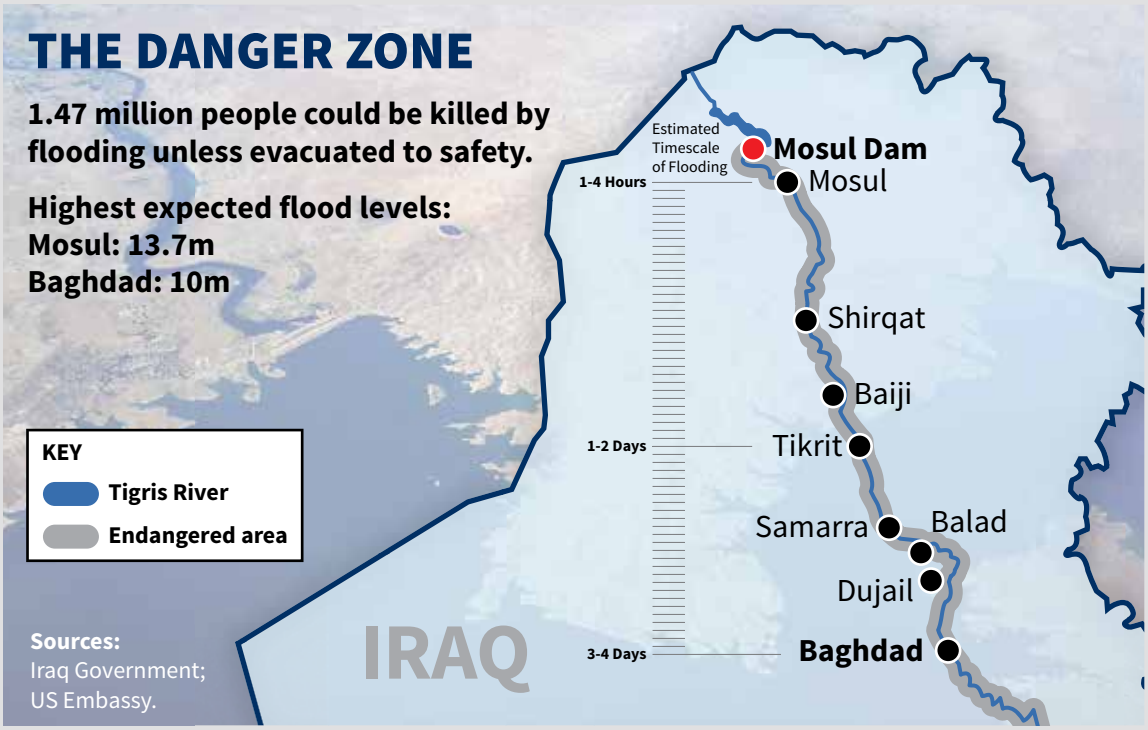
During and after the fighting, the vast majority of the town's Sunni population fled their homes. To date, the Babil provincial council has not allowed them to return, stating that there was a danger posed by unexploded ordnance. Some leaders of the displaced Sunni population (estimated to number approximately 80,000) contest this, and maintain that the area is safe enough to return to, but contend that the provincial government is reluctant to have a Sunni town so close to Karbala and Najaf, the two most prominent destinations for Shia pilgrims, who travel by the millions to both towns each year. Jurf al-Sakhr underscores the challenges ahead for reintegrating displaced Sunnis, who some Shia perceive as having collaborated with ISIL, into majority Shia areas.[264]

Mosul Dam At Risk

The Mosul dam, a 370-foot high, 3.4 km long, multi-purpose dam on the Tigris River in northern Iraq, faces a serious risk of collapse. The dam was completed in 1986 and provides water, irrigation, flood control, and electrical power. Because it rests on a foundation of gypsum and karst sediments which are subject to compression and cavern formation, the dam requires constant grouting work to remain stable. In August 2014, ISIL took control of the dam, but in a few weeks Kurdish Peshmerga forces, backed by Coalition air support, regained control of it. However, for several reasons, the necessary grouting work has not been performed since that time.

Should the dam collapse, the results could be catastrophic. Within hours, floodwater 20 meters high could be rushing through the city of Mosul, about 70 kilometers downriver from the dam. Within three days, floodwaters estimated to be five meters deep could reach Baghdad. According to the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq, up to 500,000 people could be killed.[265]

In early March, the U.S. and Iraq hosted a meeting of senior diplomats and UN officials, during which U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power warned that a collapse of Mosul dam would create a catastrophe of "epic proportions."[266]



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Mosul Dam at Risk *(continued from previous page)*

The Iraqi government obtained a $1.2 billion Development Policy Loan from the World Bank in December 2015, which enabled it to sign a $300 million contract with an Italian firm, Trevi Group, on March 2, 2016. The Trevi Group is expected to be on site in May to begin a 2-month assessment of the conditions at the dam. Once completed, repair work can begin.

In the meantime, the Iraqi government is working with the UN to develop a detailed emergency notification plan to alert residents in the event of a dam breach. Embassy Baghdad has provided technical assistance to augment the Iraqi-led effort and contribute to general public emergency preparedness, including for residents in Mosul. In addition, evacuation plans for Embassy personnel and private U.S. citizens has been developed and tested. Underscoring the potential severity of any breach, on March 28 it was reported that DoS was awarding a $1.2 million contract to a U.S. company to prepare inflatable barriers to protect the multi-acre U.S. Embassy compound in Baghdad.[267]

According to March 2016 USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) report, while the threat of the dam's collapse has existed for some time, recent events have shown the threat to be significantly more serious.[268] Consequently, OFDA has begun to develop contingency plans to avert, or at least to mitigate the consequences of a breach. For example, OFDA has supported the development of an early warning system designed to alert Iraqis should the dam fail.[269] OFDA is also coordinating preparedness strategies and activities with other U.S. agencies and key international stakeholders, such as the UN, on a number of key issues relating to the integrity of the dam.[270] ■

USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives in Syria

Beyond stabilization, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) works to advance peace and democracy in countries experiencing political transitions.[271] By providing assistance to local partners, OTI seeks to generate the capacity for long-term economic regeneration, political reconciliation, and stability.[272] In Syria, OTI is partnering with Syrian organizations to promote tolerance, peace, and community discourse and to construct accountable institutions capable of addressing local community needs.[273] During the reporting period, OTI supported four different awards in Syria. Two awards were in support of the primary implementation mechanisms to assist local groups, the Syria Regional Program (SRP) I and II (together referred to as SRP). A third award supported the deployment of a Senior Transition Advisor tasked with providing technical and oversight support to OTI in managing SRP. The fourth award, the Information Collection Analysis and Monitoring (ICAM), provided research and monitoring support to SRP.[274]

OTI provides some of the U.S. government's non-humanitarian assistance in Syria.

SRP is a cross-border assistance program based in Turkey that seeks to achieve peace and promote moderate values in Syria by supporting civil society organizations and governance structures from the national to local

level.[275] According to OTI, SRP support is primarily directed to moderate local and provincial councils within Syria.[276] The initial primary implementation award (SRP I) began in January 2013 with funding to sustain activities until June 2016. The second primary implementation award (SRP II) began in August 2015 to continue activities for an additional 5 years, until August 2020.[277] During the quarter, OTI funded efforts to provide equipment and supplies and financial assistance to these local and provincial councils to aid them in providing basic public services such as waste and rubble removal, infrastructure rehabilitation, records management, and local council outreach events.[278] OTI local partners also conducted outreach efforts, such as working with local media outlets, to promote moderate groups and dialogue within Syria.[279]

OTI also supported civil defense teams in Syria through SRP. Civil defense teams act as emergency responders in the Syrian conflict, providing emergency medical and relief assistance for victims of conflict and displacement.[280] Since 2013, OTI has provided more than $19 million in assistance to civil defense teams that have, in turn, reportedly saved more than 40,000 lives.[281] During the quarter, OTI assistance to civil defense teams included the provision of equipment for rubble removal and search and rescue operations, ambulances, water tankers, and financial stipends.[282] According to OTI, the ceasefire in Syria enabled the civil defense teams to increase activity.[283] Civil defense teams reportedly capitalized on this opportunity to collect remnants of unexploded ordnance, remove rubble, report violations of the ceasefire, repair infrastructure, and conduct awareness campaigns at schools on emergency preparedness and unexploded ordnance.[284]

In addition to SRP, OTI funded ICAM during the reporting period. ICAM supports OTI's operations in Syria by providing research and analysis, as well as third-party monitoring.[285] According to OTI, ICAM provides bi-weekly reporting that analyzes long-term socioeconomic, political, and security trends in key areas of Syria.[286] OTI also noted that ICAM local researcher partners conduct monitoring visits and produce reporting that assists OTI in verifying the delivery of assistance to intended beneficiaries and identifies issues when they occur. By the end of the reporting period, USAID obligated nearly $224 million in Economic Support Funds for Iraqi governance and stabilization activities since their start and disbursed more than $190 million. Of this, $8.7 million was obligated and $8.3 million disbursed during the reporting period. USAID reported that it provided oversight of these activities with the support of 11 personnel based in Baghdad, Iraq. Personnel included a mix of U.S. direct hire staff, U.S. personal service contractors, foreign-service nationals, and a third-country national. [287]

At informal IDP settlement in Homs, a 10-year-old walks through puddles of water after the heavy snowfall during early January. (IOM photo)

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HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The U.S. government remained a central contributor to humanitarian assistance efforts in Syria and Iraq during the second quarter of FY 2016 as conflict continued in both countries. The U.S. government's humanitarian assistance activities are identified as a line of effort under the Administration's strategy to counter ISIL to highlight the importance of the humanitarian response, but they predate these efforts and have distinct aims. The U.S. government's humanitarian mission in Iraq, Syria, and neighboring countries seeks to provide assistance to displaced, vulnerable, and conflict-affected populations in Iraq and Syria, as well as Syrian and Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries, and to assist host governments in Iraq, Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon to mitigate the effects of the crises.[288] Humanitarian assistance is provided solely on the basis of need and delivered impartially, regardless of political, religious, or ethnic affiliation, and may continue long after the fight against ISIL has ended, as ISIL is not the sole cause of humanitarian crises in the region.[289]

The U.S. government implements humanitarian assistance activities through three operating units: USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Office of Food for Peace (FFP), and DoS's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). OFDA works with implementing partners to provide support to IDPs in Syria and Iraq and other conflict-affected peoples within those two countries, while PRM works with partners to primarily assist refugees, as well as some IDPs and conflict victims associated with the complex crises in these countries.[290] FFP provides food assistance to IDPs, refugees, and others in need who have been affected by these crises.[291]

OFDA and FFP manage, coordinate, and implement humanitarian assistance efforts through field- and headquarters-based units. In the field, USAID Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs) assess conditions on the ground, identify pressing needs, and coordinate the U.S. government humanitarian response.[292] DARTs are staffed with humanitarian experts and technical advisors and include both OFDA and FFP personnel. A regional DART supports efforts in and around Syria. The DART has two country teams—one based in Jordan and another in Turkey—that are managed by a regional DART team leader. In Iraq, USAID maintains a DART based in Erbil and in Baghdad.[293] In Washington, D.C., a Response Management Team (RMT), which in the case of Syria and Iraq is called the Middle East Crisis Humanitarian Response Team (MECHR), supports the DARTs and performs operational and program management, award administration, and interagency coordination and outreach functions. MECHR is staffed primarily by OFDA, but also includes FFP personnel.[294]

PRM also manages humanitarian assistance efforts through field- and headquarters-based staff. In the field, Refugee Coordinators based in Turkey,

Jordan, Iraq, and Jerusalem, as well as temporary staff in Lebanon, meet with partners and monitor programs as security allows. PRM field staff also coordinate with DART teams and a third-party monitor in Iraq, under contract to PRM, and other bureaus at State also monitor PRM-funded programming. In Washington, D.C., PRM staff perform operational and program management, award administration, and interagency coordination functions.[295]

USAID and PRM receive appropriations for humanitarian assistance activities that are not designated for use in responding to a particular humanitarian crisis, which enable them to exercise flexibility in responding to ongoing and emerging crises. OFDA and FFP primarily use International Disaster Assistance funds, as well as small amounts of Title II funds, to support humanitarian assistance activities associated with the Syria and Iraq complex crises, while PRM applies Migration and Refugee Assistance funds to this purpose.[296]

OFDA, FFP, and PRM rely on several types of personnel to execute their work, including U.S. government direct hires and personal services and institution contractors on long-term temporary duty assignments.[297] *For a breakout of the 65 personnel assigned to the Iraq-Syria complex crisis, by operating unit, and location, see Table 11.*

Table 11.

OFDA, FFP, and PRM Personnel Assigned to Iraq-Syria Complex Crisis Response Efforts, by Location, as of 3/31/2016

Operating Unit	Washington, D.C.	Iraq	Turkey	Jordan	Lebanon	Total
OFDA	17	5	4	4	—	**30**
FFM	5	—	1	2	—	**8**
PRM*	13	5	4	4	1	**27**
Total	**35**	**10**	**9**	**10**	**1**	**65**

*Two additional PRM staff based in Jerusalem focus on support for Palestinian refugees in the region, including those in Syria.

Sources: OFDA, response to Lead IG request for information, 4/8/2016; FFP, response to Lead IG request for information, 4/20/2016; PRM, response to Lead IG request for information, 4/26/2016.

