

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS



OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

JANUARY 1, 2017–MARCH 31, 2017

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL MISSION

The Lead Inspector General for Overseas Contingency Operations coordinates 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 Congress and the public on the contingency operation and activities of the Lead Inspector General

(Pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978)

FOREWORD

We are pleased to submit the Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) quarterly report on Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). This is our ninth quarterly report on this overseas contingency operation (OCO), discharging our individual and collective agency oversight responsibilities pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978. OIR is dedicated to countering the terrorist threat posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in Iraq, Syria, the region, and the broader international community. The U.S. counter-ISIS strategy includes support to military operations associated with OIR, as well as diplomacy, governance, security programs and activities, and humanitarian assistance.

This report provides information on key events involving OIR as well as an update on the nine Strategic Lines of Effort to Counter ISIS, for the second quarter of FY 2017 ending March 31, 2017. This report discusses oversight work conducted by the Lead IG Offices of Inspector General and our partner oversight agencies, as well as ongoing and future oversight work.

Working in close collaboration, we remain committed to providing comprehensive oversight and timely reporting on OIR.



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



Steve A. Linick
Inspector General
U.S. Department of State and the
Broadcasting Board of Governors



Ann Calvaresi Barr
Inspector General
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On the cover: (clockwise from top left) An Iraqi Security Forces soldier practices trigger squeeze on a Steyr HS-50 sniper rifle during advanced marksmanship training at Camp Manion, Iraq (U.S. Army photo); a French Air Force Dassault Rafale refuels from a U.S. Air Force KC-10 Extender (U.S. Air Force photo); Iraqi soldiers from 9th Iraqi Army Division load rockets at Al Asthana Ridge (U.S. Marines photo); Iraqis fleeing violence in Mosul gather at a mosque on the north end of the city's airport (Chad Garland/Stars and Stripes photo).

MESSAGE FROM THE LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL



Glenn A. Fine

I am pleased to present the ninth report on Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) and the U.S. strategy to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. This report summarizes the quarter's key events, and describes completed, ongoing, and planned Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) and partner agency oversight work relating to this activity.

In February, as Coalition-backed forces continued the fight to liberate Mosul and Raqqa, I travelled overseas to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Jordan, along with fellow Inspectors General, Steve Linick of the Department of State (DoS) and Ann Calvaresi Barr of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). This was the first time that the three IGs who have Lead IG responsibilities travelled in theater together. It was important that we take this trip because the overseas contingency efforts can succeed only through a whole-of-government approach, and our oversight has to be coordinated. On this trip, we had an opportunity to talk to the commanders on the ground, the Ambassadors in country, and the chiefs of the USAID missions.

In addition, USAID IG Calvaresi Barr traveled to Jordan in February to conduct outreach on the Syria humanitarian programs, visiting several major organizations implementing USAID projects as investigators performed fraud awareness briefings to 186 implementer employees. Also in February, DoS IG Linick conducted a day-long series of meetings with the leadership of three major international implementers focused on each of the organizations' fraud prevention efforts, including in Iraq and Syria.

This quarter, Lead IG agencies and partners continued their oversight of OIR, releasing 18 reports and conducting 27 ongoing oversight projects. The Lead IG agencies also have 72 OIR-related investigations pertaining to alleged procurement fraud, corruption, and trafficking in persons.

Examples of completed oversight highlighted in this report include a DoD OIG investigation related to allegations that senior officials at U.S. Central Command falsified or intentionally distorted intelligence related to its efforts to degrade and destroy ISIS. I testified before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, about this report and our findings.


In other examples of completed oversight, a DoS OIG inspection of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration found the bureau generally had effective internal control policies but was hampered by a lack of a staffing plan to address an expanded workload. A USAID OIG audit could not determine whether USAID/Jordan's 5-year, \$50 million Community Engagement Project was achieving its broad goal of strengthening community engagement in Jordan because the mission did not establish definitive measures of performance.

My Lead IG colleagues and I remain committed to pursuing effective oversight of OIR, and we thank the dedicated OIG employees who perform this important work.

Glenn A. Fine

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





An Iraqi Ninevah police officer runs for cover during the final advanced combat skills exercise at Camp Taji, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

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Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis hosts a joint press conference at Baghdad International Airport. (DoD photo)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is issued pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on an overseas contingency operation. The Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General is the designated Lead Inspector General for Operation Inherent Resolve. The Department of State (DoS) is the Associate Lead Inspector General for the operation. This report contains information from the three Lead IG agencies—DoD, DoS, and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)—as well as from partner oversight agencies. This unclassified report covers the period from January 1 through March 31, 2017. The methodology for obtaining information and drafting this report can be found in Appendix A.

Iraqi and Syrian forces backed by the U.S.-led Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS continued this quarter to battle to liberate the western half of Mosul in Iraq and to isolate Raqqa in Syria, as a new plan to defeat ISIS by the Administration of President Donald J. Trump was under review.

The new Administration renamed the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, a group of 68 nations and partners organized in 2014 by President Barack Obama, and began calling it the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. The structure and focus of the organization remained unchanged this quarter.¹

On February 27, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis submitted to the Administration a preliminary, classified plan that outlined a whole-of-government strategy for defeating ISIS.² Pentagon spokesman Jeff Davis described the anti-ISIS plan as “trans-regional” and said that it tapped “all elements of national power,” including diplomatic, financial, cyber, and intelligence.³ As the reporting quarter ended on March 31, the plan remained classified and there were no announcements regarding if or when it might be approved and incorporated as policy.⁴

On March 22-23 in Washington, D.C., Secretary of State Rex Tillerson hosted a meeting of the foreign ministers and senior leaders of the 68 Coalition partners at which the United States and all partners reaffirmed their commitment to Coalition efforts. Humanitarian assistance and stabilization emerged as central concerns. Coalition members expressed broad support for efforts to stabilize communities liberated from ISIS, and underscored the need for stabilization both to allow displaced persons and refugees to choose to return to their homes and to avoid a resurgence of extremist ideologies and groups.

At the Coalition meeting, Secretary Tillerson discussed the potential for so-called “zones of stability” in Syria. It was unclear when the zones would be established or how they would operate. DoS spokesman Mark C. Toner referred to the zones in the context of post-conflict stabilization without offering specifics.⁵ The DoD stated that it was working closely with the DoS, USAID, and the intelligence community to examine options for establishing what it termed “interim de-escalation zones” in Syria.⁶

U.S. policy toward Syria supports UN Security Council Resolution 2254, which calls for a Syrian-owned and -led process to resolve the civil war and effectuate a political, democratic transition. The Obama Administration had at times stated that this political solution was needed to resolve the scourge of ISIS, and that for this to occur, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad must step down.⁷ During this quarter, it remained unclear whether the U.S. position toward Assad had changed. On March 30, U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, said that the U.S. priority was “no longer to . . . focus on getting Assad out.”⁸ Her comments echoed remarks from both the White House and Secretary of State Tillerson.⁹ However, after the Syrian regime used chemical weapons against civilians on April 4, prompting a U.S. cruise missile strike against a Syrian

Coalition members expressed broad support for efforts to stabilize communities liberated from ISIS, and underscored the need for stabilization

SELECTED KEY EVENTS, 1/1/2017–3/31/2017									
IRAQ									
JANUARY 3 UN report stated at least 6,878 civilians were killed and 12,388 were wounded in 2016		JANUARY 25 A month-long series of ISIS bombings in Baghdad killed at least 90 people		FEBRUARY 16 Seven bombings in Baghdad killed at least 52 people		MARCH 12 Mass grave uncovered at Badush prison near Mosul contained hundreds of victims of ISIS executions		MARCH 22-23 Global Coalition met in Washington, D.C. to advance efforts to defeat ISIS	
JANUARY 24 Iraqi Security Forces announced liberation of eastern half of Mosul		FEBRUARY 11 50,000 pro-Muqtada al-Sadr demonstrators protested in Baghdad to demand electoral and economic reforms; several rockets were fired toward the Green Zone		FEBRUARY 19 Iraqi forces launched military offensive for western Mosul		MARCH 17 Up to 200 civilians killed in Mosul; U.S. military opens investigation into possibility deaths were caused by Coalition strikes; Iraq government blames ISIS		MARCH 30 Two bombings in 10 days in Baghdad killed at least 38 people	



The guided-missile destroyer USS Porter conducts strike operations while in the Mediterranean Sea, April 7, 2017. (U.S. Navy photo)

airbase on April 6, Secretary Tillerson said that “steps are underway” to organize a coalition to remove Assad from power.¹⁰

Amid discussions regarding the new plan to defeat ISIS, the U.S. military continued this quarter to pursue what it calls a “by, with, and through” strategy that relies heavily on Iraqi Security Forces, Syrian Democratic Forces, and vetted Syrian opposition groups in the fight against ISIS in Syria and Iraq, supported mainly through training Coalition air power, and U.S. Special Operations Forces.¹¹ In March, General Joseph L. Votel, Commander of U.S. Central Command, said that while the “by, with, and through” strategy presented some challenges, it was “proving effective and [was] likely to pay significant dividends going forward.” He said the strategy encouraged indigenous partners to build their military capability and helped to ensure that they were personally invested in conducting military operations.¹²

SYRIA

JANUARY 2

SDF announced liberation of 110 villages west of Raqqah since December launch of second phase of the battle for Raqqah

EARLY FEBRUARY

Syrian regime forces joined Turkey in the offensive to capture Al Bab from ISIS; Russia and Turkey allowed pro-government forces to enter Al Bab

MARCH 3

Syrian talks in Geneva produced no concrete results; Manbij Military Council, part of the Kurdish-led SDF, announced transfer of “defense of the frontline” to Syrian regime forces

MARCH 15

Negotiations in Astana, Kazakhstan, fail to produce progress toward a peace agreement

JANUARY 29

Hardline Sunni Islamist forces announced new alliance called the Hayat Tahrir Al Sham, which includes Al Qaeda-affiliate Fateh Al Sham

FEBRUARY 9

CIA director Mike Pompeo arrived in Ankara to discuss ISIS and Syria with the Turkish government

MARCH 10-11

Turkey shelled Syrian government forces and allies near Manbij, and claimed to have killed 71 Syrian Kurdish YPG

MARCH 20

U.S. military investigated allegations that a strike targeting Al Qaeda leaders in northern Syria killed numerous civilians

In early 2017, heavy fighting continued in Iraq and Syria:

- In Iraq, an additional 240 U.S. troops were deployed to Mosul to support Iraqi Security Forces as they secured east Mosul and battled to liberate west Mosul in dense urban street fighting against ISIS. West of Mosul, the Iraqi Army and militias belonging to the Popular Mobilization Forces ousted ISIS from areas surrounding Tal Afar and pushed further south and west into Ninewa province.
- In Syria, an additional 400 U.S. troops arrived to areas around Raqqah where Coalition-backed vetted Syrian opposition groups and other forces are deployed. The battles focused on the outskirts of Raqqah, ISIS's self-proclaimed capital, and territory north and west of Raqqah, including the cities of Manbij and Al Bab. With U.S. air support, Turkey and Turkish-backed Syrian forces liberated Al Bab.

Coalition officials estimated this quarter that in 2016 ISIS had lost territory roughly the size of New Jersey, or about 23 percent of its domain, freeing from ISIS's rule about 2 million Iraqis and Syrians

While OIR is focused on the defeat of ISIS, Syria remains a complicated battlefield. On April 6, the Administration ordered U.S. missile strikes against Syria's Shayrat military air base following the Syrian regime's use of chemical weapons against Syrian civilians, which killed 70 people, including children.¹³ The cruise missile strike was the first unilateral action taken by the United States against the Syrian regime since civil war broke out in the country in 2011. For more on the U.S. missile strikes, see section on Syrian civil war, page 54.

STATUS OF ISIS IN IRAQ AND SYRIA

The “by, with, and through” strategy has reduced the territory under ISIS's control in Iraq and Syria. Coalition officials estimated this quarter that in 2016 ISIS had lost territory roughly the size of New Jersey, or about 23 percent of its domain, freeing from ISIS's rule about 2 million Iraqis and Syrians.¹⁴ Meanwhile, ISIS's estimated annual revenue has fallen from roughly \$1.9 billion in 2014 to not more than \$870 million in 2016, according to a British think tank that tracks the terrorist organization.¹⁵ In February, Lieutenant General Stephen Townsend, Commander of the Combined Joint Task Force—OIR (CJTF-OIR), estimated ISIS would lose control of both west Mosul and Raqqah within 6 months, which would deprive the organization of its claim to a territorial “caliphate.”¹⁶

U.S. officials estimated that as many as 15,000 ISIS fighters remained, distributed largely in west Mosul and Raqqah, the two principal areas that local forces supported by the Coalition were fighting to liberate this quarter. ISIS fighters also were in smaller towns in both countries—including a town straddling the Iraqi-Syrian border called Al Qaim on the Iraqi side and Abu Kamal on the Syrian side that ISIS uses as a border crossing.¹⁷ U.S. military officials emphasized that they expected U.S.- and Coalition-backed Iraqi and Syrian forces to face a tough fight to expel ISIS from its remaining strongholds.¹⁸

ISIS has shown sophistication on the battlefield and in its ability to function as an insurgency. This quarter ISIS fighters also increasingly relied on commercial drones armed with makeshift bombs to carry out attacks, and stepped up insurgent activities

AT A GLANCE

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE



A U.S. Army M109A6 Paladin fires during training operation at Camp Manion, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

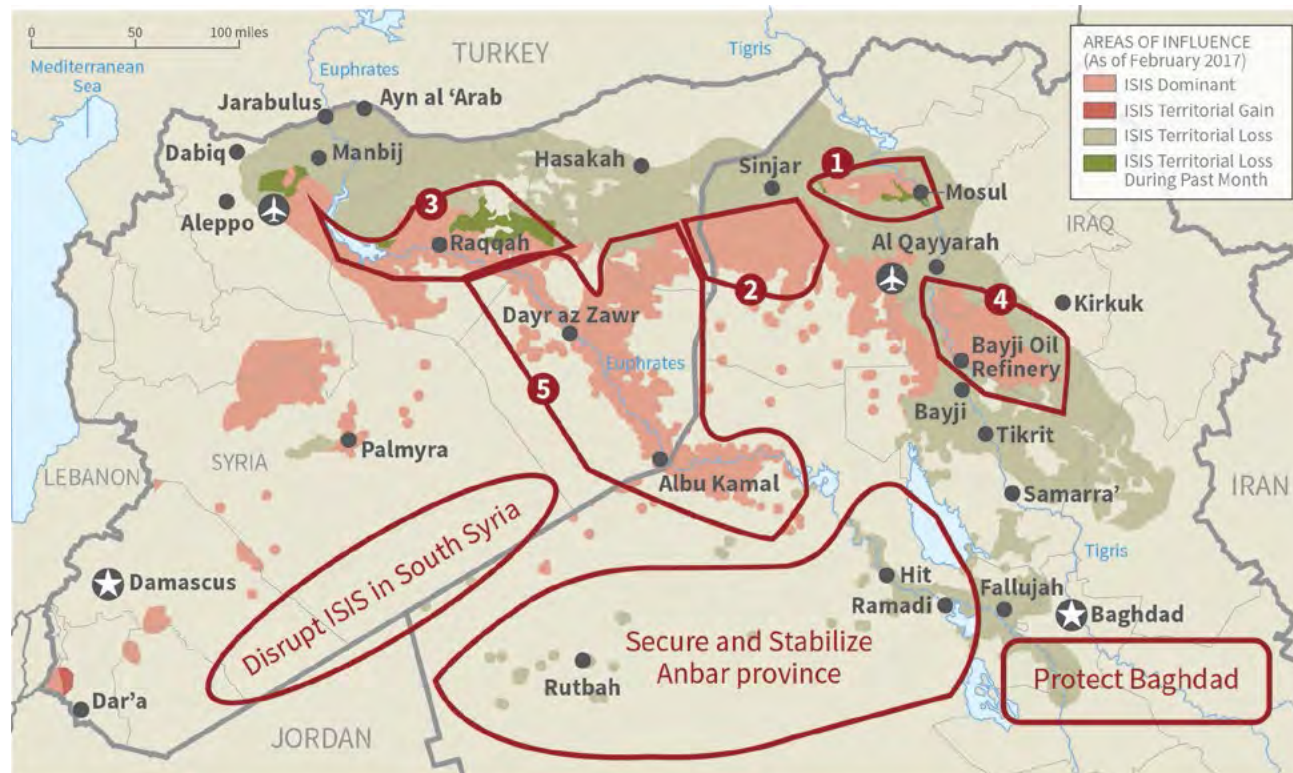
MISSION

Operation Inherent Resolve began on August 8, 2014, when U.S. airstrikes struck the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) as it threatened the Iraqi city of Erbil. Roughly a month later, on September 10, 2014, a Global Coalition to Counter ISIS was created to provide diplomatic, economic, informational, and military power to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIS. The Coalition now includes 68 members.

HISTORY

ISIS—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. The U.S.-led Operation Iraqi Freedom was conducted from 2003 to 2010. ISIS was declared in Syria in 2013 and was disavowed by Al Qaeda in 2014. The United States pledged to help Iraq's military defeat ISIS after the group captured Mosul on June 10, 2014.

THE DEFEAT ISIS CAMPAIGN IN IRAQ AND SYRIA



Source: Defense.gov; DoS

outside of areas under their direct control, particularly in Iraq, where they orchestrated more than a dozen suicide bombings.¹⁹ For more information on ISIS's fighting strength, territorial holdings, and revenue, see the section entitled ISIS-held territory and ISIS fighting strength on page 43 and the section entitled ISIS revenue on page 45. For more on ISIS's use of drones, see the section entitled ISIS military capability on page 44; for more information on ISIS's insurgency, see the section entitled ISIS insurgency on page 47.

COALITION TRAINING OF FORCES IN IRAQ AND SYRIA

This quarter, the U.S.-led Coalition pursued the train, advise, assist, and equip mission in Iraq with the movement of additional U.S. advisers closer to the fighting in west Mosul to better assist Iraqi police and soldiers.²⁰ In February, almost 5,000 Iraqis completed training at some of the eight training sites that the Coalition uses to train Iraqi Security Forces. More than 4,000 of them were police and local tribal trainees who are expected to serve as “hold” forces in Mosul after the city is liberated.²¹

In Syria, U.S. military support for the Syrian Democratic Forces, an alliance of the Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) and the Syrian Arab Coalition, continued this quarter, and a several-thousand-strong Arab component was reportedly training to join their ranks.²²

Members of the 9th Iraqi Army Division fire a heavy machine gun at ISIS fighter positions near Al Tarab, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)





U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson meets with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al Abadi after the Meeting of the Ministers of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. (DoS photo)

COALITION AIR CAMPAIGN AND GROUND SUPPORT

Coalition aircraft supported ground forces in both countries this quarter, with multiple airstrikes on ISIS military positions, weapons caches, command and control centers, oil assets, and leadership.²³ In Iraq, most airstrikes occurred in and around Mosul as Iraqi ground forces moved to capture west Mosul from ISIS. In Syria, airstrikes were concentrated around Raqqa, as well as Al Bab, Dayr Az Zawr, and Idlib. On March 17, a U.S. airstrike in Mosul may have killed up to 200 civilians in a building targeted by the Coalition.²⁴ The Iraqi government later said the civilians were killed by explosives rigged and detonated by ISIS inside homes in the dense warrens of west Mosul.²⁵ The U.S. military opened an investigation into the incident.

GOVERNANCE AND STABILIZATION IN IRAQ

Iraq's government filled the key posts of Minister of Defense and Interior this quarter.²⁶ The government was under pressure from a string of deadly ISIS bombings and two large and violent street protests orchestrated by opposition Shia cleric Muqtada al Sadr. Sadr, a populist leader from a prominent Shia family, is demanding electoral reforms to strengthen smaller political parties ahead of provincial and national elections scheduled for late 2017 and 2018. His supporters also protested to demand economic reforms as Iraq's economy reels from low oil prices and the high expense of fighting ISIS.²⁷ In 2016, Iraq's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 11 percent, attributed mainly to an increase in oil production, but the International Monetary Fund projected much lower growth for 2017 due to a contraction in the oil sector and lackluster growth in the non-oil economy.²⁸

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al Abadi sought to reduce Iraq's sectarian tensions and encourage unity in the fight against ISIS. Prime Minister Abadi continued to work with provincial government officials and political parties to recruit local mainly Sunni "hold"

forces to patrol Mosul and ensure that Shia Arab militias belonging to the Popular Mobilization Forces do not enter the largely Sunni city following ISIS's defeat. Prime Minister Abadi also continued to collaborate with the Kurdistan Regional Government to provide humanitarian assistance to and screening of persons displaced from the fighting in and around Mosul.²⁹ However, the Kirkuk provincial council voted in March to raise the Kurdistan Regional Government flag next to the flag of Iraq on public buildings, a decision that raised tensions and was rejected by Iraq's parliament on April 1.³⁰

Prime Minister Abadi travelled to Washington, D.C., to meet with President Trump and participate in a meeting of ministers and leaders from the 68 countries belonging to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, which convened to discuss stabilization assistance in Iraq, among other issues. Speaking at a forum in Washington, Prime Minister Abadi said his government was taking measures to reduce abuses by Iraqi Security Forces and welcomed international assistance in investigating atrocities committed by ISIS.³¹

Stabilization in Iraq is a major area of concern among Iraqi, U.S. and Coalition leaders. Stabilization, which is a stage in the transition of the country from war to peace, includes demining and removing unexploded ordnance; reconnecting electricity and water; reestablishing basic medical services; providing local security and policing; and contributing to the reestablishment of the rule of law. At the same time, the population presents significant humanitarian needs. This quarter, more than 420 Coalition-supported stabilization projects were underway.³² For instance, in east Mosul, cash-for-work projects and rehabilitation of several hospitals, municipal buildings, schools, and critical infrastructure began after the January 17 liberation of that half of the city.³³ For more on life in liberated east Mosul, see Infographic on page 14.

SYRIAN CIVIL WAR

The complexity of the Syrian civil war amplified the challenges the U.S. and Coalition faces in the battle against ISIS. A December Russian- and Turkish-led ceasefire failed to halt fighting between the Syrian regime and armed opposition groups, and two separate negotiation processes failed to produce either a lasting ceasefire or a peace agreement.³⁴

While the U.S.-led Coalition, including Turkey, continued to support several vetted Syrian opposition groups fighting ISIS, fighting continued in a 6-year civil war involving multiple Syrian opposition groups, including ISIS, as well as Syrian regime forces backed by Russia and Iran, Iraqi Shia militias, Syrian Kurds, and Turkey.³⁵ In addition, the U.S. military launched 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles at a Syrian military air base in response to the Syrian regime's use of chemical weapons against civilians.³⁶

By the end of the quarter, the United States had participated as an observer at talks in Astana, Kazakhstan, where the Syrian regime and moderate opposition groups gathered to try to advance a settlement. Separate negotiations, which were convened in Geneva, Switzerland, during the quarter under the auspices of the United Nations (UN), also failed to produce a peace agreement.³⁷

Stabilization, which is a stage in the transition of the country from war to peace, includes demining and removing unexploded ordnance; reconnecting electricity and water; reestablishing basic medical services; providing local security and policing; and contributing to the reestablishment of the rule of law



Families fleeing violence in Mosul stream over a hill near the city's airport, where Iraqi military and police officials were waiting to put them onto buses and trucks to be taken to a displacement camp south of the city. (Stars and Stripes/Chad Garland photo)

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The UN reported that approximately 11 million people were in need of assistance in Iraq by the end of the second quarter, an increase of 1 million since the previous quarter.³⁸ Humanitarian needs were most acute in the Mosul area, where as many as 10,000 people were being displaced per day from west Mosul in late March and conditions were deteriorating for approximately 700,000 residents trapped by fighting in the area.³⁹ Conditions improved in east Mosul, and many residents returned to the area, but continued ISIS attacks impeded efforts to return basic services such as running water to the area.⁴⁰ Response to acute medical needs improved in the Mosul area through the establishment of a new field hospital and Trauma Stabilization Points, though the volume of need and post-care follow-up remained challenging.⁴¹

There were also efforts by humanitarian organizations to increase the capacity of internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in the area, the UN reported that the overwhelming flow of IDPs out of west Mosul caused long waits at screening centers and overcrowding at camps.⁴² This led to IDPs living in camps with substandard shelter, hygiene, and sanitation facilities.⁴³ IDPs continued returning to Anbar and Salah ad-Din provinces, but ongoing insecurity as a result of attacks by ISIS, and unexploded ordnance, as well as a lack of government services impeded some efforts to return.⁴⁴

The UN reported that in Syria 13.5 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance, including 6.3 million IDPs.⁴⁵ During the quarter, regime forces advanced into besieged opposition and ISIS-controlled areas, while Coalition and Turkish allies



Internally displaced women and children board buses to be taken to displacement camps near Mosul. (U.S. Army photo)

captured new areas from ISIS control.⁴⁶ This opened up new regions to UN access, but also drove an increased need for humanitarian assistance, as more Syrians became IDPs, and civilian infrastructure was damaged.⁴⁷ These advances also displaced people in many locations throughout Syria, including approximately 50,000 people in eastern Aleppo province and 42,000 people in Raqqah province.⁴⁸

In other areas, regime airstrikes displaced thousands and damaged critical civilian infrastructure. In the Wadi Barada area near Damascus, regime airstrikes resulted in water being cut off to the five million residents of the capital for over a month.⁴⁹ In Dayr Az Zawr, an ISIS advance cut a besieged regime enclave into two sections, and prevented critical airdrops by the World Food Program to 93,000 residents for several weeks.⁵⁰

LEAD IG OVERSIGHT

Completed Oversight Projects

The Lead IG agencies and their partners released 18 reports relating directly or in part to oversight of OIR from January 1, 2017, through March 31, 2017. The reports included:

- **DoD OIG:** An audit found that Iraq Train and Equip Fund weapons were not properly inventoried and secured, and an investigation determined that senior officials at U.S. Central Command had not falsified or distorted intelligence products related to ISIS.
- **DoS OIG:** An inspection found the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration had effective internal controls to manage its grants and agreements but was hampered by the lack of a staffing plan, and an audit found that the Bureau of Diplomatic Security did not effectively administer the armored vehicle program in accordance with DoS policies and guidelines.

- **USAID OIG:** An audit could not determine whether the 5-year, \$50 million Jordan Community Engagement Project was achieving its goal because the mission did not establish definitive measures of performance.
- **GAO:** A review found the current OCO criteria “outdated” and inadequate to address the full range of operations identified in the DoD’s FY 2017 OCO budget request.

Table 1 lists reports released this quarter, while a summary of these reports is included in the section on Completed Audit, Inspection, and Evaluation Projects, starting on page 87.

Table 1.

Oversight Reports Released this Quarter

Project	Release Date
AIR FORCE AUDIT AGENCY	
<i>Consumable Item Demilitarization</i> (F2017-0006-L20000)	March 6, 2017
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>The Army Did Not Effectively Monitor Contractor Performance of the Kuwait Base Operations and Security Support Contract</i> (DODIG-2017-062)	March 7, 2017
<i>Iraq Train and Equip Fund Weapons Not Properly Inventoried and Secured in Kuwait and Iraq</i> (DODIG-2017-058)	February 16, 2017
<i>Unclassified Report of Investigation Relating to CENTCOM (OIR) Intelligence Products</i> (DODIG-2017-049)	February 1, 2017
<i>Army Contract Command-Redstone and Space and Missile Defense Command Need to Improve Contract Oversight for the Web-Based Military Information Support Operations Contract</i> (DODIG-2017-042)	January 18, 2017
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Aspects of the Invoice Review Process Used by the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs to Support Contingency Operations in Iraq Need Improvement</i> (AUD-MERO-17-33)	March 7, 2017
<i>Management Assistance Report: Iraq Fuel Storage and Safety</i> (AUD-MERO-17-31)	March 7, 2017
<i>Audit of Emergency Action Plans for U.S. Embassy Tunis, Tunisia</i> (AUD-MERO-17-27)	February 23, 2017
<i>Audit of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security’s Administration of the Armored Vehicle Program</i> (AUD-SI-17-21)	February 14, 2017
<i>Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors’ Middle East Broadcasting Network</i> (ISP-IB-17-09)	February 9, 2017
<i>Inspection of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration</i> (ISP-I-17-10)	February 8, 2017

(continues on next page)

Project	Release Date
<i>Audit of the Visas Viper Program</i> (AUD-MERO-SI-17-26)	January 24, 2017
GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE	
<i>Combatting ISIS: Training and Equipping Iraq's Security Forces</i> (GAO-17-32C)	March 15, 2017
<i>OMB and DoD Should Revise the Criteria for Determining Eligible Costs and Identify the Costs Likely to Endure Long Term</i> (GAO-17-68)	January 18, 2017
UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Mission's Changing Focus and Approach Make It Difficult To Measure Success of the Jordan Community Engagement Project</i> (Report No. 8-278-17-002-P)	March 23, 2017
OTHER LEAD IG PARTNER OVERSIGHT	
<i>Review of Domestic Sharing of Counterterrorism Information prepared by the Inspectors General of the Intelligence Community, Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice</i> (DOJ OIG: Audit Division Report 17-21; DHS OIG: OIG-17-09)	March 31, 2017
<i>CBP's Border Security Efforts – An Analysis of Southwest Border Security Between Ports of Entry</i> (DHS OIG: OIG-17-39)	February 27, 2017
<i>DHS Lacks Oversight of Component Use of Force</i> (DHS OIG: OIG-17-22)	January 12, 2017

Ongoing Oversight Projects

The Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies had 27 ongoing projects directly related to OIR at the end of the quarter. The largest number of this total—17—relate to OIR operations. Among them are DoD OIG projects assessing the U.S. and Coalition train, advise, assist, and equip activities, military facilities, acquisition cross-servicing agreements, emergency management, and counternarcotics.

Other areas of ongoing projects are contracts and grants, governance, humanitarian assistance, and intelligence. In the area of humanitarian assistance, USAID OIG is conducting audits of the agency's oversight of public international organizations for humanitarian disasters and USAID's basic education program in Lebanon, which has been greatly strained by the inflow of Syrian refugee children. In the governance area, DoS OIG is auditing the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and inspecting the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, both of which support DoS governance operations in OCO environments. Further discussion is included in the section on Ongoing and Planned Oversight Activity, starting on page 110.

Investigations

There were 72 investigations open involving OIR-related programs and operations as the quarter ended. During the reporting period, the Lead IG agencies used deployed investigators in Kuwait, Qatar, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates, as well

as in Germany and Washington, D.C., to conduct these investigations. The OIR-related investigations involved allegations of procurement, grant, and other program fraud; corruption involving U.S. Government officials; theft and diversion of Government funds or equipment; and other offenses, including trafficking in persons.

The Defense Criminal Investigative Service opened two new OIR-related Trafficking in Persons investigations this quarter. Since beginning this program in December 2015, DCIS is currently working seven such investigations related to OIR. In addition, the U.S. Army proposed for debarment a prime contractor providing dining facility services in the region based on an investigation that identified numerous trafficking violations, including failure to adequately house and feed employees, use of a recruiting agency that resulted in debt bondage, and failure to pay employees in accordance with host nation law.

