

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (والشام العراق في الإسلاموية الدولة),
Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or the **Islamic State of Iraq and ash-Sham**

- I. Brief History and Development
 - “DAESH” - داعش, Arabic pronunciation: (Arabic equivalent of "ISIL")
- II. al Qaeda vs ISIL : *Winning hearts & minds vs Breaking necks & spines*

	AQ	ISIL
Genesis	Build support over time	“field of Dreams” approach
Adversaries	Far Enemy (US / West)	Near Enemy – Apostate regional regimes
Broader Muslim Support	Seeks to inspire Muslims everywhere	Deliberately provokes outrage
Tactics	Spectacular Terror Attacks against the ‘West’	Terrorize populations through gruesome brutality
Leadership	Ayman al-Zawahiri	Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi
‘Takfir’ doctrine	Don’t declare other Muslims apostate, avoid sectarian disputes	Emphasize sectarianism; declare unbelievers & Muslims apostate, ‘purify’ world through executions
Coordination w/ rebel groups	Will work w/ non-salifist, will govern others, submit to arbitration	Unwilling to coord w/ or govern non-salifists Unwilling to submit to arbitration
Sharia Law	Selective enforcement	Stringent Enforcement
Eschatology	Downplays prophecy – doomsday far away	Obsessed with end times- believes Mahdi is coming, awaits army of “Rome”
Ways	Inspire followers to their cause	Conquer, control/govern, expand
Means	Large-Scale Dramatic attacks	Extreme Brutality; slick advertising & multimedia
Strategy toward US	Drive US out	Draw US in
Ends	Global Caliphate (later)	Global Caliphate (NOW)

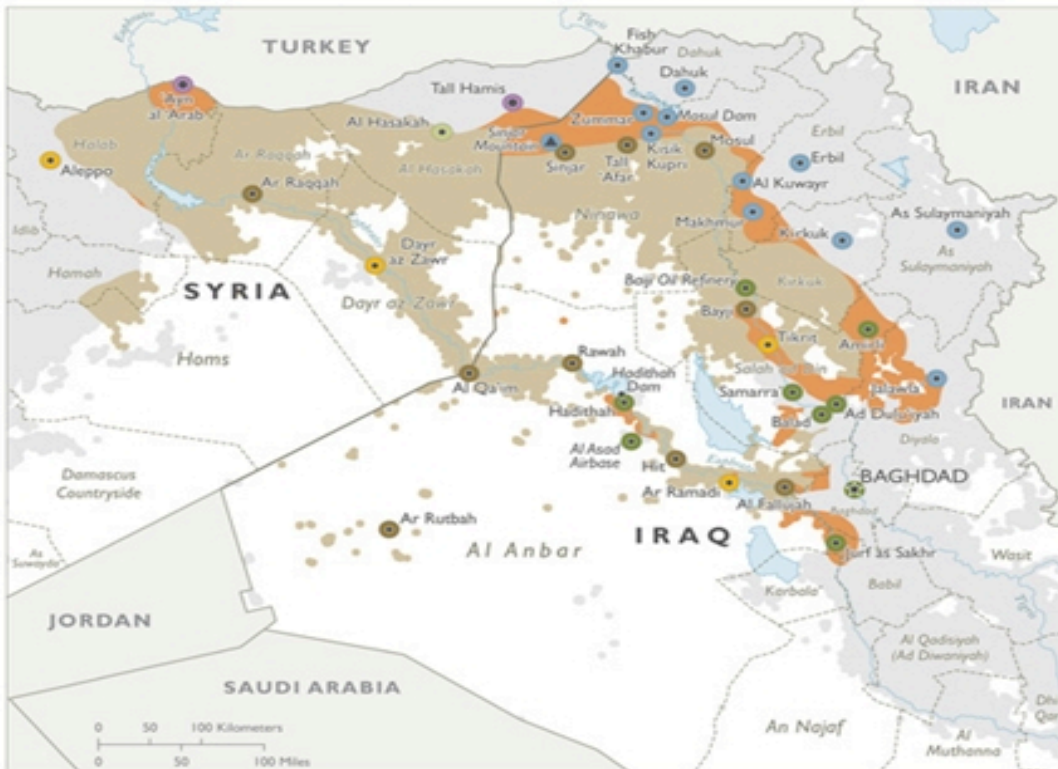
- ISIL’s Winning Formula:
 - CALIPHATE NOW
 - APOCALYPSE NOW
 - EXTREME BRUTALITY
- Controlling territory Expanding is critical to ISIL
 - “ENDURING & EXPANDING”
 - Sign up ‘Providences’ in other countries: (Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tunisia)
 - For ISIL, the IDEOLOGICAL fight = ACTUAL fight
- III. US Response

- 9 Lines of Effort (LOEs)-DoD has two:
 - LOE 2 - Deny ISIL Safe Haven (Air Campaign)
 - LOE 3- Build Partnership Capacity: IRAQ / SYRIA
 - Reconstitute Iraqi Brigades
 - Strengthen Iraqi ground forces
 - Assist GoI in Reclaiming territory
 - “By / With / Through” Iraqi Government

- **Syria** - Tougher Problem Set
 - No partner on the ground
 - we must develop a 3rd option btw Assad Regime & ISIL
 - Identify “Moderate” Syrian Opposition
 - Train them outside of Syria, reinsert them

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant’s (ISIL) frontlines in much of northern and central Iraq have been pushed back since August 2014. ISIL can no longer operate freely in roughly 25 to 30 percent of populated areas of Iraqi territory where it once could. These areas translate into approximately 13,000 to 17,000 square kilometers (or 5,000 to 6,500 square miles). However,

because of the dynamic nature of the conflict in Iraq and Syria, this estimate could increase or decrease depending on daily fluctuations in the battle lines. ISIL’s area of influence in Syria remains largely unchanged, with its gains in As Suwayda’, Damascus Countryside, and Homs Provinces offset by losses in Halab and Al Hasakah Provinces.



Areas of Influence

- ISIL dominant as of April 2015
- ISIL’s territorial losses since August 2014
- Populated area
- Sparsely populated or unpopulated
- Administrative boundary

Dominant Group

- ISIL
- Syrian Kurd
- Iraqi Kurdish security forces
- Iraqi Government
- Syrian Government
- Contested city

Note: Our judgment as to which group has dominant influence over a particular city is based on a body of sources that we deem reliable.