USAID Program Monitoring Process

OFDA and FFP reported that they monitor and assess programs to ensure operations are executed in accordance with agreed documents and plans, international regulations and laws, and are achieving set goals.[298] During program implementation, each office receives progress reports from the implementer on a bi-weekly, monthly or quarterly basis.[299] For all NGO partners, FFP requires reports on a fortnightly basis as well.[300] When reviewing

these reports, OFDA and FFP stated that they look for progress achieved to date, successes and challenges, description of activities and impact, and the rate which a program uses financial resources per quarter.[301] In addition to reviewing partner reports, USAID reports that agency representatives and technical specialists conduct monitoring visits, meetings, and assessments to examine program progress and ensure operations are functioning properly.[302] FFP reported that FFP staff meet with partner staff, review program activities, monitor distributions, and consult with beneficiaries where possible during site visits.[303] According to USAID, DART members also meet with partner representatives to discuss program implementation strategy, any issues with implementation, and operational developments. For their part, RMT staff coordinate with implementing partners in Washington, D.C. to discuss broader strategy and issues that arise.[304] If problems are found through these efforts, agency staff notify the implementer to gather additional information and may subsequently direct the implementer to make certain changes or corrections. OFDA also awarded a third-party monitoring contract to conduct in-country program site visits and activity evaluations.[305]

The DART, RMT, OFDA's Office of Preparation, Strategic Planning, and Mitigation, and FFP's headquarters team facilitate assessment visits by OFDA sector specialists and FFP policy and technical division staff on a quarterly to semi-annual basis.[306] During these assessments, specialists and field-based staff conduct meetings with implementing partners, tour program sites, and meet with beneficiaries, host government and donor counterparts.[307] Findings from these assessments are used to generate recommendations for changes to programs and guide future programming and strategy.[308]

In the final step of program monitoring, OFDA and FFP examine the impact on the lives of the beneficiaries through partner and monitor reporting to assess conditions on the ground, the vulnerability of populations, and the impact of assistance.[309] For example, FFP reviews World Food Program (WFP) reports on the crisis in Syria and the region in order to assess the vulnerability of a beneficiary population as well as the impact of food assistance.[310]

Monitoring and assessment efforts by OFDA and FFP have been frequently impacted by access problems and changing security conditions, creating conditions for fraud. A USAID OIG survey on USAID OFDA assistance programs in Iraq found that OFDA faced challenges that included deteriorating security conditions, an inability to reach IDPs due to restricted access, and fraud schemes designed by vendors in both voucher and cash assistance programs.[311] Poor security conditions have had a particular impact on program monitoring activities. USAID OIG found that restrictions placed on U.S. government personnel movements within Iraq due to poor security conditions, limited OFDA's ability to conduct direct monitoring activities.[312] USAID reported that U.S. government personnel are not allowed in Syria and that OFDA and

FFP representatives therefore do not conduct direct monitoring activities. Visits are instead conducted remotely, usually in neighboring countries such as Jordan or Turkey.[313] In the past, OFDA sector specialists have noted issues with monitoring following temporary duty assessment visits. For example, OFDA health specialists reported in October 2015 that the limitations of remote monitoring and a lack of a dedicated health sector specialist on the DART have complicated basic interventions and oversight activities in Syria.[314]

Security conditions have not been the sole inhibitor to effective monitoring. USAID OIG has identified several issues relating to USAID monitoring and evaluation practices. USAID OIG audits have identified significant problems with data quality across a range of USAID programs around the world, including those of OFDA. These findings included gaps in data collection and reporting, inconsistency in underlying calculations, errors or overstatements, and inadequate performance measures.[315] These monitoring and evaluation processes have been unsuccessful in preventing fraud, waste, and abuse in USAID-funded activities in Syria and Iraq. During the reporting period, USAID OIG investigations uncovered new cases of procurement fraud in OFDA programming. OIG work also revealed weaknesses in a cross-border medical assistance program from Jordan to Syria, leading USAID to partially terminate the program. As a result of these and other OIG observations, USAID suspended five companies and seven individuals in Turkey from receiving future federal awards and put a hold on the procurement and distribution operations of four programs operating in Turkey and Jordan during the quarter.[316]

UN Appeals for Humanitarian Funding in Syria Remain Underfunded

Financial constraints affected humanitarian efforts associated with both crises during the reporting period.[317] In Syria, despite the international community's pledge of $6 billion at the London pledging conference in early February 2016 for the Syria response, the UN appeals for Syria remain significantly underfunded.[318] USAID noted that, with the exception of more than $600 million provided to the World Food Program (WFP) by Germany, the increased funding had yet to have an impact, as non-U.S. government pledges were largely not transferred into commitments and obligations by the end of the reporting period.[319] As Table 12 shows, the UN's appeals for support for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees in the region had received only partial support.

As of early February (Syria) and early March 2016 (Iraq), U.S. government financial commitments to the current Syria and Iraq complex crises have totaled approximately $5.75 billion.[320] About 89 percent of these funds have been focused on responding to the Syria complex crisis, which predates the current humanitarian situation in Iraq by two years.[321]

From October 1, 2014, to March 31, 2016, USAID and DoS obligated nearly $2.24 billion in humanitarian assistance in response to the Syria complex crisis. Over that period, USAID and DoS disbursed nearly $1.99 billion to related programs and activities. During the second quarter of FY 2016, OFDA, FFP, and PRM disbursed a total of $253.8 million.[322] *For the status of funds, by office, see Table 12.*

From October 1, 2014, to March 31, 2016, USAID and DoS obligated nearly $347.6 million in humanitarian assistance in response to the Iraq complex crisis. As of March 31, 2016, $262.6 million of that amount had been disbursed for related programs and activities, including $13.6 million disbursed this quarter by OFDA, FFP, and PRM.[323] *For a status of funds, by office, see Table 13.* ■

Table 12.

United Nations Appeals and Funding Received for the Syria and Iraq Crises, as of 3/31/2015

United Nations Response Plan	Requested	Received
2016 Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan	$4.5 billion	$283.8 million (6% of request)
2016 Syria Humanitarian Response Plan	$3.18 billion	$177 million (6% of request)
2016 Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan	$860.5 million	$151.2 million (18% of request)

Source: OCHA, "Humanitarian Funding Update March 2016 – United Nations Coordinated Appeals," 3/31/16, p. 2, http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/humanitarian_funding_update_gho_31mar2016.pdf

Table 13.

Status of Cumulative FY2015 and FY2016 U.S. Government Humanitarian Assistance Funds for the Syria Complex Crisis, as of 3/31/2016

($ Millions)

Office	Syria Obligated	Syria Disbursed	Iraq Obligated	Iraq Disbursed
PRM	1,115.0	1,149.8	227.8	230.0
FFP	814.9	814.0	47.5	20.9
OFDA	310.1	21.8	72.3	11.7
Total	**2,240**	**1,985.6**	**347.6**	**262.6**

Note: USAID and DOS reported disbursements may exceed obligations because disbursements may have been made against obligations from a prior fiscal year. In past OIR reports, DOS reported disbursements only from funds obligated from FY2015 forward. This accounts for the difference seen in figures reported here and in past reports. Data on disbursements can provide valuable information about how much money has been spent on activities as well as the amounts of funding that remain available for expenditure. Provided a letter of credit from the U.S. government, however, humanitarian assistance implementing partners may accrue expenses before drawing down on agency funds. For this reason, expenditures on humanitarian assistance activities sometimes exceed disbursements.

Sources: USAID, response to Lead IG request for information, 4/19/2016; DoS, response to Lead IG request for information, 4/19/2016.

SYRIA COMPLEX CRISIS

In Syria, sustained conflict among multiple actors continued to displace and kill civilians throughout the country. Aerial bombings and ground assaults primarily by the Syrian government and its allies, such as Russia, were significant drivers of the humanitarian crisis in the country, according to the UN.[324] Shelling and attacks by both opposition groups and UN designated terrorists organizations also contributed to further civilian death and displacement during the reporting period.[325] In late February, a ceasefire orchestrated by the International Syria Support Group (ISSG), a coalition of over 21 international organizations and countries co-chaired by the United States and Russia, reportedly led to a significant reduction in violence and increased access for humanitarian assistance efforts.[326] The Syrian Network for Human Rights, a United Kingdom-based nonprofit that reports on the number of civilian deaths in the Syrian conflict, documented the deaths of nearly 3,400 civilians during the quarter, 1,700 fewer than during the previous quarter.[327]

As of March 31, 2016, the UN reported that there were 13.5 million people in need, the same figure recorded at the end of the previous reporting period.[328] At that point, the UN reported that this number included approximately 6 million children and 4.1 million women and girls of reproductive age.[329] In addition, a reported 8.7 million people remained food-insecure and nearly 9.5 million lacked access to adequate drinking water.[330] From the beginning of the crisis in 2011 to December 2015, according to the UN overall life expectancy in Syria fell by 20 years and four out of five Syrians were living in poverty.[331]

Of the 13.5 million people identified as in need, 6.6 million people were considered internally displaced by the end of the quarter, representing an increase of approximately 100,000 from the previous quarter.[332] Nearly half of these 6.6 million IDPs were children and 1.7 million IDPs lived in camps or collective centers.[333] Conflict during the first part of the reporting period caused particularly significant displacement as the UN reported approximately 200,000 people across 11 governorates were displaced in January and early February 2016.[334] Fighting was especially devastating in the governorates of Homs, Aleppo, Rif Damascus, and Dara due to military offensives by the Syrian government and its allies.[335] The UN reported that in January 2016, conditions for more than 120,000 people in Homs Governorate were rapidly declining as Syrian government offensives cut off supply routes and encircled many towns. Local communities reportedly faced severe food shortages and highly inflated prices for market goods and medical supplies as a result.[336]

> Conflict in Dara, one Syria's southernmost governorates, was particularly acute during the reporting period as the Syrian government continued its campaign to recapture the area.

United Nations Definitions

Hard-to-reach area: An area that is not regularly accessible to humanitarian actors for the purposes of sustained humanitarian programming as a result of denial of access, including the need to negotiate access on an ad hoc basis, or due to restrictions such as active conflict, multiple security checkpoints, or failure of the authorities to provide timely approval.

Besieged area: An area surrounded by armed actors with the sustained effect that humanitarian assistance cannot regularly enter, and civilians, the sick and the wounded cannot regularly exit the area. ■

Source: UNHCR, 4/9/16

Conflict in Dara, one Syria's southernmost governorates, was particularly acute during the reporting period as the Syrian government continued its campaign to recapture the area.[337] By the end of February 2015, the UN reported that more than 50,000 people were displaced by the offensive and that significant numbers of civilians were killed as the Syrian government pushed south to recapture towns such as Atman and Sheikh Miskine.[338] OFDA indicated that the campaign in Dara resulted in one of the largest and most expansive geographical displacements in southern Syria since 2014.[339] The offensive reportedly impacted OFDA-supported efforts, including a field hospital that was left inoperable by the offensive.[340] OFDA and FFP stated, however, that their partners and other humanitarian agencies continued to provide assistance despite the ongoing conflict by prepositioning supplies and delivering emergency assistance such as food and other critical supplies to those in need.[341]

In Syria's northern Aleppo Governorate, the UN reported that the Syrian government, backed by Russia, launched a large military campaign that included ground forces and heavy, daily aerial bombardments.[342] The conflict involved both Syrian opposition forces and ISIL, and resulted in significant civilian death and displacement of persons.[343] According to open sources, this offensive had resulted in the deaths of approximately 500 civilians by February 11, 2016, and the UN reported that more than 60,000 civilians were displaced.[344] Aggravating conditions for civilians, on January 16, 2016, ISIL shut off a water plant on the Euphrates River that supplied approximately 2 million people in Aleppo Governorate.[345] The UN reported that service from the plant to 2 million people in Aleppo Governorate was restored on March 3, 2016.[346]

In addition to killing and displacing civilians, this offensive also severely damaged civilian infrastructure and hindered humanitarian assistance efforts.[347] Heavy ground fighting and bombardments along major towns and transport corridors from Turkey to Aleppo city damaged several medical facilities and disrupted cross-border humanitarian assistance operations.[348] According to USAID, Russian aerial bombardments routinely targeted key transport corridors in northern Syria, including the M4 and M5 highways, as well as the contested 214 highway, a key supply route for opposition forces and humanitarian agencies.[349] OFDA and FFP reported that the conflict forced some of its partners to temporarily suspend field activities, but many partners continued to provide assistance despite the increased violence. According to OFDA, Turkey-based relief organizations, including OFDA- and FFP-supported organizations, stockpiled three to six months' worth of assistance commodities in eastern Aleppo city to assist approximately 150,000 affected by the conflict.[350] Additionally, FFP partners altered the

content of some of their food parcels with more ready-to-eat foods to better serve beneficiaries displaced by the offensive.[351]

While humanitarian agencies, including OFDA and FFP partners, were able to provide assistance to some of the population in need, access to beneficiaries remained highly problematic during the first half of the reporting period due to actions by local authorities and active military conflict in Aleppo and other locations.[352] Access in UN-defined hard-to-reach and besieged areas remained especially limited. OFDA and FFP reported that restrictions on the movement of goods and people by local actors, including the Syrian government and ISIL, hindered the ability of humanitarian agencies to reach people in need.[353] By March 31, 2016, there were 4.6 million people living in these hard-to-reach areas, and 486,700 living in the subset of these areas under siege.[354] Besieged communities were spread throughout the country but particularly concentrated in two areas, Rif Damascus Governorate and Deir ez-Zour city.[355]

In an attempt to gain greater access to besieged areas in Syria, the UN and other international partners worked to broker the Four Towns Agreement in September 2015.[356] The agreement established a ceasefire to allow assistance to reach four besieged towns in eastern Syria: Madaya and Zabadani in Rif Damascus Governorate and Fuah and Kafraya in the Idlib Governorate.[357] In 2015, access to the towns by humanitarian agencies was difficult and conditions deteriorated rapidly for residents, especially in Madaya, where the UN reported people were starving to death.[358] While OFDA- and FFP-supported UN agencies, such as the WFP and the World Heath Organization (WHO), that were able to reach these towns the towns three different times in January 2016, disagreements between the parties involved in the agreement continued to hinder assistance efforts.[359] Attempts to deliver medical and food aid to three of the four towns failed.[360] The UN also attempted to provide assistance to other besieged areas during the reporting period. In January 2016, the UN reported conditions in Deir ez-Zour city were "sharply deteriorating" as residents were in desperate need of food, nutrition, and health assistance.[361] WFP attempted an airdrop to besieged residents in the city in February 2016. However, strong winds and technical difficulties prevented airdrops of crates of food assistance from reaching those in need during the reporting period.[362]

A larger countrywide ceasefire went into effect on February 26, 2016, with the UN Security Council adopting resolution 2268, which outlined the terms of the cessation of hostilities.[363] The resolution called for several measures including an end to the indiscriminate use of weapons, the implementation of a nationwide ceasefire, and the facilitation of immediate humanitarian access to besieged and hard-to-reach areas.[364]

Since the adoption of this resolution, several sources noted a dramatic decrease in violence throughout much of Syria during the reporting period.[365]

A USAID OIG survey on USAID OFDA assistance programs in Iraq found that OFDA faced challenges that included deteriorating security conditions, an inability to reach IDPs due to restricted access, and fraud schemes designed by vendors in both voucher and cash assistance programs.

Military ground combat as well as airstrikes reportedly decreased significantly after the ceasefire, leading to a reduction in the number of civilians killed and injured.[366] In March 2016, the Syrian Network for Human Rights recorded 638 deaths or 55 percent less than the average in January and February 2016.[367] Notwithstanding these gains, the UN Operations Center established in support of the ceasefire, recorded numerous violations by both the Syrian government and opposition forces in the first weeks of the ceasefire.[368] Rebel forces accused both the Syrian army and Russia forces of continuing to conduct airstrikes after the official cessation of hostilities.[369] In early March 2016, DOS condemned a Syrian government airstrike that killed and injured civilians protesting the regime in Aleppo and Dara governorates.[370]

The UN and USAID reported that the ceasefire resulted in increased access for humanitarian responders to hard-to-reach and besieged areas throughout Syria.[371] According to the UN, interagency convoys reached only 0.9 percent of people in hard-to-reach locations and 12.3 percent of people in besieged locations in January 2016, prior to the ceasefire. Following the cessation of hostilities in late March 2016, these percentages had increased to 2.0 percent and 21 percent, respectively.[372] By the end of the reporting period, UN and international organization interagency convoys, including those supported by OFDA, FFP, and PRM, had reached 199,425 people in hard-to-reach areas and 150,000 in besieged areas.[373]

The UN and USAID reported that the ceasefire resulted in increased access for humanitarian responders to hard-to-reach and besieged areas throughout Syria.