USAID OIG handled complaints alleging fraud and false claims in several sub-awards of an Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) sub-awardee for a Syria cross-border program. USAID OIG referred findings to the OFDA sub-awardee, and as a result, OFDA reduced the sub-awardee's award from \$18 million to \$10 million. This reduction resulted in a savings of \$8 million to the U.S. Government.

More information on OIG investigative activity can be found starting on page 103.

Hotline Activity

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints and contacts specific to its agency. The OIGs' hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals to report violations of law, rule, or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; and abuse of authority for independent review. The DoD OIG has an investigator to coordinate the hotline contacts received among the Lead IG agencies and others as appropriate. During the reporting period, the investigator received and coordinated 72 contacts related to OIR and opened 89 cases, which were referred within the DoD OIG, to other Lead IG agencies, or to other investigative organizations.

Joint Strategic Planning

On March 9, 2017, Lead IG agency representatives convened a summit to continue the FY 2018 comprehensive joint strategic planning for OIR. The Lead IG representatives agreed on five strategic oversight areas for FY 2018 planning listed below.

- Security
- Governance and Civil Society
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Stabilization
- Support to Mission

The Lead IG representatives will continue meeting over the next few months to plan projects consistent with these areas and discuss complementary and coordinated oversight. The joint strategy oversight plan for OIR will be issued in the fall to begin FY 2018.

LIBERATION FROM ISIS

Photographer Seth Robson of Stars and Stripes captured images of life in a part of Mosul freed after nearly 2 years of terrorist occupation.



An Iraqi soldier directs traffic in Mosul, January 23, 2017.



An Iraqi soldier explores a home that ISIS had turned into a prison.



Rocket casings made by ISIS (top). Bolts that were used as shrapnel in IEDs found in a home that ISIS fighters had turned into a bomb factory (right).





Mosul residents walk through a liberated neighborhood.



An Iraqi special forces Humvee drives by pedestrians.



Buildings damaged by fighting.



A motorcycle with a white flag drives through a liberated neighborhood.



A damaged bridge over the Khoser River.



Cars and bicycles pass along a road near Mosul University.



Iraqi special forces troops at the ruins of the Nabi Yunus Mosque, which had been destroyed by ISIS militants.





Iraqi soldiers from 9th Iraqi Army Division load rockets at Al Asthana Ridge.
(U.S. Marine Corps photo)

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

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QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS OF U.S. STRATEGY TO DEFEAT ISIS

In September 2014, President Barak Obama announced a comprehensive strategy to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIS, setting out nine Strategic Lines of Effort (LOEs) to destroy the organization. Below is a description of some of the LOE activity during the quarter:

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IN IRAQ

At the March meeting of foreign ministers for the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, humanitarian assistance and stabilization for communities upon liberation from ISIS emerged as a central concern, necessary to allow IDPs and refugees to return to their homes and to avoid a resurgence of extremist ideologies and groups.¹ According to the UN, more than \$3 billion is needed for Iraqi stabilization in 2017, of which over a third is targeted for Mosul.²

DENYING ISIS SAFE-HAVEN

The military operations to isolate and attack the ISIS strongholds of Raqqa and Mosul have reportedly forced ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi into hiding in the desert along the Iraqi-Syrian border. Coalition forces reported killing at least four high-ranking ISIS in Iraq.

BUILDING PARTNER CAPACITY

The Coalition this quarter concentrated on training units of local Popular Mobilization Forces at Coalition Build Partner Capacity sites in Iraq. The Coalition trained more than 20,000 Iraqi forces, of which about 9,000 may deploy as “hold” forces. Denmark, the United Kingdom, Italy, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia offered specialty “train-the-trainer” courses. Denmark held basic training courses.³

ENHANCING INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION

The Coalition obtained what it referred to as a “huge amount” of intelligence records left behind in Mosul this quarter by retreating ISIS fighters. Speaking to reporters in mid-February, Major General Rupert Jones, UK deputy commander of CJTF-OIR, described ISIS as a “very bureaucratic organization” and said that the Coalition was working with Iraqi partners to gather as much abandoned intelligence material as possible. Major-General Jones did not reveal the contents of the captured intelligence cache, but said he expected at least some of the material to “point to terror plots” in keeping with previous intelligence abandoned by ISIS in Manbij, Syria.⁴

EXPOSING ISIS’S TRUE NATURE

On February 28, representatives from 38 countries met with media and tech companies in London to enhance efforts to counter ISIS messaging under the auspices of the Counter ISIS Coalition Communications Working Group. The group’s campaign targeting vulnerable audiences

in Tunisia, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia has expanded to Libya, Jordan, and France.⁵ The U.S. Global Engagement Center reported reaching more than 19 million people with social media campaigns aimed at giving families, youth, and community organizations tools to safeguard their communities against violent extremism; engaging women against violent extremism; and showing that ISIS is a corrupt, exploitative organization.⁶

DISRUPTING ISIS'S FINANCES

Over 35 countries sent officials to the Counter ISIS Finance Group meeting in Denmark on March 29-30, 2017, to discuss the effectiveness of Coalition strategies to disrupt ISIS's revenue. The group also addressed possible new methods of raising revenue should ISIS transform itself into an insurgency that does not administer any territory. In addition, the Department of the Treasury (Treasury) and the DoS listed for sanctions 11 people and one group as ISIS-related. The UN designated four persons for sanctions, and is considering others nominated by at least 14 countries.⁷

DISRUPTING THE FLOW OF FOREIGN TERRORIST FIGHTERS

More than 60 countries have laws addressing the movement of foreign terrorist fighters, and provide fighter profiles to the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). More than 30 countries use enhanced traveler screening measures. ISIS no longer controls any section of the Turkey-Syria border. As a result of such systemic efforts, according to the DoS, the flow of foreign terrorist fighters fell by 90 percent during 2016.⁸

PROTECTING THE HOMELAND

In January, Ahmed Mohammed El Gammal was convicted in New York of conspiring and attempting to provide material support to ISIS. According to the Department of Justice, El Gammal posted comments in support of ISIS and regularly corresponded online with someone who later flew to Istanbul with the intent to travel to Syria to join ISIS. In a separate case, in February, Omar Munther Saleh pled guilty to conspiring to provide material support to ISIS for trying to prepare a "pressure cooker" bomb and detonate it in New York City on behalf of ISIS.⁹

HUMANITARIAN SUPPORT

USAID and the DoS continued to fund humanitarian assistance for IDPs, refugees, and other people in need due to the conflicts in Iraq and Syria. Assistance efforts included shelter; healthcare; emergency food aid; protection; water, sanitation and hygiene services; humanitarian coordination; and logistics support.¹⁰ The humanitarian effort in Iraq focused on mitigating the effects of the fighting for control of west Mosul.¹¹ In Syria, humanitarian assistance efforts centered on meeting the needs of IDPs displaced by Syrian regime advances into opposition and ISIS-held areas, and advances by Coalition allies into ISIS-held areas.¹² As of March 31, 2017, the U.S. Government committed nearly \$5.98 billion in humanitarian assistance for Syria and committed more than \$1.13 billion for Iraq.¹³

SPOTLIGHT: GLOBAL COALITION TO DEFEAT ISIS MEETS IN WASHINGTON

The reporting period saw significant diplomatic and military engagement among the United States, Iraq, and Coalition partners regarding the effort to defeat ISIS.

In particular, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson hosted foreign ministers and senior leaders of the Global Coalition in Washington, D.C., on March 22-23, 2017. Partners from the 68-member Coalition assembled to review the campaign and strategize about accelerating the defeat of ISIS. The meeting included a detailed discussion of Coalition efforts including military operations, countering foreign terrorist fighters, counter-terrorist financing, counter-messaging, and stabilization of liberated areas.¹⁴ Additionally, the participants discussed the ongoing humanitarian crises in Iraq and Syria, which affect the region.¹⁵

Iraqi Prime Minister Abadi, accompanied by the Chief of Staff to the President of the Kurdistan Regional Government, attended the meeting. Prime Minister Abadi addressed the Coalition and stressed his government's commitment to destroying ISIS and promoting effective democratic governance. In a joint statement, the ministers stated that they "remain firmly united in our outrage at ISIS's atrocities and in our determination to eliminate this global threat and overcome its false, destructive narrative. We reiterate our commitment to an integrated, multidimensional, and comprehensive approach to defeat ISIS and its global networks, fully recognizing this will require sustained, focused efforts."¹⁶

Prime Minister Abadi met with President Trump in Washington, D.C., on March 21. The Iraqi leaders also met with Vice President Mike Pence and senior Iraqi officials in February at the Munich Security Conference, a major global forum for discussing security policy.¹⁷ In these meetings, the United States reaffirmed its commitments to fighting ISIS and supporting democratic governance in Iraq. The United States and Iraq reaffirmed their commitment to the long-term partnership.¹⁸

Vice President Pence also met in Munich with Masoud Barzani, President of Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government, and expressed continued U.S. support for a unified, federal, and democratic Iraq, and encouraged close cooperation between the government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government.¹⁹

In February, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir visited Baghdad for talks. This was the first visit to Iraq by a senior leader from Saudi Arabia in 27 years. During the visit, Foreign Minister Jubeir met with Prime Minister Abadi and Iraqi Foreign Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari.²⁰ The Saudi foreign minister reportedly expressed his country's support for the fight against ISIS.²¹

At the end of March, UN Secretary-General António Guterres conducted what he described as a "visit of solidarity" to Iraq. Secretary-General Guterres met with Iraq's Prime Minister, President, Foreign Minister, and Speaker of Parliament. In remarks on March 30, Secretary-General Guterres stated that he welcomed the commitment of the country's leaders to civilian protection and national dialogue and pledged the ongoing support of the UN.²²



U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson addresses foreign ministers from the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, March 23, 2017. (DoS photo)

In addition, during the reporting period, U.S. officials actively engaged their Turkish counterparts to discuss efforts to defeat ISIS in Iraq and Syria. In particular:

- **On February 7**, President Trump held a 45-minute introductory call with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. During the phone call, the President reiterated the need to continue to cooperate in the fight against ISIS and against all forms of terrorism.
- **On February 9**, Central Intelligence Agency Director Michael Pompeo visited Turkey to discuss ISIS and Syria with Turkish intelligence officials.
- **On February 17**, Vice President Pence met with Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim at the Munich Security Conference to reiterate the importance of consensus and action in the defeat-ISIS campaign.
- **On March 7 and 8**, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford met his Turkish and Russian counterparts, General Hulusi Akar and General Valery Gerasimov, respectively, in the southeastern Turkish town of Antalya. The talks focused on establishing more effective coordination and cooperation among the forces of the three nations in the conduct of the counter-ISIS military campaign.
- **On March 30**, Secretary of State Tillerson met with President Erdogan and other senior Turkish officials in Ankara to discuss the counter-ISIS campaign in Syria and Iraq and to recognize Turkey's role in ensuring regional stability.²³

In a tense March 30 press conference, Secretary Tillerson praised the Turkish contributions to the counter-ISIS mission.²⁴ However, the Turkish foreign minister noted continuing frustration with the U.S. support for Syrian Kurdish forces in the fight against ISIS. The Turkish minister said the two countries can fight ISIS together but “it is not correct to fight against one terrorist organization while co-operating with another.” The Turkish government considers the Kurdish YPG a terrorist organization while the U.S. government does not. Tillerson said “difficult decisions” and “difficult choices” remained.²⁵

STATUS OF FUNDS

DoD Request for Overseas Contingency Operations Appropriations

The DoD operated this quarter under a continuing resolution enacted on December 12, 2016, and set to expire on April 28, 2017. In late April, Congress reached a budget agreement to fund the Government through September. The continuing resolution required the DoD to operate under its FY 2016 budget, except as explicitly provided otherwise.²⁶ The continuing resolution included \$5.8 billion in defense OCO funding above the FY 2016 appropriation's annualized rate of \$572.7 billion (\$514.1 billion in base funding, \$58.6 billion in OCO).²⁷ The additional OCO funds were requested by the Obama Administration on November 10, 2016.²⁸

General Robert Neller, Commandant of the Marine Corps, said that while service members forward deployed in support of OCOs will continue to receive the resources they need, under the fiscal constraints of a continuing resolution, this expenditure of resources will come at the expense of the troops who are currently training to replace them as well as those who have just returned from combat.²⁹

Table 2.

DoD FY 2017 Budget Request for Overseas Contingency Operations (in \$ thousands)

Appropriation Account Title	FY 2017 President's Budget 2/9/16	OCO Budget Amendment 11/10/16	Less Supplemental Enacted 12/12/16*	Additional Appropriation Request 3/16/17	Total Remaining OCO Request for 2017
Military Personnel	3,562,258	+144,868	-265,118	+113,765	3,555,773
Operation and Maintenance	45,034,083	+5,100,248	-4615,935	+3,585,313	49,103,709
Procurement	9,514,408	+387,684	-812,247	+1,1008,202	10,098,047
Research, Development, Test and Evaluation	374,169	+142,200	-81,700	+359,671	794,340
Revolving and Management Funds (Working Capital)	140,633	—	—	+1,681	142,314
Military Construction†	172,000	—	-172,000	+11,500	11,500
FY 2017 Department of Defense OCO Request Total	58,797,551	+5,775,000	-5,947,000	+5,080,132	63,705,683

*Enacted includes funding provided in Division B of Public Law 114-254, the Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017, enacted 12/12/2016, and Division A of Public Law 114-223 for items listed under "Military Construction Bill Appropriations."

† These amounts reflect the full-year Military Construction appropriation, which was enacted in Division A of Public Law No. 114-223, the Military Constructions, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017, enacted 9/29/2016. The Additional Appropriations Request, 3/16/17, includes a cancellation of \$12.3 million previously requested for the Air Force.

Source: Table accompanying the Additional Appropriations Request, 3/16/17, pp. 6-9.

In this fiscal year, the budget request has evolved over two presidential administrations. The Obama Administration initially released the President's Budget for FY 2017 in February 2016. In November, President Obama submitted a budget amendment requesting additional OCO funding, much of which was appropriated by Congress in December. The new Administration submitted its own supplemental request for OCO funds in March 2017.³⁰

The current DoD OCO request for FY 2017 is \$63.7 billion. This is the product of the original budget of \$58.8 billion, plus the two supplemental requests, minus the additional funds appropriated in the Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017, enacted in December.³¹ Table 2 shows the evolution of the OCO request for FY 2017.

Challenges Posed to the DoD by an Extended Continuing Resolution

This fiscal year constitutes the longest span of time the DoD has operated without a full year appropriation and the first time a new President was inaugurated with the DoD operating under a continuing resolution.³² The four Armed Service Chiefs testified before the House Armed Services Committee on the damage done to the Department and the Military Services by long-term continuing resolutions. Common themes were that a year-long continuing resolution would:

- prevent the increase in active duty end strength as authorized by the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2017;
- result in the cancellation of some planned training exercises;
- delay necessary procurement of major systems, including aircraft, ships, and munitions; and
- generally reduce the quality of life for service members.³³

At a March 16, 2017, press briefing, the DoD Comptroller said the DoD was unable to fully execute its currently available procurement funding due to the continuing resolution restrictions on new contracts (such as the prohibition on new program starts).³⁴ Conversely, while the DoD's FY 2017 budget request included a reduction in procurement funds, it also included a significant increase in funding for operation and maintenance, which has not been met. The absence of the requested operation and maintenance funding has negatively impacted planned training, readiness, and maintenance efforts, and the DoD Comptroller stated that a full-year continuing resolution would result in the cancellation of certain planned training exercises and maintenance activities.³⁵

Trump Administration Submits its Supplemental DoD OCO Request for FY 2017

On March 16, 2017, the President submitted a supplemental budget request for the remainder of FY 2017. This request called for an additional \$30 billion for the DoD, including \$24.9 billion for base budget requirements and \$5.1 billion for OCO. It also included a separate \$3 billion request to fund Department of Homeland Security (DHS) border security activities.³⁶ The supplemental OCO request specifically included \$1.4 billion for operational needs associated with OIR, \$2 billion for the new strategy to combat ISIS, \$626 million for the Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund, and \$1.1 billion for Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS) in Afghanistan.³⁷

The National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2017, signed into law on December 23, 2016, combined the existing Iraq Train and Equip Fund (ITEF) and the Syria Train and Equip Fund (STEF) into a new Counter-ISIL Train and Equip Fund to be used to support train and equip operations for both countries (at the time of the law's enactment, "ISIL" was the U.S. Government's preferred name for ISIS).³⁸ The Obama Administration had originally requested \$630 million and \$250 million for the Iraq and Syria funds, respectively. The November OCO amendment requested an additional \$289.5 million for the ITEF, which was included in the Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017. The Trump Administration's supplemental request cancelled the standing requests for the previous Iraq and Syria Train and Equip Funds and made a request of \$1.5 billion for the new Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund. All train and equip funding is requested and appropriated under the operation and maintenance account.³⁹

According to CJTF-OIR, approximately 30,000 partner troops are needed to continue offensive momentum, secure internal lines, and liberate ISIS-controlled territory

FY 2017 DoD OCO Funding Shortfalls

CJTF-OIR projected that extended operations to seize Mosul and higher-than-anticipated battle costs will result in ITEF expenditures exceeding the program's \$919.5 million allocation for FY 2017/2018 by \$446.4 million. CJTF-OIR has requested additional funding from the DoD Comptroller to mitigate the shortfall. Current funding for OIR is being focused on operations while less immediate priorities and activities have been deferred.⁴⁰

The current FY 2017 STEF allocation is \$270 million, which allows the DoD to fund the training and equipping for approximately 14,000 partner force troops. According to CJTF-OIR, however, approximately 30,000 partner troops are required to continue offensive momentum, secure internal lines, and liberate ISIS-controlled territory. CJTF-OIR has requested a \$180 million increase in STEF from the DoD Comptroller to support this operational requirement.⁴¹

Although Congress has not directly appropriated funding for STEF since 2015, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, permitted the DoD to use funding from the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund to provide assistance to appropriately vetted elements of the Syrian opposition.⁴² Once the Counter-ISIL Train and Equip Fund is created, as required by the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2017, ITEF and STEF will be combined into a single Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund.⁴³

Current Cost of DoD Operations Against ISIS

The DoD reported spending a total of \$11.7 billion on the counter-ISIS mission from the start of operations on August 8, 2014, through February 15, 2017, for an average daily cost of \$12.7 million over that 2.5-year period. This information is provided in the DoD *Special Report: Inherent Resolve*, which has the most current data on OIR.⁴⁴

As the accompanying table from the report shows, the Air Force continues to be responsible for nearly two-thirds of the total cost of operations, due primarily to expenses related to munitions and daily flying operational tempo, or OPTEMPO, which consists of operations, training, maintenance, parts, fuel, and other necessities for sustaining day-to-day air combat operations.⁴⁵

Table 3.

Total Cost of DoD Operations for OIR (in \$ millions)

Extrapolated Total Cost	Total Cost	Percent of Total
By Expense		
Daily Flying OPTEMPO	4,620	39%
Daily Ship OPTEMPO	23	0%
Munitions	2,635	22%
Mission Support	4,442	38%
TOTAL	11,720	100%
By Service		
Army	2,024	17%
Navy	1,355	12%
Air Force	7,464	64%
SOCOM	876	7%
TOTAL	11,720	100%
By Category		
Logistics Support	2,180	19%
Operational Support	2,100	18%
ISR	56	0%
OPTEMPO	4,643	40%
Military Pay	106	1%
Munitions	2,635	22%
TOTAL	11,720	100%

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding. Total is for Aug. 8, 2014–Feb. 15, 2017.

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, “Special Report: Inherent Resolve,” 3/28/2017.

A more detailed but less current assessment of OCO spending is available in the *Cost of War* report, in which the DoD Comptroller details the DoD's year-to-date spending on OIR. The report's most current information, as of December 31, 2016, shows \$1.2 billion in obligations and \$795 million in disbursements for specific appropriations supporting OIR.⁴⁶

FY 2016 DoD OCO Spending Recap

This quarter, the DoD Comptroller published the *Cost of War* report for September 2016, the final month of the fiscal year. In total, the DoD reported that it had obligated \$5.4 billion and disbursed \$3.6 billion during FY 2016 in support of OIR.⁴⁷ These figures represent all OCO spending by the DoD in support of OIR during the fiscal year, regardless of when the funding was appropriated. Therefore, this report should not be considered an execution of FY 2016 appropriations. Funds appropriated for FY 2016 may also continue to be spent in subsequent years to support contracts made during that fiscal year.

FY 2017 Supplemental OCO Request a Placeholder for Counter-ISIS Efforts

When the FY 2017 supplemental request was released, the DoD held a press conference with Mr. John Roth, currently performing the duties of Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller), and Army Lieutenant General Anthony Ierardi, Director, Force Structure, Resources and Assessment (J8), Joint Staff. They discussed the additional \$5.1 billion requested for OCO, which is intended to fund plans currently being developed to defeat ISIS. Mr. Roth noted that the FY 2017 request is likely to be the largest yet for the counter-ISIS fight.⁴⁸

Lieutenant General Ierardi said that while the Secretary of Defense and the President had not yet finalized the details of the strategy to defeat ISIS, the requested funding level establishes a baseline for subsequent decisions that will be made regarding these plans. He added that the figures included in the President's revised OCO request for FY 2017 were the product of discussions with the combatant command about possible ways forward in the counter-ISIS fight, and this funding would support core capabilities, such as command and control, logistics, and sustainment, which could play a role in a number of potential strategies.⁴⁹ Specifically, the request included \$2 billion for a "flexible fund that would enable DoD to allocate resources in support of the new counter-ISIS strategy."⁵⁰

While the Secretary of Defense and the President had not yet finalized the details of the strategy to defeat ISIS, the requested funding level establishes a baseline for subsequent decisions that will be made regarding these plans

The *Cost of War* report is an important oversight resource, as it is the only source for monthly data on the DoD's spending in support of OCOs. The following highlights end of fiscal year 2016 spending for the major appropriations categories supporting OIR:

- **Military Personnel:** Provides for pay and allowances for service members, including costs related to permanent changes of station.⁵¹ As of September 30, 2016, the DoD had obligated and disbursed \$144 million.⁵²
- **Operation and Maintenance:** Provides for a wide range of services and consumable items to support sustainment of war-related activities, including fuel, training, airlift, base support, ammunition, and civilian and contractor personnel.⁵³ As of September 30, 2016, DoD had obligated \$4.6 billion and disbursed \$2.9 billion. The variance between obligations and disbursements may be attributed to delayed invoices associated with contracts or over-obligating resources for services and activities.
- **Iraq Train and Equip Fund:** Provides direct material support to the Iraqi Security Forces, including the Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga, and certain tribal elements allied with the Iraqi government that are engaged in the fight against ISIS.⁵⁴ As of September 30, 2016, the DoD had obligated \$380 million and disbursed \$377 million of its \$715 million appropriation for the ITEF for FY 2016.⁵⁵
- **Syria Train and Equip Fund:** Previously provided assistance, including training, equipment, supplies, and other sustainment needs to vetted elements of the Syrian opposition engaged in the fight against ISIS.⁵⁶ Congress did not fund the STEF in FY 2016 because the DoD suspended elements of this program due to significant challenges with its implementation and an inability to meet program goals on the ground in Syria.⁵⁷ However, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, permitted the DoD to use funding from the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund to provide assistance to appropriately vetted elements of the Syrian opposition.⁵⁸

FY 2017 Status of Funds

This quarter, the DoD Comptroller published the *Cost of War* report for December 2016, which is the most recent update on the status of funds. The following highlights current obligations and disbursements through December 2016 for the principal categories supporting OIR activities:

- **Military Personnel:** As of December 31, 2016, the DoD had obligated and disbursed \$64 million.⁵⁹
- **Operation and Maintenance:** As of December 31, 2016, the DoD had obligated \$925 million and disbursed \$564 million.⁶⁰
- **Iraq Train and Equip Fund, 2016/2017:** As of December 31, 2016, the DoD had obligated \$177 million and disbursed \$144 million.⁶¹

FY 2018 DoD OCO Budget

On March 16, 2017, the President also released his budget blueprint for FY 2018, which requested \$639 billion for the DoD, a \$52 billion increase from the FY 2017 (annualized from the continuing resolution level). This included \$574 billion in base budget expenditures and \$65 billion in OCO.⁶² The budget blueprint included only top-line funding requests for federal departments and agencies, as well as broad policy priorities for the Executive Branch. A full budget with greater detail is expected in the coming months.⁶³

The FY 2018 blueprint indicated that the forthcoming budget will prioritize warfighter readiness needs, which have been strained over 15 years of conflict overseas. It will also focus on providing sufficient resources to replace equipment lost in combat operations and address shortfalls in stocks of critical munitions, personnel gaps, deferred maintenance, and facilities. The budget will also request funding to support DoD's efforts to combat ISIS, including direct strikes, support for partners engaged on the ground, and disruption of ISIS's external operations and finances.⁶⁴

General Mark Milley, Chief of Staff of the Army, testified to the House Armed Services Committee that a return to the statutory spending caps under the Budget Control Act of 2011 (also known as "sequestration") in FY 2018 would severely impact readiness, citing the lingering effects of the imposition of sequestration in FY 2013. General Milley cautioned that sequestration would "reverse efforts to restore prior end strength cuts and improve Army readiness, and will cause the Army to further mortgage future readiness especially in our modernization accounts." General Milley noted that in order to meet near term operational demands, such as those associated with OIR, the capacity and size of the overall force structure would be sacrificed under sequestration. He warned that the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act's mandated end strength increases without commensurate funding would result in a "hollow Army" with only a select few units ready for combat.⁶⁵

General Mark Milley, Chief of Staff of the Army, warned that the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act's mandated end strength increases without commensurate funding would result in a "hollow Army" with only a select few units ready for combat

Department of State Use of FY 2017 OCO Funds to Defeat ISIS

On January 5, 2017, the DoS and USAID submitted to Congress their Consolidated Report on Anticipated Uses of Funding to Counter ISIS and Other Threats, Address Related Needs, and Counter Russian Influence. The report addressed anticipated uses for \$4.3 billion in OCO funds provided for these purposes in the Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017. For example, the DoS and USAID anticipated using OCO funds to increase assistance for stabilization, addressing explosive remnants of war, countering violent extremism, and providing humanitarian assistance.

On January 28, 2017, President Trump issued National Security Presidential Memorandum-3, “Plan to Defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria,” directing the Secretary of Defense to prepare a preliminary draft of a new plan to defeat ISIS, in collaboration with the Secretary of State.⁶⁶ The budget implications of such a plan are not yet known.

The Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017, directed the DoS and USAID to submit a report to Congress on the anticipated uses of funds provided under the Act, which they submitted on January 5, 2017. The Act also required the DoS and USAID to notify Congress before they obligate these funds. By the end of February 2017, the DoS and USAID had submitted notifications to Congress for the obligation of \$2.39 billion, of which over \$519 million was for counter-ISIS programming. The DoS and USAID continued to assess the resource requirements associated with implementing the civilian components of the plan to defeat ISIS and have undertaken the following initiatives under OIR:

Defeating ISIS at the Core: \$963.5 million has been allocated for Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and the Relief and Recovery Fund, including:

- \$50.0 million in Economic Support Fund (ESF), Overseas Contingency Operations (ESF/OCO) to support programs in areas controlled by the Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq;
- \$270.0 million in ESF/OCO to support a sovereign loan guarantee in Iraq;
- \$124.0 million in ESF/OCO and \$30 million in Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining and Related (NADR) Programs, Overseas Contingency Operations (NADR/OCO) to support stabilization, local governance, civil society, reconciliation, and demining in Syria;
- \$10.0 million in NADR/OCO to support efforts to counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq; and
- \$30.0 million in NADR/OCO to support demining in Iraq.

Countering ISIS Branches: The DoS and USAID continue to provide funds for Libya.

- The DoS has committed \$14.5 million in NADR/OCO for demining; and
- USAID plans to continue its support under USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives with \$10.0 million in Transition Initiatives, Overseas Contingency Operations for conflict mitigation and stabilization activities and to expand its programming to counter violent extremism.

Enhancing Stability in Neighboring Countries: The DoS intends to provide \$30.0 million in Foreign Military Financing, Overseas Contingency Operations to support the Lebanese Armed Forces as they continue to fight ISIS and strengthen Lebanese borders against violent extremists.⁶⁷

Of the \$4.3 billion in appropriated FY 2017 supplemental OCO funds, the DoS and USAID anticipate using \$1.37 billion to fund D-ISIS activities. Table 4 provides a detailed review of the \$1.37 billion allocated from the \$4.30 billion made available to DoS and USAID.

Table 4.

Review of DoS and USAID FY 2017 OCO Supplemental Funds Allocated to Defeat ISIS (in \$ thousands)

Country/Program	Account	Amount Allocated	Amount Notified (As of 2/28/17)
Defeating ISIS at the core		963,500	470,312
Iraq		491,500	295,312
Sovereign Loan Guarantee (SLG)	ESF-OCO	255,312	270,000
Stabilization	ESF-OCO	150,000	—
of which, programs in KRG-controlled areas	ESF-OCO	(13,312)	—
Reconciliation, Justice, Accountability, and Atrocity Prevention	ESF-OCO	10,000	—
of which, UN/Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict	ESF-OCO	(2,000)	—
of which, programs in KRG-controlled areas	ESF-OCO	(2,000)	—
Economic Governance and Reform in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region	ESF-OCO	5,000	—
Higher Education (American University of Iraq-Sulaimani)	ESF-OCO	5,000	—
Economic and Development Programs in KRG-controlled areas*	ESF-OCO	24,688	—
Demining	NADR-OCO CWD	30,000	30,000
Counter WMD	NADR-OCO GTR	10,000	10,000
Strengthening Border Security	NADR-OCO EXBS	1,500	—
Syria		315,000	175,000
Stabilization and Community Initiatives	ESF-OCO	270,000	136,000
Reconciliation, Justice, Accountability, and Atrocity Prevention	ESF-OCO	10,000	9,000
Support to Political Processes	ESF-OCO	5,000	—
Demining	NADR-OCO CWD	30,000	30,000
Turkey		2,000	—
Strengthening Border Security along the Syria-Turkey Border	NADR-OCO EXBS	2,000	—
Relief and Recovery Fund		125,000	—
Crisis Response, primarily in the core Defeat ISIS area	ESF-OCO	40,000	—
	TI-OCO	10,000	—
Crisis Response, primarily in the core Defeat ISIS area	FMF-OCO	75,000	—
of which, potential transfers to NADR for demining pending consultation		(TBD)	—

Country/Program	Account	Amount Allocated	Amount Notified (As of 2/28/17)
Defeating ISIS Branches		298,589	38,734
Libya		118,500	24,500
Stabilization	ESF-OCO	30,000	—
	TI-OCO	10,000	10,000
Support to Political Processes/GNA and Municipal Governance	ESF-OCO	15,000	—
Defeat ISIS Recruitment and Transit/Strengthen Community Resilience	ESF-OCO	10,000	—
Expanded UN Efforts and Platforms	ESF-OCO	10,000	—
Community Security and Rule of Law	INCLE-OCO	10,000	—
Demining	NADR-OCO CWD	14,500	14,500
Building Counterterrorism Capacity	NADR-OCO ATA	10,000	—
	PKO-OCO	5,000	—
Strengthening Border Security	NADR-OCO EXBS	4,000	—
Enhancing Stability in Neighboring Countries		110,000	—
Jordan		40,000	—
Strengthen economic growth and improve resilience among host communities	ESF-OCO	20,000	—
Defeat ISIS and border security capacity	FMF-OCO	20,000	—
Tunisia		40,000	—
Strengthen economic growth and improve resilience among marginalized communities	ESF-OCO	10,000	—
Defeat ISIS and border security capacity	FMF-OCO	30,000	—
Lebanon		30,000	24,500
Defeat ISIS and border security capacity	FMF-OCO	30,000	—

*USAID CN #81 notified up to \$270 million for a SLG for Iraq; the actual subsidy cost of the SLG was \$255.3 million. The remainder was added to support programs in the KRG-controlled areas.