Despite gains over the quarter, humanitarian access was limited to just 4.5 percent of people in need in hard-to-reach areas and 32 percent of those in besieged areas.[374] OFDA, FFP, and PRM asserted that the primary barrier to accessing more people in need was not conflict-related as the ceasefire was largely holding, but rather the refusal by the Syrian government to grant permission for access to these areas.[375] While convoys did reach important locations, such as communities covered by the Four Towns agreement, the withholding of Syrian government approval for UN requests to access new areas continued to severely limited assistance efforts. By mid-March 2016, only 34 out of 58 UN requests to access hard-to-reach areas had been granted by the Syrian government.[376]

Conditions in these inaccessible locations remained extremely volatile by the end of the reporting period. Some of the most in-need populations were located in cities just outside the Syrian capital of Damascus, including Daraya and Douma, and in besieged cities with an ISIL presence, such as Deir ez-Zour.[377] On March 17, 2016, the UN reported that some civilians in the cities of Daraya and Deir ez Zor were getting less than one meal a day, and at times eating grass to supplement their food intake.[378] While the UN lacked permission to access Daraya, security conditions impeded UN efforts to reach Deir ez-Zour.[379] Although previous airdrops had failed to reach Deir ez-Zour,

OFDA and FFP reported WFP, a key partner in the region, was conducting test runs in Jordan and was acquiring better parachutes capable of more accurately delivering the aid as of late March 2016.[380]

The UN also asserted that other actions by the Syrian government continued to hinder response efforts. In particular, the UN found that the Syrian Government's Ministry of Health was removing medical relief items, including surgical equipment, chronic disease treatments, and antibiotics, from UN convoys destined for hard-to-reach and besieged areas.[381] The UN noted that a total of 80,000 treatment kits had been excluded or removed from convoys in 2016, primarily by the Syrian government, and that people were dying because medical supplies and healthcare workers were not making it to those in need.[382]

While there has been, for the most part, a cessation of hostilities between the Syrian government and opposition groups, fighting continued against UN-designated terrorist groups such as ISIL and Jabhat al-Nusra, as outlined by the ISSG agreement.[383] After several weeks of fighting, the Syrian Government, with the support of Russian airstrikes, recaptured the city of Palmyra from ISIL on March 27, 2016.[384] The town had been under ISIL control since May 2015 and had served as a location for high-profile executions of civilians and others by the group.[385] This and other sustained operations against ISIL and Jabhat al-Nusra have, according to OFDA and FFP, continued to create insecure operating environments for humanitarian responders and resulted in the temporary suspension of operations by OFDA and FFP partners in some areas due to staff safety concerns.[386] While U.S. government partners are generally unable to operate in ISIL-held territory, OFDA and FFP reported that partners continued to provide assistance in Jabhat al-Nusra held territory despite continued security concerns.[387]

OFDA focuses on providing aid to vulnerable communities in Syria, while FFP provides emergency food assistance to Syrians in need within the country as well as to Syrian refugees in surrounding areas.[388]

During the reporting period, OFDA funded 37 awards through 29 implementers to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need within Syria.[389] According to OFDA, these awards supported assistance efforts targeting IDPs and other conflict affected peoples throughout all 14 governorates in Syria.[390] According to OFDA, while there were 10 countrywide programs operating during the reporting period, efforts were most concentrated in the Aleppo, Dara, Hama, and Rif Damascus governorates.[391] Programs ranged from emergency food security and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) support to vulnerable

households, community resilience building, emergency medical assistance, shelter, protection, and humanitarian coordination and information management.[392] The majority of OFDA programs continued to provide support across multiple sectors and types of assistance to deliver the most comprehensive assistance possible.[393] While no new awards were funded, OFDA reported that three of its awards concluded during the reporting period. The three awards were focused on providing emergency support, including health, WASH, and shelter assistance, to conflict-affected people in Syria.[394] This is the first time in a year that OFDA has not initiated support for new awards within a reporting period.

As of March 31, 2016, FFP maintained 13 active awards with eight implementers to support emergency food assistance to Syrians. FFP reported that 5 of these awards were awarded during the quarter (although the awards themselves were continuations of previously operating programs).[395] These awards aimed to assist those in need of emergency food assistance in Syria and in surrounding countries hosting Syrian refugees, such as Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey.[396] FFP supported assistance to beneficiaries in 13 of Syria's 14 governorates.[397] Two other FFP awards provided indirect support for humanitarian assistance, such as through information management and coordination efforts. These awards specifically focused on establishing information networks to support emergency food security and livelihood interventions in addition to analysis of regional food security conditions.[398] During the reporting period, 3 FFP awards concluded, although two of the programs continued as FFP made new awards to the same partners for the same programs.[399] These awards had focused on providing emergency food parcels and specific ingredients such as flour for bread making to people in need within Syria.[400]

As of March 31, 2016, PRM was providing humanitarian assistance to Syrian IDPs and refugees and Palestinian refugees from Syria through 51 awards to implementing partners. PRM reported providing healthcare, shelter, protection, mental health, health and psychological support, and other basic lifesaving services to conflict-affected populations, including IDPs, inside Syria. In addition, PRM assistance to Syrian refugees in Turkey, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, and Lebanon included healthcare, shelter, protection, education, mental health and psychological support, and other basic, lifesaving services. PRM humanitarian support to partners helped fund critical services to refugees throughout the region and supports host communities where refugees reside.[401]

USAID Health Sector Efforts in Syria

When natural disasters or conflicts occur, affected communities may experience an array of public health challenges, especially as people become displaced and basic services are disrupted.[402] In Syria, OFDA leads the U.S. government's health sector assistance efforts, and USAID reports that health sector assistance accounts for approximately 36 percent of OFDA's overall Syria assistance budget. In FY2015, 3.4 million people received health assistance through OFDA supported programs.[403]

OFDA reported that it determines the scope and scale of health needs in a given situation by deploying health technical advisors to the field to assess needs and by reviewing evidence, guidance, and industry best practices in coordination and consultation with other donors and UN organizations. Once needs are determined and awards are made to implementing partners, OFDA works with implementers to develop appropriate programs to meet the needs of those in Syria.[404]

According to the UN, approximately 11.5 million people are in need of health assistance in Syria, roughly 5.9 million of whom are women and 4.5 million children.[405] In 2015, growing conflict, a lack of basic services, and a shortage of healthcare workers and supplies led to increased health needs and preventable deaths throughout the country.[406] Many of these trends have reportedly continued into 2016. Over the past quarter, USAID reported that 300,000 women were in need of obstetric care and that fewer than 1 in 3 children under the age of 5 were receiving the necessary vaccinations. In addition, an average of 25,000 people each month reportedly required trauma care.[407] The degradation of sanitation infrastructure and lack of safe drinking water has contributed to a rise in the spread of communicable diseases, such as polio, hepatitis A, and watery diarrhea.[408] The vulnerability of IDPs and other conflict-affected people to related injury and illness as well as to other ailments has also increased due to the prolonged conflict, disruption of basic services, and a sustained lack of health care.[409] The number of those in need of not just trauma assistance but primary healthcare has risen significantly. OFDA reported that nearly 40 percent of all healthcare inquiries stemmed from chronic conditions or complications related to such issues.[410]

Security conditions and access constraints also have also contributed to deteriorating health conditions in Syria and presented major obstacles to OFDA-supported health activities in the country.[411] OFDA reported that sustained violence and limited humanitarian access have hindered efforts to provide health services for the most affected and improve the overall quality of these programs.[412] Attacks on healthcare facilities and workers have been particularly detrimental.[413] The non-profit Physicians for Human Rights recorded 358 separate attacks on 255 healthcare facilities and the deaths of 726 healthcare workers from March 2011 to February 2016.[414] OFDA reported that the targeting of healthcare facilities and workers continued over the past quarter as many facilities were destroyed and healthcare staff were killed in airstrikes.[415] Implementing partners have reported suspicions that field hospitals and facilities that provide surgical services are being specifically targeted. OFDA partners reported a decline in the utilization of healthcare services in some cases because patients expressed fear of attacks on health

facilities, and some healthcare workers have fled out of fear for their safety.[416]

Notwithstanding these challenges, OFDA attempts to provide healthcare services in a safe and secure manner. Implementers have in the past temporarily suspended services and closed or moved health facilities and medical equipment when security conditions worsened. Implementers have also temporarily suspended health assistance efforts in ISIL-controlled areas to mitigate risks such as the diversion of medical supplies and material support, or any reputational benefit ISIL could receive by co-opting and distributing such goods.[417] ISIL and the Syrian government and its allies are some of the main actors responsible for fraud and loss associated with health assistance efforts in Syria.[418]

During the reporting period, OFDA supported 14 implementing partners in providing healthcare services across all 14 governorates in Syria.[419] Assistance included services such as primary and preventative care, obstetric care, basic surgical care, mental healthcare, and treatment for malnutrition.[420] To support these treatments, OFDA assisted with the provision of medical supplies, including medicines and equipment. Anesthetics, antidotes, blood and plasma substitutes, and infection prevention medicines, as well as ventilators, electrocardiogram machines, intravenous pumps, and basic surgical gear are among the materials and equipment furnished to healthcare facilities.[421] OFDA also supported immunization campaigns in Syria, such as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund's (UNICEF) ongoing polio immunization and vaccination campaign which aims to reach 5.34 million children and women of child-bearing age.[422] During January and February 2016, nearly 40,000 children received vaccinations according to UNICEF.[423]

In effort to build local healthcare capacity in Syria, OFDA also supported a network of trauma and health facilities, ambulances, and mobile medical clinics.[424] Support was commonly provided in the form of medical supplies, healthcare worker training, and assistance with operating costs, such as the purchase of fuel, water, and funding for minor building repairs.[425] Capacity-building support for healthcare workers—community healthcare workers, emergency first responders, and healthcare professionals—included training on a variety of subjects.[426] OFDA reported that this training was intended to provide healthcare workers with the skills to deliver emergency medical care, identify malnutrition, provide first aid, diagnose and treat diseases such as leishmaniosis, and to promote the psychosocial well-being of conflict-affected children and youth at health facilities and in community settings.[427]

PRM partners also continued to provide health assistance where possible inside Syria. One partner reportedly provided primary healthcare services, including management of chronic diseases, to more than 21,000 IDPs in several governorates, including Homs and Idlib. This partner also provided generators for health facilities that serve a total of more than 31,000 patients per month, in addition to oxygen generators and infant incubators for other, smaller hospitals. In addition, the partner provided wheelchairs and crutches to more than 1,300 patients according to PRM. Another PRM partner also provided health services, including mental health services, in five Syrian governorates, including Homs, Damascus, and Aleppo.[428] ■

PRM reported that its continued risk-mitigation measures include regular, in-person communication between field staff and implementers to discuss monitoring policies and the use of appropriate monitoring tools. As the security situation allows, refugee coordinators in the region, locally employed staff within each of the U.S. missions, and PRM's Washington-based staff conduct in-person monitoring of refugee programs in neighboring countries. PRM has advised that it complies with the Department's Risk Analysis and Management vetting system for five pilot countries, including Lebanon, to address the risk of aid supporting terrorist organizations.[429]

Throughout the reporting period, PRM-supported programs provided core relief items inside Syria in areas where implementing partners were able to negotiate access safely, such as via a convoy on March 17, 2016, to Rif Damascus and Idlib. This PRM partner was part of a 61-truck convoy provided food rations, health supplies including nutritional supplements and WASH items. PRM focused the delivery of core relief items to particularly vulnerable individuals who had been recently displaced, were located in hard-to-reach areas, or were facing specific needs and vulnerabilities, such as unaccompanied minors or elders, single women, disability or mental health issues, serious medical conditions, and chronic diseases. Vulnerable IDPs also received PRM-supported mental health and psychosocial support during the reporting period. In addition, a significant number of vulnerable IDPs received primary health care services free-of-charge through PRM-supported clinics. The primary health care services included medical consultation, laboratory investigations, and the provision of essential medicines.[430]

Displaced Sunnis fleeing conflict in Ramadi arrive in Baghdad. (AFP/Ahmad al-Rubaye photo)

IRAQ COMPLEX CRISIS

In Iraq, the conflict between the Iraqi government and ISIL continued to result in deaths, displacement of persons, and increased needs for thousands of people throughout the country. According to the UN, between January and March 2016, more than 2,600 people were killed, including armed actors and civilians, due to conflict and acts of terrorism in Iraq.[431] The UN reported that civilians were the greatest victims of the violence, accounting for more than 50 percent of all deaths during the quarter.[432] The impact of the conflict in Anbar, Baghdad, and Salah al-Din provinces was particularly intense. In Baghdad province, more than 800 people were killed, while conflict in Anbar and Salah-al-Din provinces displaced more than 50,000 people and left thousands with limited access to food or medicine.[433] Compounding the effects of the conflict, financial difficulties within the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) led to a decrease in public services and worsening conditions for those in need throughout the country.[434] In addition, the risk of a potential breach of the Mosul Dam continued to threaten the country, placing millions at risk of death and displacement.[435]

As of late March 2016, the UN and other international humanitarian organizations reported that 10 million people were in need in Iraq.

As of late March 2016, the UN and other international humanitarian organizations reported that 10 million people were in need in Iraq, nearly a third of the country's overall population.[436] Of those in need, the UN

reported that approximately 4.7 million were children and 3 million were living in hard-to-reach areas under ISIL control.[437] According to the UN 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan for Iraq, the urgent needs of those in need included protection, food assistance, health, WASH, shelter, and emergency relief items. Protection and health assistance were especially in demand, with more than 8 million people in need of such assistance.[438]

During the quarter, the UN reported that more than 3.3 million people were internally displaced in Iraq, representing an increase of approximately 150,000 IDPs from the previous quarter.[439] According to the International Organizations for Migration (IOM), more than 75 percent of the 3.3 million IDPs originated from the provinces of Anbar and Ninewa, and about half were residing in Baghdad, Anbar, and Dohuk provinces as of early March 2016.[440] The Iraqi government's military operations against ISIL in the provinces of Anbar, Salah al-Din, and Ninewa resulted in significant additional displacement of civilians during the reporting period.[441]

In Anbar province, the Iraqi government's campaign to recapture cities from ISIL control continued to displace thousands.[442] Clashes in the areas around the cities of Heet and Ramadi in particular drove displacement during the quarter.[443] The Iraqi government's military operations against ISIL near Heet, for example, resulted in the displacement of approximately 38,000 additional people by the end of the reporting period.[444] According to the UN and USAID, those displaced by these engagements have mostly fled to other areas within Anbar province.[445] Since January 2015, approximately 75,000 IDPs have sought refuge in Ameriyat al Falluja and since April 2015, 38,000 IDPs have fled to Habbaniyah Tourist City.[446] OFDA and FFP reported that the recent influx of IDPs has exceeded the capacity of camps in these cities and forced some IDPs to seek other locations for shelter.[447] Some have reportedly settled with host communities,[448] while others fled to remote areas in the desert where they have little to no access to food, water, or healthcare.[449]

USAID, PRM, and humanitarian organizations reported that access and assistance efforts in Iraqi government-controlled or partially controlled areas of Anbar province, such as Ramadi and Heet, were limited by the presence of unexploded ordnance and a lack of adequate infrastructure to house displaced persons.[450] USAID and PRM reported that as people fled to safer areas during the quarter, OFDA, FFP, and PRM partners have been able reach a greater number of beneficiaries with assistance that included WASH, food aid, health services, and shelter assistance.[451] In the past, USAID OIG has observed that the continued movement of IDPs after initial displacement risked complicating assistance efforts.[452] Specifically, OIG recently reported that OFDA partners faced the risks over being overwhelmed by an influx of new

Falluja city, which remained under ISIL control, was inaccessible to USAID and PRM partners as well as other humanitarian actors during the reporting period.

IDPs, as well as the risk of being unable to monitor the impact of assistance due frequent IDP relocation.[453]

Falluja city, which remained under ISIL control, was inaccessible to USAID and PRM partners as well as other humanitarian actors during the reporting period.[454] According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), between 30,000 and 60,000 people remained in the city at the end of the quarter.[455] Humanitarian assistance agencies were unable to reach the city with basic commodities and severe shortages of both medicine and food have reportedly resulted in deaths.[456] In March 2016, the Iraqi government requested that humanitarian agencies prepare for increased displacement of persons from Falluja.[457]

In Salah al-Din province, fighting throughout the reporting period displaced thousands of people.[458] Government military offensives targeting ISIL positions north of the provincial capital Tikrit, especially in the al-Jazira region, displaced approximately 20,000 to 30,000 people.[459] IDPs fleeing the conflict sought refuge in nearby towns and camps, including more than 5,000 people in al-Albasiya camp north of the city of Samarra, 18,000 in the Baiji city sub-district of al-Hajaj, and about 7,200 people in the al-Awja area of Tikrit.[460] As of mid-March 2016, local authorities expected displacement to continue and noted critical needs for these displaced persons, including WASH, health, and food assistance. ECHO reported that a lack of humanitarian responders in the area hampered response efforts.[461]

Ninewa province also saw an increase in IDPs during the quarter, as more than 20,000 people sought refuge within the province.[462] While the majority of IDPs in Ninewa province originated from other parts of the country, conflicts within the province itself contributed to the numbers of displaced.[463] Thousands of people remain displaced from the campaign to recapture the town of Sinjar in December 2015.[464] Like Ramadi's destruction in late 2015, Sinjar was largely destroyed by ISIL and the campaign to retake the city, and it remains littered with explosives.[465] OFDA and FFP reported that IDPs who remain in the Sinjar area, which was previously unreachable due to ISIL's hold on the area, are now receiving aid.[466] However, the majority of residents from Sinjar remain displaced in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR), where OFDA and FFP reportedly focused a large part of their assistance efforts.[467] During the quarter, OFDA, FFP, and PRM partners provided WASH, health, psychosocial services, shelter, food aid, and other non-food item assistance to IDPs from Ninewa province and other areas of Iraq in the IKR.[468]

Near the end of the quarter, the Iraqi government and its allies began an assault on ISIL-controlled villages in Ninewa as part of a campaign to

recapture the city of Mosul, ISIL's stronghold in Iraq.[469] Fighting primarily occurred south of Mosul as government forces advanced towards the village of Qayyarah, which is located approximately 35 miles south of Mosul.[470] Thousands of people have reportedly fled in advance of the offensive, arriving in the district of Makhmur in Kirkuk province, where government forces preparing for the recapture of Mosul are based and where humanitarian responders were providing assistance to newly displaced persons.[471]

While thousands of people were displaced during the quarter, Iraq also continued to see many others return to their places of origin. IOM reported that, due to improved security conditions and the liberation of cities and villages, more than 557,000 people had returned to their places of origin in Iraq between January 2014 and early March 2016.[472] This figure grew by nearly 90,000 over the first 2 months of the quarter.[473] As of March 2, 2016, Salah al-Din province had registered the largest number of returnees in Iraq, or 47 percent of the total.[474] In Ninewa province, which accounted for 23 percent of all returnees, the northern districts of Tel Afar and Tilkaif witnessed significant returns of displaced persons during the reporting period.[475] Improved security conditions also facilitated the return of approximately 5,000 people to Ninewa's Sinjar district, an area controlled by ISIL until November 2015.[476] ISIL's continued hold on territory just 6 miles from the district capital, Sinjar city, reportedly prevented further returns to the area.[477]

Financial constraints in the Iraqi government and Kurdish regional government led to worsening conditions for those in need during the quarter.[478] The decline of global oil prices, a resource which both governments rely on for 90 percent of their respective revenue streams, has been a major contributor to these difficulties.[479] From March 2014 to March 2016, the global price of a barrel of Brent crude oil fell from nearly $108.00 to $39.00, with significant economic effects on Iraq.[480] According to OFDA and PRM, these conditions have hampered the government's ability to provide services throughout the country.[481] OFDA and PRM reported that the Iraqi government was not able to pay government worker salaries, including those of healthcare workers and that related services are now in short supply.[482] These shortages have reportedly placed an even greater demand on humanitarian responders to provide assistance in Iraq and caused friction within Iraqi society.[483] According to USAID and PRM, tension has grown between displaced persons and host communities, as well as Syrian Refugees, as IDPs and refugees in some areas, particularly the IKR, received greater assistance than was available to host community residents at public facilities.[484] USAID OIG has noted that funding constraints and tensions between IDPs and host communities increased uncertainty concerning the sustainability of humanitarian assistance efforts in some communities in the past.[485]

During the quarter, OFDA reported that it maintained the same portfolio of awards in Iraq from the previous quarter, funding 24 awards to 20 implementing partners.[486] OFDA reported that it provided assistance throughout all 18 provinces in Iraq, but that its efforts were most heavily concentrated in the northern provinces of Dohuk, Ninewa, Kirkuk, and Erbil.[487] Services provided through these awards ranged from emergency assistance for IDPs and conflict-affected persons, health assistance, logistics and relief commodities, shelter, WASH, and psychosocial support.[488] OFDA awards in Iraq often supported the provision of several types of assistance to meet the diverse needs of conflict-affected persons.[489] Shelter efforts were, for example, commonly provided in conjunction with other forms of assistance, including relief commodities, protection, WASH, and winterization support.[490] OFDA also reported that it continued to fund awards to address unique or specific assistance needs in Iraq. For example, OFDA continued to support an implementer with the development of the Mosul Dam early warning system and funded assistance efforts for saving the lives and protecting the dignity of displaced young women and girls.[491]

FFP-supported food assistance efforts in Iraq are conducted through WFP.[492] During the quarter, WFP aimed to assist 1.5 million IDPs and conflict-affected people per month through monthly household food parcels, immediate response rations, and food vouchers.[493] During the quarter, FFP provided funding for the first two forms of assistance.[494] Immediate response rations are designed to meet the most urgent food needs of families for three days, while family food parcels are provided to cover 80 percent of the caloric needs of a family of five for 30 days.[495] For example, in one of many deliveries during the reporting period, WFP, with FFP assistance, distributed 3,312 immediate response rations to 2,645 displaced and returnee families in January 2016. These displaced and returnee families had recently arrived in Anbar, Diyala, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din provinces.[496] More generally, in February 2016, with FFP's support, WFP reportedly provided immediate response rations to approximately 640,000 displaced Iraqis across all 18 provinces, including more than 15,000 people fleeing conflict areas.[497]

FFP reported that 100 percent of FFP funding announced by the end of the quarter in FY2016 has supported Locally and Regionally Purchased (LRP) foods in Iraq.[498] LRP is a method of providing emergency food assistance by procuring food from local and regional markets.[499] In Iraq, FFP reported that LRP efforts have enabled it to reach more people and reduce the cost of providing food assistance by 24 percent when compared to Title II in-kind food assistance.[500] An additional $20 million in funding for these efforts was announced during the reporting period.[501]

As of March 31, 2016, PRM reported that it was providing humanitarian assistance to Iraqi refugees in the region and Iraqi IDPs through 19 different awards to implementing partners. These awards addressed a variety of needs, such as education, shelter, winterization supplies, protection, and mental health care, while combatting gender-based violence and promoting livelihood development. PRM funding to non-governmental organizations and international organizations such as UNHCR, IOM, and UNICEF, among others, enabled these organizations to carry out humanitarian activities for vulnerable Iraqis in Iraq and in neighboring countries. PRM did not announce any new funding this quarter.[502]

In northern Iraq, PRM programs sought to address education, protection, and other needs of vulnerable Iraqis including those displaced and members of the communities hosting them in both camp and non-camp settings. PRM noted that one program provided more than 130 IDPs group therapy sessions in Dohuk, while 79 Syrian refugees and Iraqi IDPs received individual counselling sessions from a psychosocial professional. Another implementing partner reportedly trained more than 300 teachers in best practices for addressing emotional trauma in the classroom, and established and trained 25 parent-teacher associations to promote refugee and host-community parents in their children's education. Yet another implementing partner used PRM funding to provide clean drinking water, sanitation system improvements, and hygiene education to more than 87,000 Syrian refugees and host community members in northern Iraq. With PRM support, this partner also constructed three schools that can accommodate up to 1,000 students each, drawing from a mixed student population of refugees, IDPs, and host community children.[503]

PRM reported that, in central and southern Iraq, its programs primarily supported IDPs newly displaced by fighting with ISIL, vulnerable IDPs, host-community members, and other conflict-affected Iraqis. In March 2016, one PRM partner provided food rations and water to more than 12,000 displaced civilians who had fled the villages surrounding Heet, in Anbar province, according to PRM. PRM also supports the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR's) work to provide protection in Iraq. UNHCR provided legal counselling to 654 individuals in the month of January, and it intervened with local authorities to prevent the deportation of 78 IDP families from their temporary accommodations in Baghdad.[504]

Although its operations began in late 2015, the majority of UNHCR's winterization assistance for IDPs, refugees, and vulnerable host communities was provided during the quarter, according to PRM. UNHCR provided core relief items to 84,290 IDP families, and complemented the Iraqi government's kerosene ration for IDPs by providing more than 15 million liters of kerosene

As of March 31, 2016, PRM reported that it was providing humanitarian assistance to Iraqi refugees in the region and Iraqi IDPs through 19 different awards to implementing partners.

to 58,337 IDP families, as well as 200 particularly vulnerable host community families. A total of 13,564 Syrian refugee families in Iraq reportedly received core relief items, in addition to cash disbursements and kerosene.[505]

PRM reported that its programs assisted Iraqi refugees in the region this quarter through contributions to UN agencies and NGO programs. PRM supported UNHCR in providing a range of services for Iraqi refugees, including registration, basic assistance, and access to healthcare and education. PRM continued its assistance to NGOs in Jordan to assist the approximately 55,000 Iraqi refugees in that country. UNHCR also provided winterization assistance to Iraqi refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. A total of 36,402 Iraqi refugees in Turkey received cash assistance or winter clothes and heaters, on par with what was provided for Syrian refugees in Turkey. Another 6,300 Iraqi refugees in Lebanon received warm winter blankets and cash assistance, while 30,396 Iraqi refugees in Jordan received cash assistance.[506]

Peshmerga soldiers rehearse urban tactical movement at a training base near Erbil, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

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COMPLETED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Section 8L of the Inspector General Act, as amended, established the Lead IG model and created a structure for planning, conducting, and reporting on oversight of overseas contingency operations. This section of the report provides information on Lead IG staffing to perform these functions; outreach efforts; completed oversight work related to audits, inspections, evaluations, and investigations; and hotline activity. Ongoing and planned oversight activities are discussed in the next section.

For this report, we are focusing on completed oversight activity or results realized during the 6-month period, October 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016. In future reports, oversight activities will be discussed on a quarterly basis, with information covering a three-month period.

Appendix B provides a description of the Lead IG model.

Staffing and Outreach

Over the last 6 months, the Lead IG agencies have continued to staff their respective organizations with individuals possessing the knowledge and skills needed to immediately contribute to OIR oversight efforts. The Lead IG staffing strategy includes assigning permanent staff for overseas contingency operations (OCO) oversight, as well as hiring new staff, through the special hiring authority provided within title 5 USC 3161 and the re-employment of annuitants provided within section 9902. Each Lead IG agency has assigned current permanent staff as well as newly hired 3161 staff to the oversight projects identified in this report and in support of the strategic oversight planning and reporting responsibilities.

The Lead IG agencies have adopted an expeditionary workforce model to support audit, evaluation, and inspection efforts throughout the region. For example, DoD OIG has a field office in Kuwait in support of its regional activity with a small contingent of oversight staff assigned to that office on 6-month rotations. In addition, oversight teams from the Lead IG agencies travel to Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Turkey, and other locations in the region on a temporary basis to conduct the field work for their respective projects.

For their investigative work, the Lead IG agencies have hired and deployed senior leadership and investigators to the region. Since October 2015, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), the DoD OIG investigative component, has begun to to bolster its activities in the region by deploying several Special Agents to Kuwait, Qatar, and Djibouti. These DCIS agents have been assigned to detect and investigate fraud and corruption relating to DoD's role in supporting overseas contingency operations. For example,

DCIS deployed three additional Special Agents to Kuwait to address anticipated procurement fraud, corruption, and other offenses involving OIR. The increased staffing levels have already resulted in the initiation of new procurement fraud and corruption investigations. During the reporting period, DCIS hired a senior Special Agent to serve as program manager for investigative activity relating to Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR).

DoS OIG also hired a senior Special Agent to direct Lead IG-related operations and conduct other investigations relating to DoS involvement in overseas contingency operations. The program director coordinates and provides oversight of OCO-related investigations conducted by DoS Special Agents based in the United States and overseas, including the recently established DoS OIG office in Frankfurt, Germany. DoS OIG is hiring another senior Special Agent who will be based in Baghdad and will focus exclusively on OCO-related investigations in the region.