Sources: Submitted by DoS and USAID to Congress: “Consolidated Report on Anticipated Uses of Funding to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Other Threats, Address Related Needs, and Counter Russian Influence” (January 5, 2017). Submitted by DoS and USAID to Congress: “Updated Report on Anticipated Uses of Funding to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Other Threats, Address Related Needs, and Counter Russian Influence” (March 3, 2017).

U.S. AND COALITION EFFORTS TO DEFEAT ISIS

Coalition Train, Advise, Assist, and Equip Mission

The mission to train, advise, assist, and equip local forces in Iraq and Syria remained a cornerstone of the U.S. strategy to defeat ISIS. The strategy, known as “by, with, and through” in DoD parlance, has allowed the U.S. and Coalition partners to conduct military operations against ISIS using Iraqi Security Forces, Syrian Democratic Forces, and vetted Syrian opposition forces that are trained and equipped by the United States and the Coalition. According to Pentagon officials, the training missions in both countries provide local forces with five essential components of military readiness, including:

- equipping troops prior to combat
- training troops prior to combat
- intelligence during combat
- precision fires during combat
- advice during combat⁶⁸

The DoD and the Coalition carry out their mission in Iraq in coordination with the Iraqi government, and are training an array of security forces, including Iraqi Army soldiers, border guards, tribal forces, Federal police, and Kurdish Peshmerga, at eight Build Partner Capacity sites. In Syria, where there is no government partner, the train and assist mission has faced several challenges to vetting fighters and supporting local force leadership. The program was briefly discontinued in 2015, and reinstated in 2016. Since then, the DoD has trained and equipped the Syrian Democratic Forces and vetted Syrian opposition in northwestern Syria and in southern Syria fighting to disrupt ISIS around the Jordanian border.⁶⁹

This quarter, the mission in Iraq focused heavily on Mosul, from assisting the Iraqis as they finished liberating east Mosul and began operations in west Mosul to training “hold” forces capable of patrolling areas recently captured from ISIS, particularly in Mosul.⁷⁰ In Syria, the mission focused primarily on training Arab elements of the Syrian Democratic Forces, which consists mainly of Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) and the Syrian Arab Coalition and is based in northeastern Syria near Raqqah.⁷¹

U.S. Military Advisers Deployed with Iraqi Forces Closer to the Fight

The United States and Coalition partners intensified the train, advise, assist, and equip mission in Iraq this quarter, with the deployment of an additional 240 U.S. troops closer to the fighting in west Mosul.⁷² The increase in U.S. troops nearer to the battle began as Iraqi police and soldiers fought for control of east Mosul, which they captured in January, and continued as those security forces moved toward capturing west Mosul.⁷³

The United States and Coalition partners intensified the train, advise, assist, and equip mission in Iraq this quarter, with the deployment of an additional 240 U.S. troops closer to the fighting in west Mosul.

Training of Iraqi Security Forces Focuses on “Hold Forces”

In February, almost 5,000 Iraqis completed training at some of the eight training sites that the Coalition uses to train Iraqi Security Forces.⁷⁴ Trainees learned about the law of armed conflict, the use of small arms, explosive hazard awareness, and basic patrolling, among other things.⁷⁵ This quarter, many of them were trained to act as “hold” forces in Mosul.⁷⁶ This quarter, CJTF enrolled 11,595 personnel at various training camps.⁷⁷

Coalition training also is conducted at Qayarah West and Al Taqqadum. Qayarah West trains tribal forces to act as “hold” forces. Al-Taqqadum is a new location for Coalition training and offers specialty courses to the Iraqi Army’s 10th Division and the Commando Brigade of the Anbar Operations Command.⁷⁸

This quarter, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) began training about 30 enlisted Iraqi soldiers in ways to counter improvised explosive devices (IEDs). NATO supplied protective equipment to Iraqi Security Forces, ran a course on civil-military cooperation, and worked with Iraqi authorities to reform security institutions. Prior to its deployment in Iraq, NATO had been training Iraqi Security Forces in countering IEDs and demining from bases in Jordan.⁷⁹

In February, Lieutenant General Townsend said that while 2 years ago the Iraqi Army was “broken and defeated,” today, with Coalition support, it is a success. “Now they’re running a multi-divisional operation involving 40,000 or 50,000 Iraqi Security Forces up around Mosul,” he said. “It is an incredible turnaround.”⁸⁰ However, Lieutenant General Townsend emphasized the need to train additional Iraqi police that could serve as “hold” forces in territory newly liberated from ISIS to ensure that the group does not infiltrate or recapture lost territory.⁸¹

Support for the Syrian Democratic Forces and Moderate Opposition Groups Continued This Quarter

U.S. and Coalition advisers continued to support vetted Syrian opposition groups fighting ISIS in northeastern Syria near Raqqah, including a several-thousand-strong fighting force called the Syrian Arab Coalition, which is part of the Syrian Democratic Forces.⁸² The DoD also trains and equips vetted Syrian opposition along the Jordanian border and fighting ISIS in Al Bab.⁸³

Turkey continued to criticize U.S. and Coalition support for the Syrian Democratic Forces because that group includes the YPG, which maintains ties to the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), an organization that has been fighting to create an independent enclave in eastern Turkey, adjacent to Syria. The U.S. Government does not consider the YPG a terrorist organization.⁸⁴

Support for Rebels Formerly Associated with the Free Syrian Army Continued this Quarter

The DoD provided training, equipment, and other support to vetted Syrian opposition who took part in the military offensive to oust ISIS from Al Bab, including some groups and individuals that had previously fought in the Free Syrian Army. The Free Syrian Army is largely an anti-Syrian regime force, but some elements formerly associated with it have been vetted through the DoD's Syria Train and Equip Program and have committed to fighting ISIS.⁸⁵

U.S. Military Targets Fateh al-Sham Front (Formerly Called al-Nusrah Front) as an Al Qaeda Affiliate

In addition to fighting ISIS, the United States targeted Syrian groups it said were affiliated with Al Qaeda, including Fateh al-Sham. Specifically, the DoD reported that U.S. manned and unmanned aircraft had carried out the following:

- A March 16 airstrike in Idlib, Syria, that U.S. officials said killed several Al Qaeda members.
- A February 4 strike that killed Abu Hani al-Masri, an Al Qaeda terrorist with ties to Al Qaeda's core leadership whom U.S. officials accused of overseeing the creation and operation of Al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan.
- January 19 manned and unmanned airstrikes against what U.S. officials described as an Al Qaeda training camp in Idlib, which reportedly killed more than 100 fighters.⁸⁶

Following the January 19 strike, leaders of Fateh al-Sham Front said it had been running the training camp and that the fighters had been Fateh al-Sham members. It also said it had severed ties with Al Qaeda and changed its name from the Nusrah Front to the Fateh al-Sham Front, but the United States still considers its members linked to Al Qaeda.⁸⁷ In February, it merged with four smaller opposition factions to form an alliance known as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which is still considered an al Qaeda affiliate.⁸⁸

Fateh al-Sham also said it had severed ties with Al Qaeda and changed its name from the Nusrah Front to the Fateh al-Sham Front, but the United States still considers its members linked to Al Qaeda.



An EA-18G Growler launches from the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush during flight operations in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. (U.S. Navy photo)

COALITION AIR CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISIS

This quarter Coalition aircraft supported local ground forces in both countries with multiple airstrikes on ISIS military positions, weapons caches, command and control centers, oil assets, and leadership.⁸⁹ In Iraq, most airstrikes occurred in and around Mosul as Iraqi ground forces moved to liberate west Mosul from ISIS. In Syria, airstrikes were concentrated around Raqqah, Al Bab, and Idlib.⁹⁰

Highlights of Airstrikes Conducted this Quarter in Support of Iraqi Ground Troops

Mosul: Coalition aircraft struck ISIS targets in east Mosul and along the Tigris River prior to the February 17 launch of the military offensive to capture west Mosul.⁹¹ After the offensive began, the Coalition conducted multiple sorties over the largest ISIS stronghold in Iraq as Iraqi ground troops moved farther into the western half of the city. In March, the U.S. military opened an investigation into a U.S. airstrike in west Mosul that may have killed up to 200 civilians, according to media reports.⁹² The Iraqi government said the deaths were caused by ISIS booby-trapping homes.⁹³ See sidebar on Iraqi civilians killed in west Mosul, page 36.

Al Qaim: A Coalition airstrike targeted part of a medical community complex in this town on Iraq's Syrian border, which U.S. military officials said ISIS was using as an "improvised weapons factory."⁹⁴

Iraqi Civilians Killed in West Mosul

On March 17, media outlets reported that U.S. airplanes had struck targets in densely-populated areas of west Mosul, and that as many as 200 civilians hiding in basements in a residential neighborhood had been killed.⁹⁵ U.S. military officials said that Coalition airplanes had conducted a strike in the area at the time of the incident and that the military had opened an investigation.⁹⁶ Shortly after the incident, the Iraqi government released a statement saying that its special forces had called in Coalition air support to take out ISIS snipers and were unaware that civilians were huddled in nearby basements.⁹⁷ General Joseph L. Votel, Commander of U.S. Central Command, told the House Armed Services Committee that U.S. action may have contributed to civilian casualties in Mosul, and attributed any increase in civilian casualties caused by Coalition air power to the dense urban terrain of west Mosul and ISIS's use of civilians as human shields.⁹⁸

However, the Iraqi government stated in a later press release that the civilian deaths were the result of ISIS militants forcing civilians into booby-trapped basements that ISIS detonated using vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs). The press release said that a team of military experts inspected the houses and found no indication that they were subjected to airstrikes, but instead found evidence of a large VBIED and detonator.⁹⁹

U.S. and Coalition Air Support for Vetted Syrian Opposition

The Coalition concentrated its air support for vetted Syrian opposition this quarter around Raqqah, where Syrian Democratic Forces were conducting military operations to isolate the so-called capital of the ISIS caliphate, and Al Bab, which Turkey and Turkish-backed Syrian Arab forces captured from ISIS this quarter; the city of Tabqah and nearby Tabqah airfield and dam; and the border town of Abu Kamal.¹⁰⁰ The following are some of the major airstrikes conducted this quarter against Al Qaeda-linked groups or in support of vetted Syrian groups:

Raqqah: On March 21, Coalition military forces conducted 18 strikes against 2 ISIS tactical units and an ISIS staging area near Raqqah, among other targets.¹⁰¹ U.S. news sources reported that at least 30 Syrian civilians were killed in one of the strikes in rural Raqqah province, citing residents, activists, and Syrian state television.¹⁰² The DoD is conducting an investigation into the reports of civilian casualties.¹⁰³

Idlib: On January 19, U.S. warplanes struck what U.S. officials said was an Al Qaeda training base in Idlib, killing as many as 100 fighters. For more information, see Section on the Status of ISIS on page 43.

Al Bab: In February, the Coalition carried out more than 50 airstrikes in support of Turkey and its partner forces fighting ISIS in Al Bab.¹⁰⁴

Tabqah Dam: On March 21, the Coalition also provided air support to Syrian Democratic Forces as they liberated the Tabqah Dam from ISIS. U.S. military officials said the Coalition provided precision airstrikes and Apache helicopters, in addition to ground



A French Air Force Dassault Rafale refuels from a U.S. Air Force KC-10 Extender. (U.S. Air Force photo)

support.¹⁰⁵ U.S. military helicopters transported over 500 Syrian Democratic Forces behind ISIS lines, according to media reports.¹⁰⁶

Abu Kamal: In early March, Coalition airplanes attacked what U.S. military officials said was an ISIS-operated oil and gas separation plant in this town, located along the Iraqi border.¹⁰⁷

Deconfliction with Russia Regarding Syrian Airspace

U.S. military officials said this quarter that they would like to enhance “deconfliction” efforts with Russia to assure continued safe operations in an increasingly congested battlespace in Syria.¹⁰⁸ Overall interactions through the so-called ‘safety of flight channel’ have remained professional with the Russians, according to the DoD. However, in some instances, deconfliction with Russia has been difficult due to a time lag in the flow of information from Russian headquarters to forces operating in Syria, language barriers, and the absence of smaller Syrian towns on U.S. maps.¹⁰⁹ U.S. military airplanes have occasionally maneuvered to avoid Russian military airplanes, particularly during operations around the city of Palmyra.¹¹⁰

In 2015, after Russia’s deployment of forces to Khmeimim Air Base in Syria, the United States and Russia signed an agreement to use a hotline over an unclassified telephone line to deconflict air operations in Syria, without sharing intelligence.¹¹¹ General Joseph Votel, commander of US Central Command, reiterated this quarter that the U.S. military was not coordinating or cooperating with Russia in Syria, but rather “de-conflicting air operations” to ensure the safety of air and ground personnel operating in Syria.¹¹² In February, Defense Secretary Mattis said conditions were not ripe for the United States and Russia to collaborate on a military level.¹¹³

Following the April 6 U.S. cruise missile strike on the Syrian airbase, Russian officials announced the suspension of the “deconfliction” agreement. They also said the risk of U.S.-Russia confrontation in the Syrian skies had “significantly increased” after the launch of U.S. missiles in retaliation for the Syrian regime’s use of chemical weapons against civilians.¹¹⁴ In the days following the strikes, the Russians agreed to re-engage through the deconfliction channel.¹¹⁵

Update on U.S. Military Investigations into Possible Airstrike Mishaps

The U.S. military reported this quarter that as of February 28, 2017, the CJTF-OIR was reviewing 19 reports of possible civilian casualties from previous months, had received 41 new reports, and had completed 17 reports.¹¹⁶ The statistics from February were the latest available as of the end of the quarter.

THE GROUND CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISIS IN IRAQ

The United States sent an additional 240 troops to Iraq this quarter to support Iraqi Security Forces fighting against ISIS in Mosul.¹¹⁷ The troops, from the 82nd Airborne Division, were sent to reinforce about 5,000 U.S. troops already in the country.¹¹⁸ Iraqi Security Forces also battled around Tal Afar, a town west of Mosul that has been surrounded by the mainly Shia Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces. In addition to those two battle zones, Iraqi Security Forces launched military offensives to the south and west of Mosul.

Highlights of the ground campaign this quarter include:

The Battle for Mosul

East Mosul. On January 24, the Iraqi government declared that Iraqi Security Forces had captured east Mosul. The 16th Iraqi Army Division, supported by police and thousands of tribal forces, secured newly liberated areas to prevent ISIS from infiltrating or using sleeper cells.¹¹⁹ Despite these efforts, ISIS militants fired more than 300 mortars, rockets, and artillery into east Mosul, and continued to use commercial off-the-shelf drones with improvised weapons to attack Iraqi Security Forces.¹²⁰

West Mosul. On February 19, the Iraqi Army's 9th Division, the Federal Police, and the Counter Terrorism Service initiated military operations to liberate west Mosul from ISIS.¹²¹ ISIS militants responded by shooting and using berms, T-walls, tunnels, shipping containers, explosive barriers, and vehicles in the streets to slow the Iraqi Security Forces' advance.¹²² However, by the end of February, Iraqi Security Forces had pushed into west Mosul and captured one of five bridges that span the Tigris River, all of which had been damaged or destroyed by Coalition airplanes. The Iraqi forces began using the bridge to transport supplies and reinforcements, and they installed a floating bridge to link east and west Mosul. According to the DoD, rebuilding the bridges would be an issue for the Iraqi government and the UN.¹²³

On March 7, Iraqi Security Forces secured a government complex in west Mosul and continued advancing along the Tigris River toward the Al Nuri Grand Mosque.¹²⁴ As of April 1, Iraqi forces were near the mosque, located inside Mosul's Old City, but had yet to capture it. Liberation of the mosque carries symbolic significance because it is



U.S. Army mortar teams fire mortars in support of 9th Iraqi Army Division near Al Tarab, Iraq, during the offensive to liberate West Mosul from ISIS. (U.S. Army photo)

where ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi gave a speech declaring the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in 2014.¹²⁵

As of March 31, the fighting in west Mosul was continuing, but Coalition officials reported that Iraqi Security Forces had captured about 40 percent of west Mosul.¹²⁶

The Road to Tal Afar

In March, Iraqi Army soldiers and Popular Mobilization Forces captured the main highway leading from Mosul to Tal Afar, a town of roughly 200,000 controlled by ISIS that lies between Mosul and the Syrian border. The operation followed months of preparation by Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces, an umbrella of militias dominated by several Shia militias, some with strong ties to Iran, to isolate Tal Afar by capturing villages around the town.¹²⁷



Iraqi Federal Police conduct operations to secure west Mosul. (U.S. Army photo)



Figure 1.
Iranian-backed Shia Militias “Arc of Influence”

Iran-backed Shia Militias Operate along “Land Bridge” from Iran to Lebanon

Several Iranian-backed Shia militias belonging to the Popular Mobilization Forces are working to exert influence over a stretch of territory that some analysts have described as an “arc of Iranian influence” across Iraq and Syria and that would effectively connect Iran to Lebanon by ground. Middle East experts describe this so-called “land bridge” as beginning in Diyala province in eastern Iraq and running across the Hamrin Mountains northeast of Tikrit to Tal Afar and on to the Syrian border, which still is in ISIS control. The arc continues in Syria, where these Iranian-backed militias operate along multiple routes southwest across Syria to Lebanon via the Qalamoun region near Damascus.¹²⁸ Although a land bridge might offer Iran additional opportunities to transfer equipment or people to Syria or Lebanon, the journey is much longer than the current “air bridge” and more vulnerable to disruption or delays.¹²⁹

In March, General Votel, Commander of the U.S. Central Command, told the House Armed Services Committee that Iran posed the greatest danger to long-term peace in the Middle East.¹³⁰ The influence of Iranian-backed Shia militias in Iraq reinforces the anti-Shia narrative espoused by ISIS and exacerbates the sectarian conflict in Iraq, according to a report by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.¹³¹ Some Iraqi Shia militias currently participate in Syria’s civil war, siding with the Syrian regime. For instance, the military wing of the Badr Organization operates in Aleppo governorate.¹³²

THE GROUND CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISIS IN SYRIA

The U.S. military sent additional troops to Syria this quarter to support vetted Syrian opposition groups deployed mainly in the north and northwest of the country.¹³³ ISIS remained in control of Raqqah and territory south and west of Raqqah, including Palmyra and Dayr Az Zawr, and the countryside west of Damascus.¹³⁴

Fighting around Raqqah

The DoD dispatched 400 additional Army Rangers and Marines to Syria this quarter to aid in preparations for the battle for Raqqah. The U.S. troops were deployed in support of Syrian Democratic Forces preparing for the assault, and to supplement a small contingent of conventional U.S. Army troops already in the country.¹³⁵ Syrian Democratic Forces deployed east of Raqqah liberated more than 300 square miles and more than 100 villages from ISIS's control, in military offensives that weakened ISIS's ability to resupply and further isolated its fighters inside Raqqah, according to the Institute of War.¹³⁶ However, Lieutenant General Townsend described the Syrian Democratic Forces as an "irregular light infantry force mounted mostly in pickup trucks" that would "probably need additional combat power" to take Raqqah.¹³⁷

ARMED FORCES CONVERGE ON RAQQAH

Speaking to reporters in March, Secretary of Defense Mattis said planning was underway regarding which fighting force—the Syrian Democratic Forces or Turkey-backed Syrian Arab forces—would lead the fight to liberate Raqqah.¹³⁸ Secretary Mattis said discussions were also in progress with the Turkish government regarding how Turkish forces might participate in the battle for Raqqah.¹³⁹ In addition to these fighting forces, the Syrian regime (with Russian backing) has also indicated its intention to liberate Raqqah and to do so before the Syrian Democratic Forces do.¹⁴⁰

The rush to liberate Raqqah reportedly stems from Turkish unease over the possibility of Kurdish influence in the area and Syrian regime unease over Turkish and Kurdish influence

The rush to liberate Raqqah reportedly stems from Turkish unease over the possibility of Kurdish influence in the area and Syrian regime unease over Turkish and Kurdish influence.¹⁴¹ The Turkish government's wariness about possible Kurdish influence in Raqqah stems from ties between Syrian Kurds belonging to the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which leads a Kurdish independence movement in Turkey and has orchestrated terrorist attacks in Turkey.¹⁴² Syrian Kurdish officials have outlined their plans to organize Raqqah's local council and police. These plans reportedly are similar to those in Manbij to establish governing arrangements allied to the Syrian Democratic Forces and consisting mainly of local Arabs in line with city demography. Still, the extent of Kurdish influence is a sensitive issue for residents and Turkey.¹⁴³

According to U.S. military officials, Syrian Democratic Forces are likely to participate in—if not lead—the battle for Raqqah, and local Kurds and Arabs from Raqqah and the Euphrates River Valley are likely to join with other locals to create a "hold" force

that “governs and secures Raqqah after it’s liberated from ISIS.”¹⁴⁴ They maintained, however, that Kurds, as less than 10 percent of the population of Raqqah, would not try to govern the city, and would hand control of it to local forces.¹⁴⁵

U.S. Troops Deploy Near Manbij

In early March, U.S. Special Forces took up positions in and around the northern Syrian town of Manbij in an effort to monitor the forward line of troops of Turkish, Russian, Syrian, and Syrian Democratic Forces.¹⁴⁶ DoD officials described a mix of forces coalescing around Manbij.¹⁴⁷ Pentagon spokesman Captain Jeff Davis announced the deployment of the U.S. troops to Manbij as a “visible sign of deterrence and reassurance” to ensure that U.S. allies do not fight each other and instead focus on battling ISIS.¹⁴⁸ Following the deployment of U.S. troops, the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces transferred control of villages around Manbij to Russian and Syrian regime forces in an effort to block the advance of Turkish forces.¹⁴⁹ The transfer of power to the Syrian regime occurred as Turkish-backed Syrian opposition forces moved toward Manbij.¹⁵⁰

Manbij has been a source of tension between rival U.S. allies since ISIS was ousted from it in August 2016. Turkey has objected to the presence of Kurdish YPG fighters in Manbij, and has responded to their presence in the city by sending Turkish troops into Syria and backing Arab rebels opposed to the YPG.¹⁵¹ In August 2016, the United States told Turkey that Kurdish forces were leaving the area west of Manbij, and subsequently the YPG announced that it had handed military command and all YPG-held positions to the Manbij Military Council, according to news reports.¹⁵² However, the YPG remained in the Manbij area, prompting U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIS Brett McGurk to tweet in November that YPG units would depart Manbij after training of local units was complete.¹⁵³

ISIS Cedes Al Bab, Leaving a Mix of Forces in Control

In February, Turkey and Turkish-backed forces liberated Al Bab, a town in northern Syria that had been an ISIS stronghold.¹⁵⁴ The capture of Al Bab disrupted ISIS’s supply lines and its ability to export terrorists abroad, and further isolated Raqqah, according to the U.S. military.¹⁵⁵ The DoD reported that it had provided support to Turkey and to vetted elements of the Syrian opposition in the form of airstrikes and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance as they fought to liberate Al Bab from ISIS’s control.¹⁵⁶

Dayr Az Zawr

U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces entered Dayr Az Zawr province this quarter to undertake a military offensive against ISIS designed to isolate Raqqah. As part of the operation, the Syrian Democratic Forces captured about 15 villages in the province. ISIS controls most of the province, while Syrian regime forces control Dayr Az Zawr city and a nearby military airport.¹⁵⁷



Abandoned ISIS headbands lie on a street during the Iraqi Security Forces' offensive to liberate and secure west Mosul. (U.S. Army photo)

STATUS OF ISIS

ISIS-Held Territory

This quarter in Iraq, ISIS was ousted from east Mosul and parts of west Mosul, territory around Tal Afar, and parts of western Anbar province. In Syria, Turkey and Syrian opposition forces, some vetted by the United States, ousted ISIS from Al Bab. In addition, Syrian opposition took control of a main road leading from Raqqah to Dayr Az Zawr province, where ISIS is still in control.¹⁵⁸ This liberation of territory continued the rollback of ISIS, which during 2016 lost almost a quarter of territory it previously controlled in Iraq and Syria.

ISIS Fighting Strength

U.S. officials estimated that about 12,000 to 15,000 ISIS fighters remained in Iraq and Syria this quarter, concentrated in Mosul and Raqqah.¹⁵⁹ Few new fighters were arriving to either country: in its fourth report on the state of ISIS and Al Qaeda, released in February 2017, the UN said recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters to ISIS in Iraq and Syria had “slowed considerably” and that fighters were increasingly leaving the battlefield.¹⁶⁰ According to Secretary of State Tillerson, over the course of 2016, the flow of foreign terrorist fighters fell by 90 percent.¹⁶¹

At the March 22-23 Ministerial meeting of the Coalition in Washington, D.C., participants noted the need for long-term commitments to countering ISIS and other violent extremists. The UN reported that ISIS recruitment was “increasingly moving towards more covert methods,” such as using the “dark web,” encryption,

An ISIS unmanned aerial vehicle captured by Iraqi Federal Police rests on a table at an intelligence-sharing key leader engagement at the Joint Operations Center, at Qayyarah West Airfield, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)



and messengers.¹⁶² Moreover, the UN stated that ISIS's ability to carry out attacks in Iraq and Syria, despite the military onslaught against it, demonstrated its operational capabilities, while its attacks in neighboring countries illustrated its ability to use links to existing local cells.¹⁶³ U.S. officials said that while ISIS's fighting forces were shrinking, they did not expect the organization to collapse. "A portion [of them] will break and run," General Townsend said in March. "The rest of them will fight as ordered or fight to the death."¹⁶⁴

ISIS Military Capability

Drones: The DoD reported that ISIS's increased use of drones was most notable this quarter in the Mosul area as Iraqi Security Forces moved into the western half of the city.¹⁶⁵ For several months, ISIS has been fitting off-the-shelf drones with explosives, including 40 mm grenades, and dropping the ordnance by electronic command. Some drones were used to guide suicide car bombers to their targets. ISIS has been using drones for surveillance for about two years.¹⁶⁶

Chemical and biological weapons capability: Iraq's ambassador to the UN, Mohamed Ali Alhakim, said in March that there was no evidence that ISIS had used chemical weapons in Mosul.¹⁶⁷ His statement came days after the UN reported that 12 people had been treated for possible exposure to chemical weapons in Mosul.¹⁶⁸ The DoD reported that ISIS had access to hundreds of industrial and commercial chemical facilities in territory it controlled and therefore could produce mustard gas or other chemical warfare agents. However, according to the DoD, the reduction of ISIS-controlled territory has substantially diminished the threat of chemical weapons use.¹⁶⁹

The DoD reported that it has had difficulty estimating ISIS's access to chemical weapons in Syria because of what it termed the Syrian regime's "incomplete declaration" to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, as well as the regime's use of chemical weapons against Syrian civilians. In 2014, the Syrian

regime issued a declaration ostensibly listing its stockpiles of chemical weapons after coming under pressure for using chemical weapons against Syrian civilians in August 2013. Inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons visited 21 sites in Syria to ensure the weapons had been dismantled; two additional sites were considered too dangerous to visit, but inspectors said at the time that they believed chemical weapons were dismantled there as well, according to news reports.¹⁷⁰

However, at the time of the inspections, some American officials and independent experts questioned whether Syria's declaration was complete. The DoD reported this quarter that the Syrian regime has refused to provide an inventory of chemicals that existed in ISIS-controlled territories prior to ISIS gaining control of those territories. Despite these difficulties in obtaining information, the DoD assessed that ISIS has continued its efforts to acquire chemical weapons within Syrian territory.¹⁷¹

ISIS Leadership

ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's whereabouts remain unknown. However, according to a news report, U.S. officials and Iraqi intelligence sources believe that he has left Mosul and may be hiding in the Iraqi desert. Al-Baghdadi has not released a recorded speech since November 2016.¹⁷²

Meanwhile, the DoD reported that Coalition forces continued this quarter to kill high-ranking ISIS leaders, including:

- **Ahmed Wahid al-Abed**, killed near the northeastern town of Arsal on the border with Syria.
- **Haqqi Ismail Hamid al-Mmri**, killed by a coalition precision airstrike on February 13 in Mosul.
- **Abu Abbas al-Quaryshi**, who U.S. military officials allege had coordinated the movement of VBIEDs and suicide bombers in Iraq.
- **Abdullah Sulaymani al-Jaburi**, an ISIS leader responsible for anti-aircraft defense assets in Mosul.¹⁷³

ISIS Revenue

DoD officials reported that ISIS continued to be able to finance operations in Iraq and Syria this quarter, and would likely continue to finance operations over the next 3 to 6 months. However, the DoD and the DoS maintained that U.S. and Coalition efforts had disrupted ISIS's sources of revenue but did not assess the extent.¹⁷⁴ A report released by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation at King's College, London, and Ernst and Young Assurance Services Fraud Investigation & Dispute Services, an entity that investigates unusual financial activity, estimated that ISIS's earnings had dropped from as much as \$1.9 billion in 2014 to less than \$870 million in 2016.¹⁷⁵ The DoD reported that ISIS generates the majority of its revenue from energy resources, as well as taxes on and extortion of populations within its control, and that as ISIS continued

to lose territory and access to population centers, revenue generated from taxation and extortion was decreasing.¹⁷⁶

According to the DoD, Coalition airstrikes carried out against ISIS this quarter targeted its energy resources, oil infrastructure, and distribution chain, including gas and oil separation plants, oil well heads, pump jacks, tanker trucks, and related production, construction, and repair equipment.¹⁷⁷ From January 1, 2017, through March 31, 2017, Coalition forces conducted more than 700 strikes, which targeted ISIS's fighting positions and destroyed approximately 1,300 pieces of oil infrastructure, primarily in oil-rich areas around Raqqa, Dayr Az Zawr, and Abu Kamal in eastern Syria.¹⁷⁸ ISIS's sale of oil and gas to the Syrian regime is considered its largest source of funding.¹⁷⁹

The DoS and Treasury reported efforts this quarter to restrict ISIS's ability to generate, store, move, and use money by, for example, tracking and interrupting the group's financial transactions and continuing to designate suspected ISIS-linked organizations, leaders, and facilitators as terrorists and terrorist organizations.¹⁸⁰

However, the DoD and the DoS reported that as ISIS continues to lose territory and resources, it is adapting its methods of raising and transferring funds, including for example, the sale of Syrian natural gas to the Syrian regime, which buys oil and gas from ISIS to power Damascus and other parts of the country, despite claims that it is fighting ISIS.¹⁸¹ Further, the DoS Energy Bureau assesses that ISIS's relative wealth will increase as it loses territory and costly population centers while retaining control of oil and gas operations in Dayr Az Zawr and Palmyra. According to the DoS, the Coalition Counter ISIS Finance Group met at the end of March, and addressed ISIS's likely transformation into an insurgency that uses fundraising tactics more commonly associated with organized crime, requiring adaptation of Coalition methods of blocking ISIS financing.¹⁸²

ISIS Propaganda

In March, Secretary of State Tillerson laid out his vision to defeat ISIS at a meeting of the 68 partners belonging to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, stating that the Coalition "must fight ISIS online as aggressively as we would on the ground" to prevent ISIS from spreading its message and recruiting new followers. The Coalition sponsors counter-messaging hubs in the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and Malaysia, and Secretary Tillerson called on Egypt and Saudi Arabia in particular to play a role in combating terrorist messaging.¹⁸³

This quarter, there were signs that ISIS's propaganda efforts were beginning to slow. Its presence on Telegram, an encrypted online messaging application, for instance, has tapered off, according to U.S. military officials. Activity on Twitter was also down by 45 percent since 2014, and roughly 635,000 ISIS Twitter accounts have been suspended.¹⁸⁴ However, ISIS continued to use the internet and a variety of social media outlets to spread its message, including through a monthly magazine and a news outlet. The DoD reported that ISIS propaganda continued to highlight the group's use of commercially purchased drones to support military operations and to conduct surveillance.¹⁸⁵ ISIS propaganda has

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also featured what the DoD described as “pristine” medical facilities for wounded ISIS fighters, although the DoD reported that this portrayal of its medical facilities is likely exaggerated.¹⁸⁶

Moreover, as ISIS continued to lose territory, it is likely to seek to survive on the internet, according to U.S. officials and Iraq analysts. A second report released this quarter by the International Centre for Radicalisation at King’s College, London, found that while the amount of ISIS propaganda had declined since 2014, it was still able to release 570 pieces of propaganda in one month this quarter, an average of 19 per day.¹⁸⁷ The majority of the propaganda highlighted battles to defend Mosul and Raqqa, but also included what the report called “utopian-themed propaganda”—propaganda that portrayed a blissful life under the caliphate, a theme that the report said “still underpins much of the group’s ideological allure.”¹⁸⁸

Moreover, the King’s College report said that as part of the strategy to move away from territory and into cyberspace, ISIS’s media wing has started to repurpose videos and messages to depict an idyllic Islamic caliphate that will one day come into being. The report said this strategy aims to keep followers on board even as the group loses territory and members are dispersed around the globe.¹⁸⁹ The report warned that it was premature to expect a “post-Islamic State world at this time.”¹⁹⁰

ISIS Insurgent Activity

The DoD reported this quarter that ISIS’s activity signaled that the group was transitioning from a state-like entity in control of territory to an insurgency in anticipation of defeat in Mosul and Raqqa. In Iraq, ISIS’s insurgent activity consisted of harassing attacks and suicide bombings in the central and western parts of the country. For instance, the DoD reported that ISIS carried out numerous direct fire and suicide attacks against Iraqi Security Forces and sent suicide bombers to a Shia wedding near Tikrit. ISIS continued to use IED and VBIED attacks in Shia neighborhoods in Baghdad. Additionally, the group conducted suicide and VBIED attacks in Anbar province against Iraqi Security Forces in Fallujah, Ramadi, and Hit. The DoD assessed that these attacks have not resulted in an increase in ISIS-held territory or increased ISIS’s military capabilities in western or central Iraq. However, such attacks would continue as ISIS loses territory.¹⁹¹

In Syria, where ISIS constitutes only one of many groups competing for territory, signs of an imminent ISIS insurgency were less obvious. The DoD reported that ISIS continued to prepare for future military engagement in Raqqa, but remained focused this quarter on counterattacks in the city of Tabqah and in Dayr Az Zawr province.¹⁹²

Iraqi politicians and U.S. officials reiterated this quarter the need to address long-simmering ethnic and sectarian grievances harbored by various groups in Iraq to prevent ISIS or another iteration of the group from emerging after ISIS is defeated territorially.¹⁹³ For a further explanation, please see the sections on Governance in Iraq and Stabilization in Iraq that follows.