Outreach is a critical component of our Lead IG work. In February 2016, the DoD Acting Inspector General and other senior Lead IG personnel visited the OIR region to meet with senior commanders and discuss ongoing and future oversight Lead IG projects. This trip included a visit to Incirlik, Turkey, one of the main bases from where Coalition aircraft strike ISIL targets in Iraq and Syria, and a visit to Stuttgart, Germany, to meet with the Commanders of U.S. African Command and U.S. European Command and discuss the spread of ISIL to these theaters. The group also visited Kuwait and Iraq to meet with the officers who oversee the day-to-day conduct of the campaign to counter ISIL, including Lieutenant General MacFarland, Commander, CJTF-OIR.

Additionally, to stay current on OIR activities and initiatives, senior Lead IG officials routinely meet with policy officials, collect information, and conduct research related to the military campaign, governance activities, and humanitarian assistance. Senior Lead IG officials also meet with congressional staff to discuss OIR activities and completed, ongoing, and planned oversight.

Investigative briefings and the Lead IG Hotline are other avenues for outreach and are discussed in more detail at the end of this section.

Audit, Inspection, and Evaluation Activities

Lead IG agencies released 11 reports relating to OIR from October 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016. The DoD OIG also completed two research projects during this time frame—on DoD reporting of financial and operational information for OIR and a project examining U.S. military housing in the Middle East. The DOD OIG did not issue a report for either of these research projects, but used the information collected during these projects to plan new projects.

Final Reports

The following reports completed during this reporting period addressed OIR-related matters:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

DoD Components Did Not Properly Use the Acquisition and Cross Service Agreement Automated Tracking and Reporting System

DODIG-2016-067. March 24, 2016

The DoD OIG evaluated whether DoD Components properly used two bilateral information-sharing agreements between the United States and several other countries—the Acquisition and Cross-Service Agreement (ACSA) Global Automated Tracking and Reporting System (AGATRS) in support of OIR. The DoD OIG determined that Army Central Command and Air Force Central Command personnel did not properly use AGATRS in support of OIR. Specifically, these two commands did not include all minimum essential data elements on ACSA orders, upload source documents supporting line items on orders into AGATRS, or close ACSA orders. As a result, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and Combatant Commanders had limited oversight of logistics support, supplies, and services transactions executed in support of OIR. For example, CJCS did not have assurance that 142 orders, valued at $223 million, were accurate or had been reimbursed.

During the audit, the audit met with Army and Air Force officials and suggested that each Service update ACSA procedures to comply with CJCS Instruction and the DoD Financial Management Regulation. We also informed U.S. Army Central (ARCENT) that there were deficiencies in the Command's ACSA orders in AGATRS. Specifically, we identified ACSA orders that did not meet the requirements outlined in the CJCS Instruction and the DoD Federal Management Regulation. The management actions taken during the audit addressed our suggestions; therefore, we are not making any additional recommendations.

U.S. Army Central and U.S. Army Contracting Command–Rock Island Need to Improve Facility Maintenance at King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center

DODIG-2016-065, March 23, 2016

The DoD OIG evaluated whether DoD effectively maintained facilities at King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center, a facility in Jordan owned and operated by the Government of Jordan and designed with the

support of the U.S. Government. The training center provides reality-based training for special operations forces, counter-terrorism units, and law enforcement agencies. The DoD OIG audit determined that ARCENT and U.S. Army Contracting Command−Rock Island (ACC-RI) officials did not effectively maintain facilities at King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center. Specifically, the (1) Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) did not monitor the contractor's obligation to install fire extinguishers and smoke detectors; (2) ARCENT officials did not include a requirement in the contract to prevent or remove mold and mildew or to ensure the safety of facilities, infrastructure, and equipment for military operations; (3) ARCENT and ACC-RI officials did not develop appropriate requirements in the contract for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning repair and replacement times; and (4) ARCENT and ACC-RI officials did not verify that King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center facilities received periodic maintenance in accordance with the contract or create a reliable process to track repairs.

During the audit, the DoD OIG informed the Director, CENTCOM Forward–Jordan, of the health and safety concerns, and the Director took immediate action to have the facilities inspected, ensure that the contractor is completing facility repairs and periodic maintenance in accordance with the contract, and ensure that the Executive Director, ACC–RI review and modify the basic life support services contract.

Equipping and Training Iraq and Afghan Security Forces U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Train, Advise, Assist, and Equip Iraqi Sunni Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF)

DODIG-2016-055 (classified), February 29, 2016

The DoD OIG assessed the extent to which U.S. and Coalition Forces efforts to train, advise, assist, and equip Sunni Popular Mobilization Forces (PMFs) enabled the combat readiness and successful integration of these forces into the Iraqi Security Forces. The Government of Iraq established the PMF program to organize volunteer militias in the fight against ISIL. This program includes members of Sunni tribes whose traditional homelands were under ISIL control. To assist the Government of Iraq in developing its security forces to fight ISIL, Congress authorized the $1.6 billion Iraq Train and Equip Fund in 2015. The fund authorized assistance to local security forces with a national security mission that were vetted and approved through section 8059 of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, P. L. 113-235, December 16, 2014, and section 1236 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2015 requirements. Both the Iraq Train and Equip Fund and title 10, U.S.C. funds used to assist PMFs established requirements for vetting recipients before training or equipping could be conducted, including vetting of recipients for gross human

rights violations, associations with terrorist organizations or the Government of Iran, and a commitment to promote human rights.

The report contained five findings and three observations. The findings identified five topics resulting in eight recommendations. These topics concerned U.S. and Coalition efforts to build relationships with Sunni PMFs and the Government of Iraq; logistics support to Sunni PMFs; measuring the progress of Sunni PMF development; integration of the Sunni PMF with other Iraqi Security Forces; and vetting of Sunni PMFs. The observations identified three areas for continued improvement including future planning efforts, vetting procedures, and timely reporting by DoD to Congress on the use of the Iraq Train and Equip Fund. This report is classified. *This report was featured on page 29.*

The Army Did Not Fully Document Procedures for Processing Wholesale Equipment in Kuwait

DODIG-2016-056, February 24, 2016

The objective of this DoD OIG audit was to determine whether the Army had effective controls for processing equipment—rolling stock (mine resistant vehicles, wrecker trucks, and cargo trucks) and non-rolling stock (radio sets, encryption devices, transmitter-receivers, and armament subsystems)—in Kuwait. This was the second in a series of audits on property accountability in support of OIR.

The DoD OIG found that Army Field Support Battalion–Kuwait generally had effective controls for processing (receiving, repairing, maintaining, storing, and preparing for issue) equipment at Camp Arifjan; however, it did not update existing standard operating procedures for processing Army Pre-Positioned Stock equipment or formalize its procedures for processing retrograde equipment. This occurred because Army Field Support Brigade–Kuwait relied upon experienced Department of Army civilians to provide guidance to receive, maintain, and issue equipment instead of reviewing the existing standard operating procedures to determine areas requiring updates and documenting the procedures being used. As a result, oversight of processing and maintaining equipment could be done in an ad hoc manner as experienced personnel redeploy, increasing the risk that equipment is misreported to Army Sustainment Command, unaccounted for, or stolen.

During the audit, the DoD OIG notified Commanders of the 401st Army Field Support Brigade and Army Field Support Battalion–Kuwait that deficiencies in the controls for processing wholesale equipment existed. The Commanders agreed and took immediate action to resolve the deficiencies. For example, Army Field Support Battalion–Kuwait agreed to create new wholesale

equipment standard operating procedures that will incorporate updated Army Pre-Positioned Stock procedures and establish retrograde procedures.

U.S. Army Central Did Not Implement Controls to Effectively Manage the Shared Cost of Administrative Support Functions in Iraq

DODIG-2016-048, February 17, 2016

ARCENT initially signed an interagency agreement with the Department of State to temporarily use and pay for DoS-provided life-support services. However, during the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2015, DoD agreed to subscribe to the Department of State's International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) for support in Iraq for Fiscal Year 2016. Army Central Command did not develop controls to effectively manage the shared cost of administrative support functions in Iraq after Fiscal Year 2016. Specifically, ARCENT did not establish procedures to determine and verify ICASS modification levels and workload counts; designate a representative to participate in the post's ICASS budget committee or council; or require ICASS training for personnel before deployment. These shortfalls occurred because ARCENT and Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve did not determine who would be responsible for implementing ICASS in Iraq. Without appropriate controls, DoD cannot ensure that the shared costs of administrative support services are appropriately calculated and distributed for the fiscal years after FY 2016, and DoD is at increased risk of overpaying for ICASS shared costs.

During the audit, we informed ARCENT that the temporary measures ARCENT enacted did not establish controls over the shared cost of administrative functions in Iraq after FY 2016. ARCENT agreed and initiated steps to implement our suggested corrective actions. In December 2015, ARCENT developed standard operating procedures in which it formally accepted responsibility for ICASS implementation. The management actions taken during the audit addressed our suggestions, so we did not make any recommendations.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

Evaluation of Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor Iraq Programs in Support of Line of Effort 1 of the President's Strategy to Counter ISIL: Supporting Effective Governance in Iraq

ISP-I-16-09, March 1, 2016

DoS OIG found that all 12 active DRL grants files in Iraq Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) contained monitoring plans, risk assessment

or contingency plans, and performance indicators. However, DRL did not report grant recipient performance indicator data but instead reported narrative performance summaries. Without the reporting of performance indicator data, the Department and Embassy Baghdad cannot determine whether DRL grants are meeting program objectives. The Bureau of Administration also improperly designated six contractors to serve as grants officer representatives, thus allowing contractors to perform inherently governmental functions. *This report was featured on page 54.*

Evaluation of Embassy Baghdad's Implementation of Line of Effort 6 in the President's Strategy to Counter ISIL: Exposing ISIL's True Nature

ISP-I-16-10, March 1, 2016

DoS OIG conducted an evaluation of Embassy Baghdad's activities supporting the OIR line of effort, Exposing ISIL's True Nature. Embassy Baghdad's Public Affairs Section has the lead responsibility for information and programmatic communications activities to counter ISIL. DoS OIG found that Embassy Baghdad's public diplomacy activities operate without formal strategic planning and goals. None of the embassy's Integrated Country Strategy goals or objectives contained language relating to public diplomacy generally or to counter ISIL messaging, specifically. The report noted an absence of these planning tools and recommended that both be completed. *This report was featured on page 49.*

Evaluation of Embassy Baghdad's Implementation of Line of Effort 1 in the President's Strategy to Counter ISIL: Supporting Effective Governance in Iraq

ISP-I-16-11, March 16,2016

DoS OIG conducted an evaluation of Embassy Baghdad's diplomatic engagement in implementation of governance, the first line of effort in the strategy to counter ISIL. Embassy Baghdad and its country team have primary responsibility for implementing this line of effort, assisted by Consulates in Basrah and Erbil, through engagement with officials from the Government of Iraq, the Kurdistan Regional Government, Iraqi provinces, partner countries in the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, and multilateral organizations. DoS's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs formulates overall Iraq policy in an interagency process, under the direction of the National Security Council and in coordination with the Special Presidential Envoy to the Global Coalition.

The report assesses the extent to which the Embassy has developed quantitative and qualitative performance metrics for activities associated with implementing this line of effort. The report also assesses whether the Department of State has identified financial resources, expected outcomes,

risks, and interagency roles related to stabilization activities across Executive Branch agencies for Iraq stabilization. The remainder of the report's findings and recommendations is classified and not available in this setting. *This report was featured on page 55.*

Audit of Bureau of Diplomatic Security Worldwide Protective Services Contract Task Order 8 — Security Services at U.S. Consulate Erbil

AUD-MERO-16-30, March 28, 2016

On behalf of the DoS OIG, Kearney and Company, P.C. (Kearney) reviewed a sample of 52 invoices totaling $93.3 million that DynCorp submitted as of September 30, 2015, and is questioning $10.8 million of the costs approved by the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR). Specifically, Kearney questions $807,507 in costs considered unallowable based on the contract terms, applicable laws, or regulations. Kearney is also questioning $10 million in costs not adequately supported in accordance with the contract terms. The COR approved these costs primarily because Diplomatic Security did not have a sufficient process to review and approve world protective services invoices. Specifically, Diplomatic Security did not have documented procedures for CORs to follow when reviewing and approving invoices. Additionally, Diplomatic Security did not provide training to CORs on how to perform an in-depth review of invoices. Further, the Bureau of Administration's Office of Logistics Management, Office of Acquisitions Management did not formally modify the contract where Diplomatic Security allowed DynCorp to deviate from the base contract. Finally, the Office of Acquisitions Management signed and executed modifications to DynCorp's approved pricing schedules as much as a year after their stated effective dates.

Audit of Bureau of Diplomatic Security Worldwide Protective Services Contract Task Order 3 – Baghdad Embassy Security Force

AUD-MERO-16-28, February 25, 2016

DoS OIG found that although the contractor did not initially meet several contract requirements such as staffing, English language proficiency, and implementing a biometric time and attendance system, the contractor executed corrective actions to address the deficiencies. DoS OIG reviewed all 1,016 invoices totaling $466 million submitted by the contractor as of December 31, 2014, and is questioning $7.2 million of the costs approved by the Contracting Officer's Representative.

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Survey of Selected USAID/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance Programs in Iraq

8-267-16-001-S, February 10, 2016

USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and its partners mobilized to assess the needs of internally displaced people (IDP) in Iraq in response to the armed conflict and subsequent humanitarian crisis in Iraq that began in 2014 and displaced 1.8 million people. OIG conducted this survey to determine how OFDA was responding and what steps OFDA and its partners have taken to manage and mitigate risks. OFDA and its partners faced risks related to a deteriorating security situation and security conditions that limited access to safely deliver assistance. Other challenges included an inability to reach IDPs due to restricted access by local governments and other problems related to a lack of unification and coordination among local governments. In addition, several partners found fraud schemes designed by approved vendors in the NFI voucher program as well as in some cash assistance programs. OFDA and partners were working to manage and challenges with program in Iraq.

Investigations

The criminal-investigative components of the DoD, DoS, and USAID OIGs conducted investigations related to OIR and coordinated their investigative efforts. They all participate in the Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group for OIR, which includes the Lead IG agency components and representatives from the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. The group met regularly during the reporting period to share and deconflict information regarding ongoing investigations. For example, during the period, information concerning 36 criminal cases was shared across the member agencies.

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIVE EFFORTS

As of March 31, 2016, the Lead IG agencies have 35 ongoing OIR-related investigations. The bulk of these investigations relate to procurement fraud. Several ongoing investigations resulted in over $1 million in savings, a partial termination of an award, and multiple suspensions. Described below are the completed and ongoing investigative efforts by DCIS, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG.

Defense Criminal Investigative Service

During this period, DCIS was conducting nine criminal investigations and six investigative projects relating to OIR. Four of the investigations focused on procurement fraud; three involved corruption, including bribery and financial conflicts of interest; and two related to theft, including larceny, embezzlement, and misappropriation of property and equipment. The investigative projects do not involve specific allegations pertaining to a specific person or business, but are used as proactive efforts to collect information from potential sources and evaluate this information in places where the environment is ripe for fraud, such as in contingency operations. Because these investigative efforts are ongoing, the details cannot be disclosed in this report.

DCIS closed one criminal investigation where the allegations were unfounded and completed four information reports during this period, three of which were closed after DCIS determined that the allegations did not merit further investigation. The final information report was referred to a DoD OIG component for further review.

As of March 31, 2016, DCIS continued to investigate 37 “legacy cases” pertaining to actions committed during Operation Iraqi Freedom and its immediate successor, Operation New Dawn, which concluded in December 2011.

Department of State OIG

DoS OIG has opened nine OIR-related investigations since October 1, 2015. Seven involve allegations of procurement fraud, one concerns allegations of theft, and the other addresses a reported instance of public corruption. The procurement-fraud cases involved a diverse array of alleged offenses, such as double-billing by a DoS grantee, a sub-grantee receiving kickbacks and diverting funds intended to aid Syrian refugees, and another sub-grantee billing both the European Union and the United States for the same expense.

DoS OIG also identified opportunities to strengthen reporting requirements related to allegations of improprieties in the administration of U.S. government grants, cooperative agreements, and other assistance awards. Since October 1, 2015, DoS OIG issued Management Assistance Reports (MARs) to the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). These MARs recommended incorporating language that included notice of the legal requirement to make a timely and written disclosure to the awarding agency or pass-through entity of all suspected violations of federal criminal law potentially affecting the award. The recommended language also suggested requiring disclosure to DoS OIG, with a copy to the responsible grants officer.

DoS and BBG both agreed with these DoS OIG recommendations. Following through on this analysis, DoS also issued guidance to amend accordingly all active grants, cooperative agreements, and other assistance awards at or above $1 million that have at least four months remaining in the period of performance. As of mid-April, DoS OIG had not received a response to these recommendations from the BBG.

DoS OIG also has nine remaining Operation Iraqi Freedom investigations, two-thirds of which involve procurement fraud. The other three matters relate to trafficking in persons, false claims, and public corruption.

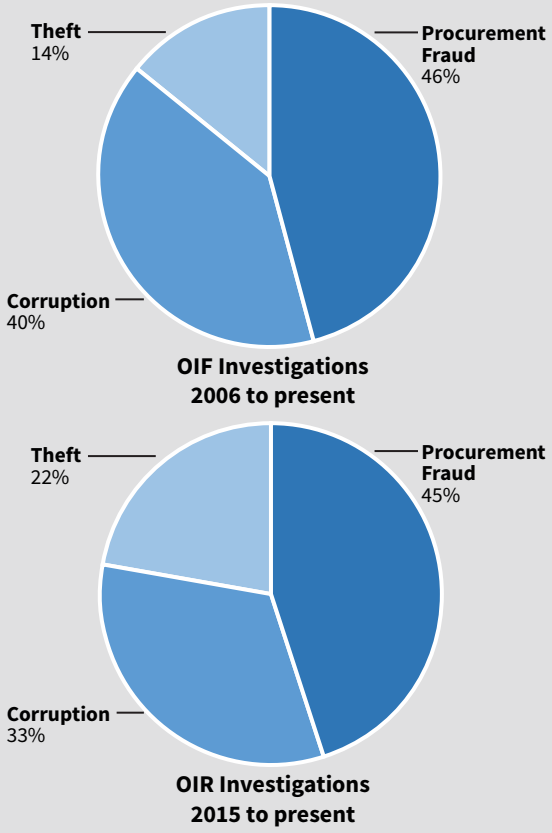
Investigative Analysis: Comparing Experiences from Prior U.S. Operations in Iraq to OIR

DCIS recently began comparing contract fraud and corruption investigations associated with Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and related operations to OIR investigations. This analysis aims to identify targets for fraud and corruption investigations, as well as suggest the best use of investigative resources. There were 117 OIF investigations since 2006, while OIR has nine investigations since 2015. As shown in the figures below, procurement fraud accounts for almost half the investigative caseload for both, followed by corruption cases.

An example of how this analysis of past experience informs the process is visible in a current investigation of potential contract fraud. A DCIS review of a recently-issued construction contract disclosed potential vulnerabilities concerning the quality of concrete used for construction and the possibility of false reporting of manpower labor hours. This information was forwarded to DCIS personnel who determined that the quality of concrete used in construction was inferior. Further investigation has identified additional allegations, which are currently under review and therefore cannot be detailed in this report. ■

Figure 2.

Comparison of Investigation Types



U.S AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OIG

From October 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016, USAID OIG received 38 complaints concerning OIR-related humanitarian operations (out of a total of 98 new complaints received by USAID OIG since the crisis began). After evaluating these complaints, USAID OIG opened seven investigations and referred four matters to USAID and other agencies. USAID OIG had a total of 23 active investigations at the end of the reporting period.

Investigative results achieved by USAID OIG during the reporting period include:

- **Partial Termination of a USAID-funded Syria Cross-border Program and a Savings of $968,319.** An ongoing USAID OIG investigation revealed systemic weaknesses on the part of an implementer in the procurement, storage, handling, transportation, and distribution of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies purchased for use in Syria. As part of the investigation, USAID OIG personnel physically inspected materials on hand in several warehouses operated by the implementer, reviewed associated documentation, and interviewed key personnel. USAID OIG shared its findings regarding these issues, as well as procurement irregularities identified in the course of the ongoing investigation, with USAID, which conducted a concurrent inspection of the warehouses and materials in question. In March 2016, USAID partially terminated the implementer's award for failing to comply with terms and conditions. As a result of the partial termination, the implementer canceled a planned and approved procurement of additional pharmaceuticals valued at $968,319.
- **$106,060 in Savings and the Suspension of Two Turkish Entities.** In January 2016, USAID OIG distributed a questionnaire to all USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Response (OFDA) and Food for Peace implementing partners in Turkey and Iraq. USAID OIG distributed the questionnaire to collect information from implementing partners possibly affected by collusion, product substitution, and bribery schemes identified during an ongoing investigation into vendors in Turkey. As a result of this questionnaire, a USAID implementing partner carried out additional oversight of its procurement activities and vendor, which was listed in the questionnaire. The implementing partner identified discrepancies in food baskets purchased for distribution in Syria and determined that the vendor fraudulently profited $106,060 by manipulating the contents of more than 55,000 food baskets. Because of the difficult operating environment within Syria, USAID OIG assumed an advisory role during the implementer's internal review. In March 2016, the implementer committed to not charging USAID for this amount

and determined it would no longer work with the vendor. In addition, in March 2016, USAID suspended the vendor and its owner.

- **Investigations in Turkey and Jordan Result in Suspensions at OFDA Projects.** Two ongoing USAID OIG investigations revealed possible product substitution, bribery, and procurement fraud in USAID-funded non-food item procurements conducted for the Syria cross-border program. One case currently involves multiple OFDA-funded projects in Turkey and the other one concerns an OFDA-funded project in Jordan. As a result of preliminary investigative data USAID OIG shared with USAID in December 2015, USAID suspended certain program activities carried out by the relevant implementing partners. USAID OIG also referred 24 entities to the USAID Suspension and Debarment Office for potential administrative action.
- **Twelve Turkish Companies and Individuals Suspended and Three Implementer Staff Members Terminated.** In January 2016, as a result of a USAID OIG investigation, five companies operating in Turkey and seven of the companies' owners and operators were suspended from receiving U.S. government awards. These companies and individuals were found to have violated federal or state antitrust statutes by colluding to win an award to provide supplies to displaced persons under two USAID-funded programs. In January 2016, one affected implementing partner terminated two staff members from its Turkey office who had accepted money from vendors in exchange for steering contracts to them. In March 2016, the other affected partner followed suit, firing one staff member from its Turkey office.

Other USAID OIG investigative oversight activities completed during the period include:

- **Analyzing potential programmatic and budgetary overlap between OIR-related USAID and State Department-funded humanitarian relief projects.** This analysis revealed both agencies are funding many of the same implementers. USAID and DoS also support numerous international public organizations that carry out their work using many of the same implementers. For example, USAID OIG identified that 15 of 28 implementers (53%) receiving Syria-related OFDA funding also receive funding from the State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). A sixteenth overlapping partner in Syria has ongoing awards from USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives and DoS's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. In Iraq, eight implementing partners currently receive awards from USAID OFDA and DoS PRM or DRL. USAID OIG conducted this analysis jointly with DoS OIG and the two agencies continue to work closely together on this and other matters.

- **Reviewing incoming complaint data and interviews with implementing partners.** From this information, USAID OIG identified a number of risk factors and potential best practices used by implementing partners responding in the region. USAID OIG captured this knowledge in a Fraud Prevention and Compliance Handbook for USAID and its implementers. The handbook identifies programmatic risk factors and best practices for implementers operating in and around Syria and Iraq and identified best practices observed during USAID OIG's previous visits to USAID implementers in Turkey, Jordan, and Iraq. The handbook also includes a questionnaire USAID and implementers can use to evaluate internal controls. Questions were created from recurring trends that USAID OIG has indentified in cross-border humanitarian programs in the region.
- **Founding the Syria Investigations Working Group composed of representatives of the investigative oversight bodies of USAID OIG, DoS OIG, and other agencies working in the Middle East.** The group shares investigative leads, coordinates oversight activities, and identifies trends in the region. USAID OIG hosted the group's first teleconference in early November and a second teleconference in December. In February 2016, USAID OIG hosted the group's first in-person conference at the United States Mission to the United Nations in Geneva. The conference was attended by representatives of ten international organizations and bilateral donors. Information shared within the group has already aided three ongoing USAID OIG investigations.

Investigative Briefings

Each Lead IG investigative component provided many fraud awareness briefings during this reporting period. In total, during the reporting period, investigators conducted over 120 briefings and connected with over 1,100 individuals.

- DCIS personnel provided 110 fraud-awareness briefings to almost 1,000 U.S. Government and contract employees supporting OIR at various installations worldwide.
- DoS OIG investigators conducted six fraud awareness briefings for approximately 90 individuals, including both U.S. Government employees and contractors.
- USAID OIG conducted three fraud awareness briefings to 62 individuals relating to OIR. Additionally, in February 2016, a joint USAID OIG and DoS OIG team provided five fraud awareness presentations to 84 implementer staff members in Jordan.

Hotline Activity

Hotline awareness is an important aspect of the Lead IG outreach efforts and has been ongoing since the Lead IG designation for OIR occurred in December 2014. The DoD OIG has a Lead IG Hotline investigator to proactively discuss the attributes of the hotline, and coordinate the contacts received through the hotline, among the Lead IG agencies and others. The investigator, who deploys periodically, reinforces an education campaign on preventing, detecting, and reporting fraud, waste, and abuse as it relates to OIR activities.

In addition to the investigative briefings described above, the Lead IG Hotline investigator conducts in-theater fraud awareness briefings and training events for commanders, service members, DoD civilians, contractors, and facility directors at military installations throughout Iraq, Kuwait, and Qatar. In addition, this representative works closely with Joint Staff and CENTCOM IGs in theater on Hotline matters and conducts outreach with the Services IG hotline coordinators to educate them on Lead IG matters. Through these periodic visits, the Lead IG Hotline investigator maintains open lines of communication with rotating commanders and staff and communicates the presence and accessibility of the DoD OIG to deployed military, civilian, and contractor personnel.

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline, processes complaints or contacts received, and refers these complaints or contacts according to its respective protocols. The Lead IG Hotline investigator coordinates the hotline activities among the Lead IG agencies and other OIR-related organizations. During the reporting period, the Lead IG Hotline investigator received and coordinated 84 contacts related to OIR and opened 102 cases. These contacts were referred within DoD OIG, the Lead IG agencies, or other investigative organizations for review and, as appropriate, investigation.

During the reporting period, the Lead IG Hotline investigator received and coordinated 84 contacts related to OIR and opened 102 cases.

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Sailors inspect ordnance on the flight deck of the USS Harry S. Truman in the Arabian Sea. (U.S. Navy photo)

ONGOING AND PLANNED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY

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ONGOING AND PLANNED OVERSIGHT

This section of the report discusses ongoing and planned oversight work by the Lead IG agencies, in addition to our strategic planning process. The ongoing and planned audit, inspection, and evaluation projects are listed in separate tables. Information contained in this section is as of March 31, 2016.

Audit, Inspection, and Evaluation Activities

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Fiscal Year 2016 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for OIR was effective October 1, 2015.

The Plan categorizes OIR-related oversight projects into five strategic oversight areas. These areas include:

- Oversight of contracts
- Operations
- Governance
- Humanitarian and Development Assistance
- Intelligence

Representatives from Lead IG agencies, as well as from other Federal oversight entities, have been working to update this plan for Fiscal Year 2017, which will be published later this year. The overall goal of this strategic planning process is to identify and scope oversight projects that examine the economy, efficiency, or effectiveness of the programs and operations that the Federal agencies participating in OIR are employing to counter ISIL or provide refugee and humanitarian assistance. The Lead IG planning representatives are undertaking a strategic planning and analysis process to examine major Lead IG oversight areas, highlight strategic oversight priorities, balance

Lead IG Planning Responsibilities

To develop and carry out, in coordination with the Lead IG agencies, a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight over all aspects of the contingency operation and to ensure through either joint or individual audits, inspection, and investigations, independent and effective oversight of all programs and operations of the Federal government in support of the contingency operation. ■

Source: Section 8L, Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended

oversight resources across those priorities, and identify oversight gaps and where to assume risk. The OIR strategic objectives and annual appropriations to support the military, diplomatic, and humanitarian activities as well as feedback from departmental and congressional stakeholders are among the considerations that inform this strategic planning process. The Departments of Homeland Security, Justice, and the Treasury OIGs are also engaged in planning oversight work on OIR-related issues.

ONGOING AND PLANNED PROJECTS

Ongoing Projects

As of March 31, 2016, the oversight community has 36 ongoing projects directly related to OIR.

The table on page 118 provides the project title and objective for each of these projects.

The Lead IG agencies have ongoing work in the contract oversight area. The DoS OIG has ongoing audits of the transition services, overtime, and the fuel task orders under Baghdad Life Support Services contract and the Operations and Maintenance contract of U.S. Mission Iraq. The USAID OIG is auditing selected Middle East Missions' use of full and open competition.

Sixteen ongoing oversight projects related to operations. The operations category covers the military, diplomatic, and development programs and activities that support accomplishing the mission objectives to counter ISIL. In this area, for example, the DoD OIG has four projects related to the Iraq and Syria train, advise, assist, and equip programs and three projects involving the safety of military facilities. As discussed earlier in this report, the train, advise, assist, and equip programs are the cornerstone for the ground activity in Iraq and Syria and have a high degree of congressional interest. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) has five more projects examining aspects of these train and equip programs that are under the intelligence category. The DoS OIG has three ongoing operations projects inspecting two embassies and the Middle East Broadcasting Network.