GOVERNANCE IN IRAQ

During this quarter, U.S. Government representatives continued to urge Iraqi officials from across the political spectrum, including in the Kurdistan Regional Government, to put aside political differences and focus on supporting Prime Minister Abadi's government as it fights ISIS, addresses the country's economic crisis, promotes political reforms, and pursues strategies to decrease ethnic and sectarian tension. The DoS also pressed the international community to provide Iraq with additional funding and support, and encouraged Iraq's regional neighbors to increase their engagement with the Iraqi government.¹⁹⁴

Despite continued political infighting, the Iraqi government and most political parties remained united in the goal of defeating ISIS. To that end, the central government continued to work with provincial officials to establish local "hold" forces capable of maintaining security in areas liberated from ISIS and to empower provincial governors to deliver basic services and otherwise stabilize liberated areas. The DoS has encouraged the Iraqi government to deploy security forces acceptable to the local populations where possible in order to reduce the potential for conflict.¹⁹⁵

The Iraqi government also worked closely with representatives from the Kurdistan Regional Government to coordinate on issues arising from military operations to liberate Mosul, including humanitarian assistance, proper screening of displaced persons, and handling of detainees—collaboration intended as a step to ease tensions between Arabs and Kurds. However, in late March, the Kirkuk provincial council voted to raise the flag of Kurdistan next to the Iraqi flag on public buildings, a move that raised controversy in Baghdad and could become a source of strain between Arabs and Kurds.¹⁹⁶ Iraq's national parliament later rejected the provincial council decision, and voted against raising the Kurdish flag on public buildings in Kirkuk, according to news reports.¹⁹⁷

In keeping with a political deal struck in 2016 to decrease sectarian conflicts in Mosul, the Kurdish Peshmerga stayed on the outskirts of Mosul while the Iraqi government kept the Shia Popular Mobilization Forces out of the largely Sunni city as Iraqi Security Forces battled to oust ISIS militants there. DoS officials credited the success in keeping Shia militias from entering Mosul to strong U.S. Government engagement with the Iraqi government, Abadi's dedication to avoiding further sectarian violence, and U.S. and Coalition efforts to professionalize units of the Iraqi Security Forces. However, the DoS reported that Shia Popular Mobilization Forces were operating this quarter alongside Iraqi Army units outside of Tal Afar, creating the potential to exacerbate sectarian tensions between Sunni residents and Shia militiamen.¹⁹⁸

In January, Prime Minister Abadi appointed, and the Council of Representatives approved, new Ministers of Interior and Defense, key posts that have been vacant for months.¹⁹⁹ Both appointees have expressed the desire to continue a close partnership with the United States. DoS officials viewed these statements as a positive sign,

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particularly with regard to the Ministry of Interior, which historically has had a mixed view of U.S. engagement in Iraq.²⁰⁰

In February and again in March, Shia demonstrations occurred in Baghdad, orchestrated by prominent Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr to protest what he described as government corruption and an unfair election law, according to news reports.²⁰¹ Sadr called off the February protests after violence erupted leaving 4 dead and 320 wounded, but called on his supporters to take to the streets again in March to demand changes to Iraq's electoral law.²⁰² Iraq is set to hold provincial elections in September 2017 and national elections in 2018.²⁰³

During the quarter, Iraq's economy continued to suffer from depressed oil prices and the spiraling cost of the war against ISIS, although its gross domestic product grew by 11 percent in 2016, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), due mainly to a large increase in oil output, but the economy has suffered this year. The IMF projected that economic activity will continue to be muted in 2017 due to a contraction in the oil sector and a "tepid" recovery of the non-oil economy.²⁰⁴

According to the IMF, the Iraqi government made progress this quarter toward implementing reforms under a 3-year, \$5.4 billion Stand-By Arrangement, but needs to implement further reforms to create fiscal space for inclusive growth, strengthen the business environment, reduce corruption and repair the banking sector to support private sector-led growth and diversification of the economy. The IMF warned that risks to Iraq's economy remained high, arising primarily from uncertainty in the oil price outlook, security and political uncertainties, and administrative weaknesses.²⁰⁵

The DoS and USAID reported this quarter that they had worked with the Iraqi government to support and implement reforms laid out in the Stand-By Arrangement.²⁰⁶ On January 18, the United States guaranteed an Iraqi government bond issuance worth \$1 billion to provide the Iraqi government access to affordable international financing. USAID continued to provide a financial technical advisor to the Iraqi Ministry of Finance and three financial technical advisors to the Kurdistan Regional Government.²⁰⁷

STABILIZATION IN IRAQ

Stabilization was a major focus of the Coalition ministerial meeting on March 22-23 hosted by the DoS in Washington, D.C. Coalition members expressed broad support for efforts to stabilize communities liberated from ISIS, and underscored the need for stabilization both to create conditions so that IDPs and refugees could choose to return to their homes and to avoid a resurgence of extremist ideologies and groups.²⁰⁸

The stabilization phase follows active military operations, but does not extend into reconstruction or what Secretary Tillerson termed "normalization"—the longer-term process of rebuilding civil society and effective governance. In the context of efforts to defeat ISIS, "stabilization" encompasses the bundle of services and activities needed

to create conditions allowing displaced persons to return to their homes and begin to rebuild their lives. The term “stabilization” here normally includes some or all of the following components: demining and removal of unexploded ordnance; reconnecting electricity and water; reestablishing basic medical services; providing local security and policing; and contributing to the reestablishment of the rule of law.²⁰⁹

As reported in prior quarters, the Iraqi government leads stabilization efforts, working through provincial and local governments, and supported by the DoS, USAID, the Coalition, the UN Development Program (UNDP), and other international partners. The UNDP administers the Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS) which contains three funding facilities. Two support stabilization: the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization (FFIS) (for approximately the first 6 months after demining) and the Funding Facility for Expanded Stabilization (FFES) (in parallel to FFIS focused on higher impact longer term projects that are implemented after liberation from ISIS, and demining).²¹⁰ A third separate component is the Funding Facility for Economic Reform (FFER) which provides economic technical assistance to the Government of Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Government. FFER is different from FFIS and FFES in it that does not work in liberated areas but with host governments on longer term economic issues.

Since 2014, Coalition members have provided more than \$22.2 billion for stabilization, demining, economic support and humanitarian assistance in Iraq and Syria. At the March 2017 ministerial conference in Washington, D.C., partners pledged more than \$2.3 billion for stabilization, demining, and humanitarian assistance for Iraq and Syria.²¹¹

The UNDP reported that more than 420 stabilization projects were underway throughout Iraq as of the end of the quarter. These projects include utility repairs, rubble removal, reopening of schools and hospitals, public works, and business support.²¹² According to the DoS, the UNDP has successfully implemented over 350 stabilization projects, costing more than \$240 million, over the last 2 years.²¹³

According to the UNDP in Iraq, a number of lessons can be learned from previous stabilization efforts, including that:

- Cash-for-work projects are important to inject funds into the local economy and provide employment, particularly for youth.
- Key actors must agree on security measures for returnees, for example through a security council involving Iraqi armed forces, police, militias, tribal leaders, and representatives of key groups such as IDPs, women and youth.
- Local, provincial, and national governments need to form a strong partnership to transition immediate stabilization into longer-term planning and efforts, and local authorities require extensive support (such as staff, training, and resources).
- In large cities, stabilization projects need to be staged and prioritized to ensure rapid response with available resources.²¹⁴

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Iraqi Federal Police occupy a street within the city during the offensive to liberate and secure West Mosul. (U.S. Army photo)

Stabilization in Mosul

The DoS reported that the Coalition continued to coordinate with the Iraqi government as it worked closely with the UNDP to conduct and plan for stabilization operations in Mosul. The UNDP is pre-qualifying partners for small business grants and public work schemes to ensure that projects can be immediately implemented.²¹⁵

In east Mosul, cash-for-work projects have begun and rehabilitation priorities and requirements have been established for several hospitals, municipal buildings, schools, and critical infrastructure. USAID reported funding UNDP's rehabilitation of the al-Salamiya water-treatment plant, which provides water to residents in east Mosul and the surrounding area.²¹⁶

Deputy Special Representative of the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq Lise Grande reported that, from the perspective of the residents, the battle for western Mosul is very different from the fight for eastern Mosul. In the east, about 550,000 people remained in their homes during fighting against ISIS, which, with the concerted efforts of the Iraqi Security Forces, facilitated a relatively fast recovery. In the west, large numbers of people are fleeing, but a great many remain and face increasing hardships as the city is isolated and ISIS confiscates supplies.²¹⁷

According to news reports, in the few weeks since ISIS was driven out of east Mosul, markets have opened, bulldozers are clearing debris, and produce is available for sale in shops, as are items previously banned by ISIS such as SIM cards and mobile phones.²¹⁸ The damage to infrastructure was very extensive, making recovery slow. Children in particular show psychological damage from ISIS violence.²¹⁹ There were still areas that lacked electricity or water and challenges remained due to car bombings and indirect fire from west Mosul, as well as delays in UNDP programming due to inaction by the local bureaucracy.²²⁰

Demining Operations

According to the DoS, as of the end of the quarter the United States and several Coalition partners had contributed approximately \$40 million to fund emergency explosives clearance of high priority sites in Ramadi and other liberated areas. Teams have cleared more than 1,652,000 square meters and 21,248 kg of explosive materials in Anbar province, and have begun operations in Ninewa province. Other Coalition partners have contributed to the UN Mine Action Service.²²¹

The early indications are that unexploded ordnance is less prevalent than expected on the eastern side of Mosul. However, the western side may see higher levels that, as with Ramadi, could hinder immediate stabilization efforts. Until the city is completely liberated and an assessment can be done, the extent of the impact and need for demining assistance remains unknown.²²²

According to the UN Mine Action Service, it will take 40 to 50 years to clear IEDs and other unexploded ordnance in Iraq and will cost between \$170 million and \$180 million a year to demine areas liberated from ISIS, including \$50 million needed annually to remove weapons from Mosul.²²³ To assist victims injured by mines and other unexploded ordnance, the UN is researching the possibility of using 3D printing of prosthetic limbs, which could lower their cost.²²⁴

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Fallujah and Ramadi

In Fallujah, according to the UNDP, stopgap repairs have been made to the main teaching hospital and 5 schools and health centers; some electricity and water facilities have been restored; much debris has been cleared; and 300 workers have been hired to clean streets.²²⁵ USAID reported funding the procurement of medical equipment for seven medical centers and UNDP's ongoing efforts to rehabilitate local sewage systems and a water treatment plant.²²⁶ The UNDP has spent \$8.6 million of \$18.5 million allocated for stabilization. Of 320,000 people who fled Fallujah for camps, 250,000 have returned.²²⁷

In Ramadi, according to USAID, UNDP is implementing a variety of USAID-funded projects, including rehabilitating water tanks and pumping stations, supplying medical equipment to public health centers, and rehabilitating a power station at Anbar University. The UNDP is also piloting a USAID-funded home repair project, assessing needs and providing basic home repair material.²²⁸ Although the UNDP has been able to initiate an array of programs in Ramadi, USAID reported that IEDs and car bombs have significantly slowed stabilization efforts.²²⁹

Reconciliation Issues

The Iraqi government, the United States, Coalition partners, other international partners, and the UN continued to work this quarter on difficult issues of reconciliation and justice, which Iraqis will likely continue to face after the defeat of ISIS. The DoS urged the Iraqi government to take seriously all allegations of ethnic- or sectarian-

based violence and hold perpetrators responsible as appropriate to strengthen the democratic processes that protect human rights. The Iraqi government has formed a National Reconciliation, Accountability, and Justice Committee to develop strategy and plans to help accomplish these goals.²³⁰

Speaking in March at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C., Prime Minister Abadi said his government was taking measures to reduce abuses by Iraqi Security Forces and welcomed international assistance in investigating atrocities committed by ISIS, but stressing that any investigation would occur in Iraq and be under Iraq's jurisdiction. He stated that he was discussing with the British government and other partners the possibility of creating a tribunal to try ISIS members for war crimes.²³¹

On January 21, the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq called on the Iraqi government to investigate reports of torture and murder of captured terrorist suspects in Mosul after video circulated on social media sites allegedly showing the brutal mistreatment and murder of at least three captured ISIS members by what appears to be Iraqi Security Forces personnel. The Iraqi government ordered an investigation of the incident, and on January 24, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights welcomed the Iraqi government's announcement.²³²

The DoS reported that it continued to closely monitor reports of acts of sectarian violence in Iraq. DoS officials continued to meet regularly with members of Iraq's civil society, including representatives of ethnic and religious groups, to hear their allegations and concerns. The DoS also supported reconciliation and transitional justice efforts.²³³ UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres met with Prime Minister Abadi during the quarter and urged reconciliation among Iraq's religious communities after ISIS is defeated in Mosul.²³⁴

The DoS also reported that it continued to track reports of property seizures, restrictions on freedom of movement (particularly of displaced persons), and other actions attributed to sectarian conflict. While Iraqi and Kurdish government officials often speak positively about promoting inclusivity and supporting human rights, they sometimes allow armed forces from their own community to carry out acts of violence against others with impunity, exacerbating sectarian tensions.²³⁵

In a February 2017 meeting with the DoS, for example, Kirkuk's governor, a Kurd, rejected allegations made by Human Rights Watch that Kurdish military forces were forcibly removing Arab residents from Kirkuk and blamed Shia militias for preventing the return of Sunni Arabs to Diyala province and Turkmen to Tuz Khurmatu—two places that historically have been inhabited by a mix of ethnicities and sects. Human Rights Watch had reported in November 2016 that Kurds were forcing Arabs—both longtime residents and newly arrived displaced persons—from Kirkuk in an attempt to change the ethnic makeup of the disputed city, which is claimed by both Arabs and Kurds.²³⁶

Iraq's various ethnic and sectarian groups often accuse neighbors, governments, or military forces of seizing property in an attempt to alter local demographics. Minority

communities in Kurdish-controlled areas, for instance, have reported that Peshmerga forces have looted, occupied, or destroyed their property. Iraqi officials have denounced sectarian acts of violence and in some cases prosecuted militia members for abuses committed against civilians.²³⁷

According to the DoS, relatives of ISIS fighters or suspected ISIS sympathizers are often targets as well.²³⁸ In March 2017, for example, Human Rights Watch reported that Iraqi forces had forcibly displaced at least 125 families with suspected family ties to ISIS in Salah Ad Din province. The report said provincial authorities issued a decree in August 2016 stating that anyone affiliated with ISIS could not return to the province, and ordered the seizure of property and the expulsion of ISIS family members from Salah Ad Din province for 10 years to life unless they were subsequently deemed “safe.”²³⁹

The decree reportedly exempted families who had killed their ISIS relatives or handed them over to Iraqi authorities.²⁴⁰ According to the New York Times, the Salah Ad Din provincial government implemented this “collective punishment” policy against at least 345 families (1,111 people) accused of ties to ISIS, evicting them and confining them to a displaced persons camp; and another 200 families were being held at a separate school and camp.²⁴¹ Prime Minister Abadi sent a letter to the Salah Ad Din governor in January sharply criticizing the removals and ordering provincial and Baghdad officials to resolve the issue.²⁴²

SYRIAN CIVIL WAR

During the quarter, the highest priority of the United States in Syria remained the defeat of ISIS. The United States continued diplomatic engagement to convince allies, including Turkey, to remain focused on this goal.²⁴³

According to the DoS, the Syrian civil war has become a regional conflict involving the “direct participation of multiple state and non-state actors,” including Russia, Iran, Kurds, elements promoting extremist forms of Sunni Islam, Iraqi Shia militias, ISIS, Al Qaeda, and other terrorist groups.²⁴⁴ According to the DoS, there are hundreds of armed opposition groups operating in Syria, ranging from Al Qaeda affiliates such as the Fateh al-Sham Front (formerly known as the Nusra Front) to more moderate groups. Approximately 11 larger groups dominate the moderate opposition, but do not speak for all moderate groups on all topics.²⁴⁵ The quarter also saw an alliance of some opposition groups with Fateh al-Sham.²⁴⁶

U.S. policy toward Syria supports UN Security Council Resolution 2254, which calls for a Syrian-owned and -led process to resolve the civil war and effectuate a political, democratic transition. The Obama Administration had at times stated that this political solution was needed to resolve the scourge of ISIS, and that for this to occur Syrian President Bashar al-Assad must step down.²⁴⁷ During this quarter, however, it remained unclear whether the U.S. position toward Assad had changed. On March 30, U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, said that the U.S. priority was “no longer to... focus on getting Assad out.”²⁴⁸ Her comments echoed remarks from both the White



Battle damage assessment image of Shayrat Airfield, Syria, following U.S. Tomahawk Missile strikes. (DoD image)

House and Secretary of State Tillerson.²⁴⁹ However, after the Syrian regime on April 4 used chemical weapons against civilians, prompting a U.S. cruise missile strike April 6 against a Syrian airbase, Secretary Tillerson said that “steps are underway” to organize a coalition to remove Assad from power.²⁵⁰

On April 6, the United States launched 59 Tomahawk cruise missiles from Navy ships in the Mediterranean Sea against the al Shayrat military airfield near Hims, Syria.²⁵¹ President Trump ordered the strike following a chemical attack on Syrian civilians in Idlib province that the U.S. military said had been launched from that airfield. President Trump stated that the missile strikes were meant to “prevent and deter the spread and use of deadly chemical weapons.”²⁵² The Syrian regime denied responsibility for the chemical attack.²⁵³ Russian government officials insisted that Fateh al-Sham terrorists had smuggled chemical weapons into Syria, and that the Assad forces inadvertently released nerve gas while trying to destroy those munitions, according to news reports.²⁵⁴

Secretary of State Tillerson said that the United States had “a very high level of confidence” that the Assad regime directed these attacks by air, and that they involved the use of sarin gas.²⁵⁵ Just prior to the cruise missile strikes, the Turkish health ministry had confirmed the use of sarin gas, as shown through autopsies on victims of the attack performed with the participation of international organizations.²⁵⁶ National Security Advisor Lieutenant General H.R. McMaster called the attack “mass-murder.”²⁵⁷

Secretary Tillerson stated that failure to respond to Assad's use of chemical weapons would result in "normalizing" the use of chemical weapons by others, and said that the "chaotic circumstances" in Syria created an "existential" threat to the United States if chemical weapons "fell into the hands of those who would bring [them] to our shores to harm American citizens."²⁵⁸ He added that Russia had failed in its role as guarantor that Syria had destroyed its chemical weapons stocks. "Either Russia has been complicit, or Russia has been simply incompetent in its ability to deliver on its end of that agreement," Secretary Tillerson said.²⁵⁹

Secretary Tillerson said the United States had followed military de-confliction agreements with Russia in advance of the attack and coordinated with European and Middle Eastern partners, who were "overwhelmingly supportive" of the U.S. missile attack.²⁶⁰ Speaking with reporters following the cruise missile strike, Secretary Tillerson said the crisis in Syria called for an international effort first to defeat ISIS in Syria, then to stabilize the country and end the civil war, and then to "work collectively with our partners around the world through a political process that would lead to Assad leaving." Asked if President Trump would "organize an international coalition to remove Assad," the Secretary replied: "Those steps are underway."²⁶¹

Ceasefire in Syria Fails to Hold

The reporting period began in the immediate aftermath of the fall of eastern Aleppo to the Assad regime in December 2016, and the accompanying dramatic weakening of the armed opposition.²⁶² A ceasefire negotiated by Russia and Turkey in December and agreed to by the regime and much of the armed opposition, failed to hold this quarter.²⁶³

The DoS blamed the failure on the Assad regime, stating that the regime continued offensives in strategic locations, using "harsh siege and surrender tactics which they term reconciliation agreements."²⁶⁴ The opposition also apparently failed to hold to the ceasefire. In late February, opposition forces reportedly initiated the first fighting in southern Syria in more than a year, in the vicinity of the city of Daraa. Monitors said the Syrian regime responded by carrying out intense airstrikes.²⁶⁵

According to DoS, fighting was continuing in the province of Idlib in northwest Syria, which is considered "the biggest surviving rebel stronghold in northern Syria." The province also has a strong and growing presence of Fateh al-Sham Front, formerly known as al Nusra.²⁶⁶

Russia, Turkey, and Iran sponsored talks in Astana, Kazakhstan, on January 23 to create a mechanism for strengthening, monitoring, and enforcing the ceasefire.²⁶⁷ Representatives from the Syrian regime and elements of the Syrian opposition attended the talks. The U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan attended as an observer.²⁶⁸ Talks resumed in February without any direct dialogue between the Syrian regime and opposition, whose representatives claimed the Syrian regime had not met ceasefire conditions. No concrete progress was reported.²⁶⁹

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In March, the talks continued but did not include the Syrian opposition groups. Those groups boycotted the talks after accusing the Syrian regime and Russia of failing to enforce the ceasefire, citing the bombardment of rebel-held areas near Damascus, Homs, Daraa, and Idlib by Syrian regime and Iranian-backed militias.²⁷⁰ The rebels also accused the Syrian regime of forcing them to surrender territory under the guise of evacuating citizens.²⁷¹ Meanwhile, the Syrian regime's envoy accused Turkey of using the Syrian opposition as "proxies" and stated that his delegation was in Kazakhstan only to meet with Russian and Iranian allies.²⁷² The attendees designated Iran as the "guarantor" of the ceasefire. As the talks came to a close, the Kazakh Deputy Foreign Minister maintained that the ceasefire was still holding.²⁷³ The sponsors of the negotiation said they would reconvene in early May.²⁷⁴

Geneva Peace Negotiations Show Little Progress

Concurrent with the Astana talks, the UN-sponsored peace negotiations, led by UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura, convened in Geneva, Switzerland, on February 23 and 24. It also failed to produce an agreement.²⁷⁵ According to the DoS, the connection between the UN-sponsored Geneva process and the Astana talks remained unclear.²⁷⁶ The Geneva talks were scuttled in part by violence in Syria as various parties to the conflict launched attacks in apparent attempts to strengthen their negotiating positions.²⁷⁷ Al Qaeda affiliate Hayat Tahrir al-Sham launched suicide attacks on Homs that killed dozens, in what Special Envoy de Mistura said was a deliberate attempt to undermine the talks. At the same time, the Syrian regime carried out airstrikes on opposition-held areas, according to news reports.²⁷⁸

The Geneva talks resumed on March 23, 2017, and negotiators discussed four "baskets" of issues: governance, constitution, elections, and counter-terrorism.²⁷⁹ The talks were considered successful but did not lead to any breakthroughs, according to the DoS.²⁸⁰

In addition to the formal talks in Geneva, task forces of the UN-sponsored International Syria Support Group continued to meet during the reporting period.²⁸¹

Stabilization in Syria

Coalition members who attended the March 22-23 Ministerial meeting hosted by the DoS in Washington, D.C., focused much of their attention on anticipated stabilization needs for Raqqah, such as water, electricity, local government, and security, following its liberation from ISIS's control.²⁸² Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Richard Albright noted the unique constraints facing the Coalition in Syria, including the lack of a central government and the lack of access to many areas. He said stabilization efforts will focus on restoring electricity and opening roads to allow safe access for humanitarian assistance and follow-on stabilization efforts, but stated that the Coalition effort will not be as extensive as in Iraq. Secretary Tillerson said the Coalition might establish limited "zones of stability" through ceasefires to allow refugees and IDPs to return home.²⁸³

Throughout the quarter, the DoS continued its efforts to provide stabilization assistance to opposition-controlled areas and non-lethal aid to vetted Syrian opposition groups. The DoS reported that it sought to provide services where the Syrian regime did not, both to promote stability and so the population would not turn to extremists for those services.²⁸⁴

While the programs and objectives for this assistance did not change during the quarter, the areas where services were delivered shifted as battle lines shifted.

The DoS continued to make small grants and provided assistance and training to local governance actors and civil society in an attempt to rapidly restore essential services, such as water, sanitation, electricity, and bakeries, which in turn should make these recipients credible within their communities.²⁸⁵ The United States, Western European countries, and Canada provided vehicles, equipment, stipends, and training. A “community security” program was aimed at providing “non-contentious community policing services that are responsive to community needs.”²⁸⁶

The United States provided operational support for six independent radio stations and one satellite television station. The program is intended to strengthen independent media in Syria to counter regime and violent extremist narratives. Stations reportedly challenge claims that extremist groups represent average Syrians by highlighting the presence and role played by foreigners fighting for these groups.²⁸⁷

Finally, the United States also awarded grants to fund the clearing of unexploded ordnance and explosive booby traps in territory liberated from ISIS so residents may return to work and venture out to receive humanitarian assistance.²⁸⁸

The DoS reported that it provided 27 vetted, moderate armed units, comprising approximately 68,000 members, with non-lethal assistance such as food baskets, medical kits, and winterization gear. This aid was intended to help them “recruit and retain fighters to better protect their communities from attacks by the regime and its allies and counter the influence of extremists.”²⁸⁹

The DoS Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor funds programs intended to provide Syrian leaders the skills necessary to address the transition from the current conflict to Syria’s next stages. Local groups are currently helped to work through decisions about equitable access to shared resources as well as to the facilitation of local ceasefires.²⁹⁰

The DoS reported that it sought to provide services where the Syrian regime did not both to promote stability and so the population would not turn to extremists for those services.





Iraqis fleeing violence in Mosul gather at a mosque on the north end of the city's airport. (Stars and Stripes/Chad Garland photo)

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Iraq Crisis	67
Syria Crisis	76



HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Humanitarian assistance in Iraq focused on assisting those displaced from west Mosul, where military operations created a spike in displacement of civilians. This overwhelmed the Iraqi government's IDP screening and registration processes and led to IDPs being transferred to overcrowded camps, even as other camps remained under capacity.¹ IDPs facing temporary overcrowding were met with substandard shelter and hygiene services.² Progress was made in establishing a hospital and Trauma Stabilization Points near Mosul to treat wounded civilians without needing to transport them 50 miles to Erbil, but issues remained due to a lack of specialists, ambulances, and treatment follow-up.³

Some IDPs returned to their areas of origin in territory recently captured from ISIS, including east Mosul and parts of Anbar province.⁴ Despite the progress, some returnees and those who never left east Mosul continued to experience hardship and some secondary displacement as a result of ISIS attacks behind Iraqi Security Forces lines, or a lack of basic services in east Mosul.⁵ Returnees in Salah ad Din province faced similar conditions, as ISIS attacks continued and liberated areas lacked safe shelter and municipal services.⁶ More than 396,000 persons were displaced from Mosul between the start of the military offensive in October 2016 and the end of this quarter. Of these, more than 94,000 had returned to their homes, but about 302,000 were still displaced. From February 25 to April 2, more than 235,000 individuals were displaced from west Mosul.⁷

Iraqi Counter Terrorism Service members treat patients at a processing station for internally displaced people near Mosul. (U.S. Army photo)

In Syria, advances by the Syrian regime and its allies as well as by Coalition- and Turkish-backed groups fighting ISIS reduced the number of people living in besieged and hard to reach areas.⁸ These same advances, however, resulted in new waves of IDPs and the destruction of key infrastructure, increasing the need for humanitarian assistance.⁹ Humanitarian organizations worked to provide shelter and basic provisions to new IDPs, and repaired water systems damaged in the fighting.¹⁰ While the number of besieged and hard to reach areas decreased, armed actors, including the Syrian regime and ISIS, still inhibited humanitarian responders from accessing key areas, leaving millions of Syrians without any humanitarian support.¹¹ Humanitarian organizations prepositioned supplies in Idlib province in anticipation of further inter-factional fighting, which worsened during this reporting period, in case the fighting interfered with shipments of humanitarian goods across the Turkish border.¹² Humanitarian organizations also prepositioned supplies near Raqqah as international planning for a humanitarian response to the anticipated battle for Raqqah continued.¹³

Key Developments During the Quarter

Iraq

- IDPs from Mosul increased by approximately 242,000 to a total of 368,000 displaced due to the fighting.¹⁴
- 80,628 Iraqis returned to east Mosul as the area improved.¹⁵
- Returnees across Iraq increased by 242,568 to a total of nearly 1,640,000.¹⁶
- IDPs across Iraq increased by 62,000 to a total of 3,058,000.¹⁷
- A new hospital and trauma treatment facilities around Mosul became operational.¹⁸

Syria

- The Syrian regime's capture of besieged areas and advances against ISIS by the regime and Coalition allies decreased by 170,000 the number of people living in hard to reach and besieged areas; 4.7 million people continued to live in besieged and hard to reach areas.¹⁹
- Advances by the Syrian regime and Coalition and Turkish-backed groups against ISIS in eastern Aleppo province resulted in 50,000 new IDPs.²⁰
- Advances toward Raqqah by Coalition allies produced 42,000 IDPs, though displacement was mostly temporary.²¹
- An ISIS advance on a besieged regime-controlled enclave in Dayr Az Zawr cut air resupply of basic goods for two weeks.²²
- The capture of Wadi Barada by Syrian regime forces produced 2,000 IDPs and cut off water to more than 5 million residents of Damascus for more than 1 month.²³

The U.S. Government implemented humanitarian assistance activities in Syria and Iraq as distinct and separate from military operations. The information provided on humanitarian assistance has not been audited or validated. Humanitarian assistance is implemented through three operating units:

- **USAID/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)** works with implementing partners to provide support to IDPs and other conflict-affected peoples in Syria and Iraq.
- **USAID/Food for Peace (FFP)** provides food assistance to IDPs, refugees, and others in need who have been affected by the crises in Syria, Iraq and other countries in the region.
- **DoS/Population, Refugees and Migration** works with implementing partners to support conflict-affected peoples in Syria and Iraq, and assists neighboring countries harboring Syrian refugees.

USAID and PRM receive appropriations for humanitarian assistance activities that are not designated for use in responding to a particular humanitarian crisis, enhancing flexibility in responding to ongoing and emerging crises. OFDA and FFP primarily use International Disaster Assistance funds and Title II funds, which are base funds appropriated to USAID, in part to support humanitarian assistance activities associated with the Syria and Iraq complex crises. PRM uses Migration and Refugee Assistance funds for this purpose.²⁴ Each office allocates awards to implementing partners, which include various international organizations such as the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Program (WFP), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as private non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to carry out specified assistance programs on the ground in Syria, Iraq, and neighboring countries hosting Syrian refugees.²⁵ Table 5 shows the status of U.S. funding for humanitarian assistance in Iraq and Syria since FY 2015.

Table 5.

Status of Cumulative FY 2015, FY 2016, and FY 2017 U.S. Government Humanitarian Assistance Funds for the Syria and Iraq Crises, as of 3/31/2017 (in \$ millions)

Agency	Syria Obligated	Syria Disbursed	Iraq Obligated	Iraq Disbursed
OFDA	592.4	364.4	282.6	204.0
FFP	927.3	1,057.9	138.5	100.7
PRM	1,816.4	1,944.0	574.8	507.4
TOTAL	3,326.1	3,366.3	995.9	812.1

Notes: USAID and DOS reported disbursements that may exceed obligations because some disbursements in the reporting period were awards obligated to FY 2015. In OIR reports prior to March 31, 2016, 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. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Sources: USAID, OFDA/FFP response to USAID OIG request for information, 4/12/2017; DoS PRM Response to DoS OIG Request for Information 4/18/2017.

Table 6.

OFDA, FFP, and PRM Personnel Assigned to Iraq and Syria Complex Crises Response Efforts, by Location, as of 3/31/2017

Operating Unit	Washington D.C.	Iraq	Turkey	Jordan	Lebanon	Total
OFDA	18	11	1	4	—	39
FFM	7	1	2	1	—	11
PRM	10	6	4	4	2	26
TOTAL	35	18	7	9	2	76

Sources: USAID, OFDA/FFP response to USAID OIG request for information, 4/6/17, and DoS OIG request for information, 4/6/17.

OFDA, FFP, and PRM rely on several types of personnel to execute their work, including U.S. government employees, personal services contractors, and independent contractors. Outside of Washington, D.C., most of these personnel are based in Iraq. OFDA had the largest number of personnel assigned to the Iraq-Syria crisis. For a breakout of the 71 personnel assigned to the Iraq-Syria crisis, by operating unit and location, see Table 6.

UN Appeals for Increased Humanitarian Funding in Syria and Iraq

In 2016, the final funding percentages for the 3 UN programs ranged from 54 percent of the UN's request for the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan, to 100 percent for the Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan.²⁶ The UN's requested funding for the three programs has increased this year, by \$210 million for the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan, by \$100 million for the Syrian Regional Refugee Resilience Plan, and by \$124 million for the Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan.²⁷ The 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan for Iraq has requested \$985 million, of which approximately one-third would go to operations for Mosul.²⁸ By the end of the reporting period, all 2017 UN Humanitarian and Refugee Response plans for Syria and Iraq were funded at 25 percent or less.²⁹ For a breakdown of 2017 UN appeals and funding, see Table 7.

Table 7.

2017 UN Appeals and Funding Received for the Syria and Iraq Crises, as of 3/31/2017

UN Response Plan	Requested	Received
2017 Syria Humanitarian Response Plan	\$3.4 billion	\$378.2 million (11% of request)
2017 Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan	\$5.6 billion	\$1.4 billion (25% of request)
2017 Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan	\$985 million	\$90.9 million (9% of request)

Sources: FTS, "Syria Humanitarian Response Plan 2017 (Humanitarian Response Plan)" 3/31/2017; "2017 Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan-3RP (All Agencies)," 4/1/2017; USAID, "Iraq-Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #2, Fiscal Year (FY) 2017," 3/31/2017.

DoS OIG Inspection of PRM and IG Meetings with International Organizations

The DoS OIG's inspection of the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (February 2017) found that as humanitarian emergencies continue to escalate in the Middle East and Africa, leading to dramatic workload increases for PRM personnel, the Bureau is hampered by a lack of a staffing plan to address its expanded workload.³⁰ PRM has primary responsibility within the U.S. Government for refugee protection and shares responsibility with USAID for protection of internally displaced persons. The OIG found that the Bureau had established standard operating procedures and systematic mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of the international organizations that receive PRM funds, including UNHCR, IOM, and the International Committee of the Red Cross, all headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.³¹ The Bureau engaged directly with these organizations through the U.S. Mission to the UN and Other Organizations, Humanitarian Affairs Section, whose seven positions are funded by the Bureau. PRM participated with UNHCR, its largest partner, in developing annual country operating plans, and it set up an internal mechanism applicable to all recipients, including international organizations, to report allegations of waste, fraud, and abuse to the Assistant Secretary. The DoS OIG made 10 recommendations to PRM to address staffing planning, communication, contract management and other internal controls.³²

In February 2017, the DoS IG, Steve Linick, and Assistant IG for Overseas Operations Oversight conducted a day-long series of meetings in Geneva with the leadership of DoS's three major partners focused on the extent and effectiveness of each of the organizations' internal audit, investigation, and fraud prevention efforts, and on the awareness and monitoring of those efforts by PRM. The discussions highlighted the current challenges and initiatives in each of the organizations' fraud prevention efforts, both organization-wide and specifically in Iraq, Syria, and other conflict areas. IG Linick also discussed international organization relations and humanitarian assistance oversight with the Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations – Geneva. These high-level outreach efforts informed and highlighted DoS OIG's continuing focus of audit, inspection, and investigative resources on DoS-funded foreign assistance.

The DoS OIG's inspection of the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (February 2017) found that as humanitarian emergencies continue to escalate in the Middle East and Africa, leading to dramatic workload increases for PRM personnel, the Bureau is hampered by a lack of a staffing plan to address its expanded workload.

IRAQ CRISIS

During the quarter, fighting in Iraq was focused around west Mosul, where the UN reported that displacement rates reached a peak in late March with over 10,000 people being displaced per day. These IDPs overwhelmed the security screening center outside the city, as well as the capacity of IDP camps south and east of Mosul.³³ Humanitarian needs increased due to the fighting, especially medical trauma and post-operative care, in addition to shelter, emergency food aid, water, sanitation, and hygiene services for IDPs and others in need.³⁴ Ongoing violence in areas recently recaptured from ISIS control, including Ninawa and Anbar provinces, also exacerbated humanitarian conditions and hindered IDP resettlement.³⁵ While IDPs attempted to return to their areas of origin when possible, ISIS attacks that included indirect fire, drones, and suicide bombers, hindered IDP movement.³⁶ In addition, a lack of basic government services, high rates of unexploded ordnance, widespread destruction, and screening measures by sectarian militia impeded IDPs from returning to their places of origin.³⁷ By the end of the quarter, the UN reported that the Mosul offensive had displaced nearly 368,000 people, up from approximately 125,000 people at the end of the prior quarter.³⁸

Conditions on the Ground

During the reporting period, the UN reported that approximately 11 million people in Iraq were in need, an increase of 1 million people relative to the previous quarter. As shown in Table 8, the number of returnees increased by 400,000 persons but that did not result in a decrease in the number of persons in need.

Table 8.

Number of IDPs and Returnees in Need of Humanitarian Assistance in Iraq

Category	Q1 FY 2017	Q2 FY 2017
People in Need	10 million	11 million
IDPs	3.1 million	3.1 million
Returnees	1.2 million	1.6 million

Sources: OCHA, "Humanitarian Bulletin, Iraq," 1/15/2017 and 3/23/2017.

Table 9.

Overview of U.S.-Funded Humanitarian Assistance in Iraq, by Agency

Agency	Number of Awards	Number of Implementers	Types of Assistance
OFDA	29	28	Protection, water, hygiene, sanitation, health, shelter, settlement, humanitarian coordination logistics
FFP	1	1	Emergency food assistance to Iraqi IDPs and other conflict affected people
PRM	25	20	Emergency shelter support; protection assistance; water, sanitation and hygiene needs; healthcare; education; emergency livelihoods and social cohesion; and camp coordination and camp management.

IRAQ: QUARTERLY FOCUS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

TAL AFAR REGION

Humanitarian conditions worsened in the Tal Afar area, west of Mosul. The area remained under ISIS control and inaccessible to humanitarian organizations. According to a WFP survey, 40% of residents did not have enough food.

NINAWA PROVINCE

Humanitarian conditions deteriorated in west Mosul as Iraqi government forces captured some ISIS-controlled areas. Large numbers of IDPs have fled west Mosul, peaking at roughly 10,000 per day in late March, while hundreds of thousands of other civilians remain trapped in the city.

KIRKUK PROVINCE

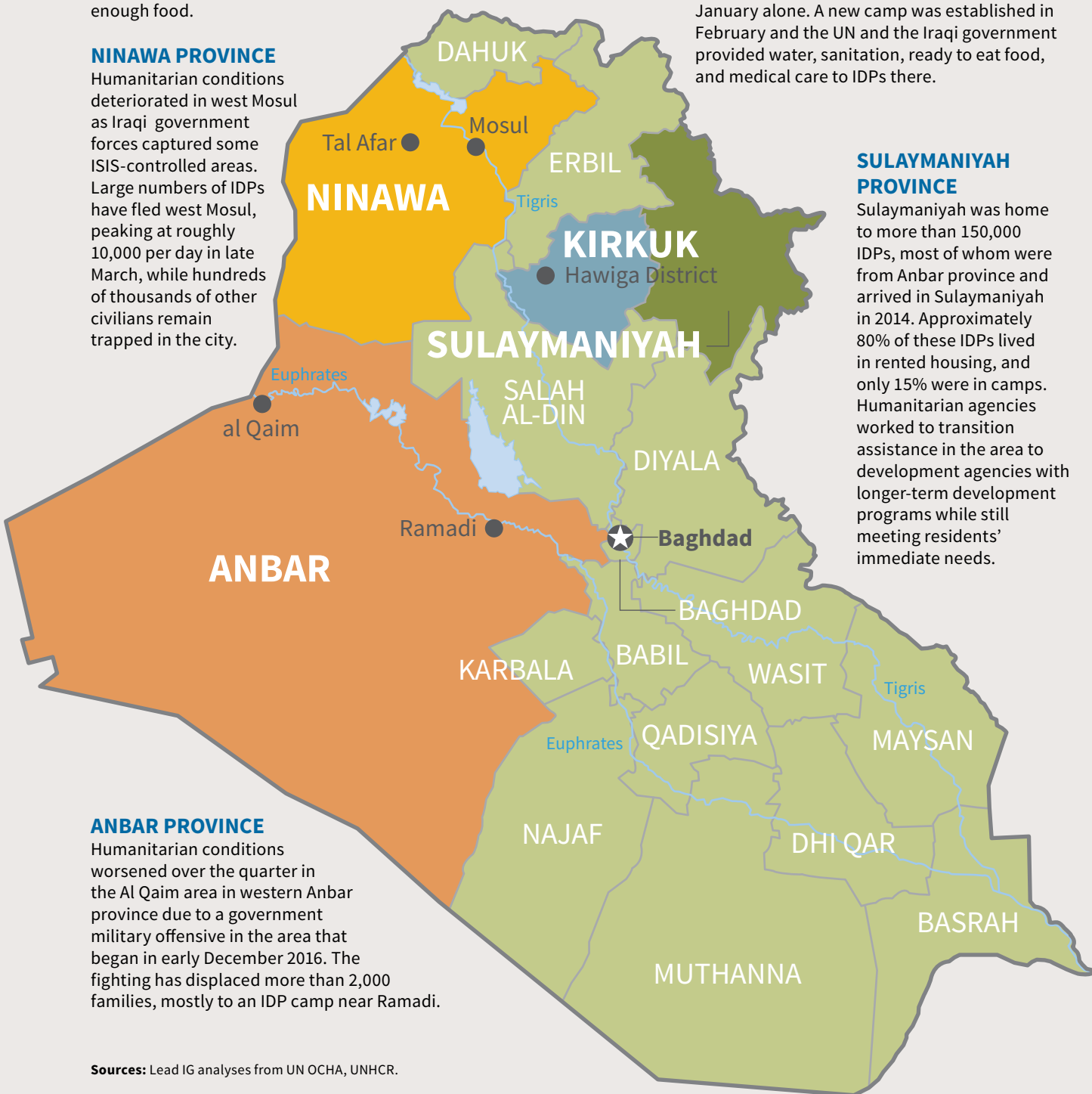
Humanitarian conditions around the ISIS-controlled Hawija area continued to be poor. Approximately 18,000 people fled the area in January alone. A new camp was established in February and the UN and the Iraqi government provided water, sanitation, ready to eat food, and medical care to IDPs there.

SULAYMANIYAH PROVINCE

Sulaymaniyah was home to more than 150,000 IDPs, most of whom were from Anbar province and arrived in Sulaymaniyah in 2014. Approximately 80% of these IDPs lived in rented housing, and only 15% were in camps. Humanitarian agencies worked to transition assistance in the area to development agencies with longer-term development programs while still meeting residents' immediate needs.

ANBAR PROVINCE

Humanitarian conditions worsened over the quarter in the Al Qaim area in western Anbar province due to a government military offensive in the area that began in early December 2016. The fighting has displaced more than 2,000 families, mostly to an IDP camp near Ramadi.



Sources: Lead IG analyses from UN OCHA, UNHCR.

West Mosul

As Iraqi forces pushed into west Mosul, the UN reported that rates of displacement rose and conditions deteriorated for the nearly 750,000 residents of the area, including 412,000 children.³⁹ The UN reported that food supplies dwindled and prices rose to almost double of those in east Mosul.⁴⁰ Residents relied on a decreasingly varied diet as they consumed less produce; key goods such as powdered milk for babies were almost completely unavailable.⁴¹ Access to safe drinking water also emerged as a critical concern in west Mosul, as some neighborhoods lacked any access to safe drinking water, while in others it was only available for 1.5 hours every few days.⁴² Trauma Stabilization Points, along with a new hospital east of the city, were established to treat those injured in the fighting, but insufficient trauma specialists, post-care follow up, and ambulances to transport the most serious cases, created health risks.⁴³

As military forces prepared to liberate west Mosul at the beginning of the quarter, the humanitarian community established additional camps and emergency sites in anticipation of large scale displacement of persons from the area, increasing camp capacities particularly north and east of the city.⁴⁴ Humanitarian organizations prepositioned 77,000 emergency shelter kits, 49,000 household item kits, and 41,700 tents.⁴⁵ Once fighting began on February 19, IDP numbers increased as Iraqi Security Forces pushed into west Mosul. The week from March 6-12, for example, saw approximately 2,500 people displaced from west Mosul per day, before increasing to roughly 10,000 per day by the end of the month, bringing the total number of people currently displaced to 368,000.⁴⁶

The UN and NGO community continued to face challenges in meeting the healthcare needs of IDPs coming out of west Mosul. In light of the serious trauma needs generated by military operations to retake east Mosul, OFDA and PRM reported making significant efforts to increase emergency healthcare capacity around Mosul during the reporting period.⁴⁷ Initial efforts in the response in east Mosul were problematic, as health agencies were not sufficiently prepared to treat the significant number of trauma cases they faced in the vicinity of Mosul, resulting in some patient deaths during transport.⁴⁸ From mid-October to mid-January, 1,610 wounded civilians were sent to Erbil.⁴⁹ The World Health Organization (WHO) established a hospital in Bartella, a town eight miles east of Mosul, and new Trauma Stabilization Points near the frontlines of west Mosul during the reporting period.⁵⁰ The Trauma Stabilization Points were able to treat more than 740 trauma cases from February 18 to March 8, while the Bartella hospital has reportedly operated at capacity since opening in January, and treated over 1,000 trauma cases.⁵¹ Despite these efforts to improve care, the UN reported an insufficient number of trauma specialists to deal with the growing number of cases; a lack of post-operative care, forcing discharged patients to return to camps without proper follow-up; and a shortage of fuel and ambulances to transport trauma cases out of Mosul.⁵² In order to address these shortages, WHO reported airlifting 30 ambulances for use in the Mosul area, and supporting the ongoing construction of 2 additional hospitals near Mosul.⁵³

When IDPs fled west Mosul, if they were unharmed, they were taken to a security screening center in the town of Hamam al Alil, south of the city.⁵⁴ As the pace of

Figure 2.

Internal Displacement of Civilians Fleeing Fighting in Mosul

displacement increased, the Hamam al Alil facility became overwhelmed, leading to extended screening times and poor processing procedures. The UN and IOM reported that once processed out of the facility, IDPs appeared unaware of their options for shelter locations, and authorities failed to transfer them to camps with available shelters, or to emergency shelters or host communities.⁵⁵ Although the UN reportedly worked to continuously expand camp capacity around Mosul, efforts were unable to keep pace with the increasing rates of displacement.⁵⁶ Figure 2 illustrates the internal displacement of people fleeing violence in Mosul.

Iraqi Security Forces continued transferring IDPs to camps south of Mosul near Hamam al Alil despite a lack of space, leaving IDPs sheltered in overcrowded and

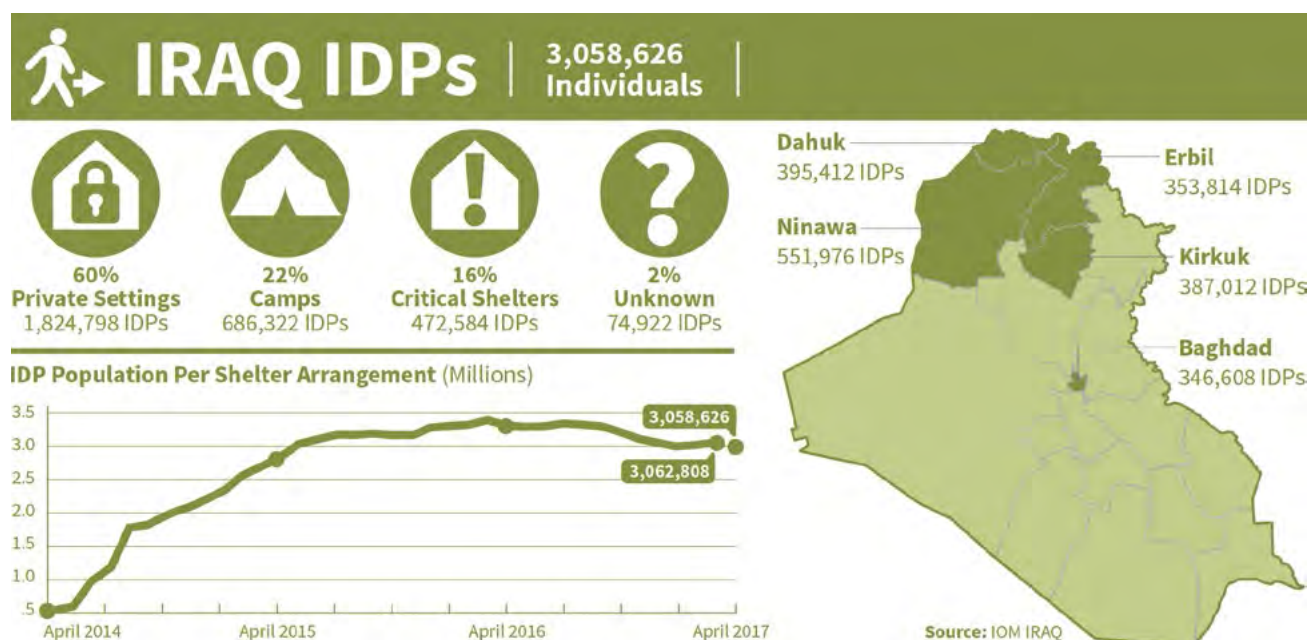
substandard conditions, while camps northeast of Mosul remained below capacity.⁵⁷ These camps were generally in Kurdish areas and according to OFDA, the Iraqi government was not effectively coordinating with Kurdish authorities when determining where to send IDPs.⁵⁸ Additionally, PRM reported that IDPs out of west Mosul were hesitant to relocate to camps controlled by the Kurdish authorities due to fears of Peshmerga-enforced movement restrictions and confiscation of legal documents, and of reports that IDPs who had previously resided in the camps viewed them as prisons.⁵⁹

Also, the capacity of IDP camp water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities was stretched. According to OFDA and FFP, the camps had limited drinking water and non-functional sewers.⁶⁰ In some camps, IDPs were taking shelter in areas where water and hygiene facilities were still under construction, due to lack of space in fully functional areas of the camps.⁶¹ IDP sites had sanitation and hygiene facilities that did not meet humanitarian standards. For example, standards recommend no more than 50 people per latrine, but some sites had an average of 75 people per latrine, with one camp averaging 150 people per latrine.⁶²

In past work, USAID OIG identified similar environmental concerns at an IDP camp in northern Iraq where an OFDA-funded implementing partner reported that poorly constructed water and sewage systems had resulted in overflowing septic tanks and possible improper waste disposal. USAID OIG noted in a memorandum to OFDA in September 2015 that such conditions could lead to health and environmental hazards,

Figure 3.

IDPs in Iraq





Families fleeing the battle for Mosul wait in trucks outside a camp for displaced Iraqis south of the city. (Stars and Stripes/Chard Garland photo)

and recommended reviewing the situation, not only in the camp where the issue was reported, but in other camps as well.⁶³ In response, OFDA planned an assessment of water, sanitation, and hygiene activities by its partners in order to determine what standard the humanitarian community can impose in Iraq, and provide recommendations for improvement to OFDA partners.⁶⁴

During the fighting for east Mosul, IDPs were almost exclusively transferred to camps where they faced restrictions on movement, making it difficult to work.⁶⁵ The UN reported that the Iraqi government allowed IDPs from west Mosul to reside with host communities, enabling them to opt out of living in camps.⁶⁶ As a result, approximately one-third of the IDPs produced by west Mosul fighting during the quarter had chosen to seek shelter with host communities, often in east Mosul where some IDPs may have relatives.⁶⁷ Figure 3 illustrates the number of IDPs and the major areas they have fled to in Iraq.

East Mosul

Following the capture of the last Mosul neighborhoods east of the Tigris River by Iraqi Security Forces on January 24, conditions improved in east Mosul for the 550,000 civilians who had remained in their homes, and other residents began returning. However, some displacement continued.⁶⁸ Ongoing security threats from ISIS and a lack of basic services perpetuated hardships and continued hindering rates of return.⁶⁹ ISIS shelling of east Mosul's western neighborhoods from its positions across the river created additional displacement, while other ISIS attacks forced humanitarian partners to suspend projects.⁷⁰

Humanitarian organizations provided assistance in east Mosul as the area became accessible. In January 2017, humanitarian organizations distributed rapid response

kits to over 30,000 returnees and residents who remained in the area while military operations occurred, along with an average of one million liters of water per day.⁷¹ As of late January, prices for basic goods in east Mosul were slightly lower than those in Erbil, but the availability of goods and purchasing power of residents were far lower.⁷²

Ongoing ISIS attacks hampered humanitarian access to the city, and stressed programs such as the provision of trauma care. ISIS attacks targeted not only the civilian population, but also aid convoys and distribution of humanitarian assistance.⁷³ According to the UN, an attack in late February that killed 1 and wounded 12 may have involved chemical weapons.⁷⁴ A PRM-supported medical team treated seven patients with symptoms of toxic chemical exposure at Rozhawa hospital and responded to potential cross-contamination among healthcare workers. To prepare for possible further attacks, PRM's implementing partner also dispatched medical teams to instruct staff members on decontamination at other nearby hospitals.⁷⁵

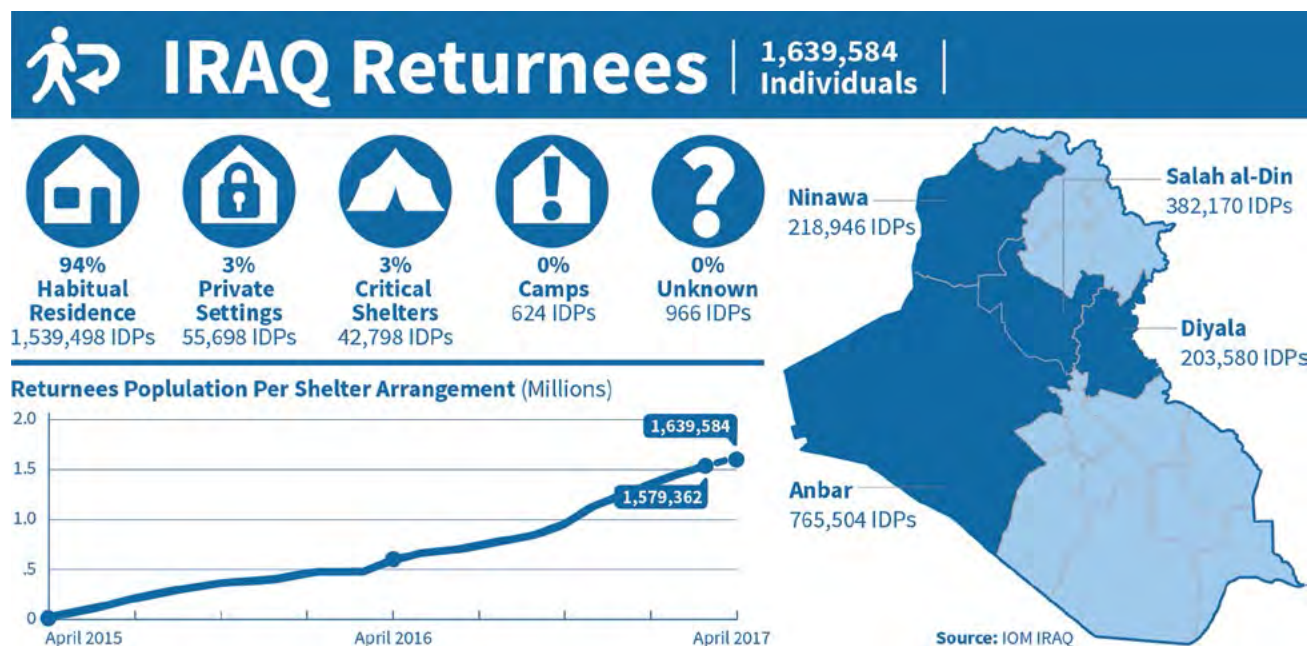
East Mosul also suffered a lack of basic services such as drinking water. Reestablishing such crucial services was hampered by ongoing security threats. In mid-February, about half of east Mosul residents were receiving water via the UN from water trucks, while others received service for a few hours a day from a water treatment plant repaired by UNICEF.⁷⁶ However, the plant was disabled after being hit by indirect fire on February 19, affecting 70,000 people. During the quarter, UNICEF worked to repair the treatment facility again while also providing water via trucks.⁷⁷

Returnees: Anbar and Salah ad Din Provinces

As security improved in many areas of Iraq, the number of people returning to their places of origin continued to grow, reaching nearly 1.6 million across the country between April 2015 and March 2017.⁷⁸ As in previous quarters, Anbar province continued to see the most returnees, with 728,800 IDPs having returned home to the province, an increase of 132,264 over the last quarter, followed by Salah ad Din with 378,550 returnees, an increase of 10,476 over the past quarter.⁷⁹ Figure 4 illustrates the number of returnees in Iraq.

However, as in east Mosul, security issues combined with extensive damage to infrastructure endangered the safety of residents and returning IDPs and complicated recovery efforts in many areas. For example, in the city of Baiji, Salah ad Din province, where approximately 28,000 IDPs returned during the quarter, humanitarian partners expressed concern that conditions in the city were unsafe due to the extensive presence of unexploded ordnance and widespread destruction of infrastructure, which was reported at approximately 50 percent of the city.⁸⁰ Fallujah, in Anbar province, also experienced high rates of returnees in the face of continuing complications. Despite ongoing ISIS attacks and unexploded ordnance, press reports cited the presence of only rudimentary government services in Fallujah, such as running water and electricity.⁸¹ There were also reports of Sunni IDPs attempting to return to their homes in Salah ad Din and Anbar, but being detained, and in some cases disappearing, after reaching checkpoints manned by Shia militia and police.⁸²

Figure 4.