GAO has a governance project related to the looting of antiquities from Iraq and Syria. The project is determining the activities of U.S. agencies to combat the destruction and trafficking of these antiquities and the resources dedicated to these activities.

The DoD OIG has another ongoing operations project to examine the adequacy of the accountability for Air Force funds supporting OIR. As previously noted, the Lead IG agencies share the responsibility, as required by Section 8L, to

ascertain the accuracy of the information related to the overseas contingency operation, and have begun a series of projects to meet this requirement.

The DoS OIG has two ongoing humanitarian and development assistance projects. One involves an audit of the vetting of Syrian non-lethal aid recipients and the other involves an inspection of the DoS PRM.

The Lead IG agencies have four ongoing humanitarian and development assistance projects. The DOS OIG has two ongoing projects—one involving an audit of the vetting of Syrian non-lethal aid recipients and the other involving an inspection of the DoS Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration. The USAID OIG also has two ongoing projects. One involves an audit of USAID's Lebanon's Quality Instruction Toward Access and Basic Education Improvement program and the other involves an audit of USAID's Jordan's Community Engagement Project.

In addition to the three DoD IG train and equip projects, the GAO has three ongoing projects in the intelligence category. These projects relate to intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance-related programs and processes.

Ongoing Oversight Projects, as of 3/31/2016

Project Title	Objective
Army Audit Agency	
Accountability and Reporting of Equipment Transferred to Vetted Syrian Opposition Forces	To verify that processes and procedures related to the accountability and reporting of equipment transferred to vetted Syrian opposition forces were sufficient to ensure compliance with provisions, as set forth in Section 1209 of the FY2015 National Defense Authorization Act and applicable regulations.
Funds Supporting Vetted Syrian Opposition Forces	To verify that funds supporting the training and equipping of vetted Syrian opposition forces were properly obligated and executed in accordance with the provisions set forth in Section 1209 of the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act and other applicable regulations.
Air Force Audit Agency	
AFCENT AOR Installation Infrastructure Planning	Determine whether implementation plans for installation development and sustainment adequately address mission requirements. Specifically, determine whether personnel accurately identify and plan civil engineering infrastructure and sustainment support to meet combatant commander's requirements.
AFCENT AOR Integrated Defense	Determine whether Air Force Personnel effectively planned and executed integrated defense at United States Air Forces Central locations. Specifically, determine if personnel properly identified critical assets, assessed risks, implemented security plans, and tested mitigation strategies.

Project Title	Objective
Consumable Item Demilitarization	Determine whether Air Force personnel properly disposed of consumable parts requiring demilitarization.
Department of Defense Office of Inspector General	
Audit of Reliability of Financial and Operational Data Reported for Operation Inherent Resolve	To determine whether the Air Force has adequate accountability of DOD funds supporting Operation Inherent Resolve by determining the accuracy of obligations and disbursements, as reported in the Cost of War. In addition, to determine the relevance of the Cost of War as it is used to satisfy legal requirements to report financial information for contingency operations.
Evaluation of U.S. Intelligence and Information Sharing with Coalition Partners in Support of Operation Inherent Resolve	To evaluate DOD's procedures and guidelines for sharing information, including intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), with Coalition partners in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.
Evaluation of ISR Capability Allocation Process for OIR	To evaluate 1) if decisions on ISR capability allocations for OIR were supported by a comprehensive cost-benefit assessment of CENTCOM's priority intelligence requirements; 2) the cost-benefit analysis tools used in the capability generation process.
Evaluation of Federated ISR Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination (PED) in Support of OIR	To evaluate 1) execution of established DOD procedures and guidelines for federated ISR PED in support of OIR; 2) if OIR ISR PED federation processes follow a cost-benefit approach
Assessment of DOD/CENTCOM and Coalition Plans/Efforts to Train, Advise, Assist, and Equip the Kurdish Security Forces	To determine the extent to which U.S. and Coalition Forces efforts to train, advise, assist, and equip the Kurdish Security Forces have enabled their combat effectiveness and successful integration into the Iraqi Security Forces.
Audit of Army Controls for Processing and Transferring Iraq Train and Equip Fund Equipment	To determine whether the Army had effective controls for processing and transferring Iraq Train and Equip Fund equipment to the Government of Iraq. This is one in a series of audits on property accountability in Kuwait and Iraq.
Assessment of U.S. and Coalition Plans/Efforts to Train, Advise, Assist, and Equip Iraqi Counterterrorism Service and the Iraqi Special Operations Forces	To assess the efforts of CENTCOM Special Operations Command and the Coalition to train, advise, assist, and equip the Iraqi Counterterrorism Service (CTS) and the Iraqi Special Operations Forces to conduct and sustain combat operations against ISIL
Evaluation of the Syria Train and Equip Program (Hotline)	To evaluate the Syria Train and Equip (T&E) Program's compliance with provisions authorized under the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act, Section 1209. In addition to our evaluation, we will determine the validity of a DOD OIG Hotline complaint concerning program execution.
Audit of Military Information Support Operations for Operation Inherent Resolve	To determine whether DOD effectively planned and executed Military Information Support Operations for Operation Inherent Resolve.

Project Title	Objective
Military Facilities Inspection - Camp Buehring, Kuwait	To determine whether U.S. military occupied facilities at Camp Buehring comply with DOD health and safety policies and standards regarding electrical, and fire protection systems. We will also conduct a radiation survey to determine whether ambient (background) radiation levels pose unacceptable health risks to the warfighters stationed at Camp Buehring.
Audit of Facilities Maintenance at the Joint Training Center in the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility	To determine whether DOD is effectively maintaining facilities at the Joint Training Center, Jordan. This is the third in a series of audits on facilities maintenance in Jordan.
Inspection of U.S. Occupied Military Facilities at King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center (KASOTC) Jordan	To determine whether U.S. military occupied facilities at King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Center comply with DOD health and safety policies and standards regarding electrical, and fire protection, and suppression systems. A radiation survey will also be conducted to determine whether current ambient (background) radiation levels pose unacceptable health risk concerns.
Department of State Office of Inspector General	
Audit of Task Orders for Transition Services and Overtime Under the Baghdad Life Support Services Contract	To determine whether the DoS is administering the Bagndad Life Support Services contract in accordance with acquisition regulations and whether the contractor is complying with contract terms and conditions.
Audit of Task Orders for Fuel Under the Baghdad Life Support Services Contract	To determine whether DoS oversight personnel implemented adequate controls to ensure the contractor, Pacific Architects and Engineering, is performing its duties of fuel acquisition, fuel distribution, and equipment maintenance in accordance with the contract terms and Federal regulations.
Audit of Department of State Management of the Operations and Maintenance Contract for U.S. Mission Iraq	To determine whether DoS is administering the contract for operations and maintenance in accordance with acquisition regulations and the contractor is complying with contract terms and conditions.
Audit of Department of State Vetting of Syrian Non-Lethal Aid Recipients	To determine whether DoS has complied with the process for vetting non-lethal aid recipients in Syria and whether the assistance provided has been used as intended.
Inspection of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, Inc	As part of the inspection of the Middle East Broadcasting Networks, to review obligations, expenditures, and program goals for overseas contingency operations funds appropriated to the BBG and allotted to the Middle East Broadcasting Networks.
Inspection of Embassy Cairo and Constituent Post	As part of the inspection of Embassy Cairo, to determine whether the Chief of Mission is effectively coordinating and supporting counter-ISIL programs and operations.
Inspection of Embassy Ankara and Constituent Posts	As part of the inspection of Embassy Ankara, to determine whether the Chief of Mission is effectively coordinating and supporting counter-ISIL programs and operations.

Project Title	Objective
Inspection of Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration	As part of the inspection of the overall programs and operations of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), to assess the effectiveness of PRM's humanitarian support activities in Iraq, Syria, and neighboring countries.
Government Accountability Office	
U.S. Efforts to Train and Equip the Vetted Syrian Opposition	To determine the U.S. plans for the Syrian Train and Equip Program; to determine the extent to which funds allocated to the Syria Train and Equip Program have been disbursed; to determine the progress made in training and equipping the vetted Syrian opposition.
DOD's Support for the Syria Train and Equip Program	To evaluate the extent to which DOD 1) identified roles and missions for the advisor teams, including personnel, equipment, and training requirements; 2) met these requirements, including any potential impact on the readiness of units providing advisors; 3) incorporated lessons learned from its prior advisory experience in structure, preparing, and executing this advisor mission; and 4) provided enablers, such as force protection and base security, to the train and equip mission.
U.S. Efforts to Vet Syrian Opposition	To understand the extent to which the U.S. government has vetted Syrian opposition groups and members who participate in the Syria Train and Equip Program for 1) associations with terrorist groups, Shia militias, and the Government of Iran and 2) a commitment to respect human rights; to determine the roles and responsibilities of U.S. agencies and the international coalition partners in assisting U.S. efforts to vet the Syrian opposition; and 3) to determine the status of U.S. vetting efforts, including the outcome of the vetting.
U.S. Efforts to Train and Equip Iraqi Security Forces	To understand the U.S. Government plans for training and equipping the Iraqi forces; the extent to which U.S. funds been allocated, committed, and disbursed for training and equipping the Iraqi Forces; and the progress made in implementing the U.S. plans to train and equip the Iraqi forces.
Vetting Iraqi Security Forces for Human Rights and Terrorism	To assess 1) the processes and procedures in place to ensure that Iraqi Security Forces personnel receiving training and equipment are vetted for violations of human rights or for associations with terrorist organizations; 2) the extent to which the U.S. Government has complied with policies and procedures to vet Iraqi security forces for human rights violations and associations with terrorist organizations; and 3) the extent to which the vetting process resulted in identifying Iraqi Security Forces with evidence of human rights violations or associations with terrorist organizations.

Project Title	Objective
Combating Looting of Antiquities from Iraq and Syria	To determine: 1) the activities U.S. agencies have taken to combat the destruction and trafficking of Syrian and Iraqi antiquities since 2011, and what resources have been dedicated to those activities; 2) the extent to which U.S. agencies work with art market participants, including auction houses, dealers, and collectors, to prevent the sale and purchase of stolen Syrian and Iraqi antiquities; and (3) the extent to which U.S. agencies work with key foreign partner countries and international organizations to combat the destruction and trafficking of Syrian and Iraqi antiquities.
Countering Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant Online Propaganda	To determine: 1) the extent to which the U.S. Government has developed a plan, with goals and performance metrics, for countering ISIL propaganda online; 2) the activities U.S. agencies have undertaken to counter ISIL propaganda online, and to what extent these activities have been coordinated among Federal agencies and entities outside the U.S. Government; and 3) the extent to which the U.S. Government has been effective in countering ISIL propaganda online.
DOD's Use of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) Funds	To determine: 1) the amount of obligated war funds DOD has authorized or appropriated with the OCO/Global War on Terror or emergency designation and the extent to which has DOD has identified and reported these obligations; 2) the extent to which Congress has appropriated war funds for non-war purposes; 3) the extent to which DOD has applied the Office of Management and Budget or other criteria in identifying costs for inclusion in its war funding requests; and (4) the extent to which DOD has established and implemented guidance and a plan with milestones for transitioning enduring OCO costs to its base budget.
U.S. Agency for International Development Office of Inspector General	
Audit of Selected Middle East Missions' Use of Full and Open Competition	To determine the extent to which the Middle East Bureau is using means of awarding contracts other than full and open competition and whether it is complying with Federal Acquisition Regulations when using means other than full and open competition in awarding contracts.
Audit of USAID/Lebanon's Quality Instruction Toward Access and Basic Education Improvement (QITABI).	To determine: 1) what actions USAID's Lebanon's Quality Instruction Toward Access and Basic Education Improvement program has taken to overcome the challenges related to expanding equitable access and improving learning outcomes for early learners in Lebanon's public schools; 2) the most appropriate actions to take to alleviate strains to Lebanon's education system, including strains from the continuing inflow of Syrian refugee children.
Audit of USAID/Jordan's Community Engagement Project.	To determine if USAID's Jordan's Community Engagement Project was achieving its goal of strengthening community engagement in the context of regional volatility and transition.

In addition, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) OIG has several ongoing projects examining programs and activities to protect the homeland against terrorist activities. While DHS OIG efforts are focused more broadly, many of these DHS OIG projects relate to the U.S. efforts to counter ISIL.

Planned Projects

In developing the FY 2016 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for OIR, the Lead IG planning process recognized the rapidly evolving nature of the overseas contingency operations and allowed for flexibility so that oversight teams could more readily respond to the changing demands of OIR and the ongoing humanitarian crisis. The Lead IG agencies used a risk-based planning process that involved reviewing OIR-related strategic plans and mission-execution documents, funding activity related to specific OIR programs, systematic management and program challenges, and prior oversight work. The current list of ongoing and planned oversight projects reflects this flexibility, as a few projects listed above and below were not contemplated when the Joint Strategic Oversight Plan was made final in October 2015.

There are seven additional FY 2016 oversight projects related to OIR, as of March 31, 2016, that we plan to start in FY 2016. These projects are listed in the table below. Three of the projects involve contract oversight. For example, as described below, the DoD OIG will soon begin projects to audit the Department's oversight of the ACC Heavy Lift Seven contract, totaling approximately $870 million to provide commercial transportation services for the movement of equipment, cargo, and personnel throughout Kuwait, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia; and the Theater Express II contracts, totaling $2.9 billion to provide international air cargo pickup and delivery services within the CENTCOM area of operations.

Planned Oversight Projects, as of 3/31/2016

Project Title	Objective
Air Force Audit Agency	
USAF Central Command Area of Responsibility Construction Planning	To evaluate whether Air Force civil engineers effectively coordinated MILCON projects. Specifically, to determine if personnel properly 1) programmed, authorized, and documented O&M funded construction; 2) used existing, temporary, or movable facilities when possible; and 3) planned construction projects to meet desired mission capabilities
Department of Defense Inspector General	
Evaluation of HOTLINE Allegations Concerning SOJTF OIR/ CJOSTF-S	To determine the validity of classified hotline allegations concerning the Syrian Train and Equip program and review current vetting processes supporting the revised Syrian Train and Equip as applicable.
Assessment U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Train, Advise, and Assist the Iraqi Police Forces	To assess the efforts of the CENTCOM and the Coalition to train, advise, assist, and equip the Iraqi Police Forces to conduct and sustain "hold" operations as part of the campaign to defeat ISIL in Iraq.
Audit of Oversight of the ACC Heavy Lift Seven (HL7) Contract for Operation Inherent Resolve	To determine whether DOD provided effective contract oversight of the Heavy Lift Seven contract. In addition, to determine whether the contractors are providing adequate quality control to ensure services are executed in accordance with the contract.
Audit of Oversight of the Theater Express II Contracts (TRANSCOM) for Operation Inherent Resolve	To determine whether DOD is providing effective contract oversight for the Theater Express II contract in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.
Department of State Inspector General	
Audit of Contract and Grant Oversight Staffing in Iraq	To determine whether the number of contract and grant oversight staff in Iraq is commensurate with the amount and complexity of funds being expended.
U.S. Agency for International Development Inspector General	
TBD	The OIG plans to develop an audit to address problems identified through recent OIG investigations related to USAID's humanitarian assistance being provided to Syria.