Iraqi Returnees

To assist those in need in Anbar and Salah ad Din provinces, humanitarian organizations continued to provide emergency water, sanitation, hygiene services, food aid, shelter assistance, healthcare, protection services, and commodities.⁸³ In addition to providing returnees with basic goods such as blankets and stoves, humanitarian organizations assisted returnees with shelter needs. PRM supported humanitarian organizations provided some returnees with \$5,000 in shelter repair assistance if their homes were damaged but salvageable, while returnees with destroyed homes were offered temporary shelters expected to last three years.⁸⁴ Despite these efforts, demand for humanitarian assistance in Mosul stretched the capacity of the Iraqi government to provide services, and of the humanitarian community to respond to needs in Anbar, Salah Ad Din, and other parts of Iraq.⁸⁵

In nearly 30 IDP camps located in Anbar and Salah ad Din governorates personal privacy was scarce and public latrines were mostly same-sex, or not secured, and risky for women to use at night due to inadequate lighting. In January, after increasing reports of incidents of sexual and gender-based violence, UNHCR supplied the camps with generators and fuel, and installed street lights and lights for sanitation units. The UN Population Fund also conducted training in sexual assault reporting for care providers, and along with its 18 partner organizations, continued rolling out its nationwide information tracking system on gender-based violence launched in 2016. This secure standard and confidential system collects and analyzes reporting nationwide.⁸⁶

Progress in Mosul Dam Early Warning Programming

The Mosul Dam, located on the Tigris River approximately 25 miles upriver from Mosul, remains at risk of a breach which, according to the UN, would create a “catastrophic outburst [of water],” flooding towns and cities downriver, and endangering over a million residents living between the dam and Baghdad.⁸⁷ Work to grout the dam began in late November 2016 and continued through the reporting period despite structural and electrical problems.⁸⁸ The Iraqi government contracted with an engineering company which has experience in dam rehabilitation and maintenance projects. The Iraqi government also entered into an agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to serve as engineer and technical advisor on the project.⁸⁹ OFDA, meanwhile, has been working with the Iraqi government, UNDP and the international community to mitigate the impact of a potential breach since late 2015 by preparing early warning systems and emergency response plans.⁹⁰

During 2016, OFDA funded UNDP’s efforts to help the Iraqi government develop a national emergency response system, including communications protocols between a national emergency operations center and governorates in the potential flood path. OFDA also supported the procurement of long range sirens to warn inhabitants of an impending breach, alongside flyers, radio, television, text message, and social media messaging on flood preparedness.⁹¹

During the reporting period, UNDP continued community awareness activities with populations living in potentially vulnerable areas along the flood plain.⁹² OFDA reported that educating populations living under ISIS control about the threats posed by the dam had been difficult, but UNDP expanded efforts to include those recently displaced from Mosul who were temporarily living in camps and emergency sites.⁹³

As with other programming, the significant amount of resources, time, and energy being invested to mitigate the impact of the conflict on civilians has limited what the Iraqi government and the international community can invest concerning a possible dam breach.⁹⁴ OFDA leveraged ongoing humanitarian efforts around Mosul in preparing a humanitarian response plan that includes pre-positioned critical emergency supplies for the dam.⁹⁵ Going forward, OFDA intends to continue funding UNDP’s work with the Iraqi government and vulnerable populations to prepare for a potential breach, including simulation exercises, community awareness and training activities, and development of evacuation plans in areas at risk.⁹⁶

SYRIA CRISIS

Conflict in Syria continued to cause civilian casualties and displacement, and drive humanitarian needs throughout the country. Siege warfare, inter-factional fighting, and international powers working at cross purposes continued to drive the crisis. A human rights watchdog organization reported 2,791 civilian deaths during the quarter, including 529 children, a 16 percent decrease from the previous quarter, mostly attributable to decreased pro-regime aerial bombing of opposition-controlled areas due to the Ankara Ceasefire Agreement.⁹⁷

By the end of the quarter, siege warfare by the Syrian regime resulted in the capture of the Wadi Barada area north of Damascus, causing the displacement of 19,000 people and temporarily depriving 5.5 million people of access to a regular water supply.⁹⁸ Advances by the regime, the Syrian Democratic Forces and Euphrates Shield (the Turkish led military operation) into ISIS-controlled territory in Aleppo and Raqqah provinces displaced 70,000 people, while also granting access to humanitarian assistance organizations.⁹⁹ While military progress by the regime against besieged opposition-controlled areas as well as progress by multiple actors against ISIS opened up new areas for humanitarian operations, the regime and ISIS continued to hinder or completely deny humanitarian access to certain areas. For example, an ISIS siege of regime-controlled city of Dayr Az Zawr temporarily worsened as vital WFP airdrops were discontinued for two weeks as a result of an ISIS advance, nearly depleting the local food supply, while the regime denied multiple UN requests to allow supply convoys into besieged opposition-held areas.¹⁰⁰

OFDA, FFP, and PRM partners, including several UN agencies, worked to provide multi-sectoral assistance throughout Syria and the region. Table 10 provides an overview of the types of assistance provided by U.S. agencies. PRM has the largest number of active awards and implementers among the offices involved in the humanitarian assistance response to the Syria crisis. The opposite page describes the humanitarian assistance distributed in key provinces in Syria.

Table 10.
Overview of U.S.-Funded Humanitarian Assistance to Syria, by Agency

Agency	Number of Awards	Number of Implementers	Types of Assistance
OFDA	40	29	Health, nutrition, shelter, settlements, water, sanitation, hygiene, protection, agriculture and food security, economic recovery
FFP	13	10	Emergency food assistance to Syrian IDPs and Syrian refugees in neighboring countries
PRM	48	32	Food assistance, healthcare, protection, shelter, relief commodities, and provision of safe drinking water

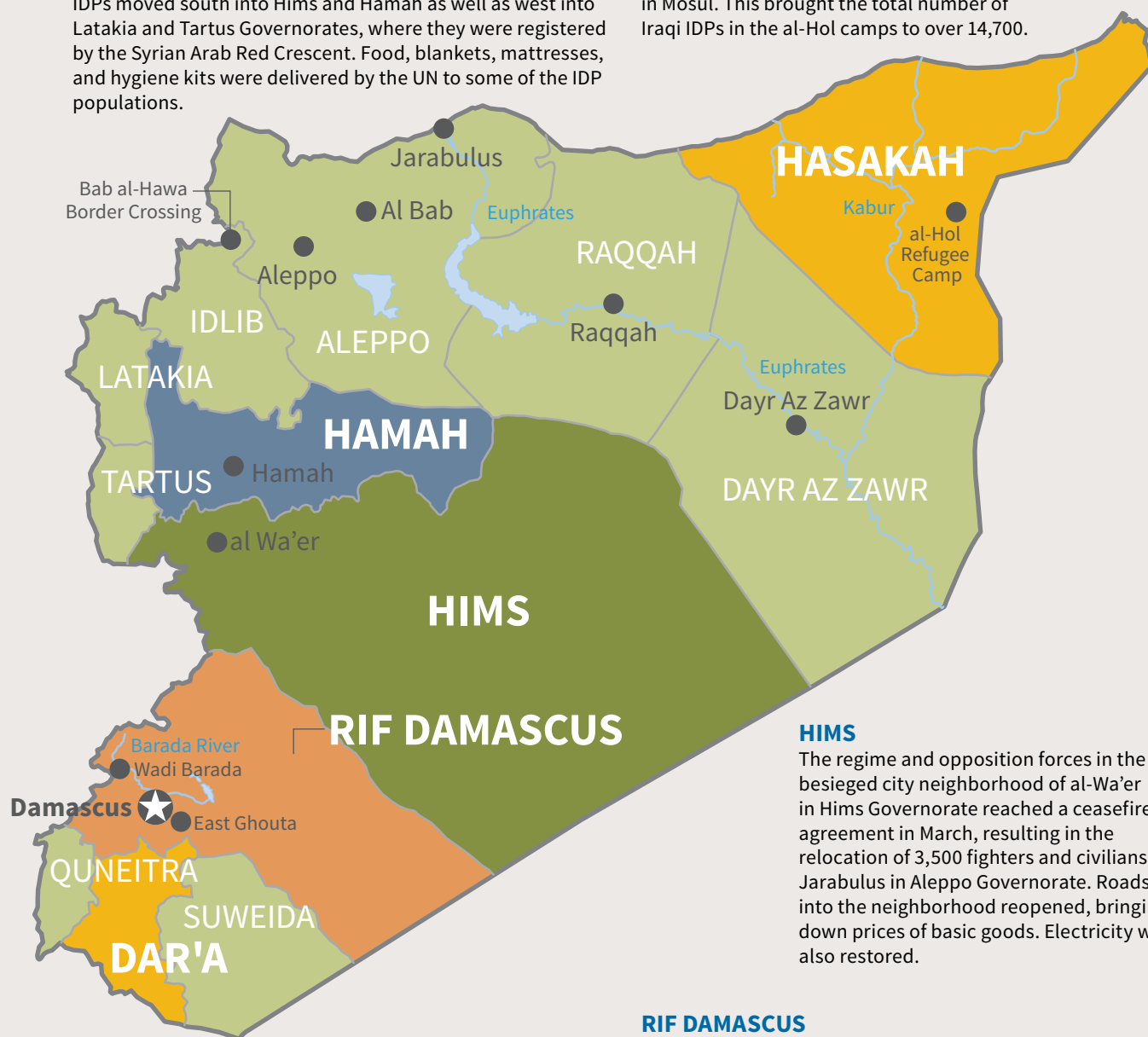
SYRIA: QUARTERLY FOCUS OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

HAMAH

Advances by opposition groups north of Hamah city displaced 40,000 people and shut down key transport routes. IDPs moved south into Hims and Hamah as well as west into Latakia and Tartus Governorates, where they were registered by the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. Food, blankets, mattresses, and hygiene kits were delivered by the UN to some of the IDP populations.

HASAKAH

The al-Hol refugee camp in Hasakah Province saw the arrival of an additional 7,500 Iraqi IDPs fleeing the ongoing fighting in Mosul. This brought the total number of Iraqi IDPs in the al-Hol camps to over 14,700.



HIMS

The regime and opposition forces in the besieged city neighborhood of al-Wa'er in Hims Governorate reached a ceasefire agreement in March, resulting in the relocation of 3,500 fighters and civilians to Jarabulus in Aleppo Governorate. Roads into the neighborhood reopened, bringing down prices of basic goods. Electricity was also restored.

RIF DAMASCUS

Humanitarian conditions deteriorated in the East Ghouta region, as fighting around the besieged opposition-controlled enclave intensified. Approximately 27,000 people were displaced in East Ghouta due to regime attacks, while availability of basic goods decreased due to disruptions of smuggling routes and the closure of formal routes into the besieged area. A UN humanitarian convoy tried to reach the area in February but was unsuccessful.

DAR'A

Renewed fighting between opposition and regime forces in Dar'a Governorate led to the displacement of 17,000 people and the closure of hospitals. A subsequent offensive by a local ISIS affiliate led to the displacement of an additional 7,000 people. The fighting led to cancellations of UN humanitarian aid shipments across the Jordanian border in February, although they resumed in March.

Sources: Lead IG analyses from UN OCHA, UNHCR, and USAID.

Conditions on the Ground

This quarter, the UN reported that approximately 13.5 million people were in need of assistance in Syria, which does not represent a change from the previous quarter.¹⁰¹ However, the number of people in hard to reach and besieged areas declined as the regime gained control of more areas it had previously besieged such as Wadi Barada, and east Aleppo at the end of the previous quarter, and the armed groups fighting with the Coalition, as well as the regime, made advances against ISIS.¹⁰² Table 11 breaks down the categories of people in need in terms of IDPs, and people in hard to reach and besieged areas. Note that the categories are not mutually exclusive. Figure 5 shows the number of Syrian IDPs and the areas they have fled to in Syria.

Table 11.
Number of IDPs and Returnees in Need of Humanitarian Assistance in Syria

Category	Q1 FY 2017	Q2 FY 2017
People in Need	13.5 million	13.5 million
IDPs	6.3 million	6.3 million
People in hard to reach areas	4.89 million	4.72 million
People in besieged areas	974 thousand	643 thousand

Sources: OCHA, “Syria,” 4/4/2017; UNHCR, “UNHCR Syria Fact Sheet,” 3/2017; OCHA, “Syrian Arab Republic: Overview of Hard to Reach and Besieged Locations,” 11/18/2016 and 1/26/2017.

Humanitarian Access

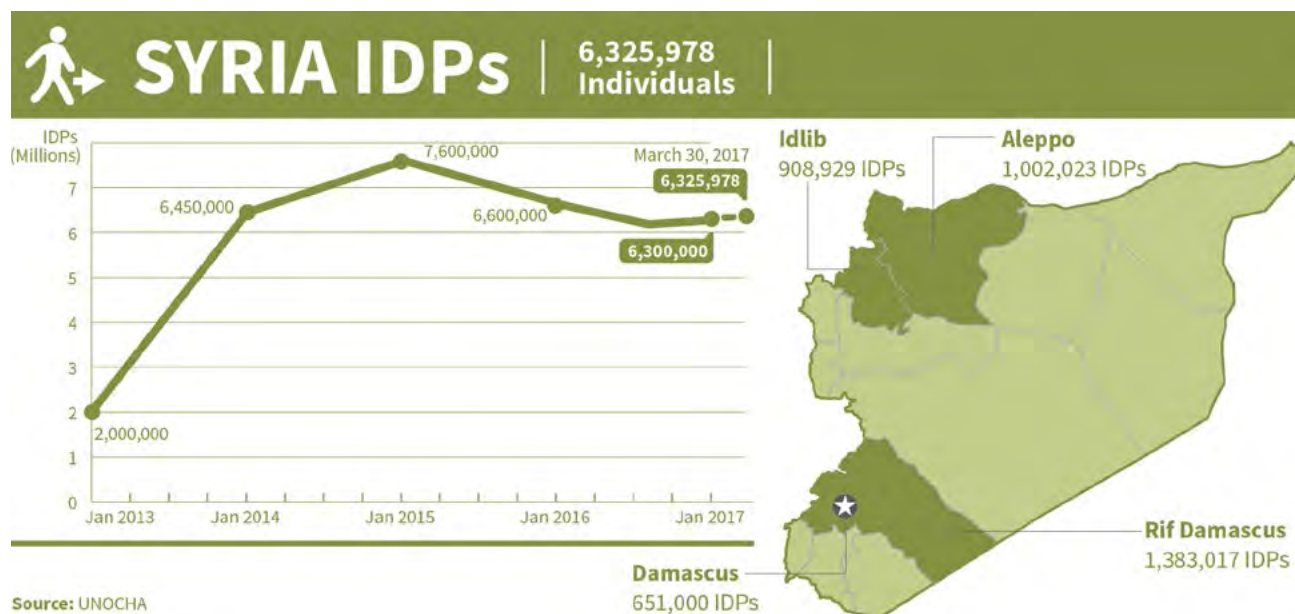
During the quarter, approximately 13.5 million people were in need of assistance throughout Syria.¹⁰³ Of those, 85 percent were living in poverty, mostly subsisting on less than \$2 a day, while a minority of the population was severely deprived of the basic food needed to survive.¹⁰⁴ Specific needs included emergency food assistance, healthcare, water and hygiene, sanitation services, protection, and shelter.¹⁰⁵ Those in acute need of assistance were primarily located in what the UN defines as hard to reach and besieged locations.¹⁰⁶ To assist people living in these areas, humanitarian organizations provided assistance to communities through several means, including air and a few ground deliveries.¹⁰⁷ However, access to areas besieged by the regime was sporadic.¹⁰⁸

Hard to Reach and Besieged Areas

During the quarter, approximately 4.72 million people were living in hard to reach areas, including nearly 643,800 people living in besieged locations.¹⁰⁹ This represents a decrease from last quarter, when 4.9 million people were living in hard to reach areas, including 974,000 in besieged areas, as advances by the Syrian regime and other armed actors into opposition and ISIS-controlled territories increased access to humanitarian organizations.¹¹⁰ The reductions are partly attributable to the Syrian regime’s recapture of east Aleppo in late December 2016, where some 250,000 people lived in the besieged areas.¹¹¹ Furthermore, the regime’s negotiated reoccupation of smaller besieged areas,

OFDA, FFP, and PRM were key supporters of UN efforts to access hard to reach and besieged areas by funding several UN agencies providing assistance to these areas, including WFP, WHO and UNHCR.

Figure 5.

IDPs in Syrian

such as Wadi Barada, and ISIS's continued loss of territory reduced the number of people living in hard to reach areas during the reporting period.¹¹²

Despite the increased access, humanitarian needs continued to grow as these same advances displaced new populations.¹¹³ In particular, the Syrian regime's recapture of Wadi Barada and advances by anti-ISIS forces into the cities of al Bab and Raqqah temporarily hindered access to populations, increased humanitarian needs by creating thousands of new IDPs, and destroyed civilian infrastructure.¹¹⁴ However, after these battles, armed actors allowed the UN and international community to provide assistance to these previously hard to reach and besieged populations.¹¹⁵

While humanitarian access to hard to reach and besieged areas increased, restrictions by parties to the conflict continued to inhibit humanitarian access to several other locations in Syria.¹¹⁶ The Syrian regime continued to restrict civilian movement and UN access to many besieged locations, especially around Damascus.¹¹⁷ For example, the Syrian regime only approved access to 44 percent of requested beneficiaries in hard to reach and besieged areas in the UN's March inter-agency convoy plan, including denying any access to eight besieged locations.¹¹⁸ The approval rate this quarter was the lowest since March 2016.¹¹⁹ In addition to the Syrian regime, ISIS continued to block humanitarian access to populations living under its control or subject to its siege, leaving hundreds of thousands without access to essential services and goods.¹²⁰ This was particularly apparent in the city of Dayr Az Zawr, where ISIS made temporary advances into a Syrian regime enclave and hindered humanitarian airdrops for weeks.¹²¹

Turkey Shut Down Humanitarian Organization Operations

Actions by the Turkish government also hindered assistance efforts within Syria. Due to the fractured nature of the Syrian conflict, in which multiple groups control significant territory, transporting humanitarian aid across the country from a single point is not possible, as actors often deny humanitarian actors approval to cross lines of control to deliver assistance.¹²² This forces humanitarian organizations to transport significant portions of their aid across international borders, most significantly from Turkey, into northern Syria. One humanitarian organization was forced to shut down all of its operations based in Turkey after the Turkish government revoked its registration.¹²³ The humanitarian organization announced that it would no longer be able to provide humanitarian assistance to the over 350,000 individuals that it reportedly serviced on a monthly basis.¹²⁴

Assistance Following Incursions Against ISIS

AL BAB

Opposition forces backed by the Turkish military and Coalition airstrikes captured al Bab, the remaining ISIS stronghold in Aleppo province, on February 23.¹²⁵ The fighting displaced approximately 36,000 people from al Bab between January 1 and February 14.¹²⁶ On February 24 a regime offensive just south of the city advanced east to the Euphrates River, reportedly displacing an additional 16,000 people.¹²⁷ Most IDPs from the al Bab area fled north to other areas in Aleppo Province, including Manbij, Azaz, and Jarabulus.¹²⁸ The UN responded by establishing reception and transit centers for the IDPs, and distributing shelter, urgent food assistance, and non-food items.¹²⁹ Humanitarian organizations also reportedly provided 200 tents to households sheltering in informal camps around Jarabulus, and emergency food assistance and safe drinking water to 1,200 al Bab IDP households in Azaz.¹³⁰

Although ISIS forces have been pushed away from the al Bab area, as in Iraq many impediments remain for IDPs desiring to return home.¹³¹ IEDs, unexploded ordnance, and direct ISIS attacks presented significant concerns. ¹³² For example, a car bomb attack on February 24 targeted al Bab returnees, killing 73 people and wounding 125.¹³³ Due to the scale of infrastructure destruction in al Bab, it will be months before essential services such as health, water, and sanitation are available in the city.¹³⁴

RAQQAH

Approximately 42,000 people have been displaced from Raqqah since November 2016 as the Syrian Democratic Forces have advanced toward Raqqah from the north, east, and west.¹³⁵ This displacement has been mostly temporary, as the Syrian Democratic Forces in control of the countryside allowed IDPs to return to their homes.¹³⁶ Displacement numbers have been limited by ISIS efforts to prevent civilians from leaving Raqqah, while the UN noted that rates of displacement were further limited by requirements of Kurdish authorities that those wishing to cross behind Syrian

Democratic Forces lines have a local “guarantor/sponsor” vouch for them.¹³⁷ Significant damaged infrastructure remained after ISIS withdrew from nearby villages and in Raqqah. Water towers were destroyed as ISIS left towns north of the city, and bridges over the Euphrates River around Raqqah were destroyed by Coalition airstrikes.¹³⁸

Furthermore, if the Tabqah Dam, which lies upriver from Raqqah, were significantly damaged, it could lead to massive flooding in both Raqqah and Dayr Az Zawr.¹³⁹ Since January 24, the Euphrates water level had already risen an estimated 10 meters, causing flooding in agricultural areas and limiting the ability of residents to cross the river in the absence of bridges damaged by Coalition airstrikes.¹⁴⁰ The Coalition captured the northern section of the dam on March 27, but ISIS continued to control the dam’s southern portion, and had begun shelling the area, putting the dam at risk.¹⁴¹

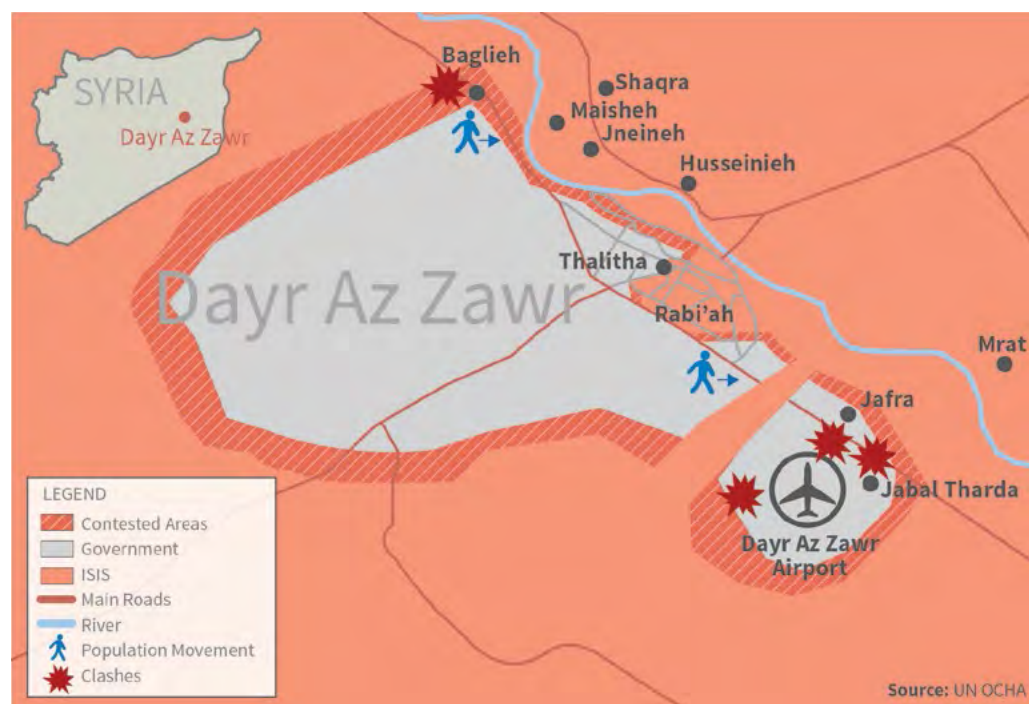
Humanitarian organizations were coordinating their Raqqah response plans in preparation for the future effort by Coalition forces to recapture the city.¹⁴² The Syrian Democratic Forces’s advance, along with the Coalition’s destruction of Raqqah bridges to the south, left Raqqah without any land routes out of the city. This trapped residents in the city, and raised the possibility that a large population of civilians would be in the city when fighting begins.¹⁴³ The UN planned to use Hasakah province as one of its hubs for responding to the anticipated crisis in Raqqah, increasing its staffing in Qamishli. UN agencies reportedly airlifted humanitarian items from Damascus to build up supplies in Hasakah for the Raqqah response, with UNHCR stocking non-food items for 10,000 IDPs in Qamishli warehouses and WFP prepositioning food assistance for 100,000 individuals.¹⁴⁴ U.S. agencies were also involved in the planning. For example, an interagency partner discussed the possibility of providing water and essential medical supplies in the period between liberation and the arrival of humanitarian organizations.¹⁴⁵

In February, humanitarian organizations agreed on a rapid response platform that would be managed by a field coordinator who would receive and circulate alerts, identify local partners to conduct rapid needs assessments, and assign partners capable of responding to humanitarian assistance needs within 72 hours.¹⁴⁶ While an initial food security response plan had been developed for Raqqah, a multi-sector field-level operational plan to address wider humanitarian needs in post-liberation Raqqah remained underdeveloped.¹⁴⁷ Figure 6 illustrates the fighting around Dayr Az Zawr.

Mitigating the Impact of the Siege of the City of Dayr Az Zawr

ISIS also used siege warfare during the quarter in its effort to capture the regime-controlled portion of Dayr Az Zawr.¹⁴⁸ Conflict in the city has been ongoing since 2014 and humanitarian assistance through UN airdrops has been the only means of assistance to the regime-controlled portion of the city.¹⁴⁹ According to the UN, the besieged area’s more than 90,000 residents face shortages of basic goods and necessities, such as food and medicine.¹⁵⁰ As of March 30, WFP had responded to the crisis with over 218 airdrops including food, medicine, fuel, and hygiene supplies into the area beginning in April 2016.¹⁵¹

Figure 6.

ISIS Advance into Besieged Dar Az Zawr City

An ISIS offensive beginning on January 15 cut the besieged regime-controlled enclave into two sections.¹⁵² The area where WFP's airdrops landed came under ISIS control on January 15, leading to a pause in operations.¹⁵³ By January 28, WFP reported that food stocks in the enclave were nearly depleted. Residents were reportedly also forced to rely on water drawn directly from the Euphrates River, which created both health concerns surrounding use of untreated water, as well as protection concerns as ISIS controlled the river's opposite bank.¹⁵⁴ By late January, WFP reported resumption of air drops using an alternate drop zone.¹⁵⁵ The airdrops are particularly expensive and technically difficult, averaging \$10,000 per metric ton (3,300 tons of relief items had been dropped as of January 28, costing over \$30 million).¹⁵⁶ Since April 2016, FFP has contributed \$15 million to these airdrops and identified their high cost as a continuing challenge.¹⁵⁷

Assistance Following Incursions by the Syrian Regime

WADI BARADA

In December 2016, Wadi Barada, a besieged, opposition-controlled suburb northwest of Damascus, became the latest focus of the regime's "siege-bomb-evacuate" strategy, in which the regime lays siege to an opposition controlled area, bombs it extensively, then negotiates the surrender and evacuation of the area's armed groups and in some

cases, civilians as well.¹⁵⁸ The regime employed this strategy in previous quarters when fighting to regain control of key areas, such as east Aleppo and Darayya.¹⁵⁹

From the beginning of fighting in late December 2016 to January 28, nearly 17,500 people were displaced from Wadi Barada and surrounding villages.¹⁶⁰ WFP provided food support to 5,000 of these IDPs.¹⁶¹ After the siege depleted essential food and medical supplies, the Syrian government and local opposition forces agreed to a ceasefire, which allowed civilians to stay in the area, while 2,000 fighters and their families were transported to Idlib Province.¹⁶² Humanitarian organizations also responded and provided services for this evacuation, including psychosocial support and screening for separated and unaccompanied minors. Protection activities also included monitoring to determine whether IDPs were moving voluntarily to locations of their own choosing or were being directed to particular locations.¹⁶³ Following the initial assault on the city, the UN requested access to Wadi Barada, but the Syrian regime denied several requests from the UN to provide support to the city.¹⁶⁴

In addition to displacing thousands, the assault on Wadi Barada caused collateral damage to Damascus city's water system. In late December, regime airstrikes damaged a facility near Wadi Barada's spring, the main water source for all of Damascus, causing water contamination and damage to pipelines that left at least 4 million people in the capital without running water through the main water system for over a month.¹⁶⁵ In response, the Syrian government instituted an emergency water rationing system in which low-lying areas received water every 5-6 days for 3-4 hours from ground wells in the area.¹⁶⁶ Residents in elevated areas, however, were not serviced by this system.¹⁶⁷ UNICEF responded by providing 15,000 liters of fuel daily to pump water into the network, servicing nearly 3.5 million residents, while also supporting efforts to repair and maintain 65 water pumps in the Damascus area.¹⁶⁸

Following the ceasefire agreement, regime forces regained control of Wadi Barada and the UN was allowed to begin repairing the water network.¹⁶⁹ However, other areas in Rif Damascus remained difficult to access. For example, UN humanitarian aid convoys have been unable to reach regime-besieged Madaya and Zabadani since November 2016.¹⁷⁰ Malnutrition and a lack of medical care are endemic in these towns.¹⁷¹

ALEPPO CITY

In Aleppo, the Syrian regime's siege and intense offensive led to the fall of the opposition's enclave in east Aleppo on December 13.¹⁷² The military operation led to the displacement of approximately 175,000 people, of which 139,000 reportedly remained in east Aleppo. Other IDPs relocated to western portions of Aleppo province and Idlib province.¹⁷³

Residents who remained or returned to east Aleppo faced a lack of adequate shelter, exposure to unexploded ordnance, and an absence of essential services. During the extensive assault on east Aleppo much of the physical infrastructure in the area was destroyed, including a majority of the area's housing. Returning families were largely

living in structurally unsound buildings, which presented significant safety threats.¹⁷⁴ IDPs in east Aleppo also faced extensive threats from unexploded ordinance.¹⁷⁵ In February, 16 deaths and 24 severe injuries were reported as a result of unexploded ordinance in Aleppo.¹⁷⁶

In addition to lacking adequate shelter, many IDP families remaining in the city were female-led as a result of the death of their husbands, or their arrest by the Syrian government, and were struggling to meet the most immediate needs.¹⁷⁷ Many children were forced to work to provide for their families rather than attend school.¹⁷⁸ Basic non-food items were a major concern as many IDPs returned home to find their homes looted. The UN responded by distributing non-food items including blankets, mattresses, and kitchen sets.¹⁷⁹ WFP provided daily bread to 80,000 returnees and IDPs in east Aleppo and also completed 2 rounds of distributions to the 36,000 IDPs that left Aleppo.¹⁸⁰ Compounding matters, a failure at the formerly ISIS-controlled al-Khafse water station in eastern Aleppo province cut off running water for approximately 1.8 million residents in Aleppo and eastern Aleppo province.¹⁸¹ In the absence of an operating station, 1 million residents were reportedly receiving water from 90 area wells while the UN installed over 60 tanks, worked to rehabilitate approximately 100 wells around Aleppo, and trucked water to about 400,000 people daily.¹⁸² The Syrian government regained control of the station on March 7, leading to expectations that water availability would improve soon.¹⁸³

Idlib and Western Aleppo Governorate

Idlib and western Aleppo provinces saw the continued arrival of IDPs from areas captured by Syrian government forces.¹⁸⁴ The UN reported that out of Idlib province's total estimated population of 1.78 million, 900,000 residents were IDPs, and 1.3 million residents were in need of assistance.¹⁸⁵ The scale of need and continued arrival of IDPs further strained host community and humanitarian assistance resources.¹⁸⁶ This included roughly 17,000 IDPs from east Aleppo, who arrived in late December, and 2,000 IDPs who arrived on January 28 from Wadi Barada outside of Damascus.¹⁸⁷ The new IDPs were incorporated into regular humanitarian programming, including food, livelihood, and health assistance, which was scaled up to meet the needs of the new populations.¹⁸⁸

In late January, fighting broke out between non-state armed groups in the area and resulted in a temporary suspension of UN assistance shipments over the Turkish border.¹⁸⁹ Despite the insecurity in Idlib and western Aleppo provinces, cross-border humanitarian shipments ultimately resumed.¹⁹⁰ The UN was concerned, however, that armed groups would begin fighting for control of the Bab al-Hawa border crossing, the main crossing point for assistance from Turkey into Idlib and west Aleppo provinces. WFP was stockpiling a two-month supply of emergency food assistance in Idlib and west Aleppo to mitigate potential consequences of a route shutdown.¹⁹¹

USAID OIG Impact

OFDA and FFP reported that the fraud schemes that USAID OIG investigators had uncovered related to Syrian humanitarian work had resulted in programmatic changes to help guard against future fraud schemes in Iraq and Syria.¹⁹² OFDA and FFP hired a risk mitigation advisor to provide the programs with technical expertise, and distributed the USAID OIG Fraud Prevention and Compliance Booklet to all partners in the field and at headquarters.¹⁹³

OFDA also piloted a single-source procurement of winterization non-food items for its Turkey-based partners this quarter. OFDA reported pursuing single-source procurement because it is easier for implementing partners to maintain oversight and accountability during the procurement process.¹⁹⁴ After this pilot effort, OFDA plans to expand its single-source procurement efforts to a broader range of items.¹⁹⁵

OFDA and FFP were working to close gaps created by USAID's suspension of some NGOs based on fraud investigations. OFDA and FFP worked to address the gaps by transferring programs formerly carried out by now-suspended partners to those partners still operating.¹⁸⁸ OFDA was also working to increase the capacities of local NGOs to establish the required structures in order to receive OFDA funds directly.¹⁹⁶ USAID OIG has not yet assessed the efficacy of these changes.





An Iraqi Security Forces soldier practices trigger squeeze on a Steyr HS-50 sniper rifle during advanced marksmanship training at Camp Manion, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

COMPLETED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

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COMPLETED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY

As required by Section 8L of the Inspector General Act, the Lead IG is responsible for planning, conducting, and reporting on oversight of overseas contingency operations. This section of the report provides information on outreach efforts by Lead IG agencies; completed Lead IG oversight work related to audits, inspections, and evaluations; Lead IG investigative activity; and the OIGs' hotline activities during the past 3-month period, January 1, 2017, through March 31, 2017.

LEAD IG STAFFING

The Lead IG agencies use dedicated, rotational, and temporary employees as well as contractors to conduct oversight projects, investigate fraud and corruption, and perform various operational activities, such as strategic planning and reporting. Following an expeditionary workforce model, some oversight staff from the Lead IG agencies are stationed in offices in Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, and Germany. Oversight teams from these offices and from offices in the United States, travel to Iraq, Jordan, Turkey, and other locations in the region to conduct field work for their projects.

During the quarter, the continuing resolution constrained staffing levels because the available OCO funding was insufficient to cover the cost of current Lead IG employees. Further, the freeze imposed on Federal hiring as of January 23, 2017, hindered recruitment of Lead IG employees.

OUTREACH

Outreach and coordination continue to be important aspects of Lead IG work. The Lead IG agencies have sought to keep Congress informed on critical issues, travelled into the theater of operation, and coordinated with other oversight partners and agencies.

Hearings Before Congress

The Acting DoD IG testified twice during the quarter on the OIG's investigation into allegations that senior officials at U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) falsified, distorted, delayed, or suppressed intelligence products related to the combatant command's efforts to degrade and destroy ISIS. These allegations claimed that intelligence was altered or suppressed to present a more optimistic portrayal of the success of CENTCOM's efforts against ISIS. The February hearing was in open session before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, and the early March hearing was in a closed, classified session before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. A summary of this investigation, which was one of the most extensive investigations in the DoD OIG's history, is provided on page 93.

On March 9, 2017, the USAID IG testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs on USAID Management Challenges and OIG Initiatives. In discussing one of the top five management challenges for USAID—developing strategies to work effectively in non-permissive and contingency operations—the USAID IG described how relying on *ad hoc* approaches to design, implement, and monitor programs in non-permissive environments makes programs susceptible to fraud, waste, and abuse. She noted that USAID OIG oversight related to humanitarian assistance programs in Syria demonstrated the extent to which USAID programs can be vulnerable to exploitation.

The DoS IG also testified at the March 9 House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs hearing and discussed oversight of DoS and foreign operations programs. In outlining the DoS management challenges, the IG highlighted DoS OIG’s work on physical security at overseas posts and contract and grant management, particularly in the OCO environment. The DoS IG’s testimony highlighted recent OIG work on the DoS Armored Vehicle Program, which exemplified how the OIG’s work can simultaneously lead to more effective stewardship of taxpayer resources, better protection of personnel, and prosecution of wrongdoers. A summary of this project is provided on page 96.

Travel in Theater

As discussed in more detail on the next page, the three IGs who have Lead IG responsibilities for oversight of OIR—the Acting DoD IG, the DoS IG, and the USAID IG—travelled into the theater together in February 2017 to highlight their commitment to a coordinated and whole of government approach to oversight. As part of this trip, the DoS IG and DoS Assistant Inspector General met with the leadership of three international organizations that receive U.S. funding to discuss the extent and effectiveness of each of the organizations’ internal audit, investigation, and fraud prevention efforts, as well as the monitoring of those efforts by DoS. These high-level outreach efforts both informed and highlighted the DoS OIG’s continuing focus of audit, inspection, and investigative resources on U.S. foreign assistance.

The USAID IG extended the February 2017 trip with her staff to conduct outreach on the Syria humanitarian programs, co-facilitate the Syria Investigations Working Group, and open a fraud awareness workshop in Jordan. In addition to meeting with the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team and staff from the Southern Syria Assistance Platform in Amman, Jordan, the OIG team visited several major implementers who partner with USAID in humanitarian assistance for Syria. The USAID OIG staff also conducted a series of site visits in Jordan, including to implementer warehouses, and visited the USAID-funded Azraq refugee camp.

A team of DoD OIG planners also traveled to Kuwait, Qatar, and Afghanistan over 2 weeks in January to meet with commanders and other officials to discuss high-risk areas needing oversight and opportunities where the oversight community can cover potential gaps. The team also discussed the timing and scheduling of ongoing and planned oversight projects.

IGs Travel into OIR Theater of Operations

In February 2017, the Acting DoD IG, as the Lead IG, and the DoS IG and the USAID IG traveled together to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Jordan to meet with military commanders, embassy representatives, and USAID officials. The purpose of this trip was to discuss the Lead IG responsibilities, activities, and challenges, as well as to learn about the challenges and environment facing U.S. officials in each country. This trip was the first time the IGs responsible for Lead IG reporting travelled to theater together, and it reflects a commitment to a coordinated and whole-of-government approach to OIR oversight.

Prior to the trip, the IGs had identified FY 2018 strategic oversight areas where future oversight projects will be focused for OIR and OFS. The strategic oversight areas recognize that both OIR in Iraq and Syria and OFS in Afghanistan need a coordinated interagency effort to successfully complete these overseas contingency operations. As one general observed, “We can’t just shoot our way out of the conflict.”

The trip validated the decision to focus on these five strategic oversight areas for OIR:

- Security
- Governance and Civil Society
- Stabilization
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Support to Mission

The IGs heard common themes in all three countries. Interagency coordination must be continuous and extend beyond the U.S. efforts. In each OCO, international organizations and a coalition of countries work with the United States to support the host government militaries, develop effective governance and encourage power sharing, and provide humanitarian assistance. U.S. officials also emphasized the interdependence of these military, diplomatic, and development efforts. Moreover U.S. military commanders cautioned against focusing solely on individual battles but also stressed the need for the host government to “win the hearts and minds” of its citizens. A significant concern is whether the common citizens believe the security forces can protect their families; that government institutions are inclusive; and that citizens have economic opportunities.

The trip exemplified the whole-of-government oversight pursued by the Lead IG agencies. The on-the-ground observations will also help inform the FY 2018 oversight plans for OIR and OFS. In addition, the IGs will seek to identify complementary oversight projects where their agencies have common or shared challenges best addressed through a whole-of-government lens, such as DoD and DoS management of major support contracts or interagency stabilization planning to address governance and humanitarian assistance concerns as territory is retaken from ISIS or other terrorists. The trip also served as a first-hand reminder of the costs and security obstacles that oversight teams must overcome to conduct their work.



USAID IG Ann Calvaresi Barr, DoD Acting IG Glenn Fine, and DoS IG Steve Linick, brought a whole-of-government approach to discussions in Southwest Asia. (DoD photo)

Other Outreach

During the quarter, the Acting DoD IG continued to highlight Lead IG efforts and common audit issues in quarterly meetings with the Service Inspectors General and the Service Auditors General. Senior Lead IG officials regularly meet with policy officials, collect information, and conduct research related to OIR's military activities, governance activities, and humanitarian assistance. Similarly, the DoS OIG and USAID OIG leaders also continued regular consultations with agency management.

Investigative briefings and the OIGs' hotlines are other avenues for outreach that are discussed later in this section.

COMPLETED AUDIT, INSPECTION, AND EVALUATION PROJECTS

Lead IG agencies and their partners completed 18 reports related to OIR from January 1, 2017, through March 31, 2017. These projects examined various activities in support of OIR, including U.S. and Coalition efforts to assist the Iraqi forces; contractor oversight and controls; governance and stability programs and initiatives; Command intelligence products; a community engagement project in Jordan; counterterrorism; and homeland security programs.

Final Reports

AIR FORCE AUDIT AGENCY OVERSIGHT

Consumable Item Demilitarization

F2017-0006-L20000; March 6, 2017

The Air Force Audit Agency conducted this audit to determine whether Air Force personnel properly disposed of consumable items requiring demilitarization. A consumable item is normally expended or used beyond recovery or repair during its

intended use, and demilitarization eliminates the functional capability and inherent military design features from such items prior to disposal. Properly demilitarizing consumable items helps ensure that the United States maintains its technological superiority and prevents the loss and diversion of items to countries and individuals whose interests conflict with our own.

The Air Force Audit Agency concluded that Air Force personnel did not properly dispose of consumable items requiring demilitarization at the ten Air Force locations reviewed. Specifically, personnel did not properly dispose of 244,756 (97 percent) of 252,448 consumable items requiring demilitarization, including classified items, during FY 2015. Instead, personnel disposed of the items as refuse and/or recycling and provided the items to external parties, including foreign vendors in countries where individuals may have interests adverse to those of the United States.

The Air Force Audit Agency made five recommendations to improve consumable item demilitarization. Air Force management concurred with the recommendations.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OVERSIGHT

The Army Did Not Effectively Monitor Contractor Performance of the Kuwait Base Operations and Security Support Contract

DODIG-2017-062, March 7, 2017

The DoD OIG conducted this audit to determine whether the U.S. Army Contracting Command developed adequate controls to effectively monitor contractor performance for the Kuwait Base Operations and Security Support Services contract. This contract provides for base support operations such as postal services logistics, medical support services, information management, administrative support, and security, fire, and emergency services.

The DoD OIG found the Army did not effectively monitor contractor performance, failing to ensure that the quality assurance surveillance plan was up to date with current requirements; the contracting officer's representatives provided consistent surveillance; and the contractor ratings were accurate. As a result, the Army did not have reasonable assurance that the contractor complied with all contract requirements or earned the entire \$13 million in award fees paid during the last two award periods. In addition, at least one significant environmental and potential health hazard went unresolved.

The DoD OIG made two recommendations. First, the Army Contracting Command—Rock Island, in coordination with the Commander, 408th Contracting Support Brigade, needed to establish formal written guidance that clearly defines roles and responsibilities of contract personnel. Second, the Commander, Area Support Group—Kuwait, in coordination with the Commander, 408th Contracting Support Brigade, was to develop a process to accurately track incoming and outgoing contracting officer's representatives to ensure oversight responsibilities are adequately covered. The three commands concurred with the recommendations and initiated immediate steps to improve oversight of the contract.

Iraq Train and Equip Fund Weapons Not Properly Inventoried and Secured in Kuwait and Iraq

DODIG-2017-058, February 16, 2017

The DoD OIG conducted this audit to determine whether the DoD has effective procedures for securing Iraq Train and Equip Fund (ITEF) equipment in Kuwait and Iraq. Congress created ITEF to assist the Iraqi government to combat ISIS by providing funding for training, equipment, logistics support, supplies and services, facility infrastructure repair and renovation, and sustainment. Congress appropriated \$1.6 billion in FY 2015 and \$715.0 million in FY 2016 for ITEF. For FY 2017, the DoD requested \$630.0 million to continue providing equipment needed for ongoing operations, performing maintenance, and providing sustainment for equipment.

This audit focused on conducting inventories of ITEF weapons in Kuwait and the security of these weapons in Kuwait and Iraq. The Army is required to conduct inventories of weapons at consistent intervals and to physically secure weapons, when not in use, in banded crates. The Army is also required to ensure that the storage facilities are surrounded by proper fencing.

The DoD OIG conducted this audit as one in a series of audits. The first focused on property accountability in support of OIR. The second focused on the processing of ITEF equipment. During this third audit in this series, which focused on ITEF accountability and deficiencies in inventory tracking, the DoD OIG conducted site visits at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait and in Iraq in May and June 2016.

In October 2016, the DoD OIG conducted a site visit at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, to discuss the inventory and security deficiencies observed during May site visit. The DoD OIG concluded that the corrective actions Army management had taken addressed the identified concerns. The DoD OIG considered recommendations made during the site visits to be closed. This report was issued For Official Use Only.

Unclassified Report of Investigation Relating to CENTCOM (OIR) Intelligence Products

DODIG-2017-049, February 1, 2017 (A separate classified report was also issued.)

The DoD OIG investigated allegations that senior intelligence officials in the CENTCOM Intelligence Directorate falsified, distorted, delayed, or suppressed intelligence products related to its efforts to degrade and destroy the ISIS. The allegations were that the intelligence was altered or suppressed to present a more optimistic portrayal of the success of CENTCOM's efforts against ISIS. A multi-disciplinary team of more than 30 DoD OIG personnel, including administrative investigators, intelligence analysts, DCIS digital forensics specialists, auditors, attorneys, and statisticians, was assembled to investigate these allegations. This was one of the most extensive investigations in the history of the DoD OIG.

In addition to the allegations submitted by two complainants, the DoD OIG also considered other allegations and issues raised during the course of the investigation.



In general, the allegations related to CENTCOM intelligence products and processes associated with the counter-ISIS campaign from May 2014 through September 2015. In total, the DoD OIG investigated more than 25 specific allegations, each requiring an investigation in and of itself. Each of those examples is discussed in separate sections of the report.

Specific examples of the allegations raised by the complainants and witnesses include the alleged banning of certain words in intelligence products, a change to an intelligence product relating to an attack at an air base in Iraq, a change to the Watch Condition level for Iraq during May and June 2014, changes in the Intelligence Directorate's ISIS Assessment Tool and the Intelligence Directorate Weekly update, and changes in the policy on coordination and collaboration with analysts throughout the Intelligence Community. In addition, other allegations arose during the course of the investigation, which the DoD OIG investigated.

The DoD OIG team conducted over 150 interviews of 120 witnesses, both inside and outside of CENTCOM. In addition, the DoD OIG collected and reviewed a massive amount of draft and final intelligence products produced by the Intelligence Directorate. The DoD OIG also collected and reviewed CENTCOM e-mails, and examined in detail the specific examples of alleged falsification, distortion, suppression, or delay raised by the complainants and the witnesses. In total, the DoD OIG collected over 15 terabytes of unclassified, secret, and top secret data from Intelligence Directorate that represented over 17 million documents and files, which included 2 million e-mails.

The DoD OIG determined that the investigation did not substantiate the most serious allegation that intelligence was falsified. The DoD OIG also did not find systematic or

A Danish soldier and Iraqi Security Forces officers verify serial numbers on a M16A2 rifle during the issuance of equipment as part of the Iraq Train and Equip Fund training program at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

intentional distortion of intelligence by CENTCOM senior leaders, or that the leaders suppressed or delayed intelligence products. However, the DoD OIG determined that there was a widespread perception among many intelligence analysts, who worked OIR intelligence products, that the Intelligence Directorate leaders were attempting to distort those intelligence products.

The DoD OIG concluded that the intelligence practices related to OIR intelligence products in the Intelligence Directorate could have, and should have, been better, and that further improvements were needed. The DoD OIG made 29 recommendations for improvements in the intelligence processes relating to the issues uncovered during the investigation. Management has agreed to implement all 29 recommendations.

Army Contract Command-Redstone and Space and Missile Defense Command Need to Improve Contract Oversight for the Web-Based Military Information Support Operations Contract

DODIG-2017-042, January 18, 2017

The DoD OIG conducted this audit to determine whether DoD components provided proper oversight for contracts supporting web-based Military Information Support Operations. The team conducted site visits to CENTCOM headquarters and the Army Contracting Command-Redstone. This report and its findings are classified.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OVERSIGHT

Aspects of the Invoice Review Process Used by the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs to Support Contingency Operations in Iraq Need Improvement

AUD-MERO-17-33, March 7, 2017

The DoS OIG conducted this audit to determine whether the DoS's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs policies and procedures, training and staffing, and practices are sufficient to ensure that invoices supporting operations in Iraq are reviewed in accordance with Federal requirements and guidance. This report is the result of an ongoing audit of invoice processes in OCO environments.

The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs generally follows Federal requirements and procedures to process invoices that support operations in Iraq. However, the DoS OIG found that two aspects of its invoice review process needed improvement. First, greater attention is needed to address a backlog of invoices that were initially approved for payment without full review and before Contract Management Office-Frankfurt was adequately staffed. As of December 2016, the backlog consisted of at least 138 invoices totaling approximately \$14 million that had been awaiting a post-payment review for more than a year. Because Contract Management Office-Frankfurt's invoice reviews have previously identified unallowable costs, delays in conducting these reviews increase the risk that unallowable costs may not be recouped in a timely manner. Second, invoice reviewers should consistently document their invoice reviews, following Bureau guidance, to demonstrate that they performed a thorough review.

The DoS OIG found that while Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs invoice reviewers had completed required training, the Bureau did not have enough reviewers. The OIG found that additional staff would be required to address the backlog of invoices. In addition, the OIG found that the Bureau has not developed contract performance metrics to provide a basis for reducing invoice payments when problems with contractor performance were identified. Further, the DoS's Acquisition Office has not developed a practice or methodology for calculating payment reductions when subpar performance is detected. The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs and the Acquisition Office are working to address both issues.

To address the deficiencies identified in this report, the DoS OIG made eight recommendations intended to improve the invoice review process, including addressing a backlog of invoices that had not been reviewed and ensuring that contractors are not paid for subpar performance. The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs and the DoS's Acquisition Office concurred with all of the recommendations.

Management Assistance Report: Iraq Fuel Storage and Safety

AUD-MERO-17-31, March 7, 2017

The DoS OIG issued a classified Management Assistance Report concerning fuel storage at DoS facilities in Iraq. Because local utilities do not reliably provide power, DoS facilities in Iraq must have adequate on-site fuel storage capacity and effective fuels management.

Audit of Emergency Action Plans for U.S. Embassy Tunis, Tunisia

AUD-MERO-17-27, February 23, 2017

The DoS OIG issued a classified audit report on DoS's emergency action plan for Embassy Tunis, Tunisia. DoS policy requires that every overseas post develop and update its Emergency Action Plan annually, and the DoS has designated Tunisia a high-threat post. The U.S. Mission in Tunisia provides direct and indirect support to U.S. personnel conducting activities in support of OIR.

The DoS OIG conducted this audit to determine whether 1) Embassy Tunis's Emergency Action Plan was current and consistent with DoS guidance and accounted for all personnel under Chief of Mission authority; 2) designated resources are available, accessible, and adequate to respond to emergencies; and 3) the plan was implemented and tested in practice drills and exercises, as well as by actual emergency events.

Audit of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security's Administration of the Armored Vehicle Program

AUD-SI-17-21, February 14, 2017

The DoS OIG conducted this audit to determine whether the Bureau of Diplomatic Security effectively administered the armored vehicle program in accordance with DoS policies and guidelines, allocated armored vehicles to meet posts' needs, and maintained accountability over armored vehicles stored domestically.

The DoS OIG found that Diplomatic Security did not effectively administer the armored vehicle program in accordance with DoS policies and guidelines because Diplomatic

Security had not developed appropriate procedures, guidance, or processes. As a result, the armored vehicle program continued to be at significant risk for fraud, waste, and abuse. As a result, Diplomatic Security is not positioned to fulfill its mission of ensuring that overseas posts have a reasonable number of armored vehicles with enhanced levels of protection.

Additionally, the OIG determined that posts used armored vehicles that did not always meet required protective standards, putting U.S. Government personnel at risk. Further, the OIG found that posts did not always sufficiently maintain armored vehicles because of a lack of oversight by embassy personnel. As a result, posts may not have armored vehicles mission-ready, which could jeopardize the safety and security of vehicle occupants.

Specifically, the DoS OIG identified 259 armored vehicles left unused on a storage lot for almost a year while some embassies had fewer vehicles than required; found that DoS transferred 200 unused vehicles, valued at \$26.4 million, to other U.S. Government agencies without cost reimbursement; and identified 5 vehicles, valued at \$536,000, that DoS could not locate.

The DoS OIG made 38 recommendations to address the deficiencies identified in the armored vehicle program. The OIG considers 4 recommendations closed; 26 recommendations resolved, pending further action; and 8 recommendations unresolved.

The DoS OIG also conducted a parallel investigation that resulted in the January 2017 guilty plea of an auto restoration and collision center manager who had conspired with a DoS employee to misappropriate and sell DoS armored vehicles.

Inspection of the Broadcasting Board of Governors' Middle East Broadcasting Network

ISP-IB-17-09, February 9, 2017

The DoS OIG inspected the Middle East Broadcasting Network, including the headquarters in Springfield, Virginia, the news bureau in Washington, DC, and the production center in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The Middle East Broadcasting Network is a private, non-profit grantee corporation that receives Federal funding from the Broadcasting Board of Governors, a Federal agency with oversight responsibility for all civilian U.S. government-funded international broadcasting activities. The Network established the *Raise Your Voice* campaign to counter the influence and messaging of ISIS.

The DoS OIG found that the Network had improved its methods to measure the effectiveness of its programs since the DoS OIG's 2010 inspection of the Network. The inspectors found that the International Broadcasting Bureau did not review the networks' past unliquidated obligations, totaling \$6.2 million, or close out expired grants. The inspectors also found that the Network did not have robust disposal processes and internal controls for excess property, lacked formal information



An Iraqi Security Forces soldier searches for an improvised explosive device while members of his unit provide security during the final exercise of the urban assault training course at Camp Manion, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

technology standards or policies, and had not conducted a fire drill at its headquarters since occupying it in 2004.

The OIG recommended that the International Broadcasting Bureau review the Middle East Broadcasting Network's past unliquidated obligations and expired grants. The OIG also recommended that the Network strengthen property management operations and conduct an annual fire drill. The OIG made other recommendations regarding compliance with the Network's grant agreement regarding information technology and security.

Inspection of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

ISP-I-17-10, February 8, 2017

The DoS OIG inspected the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), which has primary responsibility within the U.S. Government for refugee protection. The PRM works to help refugees fleeing ISIS and the related conflict, and shares responsibility with USAID for protection of internally displaced persons and other conflict victims.

The DoS OIG inspection found that humanitarian emergencies in Yemen, Syria, and South Sudan have led to an unprecedented increase in the workload of PRM personnel. OIG inspectors found that the bureau had established procedures to monitor the effectiveness of the international organizations that receive PRM funds, and that the Bureau had generally effective internal control policies to manage its grants and cooperative agreements. However, the OIG found that due to unclear communication, Bureau employees were uncertain as to how to set priorities and meet strategic goals. The OIG also found that the PRM is hampered by the lack of a staffing plan to address

the expanded workload. Finally, the OIG inspectors identified an issue with the Bureau's vetting process and issued a classified Management Alert Letter to address that concern.

The DoS OIG made 10 recommendations to PRM to address staffing planning, communication, contract management, monitoring and evaluation, human resources, and purchase card internal controls. The OIG questioned costs of \$2.2 million incurred by the Bureau because applicable payments exceeded the firm, fixed price ceilings in the orders without justifications in the contract file.

Audit of the Visas Viper Program

AUD-MERO-SI-17-26, January 24, 2017

The DoS OIG conducted this audit to determine if selected overseas posts used available resources to obtain, develop, and report terrorism-related information to the National Counterterrorism Center via the Visas Viper Program. The Visas Viper Program provides a direct consular channel for reporting this information as terrorist watch list nominations and ensures that lookout codes, indicating grounds for ineligibility for a U.S. visa, are entered into DoS systems. The DoS OIG made 11 recommendations intended to clarify and update guidance related to the Visas Viper Program and establish a centralized watch list cell for the program. The DoS OIG considers 1 recommendation closed and 10 resolved pending further action. The final report is classified.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL OVERSIGHT

Mission's Changing Focus and Approach Make It Difficult To Measure Success of the Jordan Community Engagement Project

Report No. 8-278-17-002-P, March 23, 2017

USAID OIG conducted this audit to determine if USAID/Jordan's 5-year, \$50 million Community Engagement Project was achieving its goal of strengthening community engagement. The OIG also assessed whether implementation issues existed that could impede the project's ability to meet its goal in the long term.

USAID/Jordan reported completing many activities under the Jordanian Community Engagement Project, such as establishing 19 community engagement teams and issuing 96 grants and 42 procurements totaling approximately \$21 million. In addition, Jordanian community members and mayors that OIG interviewed gave favorable feedback. However, USAID OIG could not determine whether the project was achieving its broad goal of strengthening community engagement in Jordan because the mission did not establish definitive measures of success in an approved monitoring and evaluation plan. Further, because of external pressure, the mission constantly made changes to the project. Even after the project began, the mission responded by frequently changing the project's focus and approach: expanding from 9 communities to 19, adding gender grants, establishing a pilot community in a politically unstable area, and shifting to large municipal grants. This resulted in confusion about what the project was aiming to achieve.

USAID/Jordan exceeded the cooperative agreement award's substantial involvement provisions. According to USAID policy, in a cooperative agreement, a mission's role is purposely limited to providing guidance. Nonetheless, the mission directed the implementer to perform work in additional target communities, even though the implementer had serious concerns that these additions would diminish focus on the original communities. The mission's excessive involvement had an impact on the implementer's ability to make progress in a number of ways, including stretching project resources, creating confusion about project focus, and increasing frustration among implementer management and staff.

USAID OIG made two recommendations to firm up the project's focus and approach, as well as to reinforce the roles and responsibilities of mission officials on cooperative agreements. Although USAID/Jordan did not state agreement or disagreement with the recommendations, USAID OIG acknowledged that the mission took final action to address them.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE OVERSIGHT

Countering ISIS: Training and Equipping Iraq's Security Forces

GAO-17-32C, March 15, 2017

The objective of this GAO project was to understand the U.S. Government plans for training and equipping the Iraqi Security Forces; the extent to which U.S. funds have been allocated, committed, and disbursed for training and equipping the Iraqi Security Forces; and the progress made in implementing the U.S. plans to train and equip the Iraqi Security Forces. This report is classified.

OMB and DoD Should Revise the Criteria for Determining Eligible Costs and Identify the Costs Likely to Endure Long Term

GAO-17-68, January 18, 2017

GAO reviewed the DoD's use of OCO funds to assess (1) the extent to which the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) 2010 criteria address the activities included in the DoD's OCO budget request; and (2) whether the DoD has developed and reported an estimate of the costs being funded with OCO appropriations that are likely to endure beyond current contingency operations. The OMB and DoD had issued the criteria for deciding whether items properly belong in the base budget or in the OCO budget.

The GAO found the current OCO criteria "outdated" and inadequate to address the full range of operations identified in the DoD's FY 2017 OCO budget request. The current criteria was issued in 2010, before the rise of ISIS, when the primary drivers of OCO spending were active combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Military action against ISIS in Syria and Libya and forward deployments to Eastern Europe in support of the European Reassurance Initiative are currently funded under OCO, even though the current criteria for OCO do not cover such activities. The GAO report also noted the DoD's increasing reliance on OCO funding to support non-war base expenditures.

The GAO made two recommendations. First, the DoD Comptroller, in consultation with the OMB, should reassess and revise the existing OCO budget criteria to better reflect current policy and activity. The DoD concurred with this recommendation. Second, the DoD Comptroller should develop a complete and reliable estimate of the DoD's enduring OCO costs to be reported along with future budget requests. The DoD partially concurred with this recommendation, acknowledging the importance of such estimates in any future transition of enduring OCO costs to the base budget. However, the DoD stated that absent relief from the sequestration budget caps, OCO funding would remain necessary to finance current and future operations. The DoD's response to GAO did not identify steps it plans to take to implement this recommendation.

OTHER LEAD IG PARTNER OVERSIGHT

Review of Domestic Sharing of Counterterrorism Information prepared by the Inspectors General of the Intelligence Community, Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice

DOJ OIG, Audit Division Report 17-21; DHS OIG, OIG-17-09, March 31, 2017

This review, conducted by three teams from the OIG of the Intelligence Community, Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Justice, examined domestic sharing of counterterrorism information. The three OIG teams reviewed previous studies and conducted interviews with more than 450 individuals, including senior officials at the Office of the Director Intelligence, Departments of Homeland Security, Justice, and State, and local officials.

The objective of this review was to: 1) identify and examine the Federally supported field-based intelligence entities engaged in counterterrorism information sharing to determine the overall missions, specific functions, capabilities, funding, and personnel and facility costs; 2) determine if counterterrorism information is being adequately and appropriately shared with all participating agencies; and 3) identify any gaps or duplication of effort among these entities.

The OIGs found that Federal, state, and local entities are committed to sharing counterterrorism information by undertaking programs and initiatives that have improved information sharing. However, the OIGs also identified several areas in which improvements could enhance the sharing of counterterrorism information. This joint report made 23 recommendations to their respective components to improve the sharing of counterterrorism information and ultimately enhance the U.S. Government's ability to prevent terrorist attacks. The recommendations focused primarily on encouraging increased coordination, cooperation, and information sharing in order to advance intelligence capabilities regarding the threat from ISIS-inspired individuals.

The components of the Intelligence Community, Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of Justice agreed with all 23 recommendations.

CBP's Border Security Efforts—An Analysis of Southwest Border Security Between Ports of Entry

DHS OIG: OIG-17-39, February 27, 2017

In response to a request from a member of Congress, the DHS OIG initiated a project to update the 1993 Sandia National Laboratory study, “A Systematic Analysis of the Southwest Border.” The request was to analyze completed audit and research reports on border security issued since 2003, focusing on actions taken by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection in response to the Sandia study recommendations.

The DHS OIG found that although Customs and Border Protection likely did not act in direct response to the Sandia report, it has instituted many border security programs and operations that align with the report’s recommendations. However, the review and analysis of DHS OIG, GAO, and Congressional Research Service reports also highlighted some continuing challenges. In particular, Customs and Border Protection does not measure the effectiveness of its programs and operations well. Further, it continues to invest in programs and act without the benefit of the feedback needed to help ensure it uses resources wisely and improves border security. The organization also faces program management challenges in planning, resource allocation, infrastructure and technology acquisition, and overall efficiency. Finally, coordination and communication with both internal and external stakeholders could be improved.

The DHS OIG did not make any recommendations in this report.

DHS Lacks Oversight of Component Use of Force

DHS OIG, OIG-17-22, January 12, 2017

The DHS OIG conducted this audit to determine whether the DHS and its components have controls in place to minimize the risk of improper use of force by law enforcement officers. Ten DHS components employ approximately 80,000 law enforcement officers and agents whose positions allow for the use of force as they perform their duties.