An F-16 Fighting Falcon refuels over Iraq in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. (U.S. Air Force photo)

APPENDIXES

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APPENDIX A: Lead Inspector General Statutory Requirements

Section 8L, Inspector General Act of 1978, as Amended	Pages
Appoint, from among the offices of the other Inspectors General specified in subsection (c), an Inspector General to act as associate Inspector General for the contingency operation who shall act in a coordinating role to assist the lead Inspector General in the discharge of responsibilities under this subsection.	1, 129-130
Develop and carry out, in coordination with the offices of the other Inspectors General specified in subsection (c) a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight over all aspects of the contingency operation and to ensure through either joint or individual audits, inspections, and investigations, independent and effective oversight of all programs and operations of the federal government in support of the contingency operation.	14, 98-124
Review and ascertain the accuracy of information provided by federal agencies relating to obligations and expenditures, costs of programs and projects, accountability of funds, and the award and execution of major contracts, grants, and agreements in support of the contingency operation.	14
Employ, or authorize the employment by the other Inspectors General specified in subsection (c), on a temporary basis using the authorities in section 3161 of title 5, United States Code, such auditors, investigators, and other personnel as the lead Inspector General considers appropriate to assist the lead Inspector General and such other Inspectors General on matters relating to the contingency operation.	98
Submit to Congress on a biannual basis, and to make available on an Internet website available to the public, a report on the activities of the lead Inspector General and the other Inspectors General specified in subsection (c) with respect to the contingency operation, including:	—
status and results of investigations, inspections, and audits and of referrals to the Department of Justice; and	13-15/ 98-124
overall plans for the review of the contingency operation by inspectors general, including plans for investigations, inspections, and audits.	—
Submit to Congress on a quarterly basis, and to make available on an Internet website available to the public, a report on the contingency operation.	—

Note: The Inspectors General specified in subsection (c) are the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, Inspector General of the Department of State, and the Inspector General of the United States Agency for International Development.

APPENDIX B: The Lead Inspector General Model

In January 2013, Congress passed the FY 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which amended the Inspector General Act of 1978 to add a new section 8L. It directs responsibilities and authorities to the Chair of the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) and to the Inspectors General (IGs) for the Department of Defense (DoD), Department of State (DOS), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for the oversight of overseas contingency operations (OCO). Specifically, it details the duties of the designated Lead Inspector General for an OCO and addresses jurisdictional conflicts. [507]

COORDINATION

Section 8L provides a new mandate for the three Lead IG agencies to work together from the outset of an OCO to develop and carry out joint, comprehensive, and strategic oversight. Each IG retains statutory independence, but together, they apply extensive regional experience and in-depth institutional knowledge in a coordinated interagency approach to accomplish oversight responsibilities for the whole-of-government mission. Essentially, when joint oversight projects are to be carried out among them,[508] the Lead Inspector General, in consultation with the other two IG offices, will designate one of the three staffs to lead the project. The standard operating procedures of that IG office will take precedence.[509]

In general, DoD IG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG conduct oversight projects within the boundaries of their individual office missions. However, OCO programs and operations often involve coordinated work among multiple agencies, including military operations. Pursuant to section 8L, the Lead Inspector General will determine which IG has principal jurisdiction among the Lead IG agencies. When none of the three Lead IGs has jurisdiction, the Lead IG is to coordinate with the appropriate agency to ensure that comprehensive oversight takes place.[510]

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Lead IG approach leverages dedicated, rotational, and temporary staff from each of the Lead IG agencies to perform various operational activities, including joint strategic oversight planning. The Lead Inspector General must develop, update, and provide to Congress an annual joint strategic plan to guide comprehensive oversight of programs and operations for each

OCO. This effort includes reviewing and analyzing completed independent oversight, internal management, and other relevant reports to identify systemic problems, trends, lessons learned, and best practices to inform future oversight projects.

REPORTING

As required by section 8L, the Lead Inspector General is responsible for producing quarterly and biannual reports to Congress and making these reports available to the public online. Biannual reports include the status and results of investigations, inspections, and audits; the status of referrals to the Department of Justice; and overall plans for the review of the contingency operation by IGs, including plans for investigations, inspections, and audits. Reports—published each April, July, October, and January—provide updates on U.S. programs and operations related to the OCO.[511] The Lead Inspector General manages the timely production of congressionally mandated reports in a coordinated effort among the three Lead IG offices and other IG agencies, as appropriate.

THE LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR OIR

In October 2014, the military mission for Iraq and Syria was named Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR), and on October 17, the Secretary of Defense designated it an OCO.[512] At the onset of the OCO, the Lead IG agencies had already developed a comprehensive framework for their joint oversight strategy. These agencies have always had plenary authority to conduct independent and objective oversight. For more than a decade, while they conducted independent oversight of their agencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, they also worked jointly on several projects requiring cross-agency collaboration. Since 2008, they have met quarterly, along with the Government Accountability Office, the Special Inspectors General for Iraq and Afghanistan Reconstruction, and the Service Auditors General to coordinate their oversight and avoid duplication of effort.

In consultation with the three IGs, the CIGIE Chair designated Jon T. Rymer as Lead Inspector General for OIR on December 17, 2014.[513] On December 18, 2014, Lead Inspector General Rymer appointed DoS Inspector General Steve A. Linick to serve as the Associate Inspector General for OIR, in keeping with the provisions of section 8L of the Inspector General Act, as amended.[514] Lead Inspector General Rymer resigned on January 8, 2016, and Glenn A. Fine became Acting Inspector General for the Department of Defense. On January 11, 2016, the CIGIE Chair reaffirmed the DoD IG was the Lead IG for OIR.

APPENDIX C: Other U.S. Funding

Congress has also made available 2016 funds to other agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Justice (DOJ), to fight terrorism, protect U.S. borders, and prevent radicalization,. For example:

Department of Justice

- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI): $3.4 billion funds the FBI's counterterrorism and counterintelligence operations to uncover, investigate, and disrupt current and future national security threats;
- National Security Division: $95 million to coordinate efforts between federal prosecutors, law enforcement, and the Intelligence Community to combat terrorism;
- U.S. Attorney's Office: $51 million to prosecute terrorism cases;
- Bureau of Prisons (BOP): $18 million to stop extremism and radicalization in federal prisons;
- Drug Enforcement Agency: $98 million to fight terrorism with a drug trafficking nexus;
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF): $ 15 million to disrupt and prevent the use of firearms and explosives in terrorist acts.

Department of Homeland Security

DHS: $50 million to be distributed to state and local governments, universities and non-profits to prepare for emergent threats from violent extremism and terrorist attacks.

- Transportation Security Administration: $7.4 billion to protect the nation's transportation systems, including aviation, mass transit, highway and pipelines;
- Coast Guard: $10.9 billion for maritime safety, security and environmental protection;
- Customs and Border Protection (CBP): $11.05 billion to strengthening and safeguarding the U.S. borders, and maintains border patrol agents and CBP officers;
- Office of Biometric Identity Management: $282.5 million to assist the DHS, DOJ, Defense and DOS share real-time biometric and identity data to monitor legal entry and exits of individuals and assure national security, and integrity of U.S. immigration laws.

APPENDIX D: Essential Principles of a Political Solution in Syria

UN Special Envoy Steffen de Mistura issued 12 points of commonality found during negotiations between the al-Asad regime and Syrian opposition. The sides confirm that a political settlement is the only way to peace. Towards this end the parties recognize the following essential principles as the foundation for a future Syrian state that meets the aspirations of the Syrian people:

1. Respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria. No part of the national territory shall be ceded. As an integral part of the Arab nation, Syria is committed to a peaceful and active role in the international community. As a founding member, Syria is dedicated to the UN Charter and its purposes and principles. The people of Syria remain committed to the restoration of the occupied Golan Heights by peaceful means.

2. The principles of sovereign equality and non-intervention shall apply, in conformity with the UN Charter. The Syrian people alone shall determine the future of their country by democratic means, through the ballot box, and have the exclusive right to choose their own political, economic and social system without external pressure or interference.

3. Syria shall be a democratic, non-sectarian state based on citizenship and political pluralism, the representation of all components of Syrian society, the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, equal rights, non-discrimination, human rights and fundamental freedoms, transparency, accountability and the principles of national reconciliation and social peace.

4. Syria cherishes its history of diversity and the contributions and values of all religions, traditions and national identities to Syrian society. Acts of revenge against individuals or groups shall not be tolerated. There shall be no discrimination against, and full protection of, all national, ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural identities. Members of all communities, men and women, shall enjoy equal opportunities in social, economic, cultural and public life.

5. Women shall enjoy equality of rights and representation in all institutions and decision-making structures at a level of at least 30 percent during the transition and thereafter.

6. As per Security Council resolution 2254 (2015), the political transition in Syria shall include mechanisms for credible, inclusive and non-sectarian governance, a schedule and process for drafting a new constitution and free and fair elections pursuant to the new constitution, administered under supervision by the United Nations, to the satisfaction of the governance and to the highest international standards of transparency and accountability, with all Syrians, including members of the diaspora, eligible to participate.

7. Such governance shall ensure an environment of stability and calm during the transition, offering safety and equal chances to political actors to establish themselves and campaign in the forthcoming elections and participate in public life.

8. Continuity and reform of state institutions and public services, along with measures to protect the public infrastructure and private property, shall ensure stability in accordance with international standards, principles of good governance and human rights. The governance will take effective measures to combat corruption. Citizens will benefit from effective mechanisms of protection in the relations with all public authorities, ensuring full compliance with human rights.

9. Syria categorically rejects terrorism and strongly opposes terrorist organizations and individuals identified by the UN Security Council and will engage in a national endeavour, in international partnership, to defeat terrorism and to address the causes of terrorism. Syria calls on all states in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions, to prevent terrorist groups from being supplied with weapons, money, training, shelter, intelligence or safe havens and to refrain from inciting acts of terrorism.

10. Syrians are committed to rebuilding a strong and unified national army, also through the disarmament and integration of members of armed groups supporting the transition and the new constitution. That professional army shall protect the borders and population of the State from external threats in accordance with the principle of the rule of law. The state and its reformed institutions will exercise the exclusive right of controlling weapons of war. There shall be no intervention by foreign fighters on Syrian soil.

11. All refugees and internally displaced people wishing it shall be enabled to return safely to their homes with national and international support and in line with international protection standards. Those arbitrarily detained shall be released and the fate of the disappeared, kidnapped or missing shall be resolved.

12. There shall be reparations, redress, care, and restitution of rights and property lost for those who have suffered loss or injury in consequence of the conflict. As peace and stability are being restored, Syria shall call for the holding of a major donor conference to gain funds for compensation, reconstruction and development of the country, and the lifting of all coercive economic measures and other unilateral actions affecting the people of Syria. Syria looks forward to international guarantees and support for the implementation of the political process in a way that does not infringe upon the sovereignty of Syria.

Source: United Nations

Acronyms and Definitions

Acronym	Definition
ACSA	Acquisition and Cross-Service Agreement
AGATRS	Global Automated Tracking and Reporting System
AMEG	Asia and the Middle East Growth Best Practices
ARCENT	United States Army Central Command
BBA	Bipartisan Budget Act
BBG	Broadcasting Board of Governors
CENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
CJTF-OIR	Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve
CSCC	Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (DoS)
CT	Counterterrorism
CTS	Counter Terrorism Service (Iraqi)
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team
DCIS	Defense Criminal Investigation Service
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
DoD	Department of Defense
DoD OIG	Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General
DoJ	U.S. Department of Justice
DoS OIG	Department of State Office of Inspector General
DRL	DoS Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FFES	Funding Facility for Expanded Stabilization
FFIS	Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization
FFP	U.S. Aid for International Development, Office of Food for Peace
FMF	Foreign Military Financing

Acronym	Definition
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GEC	Global Engagement Center
HNC	High Negotiations Committee
ICAM	USAID Information Collection Analysis and Monitoring
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised explosive device
IKR	Iraqi Kurdistan Region
IMET	International Military Education and Training
INCLE	International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
ISIL-K	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant—Khorasan
ISR	Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
ISSG	International Syria Support Group
ITEF	Iraq Train and Equip Fund
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
Lead IG	Lead Inspector General
Lead IG agencies	Refers to DoD IG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG
LOE	Line of effort
LRP	Food For Peace Locally and Regionally Purchased food
MECHR	U.S. Aid for International Development, Middle East Crisis Humanitarian Response Team

Acronym	Definition
NADR	Non-proliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related Programs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCO	Overseas Contingency Operation
OFS	Operation Freedom's Sentinel
OFDA	U.S. Aid for International Development, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OIR	Operation Inherent Resolve
OSC-I	Office of Security Cooperation – Iraq
OSD (P)	Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense for Policy
OTI	U.S. Aid for International Development, Office of Transition Initiatives
PED	Processsing, Exploitation, and Disemination
PMF	Popular Mobilization Force
PRM	Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
RMT	U.S. Aid for International Development, Response Management Team
SRP	U.S. Aid for International Development, Syria Regional Program
STEF	Syrian Train and Equip Fund
TAA	Train, advise, and assist
Treasury	U.S. Department of the Treasury
TRF	Tribal Resistance Forces (also known as PMF, or Popular Mobilization Forces
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Acronym	Definition
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USAID OIG	U.S. Agency for International Development Office of the Inspector General
VBIED	Vehicle-borne Improvised Explosive Devices
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene programs
WFP	World Food Program
YPG	People's Protection Units (Kurdish)

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507. DoD IG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG, as designated in section 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended.
508. Lead Inspector General, FY 2015 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for OIR, 3/31/2015, p. 12.
509. Pursuant to section 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended: The Lead IG will "determine which IG has principal jurisdiction when more than one inspector general from the DoD, DoS, and USAID has jurisdiction." Further, the Lead IG will "exercise responsibility for discharging oversight responsibilities" when Departments of Defense and State and USAID have no jurisdiction.
510. As required by section 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended.
511. In internal DoD documents, OIR was named an overseas contingency operation as defined in 10 USC 101(1)(13).
512. CIGIE Chair Phyllis K. Fong, letter to DoD Inspector Jon Rymer, 12/17/2014.
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