The audit found that the DHS had not done enough to minimize the risk of improper use of force by law enforcement officers. The DHS OIG concluded that the DHS does not 1) have a centralized office responsible for managing and overseeing component use of force activities; 2) ensure the collection of component data needed to assess use of force activities, minimize risks, and take corrective actions; 3) ensure use of force policies have been updated to reflect current operations and lessons learned; or 4) establish consistent requirements for less-lethal recurrent training and ensure training was completed as required.

The DHS OIG made two recommendations. The first recommendation was for the DHS to establish a formal entity at the Department level to oversee component use of force activities and address reporting and training activities. The second recommendation was to update the Department’s 2004 Use of Deadly Force Policy and ensure components’ use of force policies include lessons learned resulting from any reviews or shared information. The DHS concurred with both recommendations.

INVESTIGATIONS

The investigative components of the Lead IG agencies, and their partner agencies, continued to conduct investigative activity related to OIR during the quarter. The Lead IG agencies used deployed investigators in Kuwait, Qatar, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates, as well as in Germany and Washington, D.C., to conduct these investigations.

A consolidated look at the activities of these investigative components during this quarter can be found in the dashboard on the following page.

Investigative Activity

During the quarter, the Lead IG agency investigative components and the military investigative organizations initiated 12 new OIR-related investigations, involving allegations of procurement or program fraud, corruption, theft, and trafficking in persons. Twenty-five investigations were closed during the period.

As of March 31, 2017, 72 investigations involving OIR-related programs and operations remained open. These open investigations do not include “legacy cases” that the DCIS and DoS OIG special agents are continuing to pursue related to actions committed

Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group Meeting at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

The Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group held its first investigative coordination meeting at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, in late January 2017. During this 2-day meeting, the Working Group members and representatives from SIGAR, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Diplomatic Security Service, the U.S. Embassy, and the Defense Contract Audit Agency discussed strategic Lead IG issues involving OIR and OFS and investigative coordination and deconfliction across Southwest Asia. DoD OIG Hotline processes related to investigative referrals and current initiatives regarding Trafficking in Persons were featured throughout the meeting.

The Lead IG agency investigation components and representatives from the military criminal investigative organizations form the Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group. The members of this group include the DCIS, the DoS OIG, USAID OIG, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. The FBI is a collaborating agency. The Working Group members coordinate and deconflict their investigations of fraud and corruption in OIR-related programs and operations. During the quarter, the representatives coordinated on 72 open investigations.

ACTIVITY BY FRAUD AND CORRUPTION INVESTIGATIVE WORKING GROUP

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE
As of March 31, 2017



OPEN INVESTIGATIONS
72

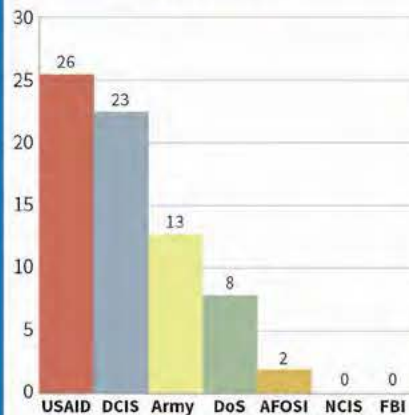
FY 2017 RESULTS

Arrests	—
Criminal Charges	—
Criminal Convictions	—
Savings/Recoveries	\$8,000,000
Suspensions/Debarments	—
Job Terminations	—
Personnel Actions	1
Other Administrative	—

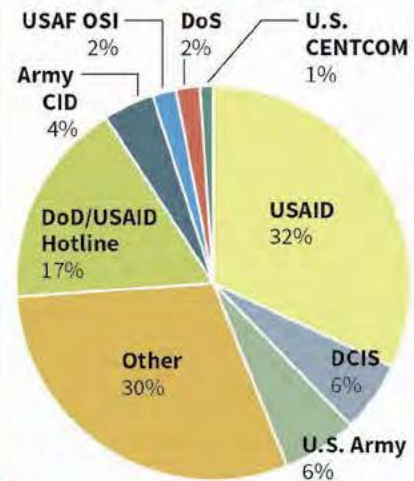
Q2 FY 2017 BRIEFINGS

No. of Briefings	30
No. of Attendees	544

OPEN INVESTIGATIONS BY WORKING GROUP MEMBER*



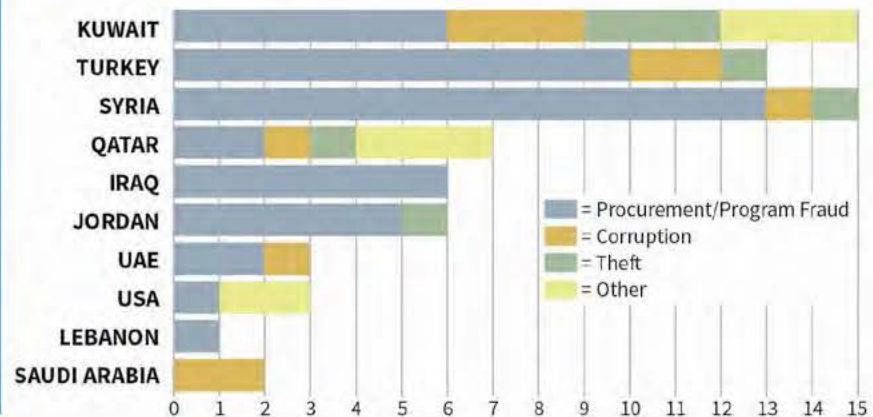
SOURCES OF ALLEGATIONS



PRIMARY OFFENSE LOCATIONS



Not represented on the map: USA



*Some investigations are joint with more than one agency and some not joint with any other agency. Therefore, the total number of Joint Open Cases may not equal the total number of Open Cases. Open Cases as of 3/31/2017. **Note:** Cumulative since 1/1/2015.

during Operation Iraqi Freedom and its immediate successor, Operation New Dawn. The OIR-related investigations involved allegations of procurement, grant, and other program fraud; corruption involving U.S. Government officials; theft and diversion of Government funds or equipment; and other offenses, including Trafficking in Persons.

OIG Referral Results in \$8 million Reduction in Cross-Border Syria Program

Between October 2015 and September 2016, USAID OIG received six complaints alleging fraud and false claims in several sub-awards of an Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) sub-awardee for a Syria cross-border program. The allegations, involving sub-partner-run clinics inside Syria, included theft and mismanagement of salaries paid to clinic staff and signature discrepancies across payment vouchers, timesheets, contracts, and sub-awardee monitoring forms. The sub-awardee visited the clinics and reported that one sub-partner did not monitor all salary disbursements due to lack of capacity and a desire to avoid responsibility for the salary payments. Upon a visit to a second sub-partner, the OFDA sub-awardee found that the sub-partner had “exactly the same” paperwork and salary management problems as the first organization it visited.

USAID OIG referred these findings to the OFDA sub-awardee’s Agreement Officer, and as a result, OFDA reduced the sub-awardee’s award from \$18 million to \$10 million. This reduction resulted in a savings of \$8 million to the U.S. Government.

Trafficking in Persons Initiatives Are Ongoing

The DCIS Trafficking in Persons Investigations Program addresses allegations of trafficking in persons that relate to or impact a DoD contract, subcontract, contractor, subcontractor, or a U.S. military installation. Trafficking in persons includes forced labor, involuntary servitude, debt bondage, document tampering, and sex trafficking. DCIS opened two new OIR-related Trafficking in Persons investigations this quarter. DCIS is currently working seven such investigations related to OIR.

During the quarter, the U.S. Army proposed for debarment a prime contractor providing dining facility services in the region based on a joint DCIS and Army Criminal Investigation Division investigation. The investigation identified numerous trafficking violations, including failure to adequately house and feed employees, use of a recruiting agency that resulted in debt bondage, and failure to pay employees in accordance with host nation law.

The DoS OIG, as part of its inspections of overseas missions and domestic bureaus, conducts risk-based assessments of key activities. The DoS OIG typically meets with the DoS Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to discuss the embassy’s engagement on Trafficking in Persons advocacy and compliance with statutorily-mandated reporting on these issues. When warranted, inspection teams may review allegations of Trafficking in Persons violations and refer these to the OIG’s Office of Investigations.

Fraud Awareness Outreach Activities Continue

During this quarter, each of the Lead IG investigative components and the military investigative organizations conducted fraud awareness briefings to educate individuals on the investigative mission and how to identify indications of fraud. These briefings promote fraud awareness, help develop relationships, and uncover information about potential fraud and corruption in Government programs. In total, investigators led 30 fraud awareness briefings attended by nearly 550 government, civilian, and military personnel; contractors; law enforcement personnel; and foreign officials.

This quarter, USAID OIG investigators held nine fraud awareness briefings and a one-day fraud awareness workshop. Over 350 USAID employees, USAID implementer staff, and UN staff responsible for implementing humanitarian programs in Syria participated in the fraud awareness briefings.

USAID IG Facilitated Syria Working Group Meeting and Opened Fraud Workshop

The Syria Investigations Working Group met for its third meeting in Amman, Jordan, in February 2017. The Working Group is composed of representatives from investigative components of USAID OIG, the DoS OIG, public international organizations, bilateral donors, and UN agency oversight entities, such as the World Food Programme and UN Development Program. The purpose of the working group is to share investigative leads, coordinate oversight activities, and identify trends in the region relating to humanitarian assistance. The Working Group has been meeting regularly and coordinating routinely to share information that has aided in ongoing investigations. USAID OIG, the DoS OIG, and other agencies working in the Middle East formed the Syria Investigations Working Group in November 2015.

At the February 2017 meeting, USAID IG Ann Calvaresi Barr co-facilitated the working group where information was exchanged on investigations into fraud and abuse in Syrian cross-border programs. The USAID IG and the World Food Programme IG opened the meeting and applauded the efforts of the working group members. The USAID OIG, Irish Aid, and the UN Development Program presented case briefings for the group.

The USAID IG also opened a fraud awareness workshop, hosted in Amman, Jordan, included 150 participants from more than 30 bilateral and multilateral donors, international NGOs, and USAID and DoS implementing partners and sub-partners. The workshop sessions ranged from fraud indicators and preventive measures for humanitarian aid programs to recognizing product substitution in food and non-food item procurements.

HOTLINE ACTIVITY

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints and contacts specific to its agency. The OIGs' hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals to report violations of law, rule, or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; and abuse of authority for independent review.

The OIG hotline representatives process the complaints they receive and refer these complaints to the appropriate entity in accordance with their respective protocols. Any hotline complaint that merits referral is sent to the responsible organization for investigation or informational purposes.

The DoD OIG has an investigator to coordinate the hotline contacts received among the Lead IG agencies and others as appropriate. During the reporting period, the investigator received and coordinated 72 contacts related to OIR and opened 89 cases, which were referred within the DoD OIG, to other Lead IG agencies, or to other investigative organizations. As noted in Figure 7, the majority of the complaints received during this quarter related to personal misconduct and other personnel matters, criminal allegations, and procurement or contract administration irregularities.

Figure 7.

Hotline Activity







An Iraqi Federal Police member, supported by Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve, guards Abu Saif, Iraq from a vehicle turret, during the effort to liberate and secure West Mosul. (U.S. Army photo)

ONGOING AND PLANNED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

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ONGOING AND PLANNED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITY

This section of the report discusses the ongoing Lead IG strategic planning process as well as ongoing and planned audit, inspection, and evaluation work. The ongoing and planned oversight projects, as of March 31, 2017, are listed in separate tables.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Pursuant to Section 8L of the Inspector General Act, the Lead IG is required to develop and carry out a joint strategic plan to guide comprehensive oversight of programs and operations for each OCO, and annually provides each plan to Congress. This effort includes reviewing and analyzing completed oversight, management, and other relevant reports to identify systemic problems, trends, lessons learned, and best practices to inform future oversight projects.

Planning Group Meets Quarterly

To inform the planning activities and coordinate projects among oversight entities, the Southwest Asia Joint Planning Group, which began in 2008, serves as the primary vehicle to coordinate audits, inspections, and evaluations throughout Southwest Asia. In late 2014, upon the designation of the Lead IG for OIR, the three Lead IG agencies began developing and carrying out a joint strategic plan for comprehensive oversight of OIR.

The Joint Planning Group, which meets quarterly, continues as a forum for information sharing and coordinating the broader Federal oversight community's efforts in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and Southwest Asia, including oversight by the Military Service Inspectors General, the Government Accountability Office, and Service audit agencies.

On January 26, 2017, the Joint Planning Group held its 37th meeting, and heard from the Director of Peacekeeping and Stability Operations in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict. The Director discussed stability and humanitarian affairs. The second half of the meeting addressed the ongoing and planned oversight projects as well as those projects nearing completion.

FY 2018 Planning Continues

On March 9, 2017, Lead IG agency representatives convened a second summit to continue the FY 2018 comprehensive joint strategic planning for OIR. During this summit, hosted by USAID OIG, the representatives focused on the proposed strategic oversight areas, considered coordination opportunities for audits and investigation, and discussed the possibilities for complementary and coordinated oversight. For FY 2018 planning, the Lead IG representatives agreed on the five strategic oversight areas listed

below. The Lead IG representatives will continue meeting over the next few months to plan projects consistent with these areas and discuss complementary and coordinated oversight. The FY 2018 joint strategic oversight plan for OIR will be issued in the fall.

The following provides a short description of each of the five strategic oversight areas for OIR.

FY 2018 Strategic Oversight Areas

Security

Ability of the people to conduct their daily lives without fear of systematic or large-scale violence by establishing transitional public order, countering illegal combatants and criminal elements, conducting border control, protecting key personnel and facilities, establishing and strengthening relationships with host nation military and police, enforcing cessation of hostilities and peace agreements, and disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating belligerents.

Governance and Civil Society

Ability of government to serve its citizens through rules, processes, and behavior by which interests are articulated, resources are managed, and power is exercised in a society by building host-country governance capacity, promoting inclusive and effective democracy, promoting reconciliation, fostering sustainable and appropriate reconstruction activities, enabling fair distribution of resources, and countering and reducing corruption, inequality, and extremism.

Humanitarian Assistance

Ability of the people to be free from want of basic needs and transition to peaceful coexistence in communities with opportunities for advancement; to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis-affected population, provided per the basic principles of humanity, impartiality, and neutrality.

Stabilization

Ability of displaced people to return to their homes and pursue opportunities for sustainable livelihoods in peaceful communities with effective economic systems. Stabilization includes repairing or rebuilding essential infrastructure and buildings, reestablishing public utilities and basic health services, removing remnants of war and debris, creating conditions for the resumption of basic commerce, and planning for humanitarian assistance.

Support to Mission

Enable the U.S. government to conduct military operations and diplomatic efforts, and to provide humanitarian assistance to the local population, including security of U.S. personnel and property, grant and contract management, program and project administration, occupational safety and health of U.S. infrastructure, and logistical support to U.S. personnel.

Implementing the FY 2017 Plan

The *FY 2017 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Operation Inherent Resolve*, effective October 1, 2016, was included in the *FY 2017 Comprehensive Oversight Plan for Overseas Contingency Operations*. The Plan organizes OIR-related oversight projects into five strategic oversight areas:

- Contracts and Grants
- Operations
- Governance
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Intelligence

The FY 2017 ongoing and planned projects are aligned according to these strategic oversight areas.

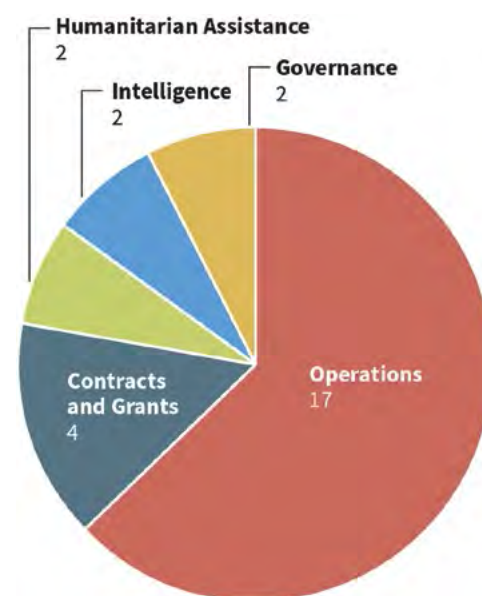
ONGOING PROJECTS

As of March 31, 2017, the Lead IG agencies and its partner agencies have 27 ongoing projects directly related to OIR. Figure 8 describes the ongoing projects by strategic oversight area. The discussion that follows highlights some of the ongoing projects by the five strategic areas. Table 12 lists the project title and objective for each of these projects.

- **Contracts and Grants:** Four ongoing projects are related to contracts and grants. The DoS OIG is conducting two audits related to contractor oversight in Iraq. The DoD OIG is examining the Army's heavy lift contracts. The USAID OIG is auditing selected obligations and costs incurred related to USAID's humanitarian assistance in Syria and neighboring countries.
- **Operations:** Seventeen of the 27 ongoing projects this quarter are related to operations. The DoD OIG projects are assessing the U.S. and Coalition train, advise, assist, and equip activities; military facilities; acquisition cross servicing agreements; emergency management; and counternarcotics. The DoS OIG is auditing programs involving explosive detection dogs, rewards for justice, and conventional weapons destruction. The GAO has three ongoing projects examining the Iraq and Syria train and equip programs, U.S. military enabler support efforts, and refugee screening. The Air Force Audit Agency has two ongoing projects evaluating infrastructure planning and integrated defense. The Army Audit Agency is auditing overtime pay and entitlements for deployed civilians and OIR obligations and expenditures.

Figure 8.

Ongoing Projects



- **Governance:** The DoS OIG is auditing the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and inspecting the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, both of which support DoS governance and humanitarian assistance operations related to OIR.
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** USAID OIG is conducting audits of the agency's oversight of public international organizations for humanitarian disasters and of USAID's quality instruction toward access and basic education improvement in Lebanon, which has been greatly strained by the inflow of Syrian refugee children.
- **Intelligence:** The DoD OIG has two ongoing intelligence-related projects, which are evaluating the DoD's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capability in support of OIR.

Table 12.

Ongoing Oversight Projects, as of 3/31/2017

Project Title	Objective
ARMY AUDIT AGENCY	
<i>Audit of Overtime Pay and Entitlements for Deployed Civilians</i>	To verify that overtime was effectively managed and downrange entitlements (including danger and post differential pay) were accurately paid to civilians deployed in support of OIR and Operation Freedom's Sentinel.
<i>Audit of the Army's Reporting of Obligations and Expenditures for Operation Inherent Resolve</i>	To verify the accuracy of the Army's obligations and disbursements reported in the <i>Cost of War</i> report for OIR.
AIR FORCE AUDIT AGENCY	
<i>AFCENT AOR Installation Infrastructure Planning</i>	To determine whether implementation plans for installation, development, and sustainment adequately address mission requirements. Specifically, to determine whether personnel accurately identify and plan civil engineering infrastructure and sustainment support to meet combatant commanders' requirements.
<i>AFCENT AOR Integrated Defense</i>	To determine whether Air Force personnel effectively planned and executed integrated defense at U.S. Air Force central locations. Specifically, to determine if personnel properly identified critical assets, assessed risks, implemented security plans, and tested mitigation strategies.
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Evaluation of ISR Capability Allocation Process for OIR</i>	To evaluate if decisions on ISR capability allocations for OIR were supported by a comprehensive cost-benefit assessment of CENTCOM's priority intelligence and cost-benefit analysis tools used in the capability generation process.
<i>Evaluation of Airborne ISR Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination for OIR</i>	To evaluate whether the DoD allocation process for ISR capability effectively supported Combined Joint Task Force-OIR Commander's intelligence requirements.

(continues on next page)

Project Title	Objective
<i>Assessment of U.S. and Coalition Plans/Efforts to Train, Advise, Assist, and Equip Iraqi Counterterrorism Service and the Iraqi Special Operations Forces</i>	To assess U.S. and Coalition efforts to train, advise, assist, and equip the Iraqi Counterterrorism Services and the Iraqi Special Operations Forces in support of operations against ISIS.
<i>Evaluation of the Syria Train and Equip Program (Phase II)</i>	To evaluate and determine Special Operations Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve compliance with legal mandates for appropriately vetting Syrian nationals being supported under the Syria Train and Equip Program; and evaluate the Special Operations Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve processes and procedures for recruiting, processing, training, equipping, and supporting forces authorized for support in the fight against ISIS in Syria.
<i>Evaluation of Social Media Exploitation for OIR</i>	To determine whether DoD is effectively employing social media analytics in support of OIR.
<i>Audit of the Army's Management of the Heavy Lift VII Contracts</i>	To determine whether the Army properly managed the requirements of the contracts for Heavy Lift VII transportation.
<i>Military Facilities Inspection-Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar</i>	To determine whether U.S. military-occupied facilities supporting OCO operations comply with DoD health and safety policies and standards regarding electrical, fire protection, and fueling systems.
<i>Audit of the DoD Acquisition Cross Servicing Agreements</i>	To determine whether U.S. Africa Command is effectively managing acquisition cross servicing agreement transactions for logistics, supplies, and services to support OIR and other operations in the region.
<i>Audit of the Army's Emergency Management Program in Kuwait</i>	To determine whether the DoD established and maintained a comprehensive emergency management program for Army installations in Kuwait.
<i>Audit of Combatant Command Oversight of Counternarcotics Activities</i>	To determine whether U.S. Central Command and U.S. Africa Command effectively provided oversight for counternarcotic activities. This project is one of a series of audits on DoD counternarcotics efforts employed to counter terrorism financing.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of All Native, Inc.</i>	To determine the extent to which 1) the Bureau of Administration, Office of Logistics Management, Office of Acquisitions Management is managing and overseeing contracted foreign assistance support in Iraq in accordance with Federal and DoS regulations and guidelines; and 2) the contractor, All Native, Inc., is complying with contract terms, conditions, and invoice requirements.
<i>Audit of Selected Contract and Grants within the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs</i>	To audit the administration and oversight of contracts within the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. The OCO aspect of this audit will be humanitarian support to Syrian refugees in Turkey and/or Europe and grants/contracts supporting security screening of refugees and other travelers coming to the United States via Europe. This is one in a series of audits related to DoS's administration of contracts and grants.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Follow-Up Review of Explosive Detection Dogs in Iraq and Afghanistan</i>	To follow up on the DoS OIG recommendations made in a 2010 report where the OIG found that the Bureau of Diplomatic Security could not verify the detection abilities of its explosive detection canines under three programs: the Baghdad Embassy Security Force, the Kabul Embassy Security Force, and Personal Protective Services in Kabul.
<i>Audit of Approved Invoices for the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center Task Orders Awarded Under Operations and Maintenance Support Services Contract</i>	To determine whether the DoS approved invoices submitted by the contractor for two task orders awarded under the Operations and Maintenance Support Service contract that contained unallowable or unsupported costs.
<i>Inspection of Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs</i>	To determine, as part of the inspection of the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs the extent to which the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs is carrying out policy execution and program management responsibilities that pertain to countering ISIS effectively.
<i>Audit of the Process to Approve, Disburse, and Report on Rewards for Justice Program Expenditures</i>	To determine whether the Rewards for Justice Program is approving, disbursing, and accurately reporting program expenditures to Congress in accordance with Federal requirements and DoS guidance. The program funds rewards to individuals who provide information on terrorists, including notable ISIS terrorist operators.
<i>Audit of Conventional Weapons Destruction Program</i>	To determine the extent to which the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs monitors the Conventional Weapons Destruction awards and took actions to address performance deficiencies, if identified. Program funding is used, in part, for demining in territories liberated from ISIS.
GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE	
<i>Refugee Screening Process</i>	To determine 1) what the data indicates about the characteristics of refugee resettlement applications to the United States; 2) how the DHS determines admissibility for refugees seeking resettlement in the United States; 3) to what extent the DHS and DoS have implemented policies and procedures for conducting security checks of applicants for refugee resettlement; and 4) how, if at all, the DHS and DoS coordinate with other U.S. agencies in conducting such security checks.
<i>U.S. Military Enabler Support within Operation Inherent Resolve</i>	To evaluate how 1) U.S. military enablers support coalition airstrikes, 2) enabler resource allocation decisions are made within Operation Inherent Resolve, 3) the United States determines the types of enabler support to provide, and 4) the United States ensures that groups, such as Iranian-back Shia militias or Iranian military forces, do not benefit from U.S. military enabler support.

(continues on next page)

Project Title	Objective
<i>Accountability of Iraq Train and Equip Fund (ITEF)-funded Equipment</i>	To determine 1) DoD's policies, procedures, and processes for tracking ITEF-funded equipment, and 2) to what extent DoD is using recommended systems to track ITEF-funded equipment from procurement through delivery to Iraqi Security Forces.
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of USAID/Lebanon's Quality Instruction Toward Access and Basic Education Improvement</i>	To determine 1) what actions USAID's Lebanon's Quality Instruction Toward Access and Basic Education Improvement Project has taken to overcome the challenges related to expanding equitable access and improving learning outcomes for early learners in Lebanon's public schools; and 2) whether actions taken would achieve alleviating strains to Lebanon's education system, including strains from the continuing inflow of Syrian refugee children.
<i>Audit of USAID's Funding Decisions and Oversight of Public International Organizations for Humanitarian Disasters</i>	To determine 1) what assessment of risk USAID offices are conducting before awarding funds to public international organizations, 2) how the risks associated with awards to these organizations are mitigated, 3) how public international organization programs and funds are overseen by USAID offices, and 4) to what extent vulnerabilities exist within USAID's assistance provided to the organizations.
<i>Audit of Selected Obligations and Costs Incurred Under USAID's Overseas Contingency Operations Relating to USAID's Humanitarian Assistance in Syria and Neighboring Countries</i>	To determine whether 1) USAID awarded, obligated, modified, monitored, and reported funds according to established requirements and 2) the costs incurred were supported, allowable, allocable, and reasonable in accordance with established requirements and award provisions.

Other Ongoing OIR-Related Projects

The DHS OIG has eight ongoing and planned projects examining programs and activities to protect the homeland against terrorist activities. While DHS OIG efforts are focused more broadly than OIR, many of these DHS OIG projects relate to the U.S. efforts to counter ISIS.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) OIG is currently conducting four projects to assess the DOJ's overall counterterrorism and national security efforts, which contribute to efforts to protect the homeland and may include efforts to counter ISIS as a part of an expansive counterterrorism effort.

The Treasury OIG initiated a project during the quarter to audit Treasury's programs to disrupt ISIS finances.

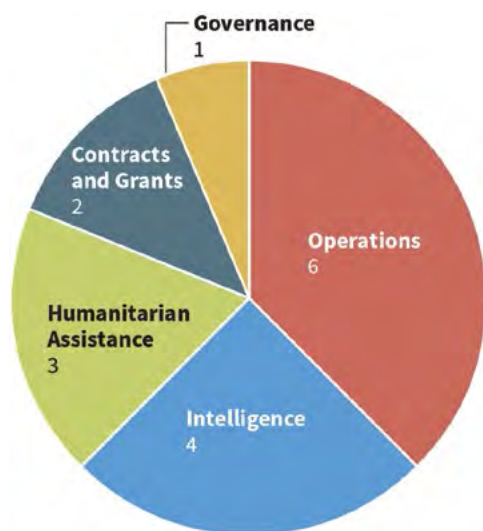
Appendix C provides a listing of the other ongoing OIR-related oversight efforts, including the project title and objectives.

PLANNED PROJECTS

Lead IG agencies and partners are planning to start 16 additional oversight projects related to OIR during the remainder of FY 2017. Figure 9 describes the planned projects by strategic oversight area. The discussion that follows highlights some of these planned projects by the five FY 2017 strategic oversight areas. Table 13 lists the project title and objective for each of these projects.

Figure 9.

Planned Projects



- **Contracts and Grants:** The DoD OIG is planning to conduct two contract and grant related audits. One audit is on the Defense Logistics Agency's disposition of equipment at facilities in Kuwait and the other is of the Defense Information Technology Contracting Organization.
- **Operations:** Six planned projects relate to military, diplomatic, and development operations. The DoD OIG planned to conduct three of these projects, including an inspection of military facilities in Iraq; an assessment of U.S. and Coalition train, advise, assist, and equip support to the Iraqi Federal Police; and an audit of operational contracting support integration. The DoS OIG plans to audit food operations at Embassy Baghdad and Jordan fuel acquisition and distribution. The Naval Audit Service is planning a project to verify that the Navy's obligations and disbursements in support of OCO are in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- **Governance:** The DoD OIG is planning to assess whether the DoD effectively planned and coordinated with DoS for stabilization efforts in Iraq and Syria.
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** USAID OIG is planning two audits related to humanitarian assistance. One audit will examine the implementers under investigation and the other is an audit of USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance oversight during a humanitarian crisis. The DoS OIG plans to audit controls on U.S. funds supporting internally displaced persons in Iraq.
- **Intelligence:** The DoD OIG is planning four projects to examine the use of biometric enabled intelligence, geospatial intelligence collection, social media exploitation, and implementation of recommendations from prior OIG intelligence evaluations in support of OIR.

Table 13.

Planned Oversight Projects, as of 3/31/2017

Project Title	Objective
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Assessment of U.S. and Coalition Train, Advise, Assist and Equip Support to the Iraqi Federal Police</i>	To assess U.S. and Coalition efforts to train, advise, assist, and equip the Iraq Federal Police in support of operations against ISIS.
<i>Audit of Controls Over the Disposition of Equipment at the Defense Logistics Agency Disposition Services in Kuwait</i>	To determine whether Defense Logistics Agency Disposition Services is properly disposing of equipment at Camp Arifjan in Kuwait.
<i>Summary Report of Recommendations from OCO Intel Evaluations</i>	To determine if recommendations from DoD OIG intelligence evaluations affecting OIR and OFS have been implemented.
<i>Evaluation of DoD Biometric Enabled Intel Ops for OIR</i>	To determine whether Biometric Enabled Intelligence effectively supports the OIR Commander's requirements.
<i>Evaluation of Social Media Exploitation for OIR</i>	To determine whether DoD is effectively employing social media analytics in support of OIR.
<i>Military Facilities Inspection-Iraq</i>	To determine whether U.S. military-occupied facilities supporting OCO operations comply with DoD health and safety policies and standards regarding electrical and fire protection systems.
<i>Audit of the DoD Plan for Stabilization in Iraq</i>	To determine whether the DoD effectively planned and coordinated with the DoS stabilization efforts in Iraq and Syria.
<i>Evaluation of Compartmented Geospatial Intelligence Collection for OIR Intelligence Requirements</i>	To determine whether compartmented geospatial intelligence collection is being effectively used to satisfy existing collection gaps in OIR intelligence requirements.
<i>Audit of DoD Components' Integration of Operational Contracting Support</i>	To determine whether the Combatant Commands effectively integrated operational contracting support into ongoing operations.
<i>Audit of Defense Information Technology Contracting Organization Contract Awards</i>	To determine whether compartmented geospatial intelligence collection is being effectively used to satisfy existing collection gaps in OIR intelligence requirements.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq</i>	To determine whether the Bureau of Population, Migration, and Refugees has effective controls to ensure that U.S. funds provided for internally displaced persons in Iraq are used for their intended purposes.
<i>Audit of Baghdad Life Support Services Food Operations</i>	This audit will focus on risk areas in food operations, such as cost and food handling and safety at Embassy Baghdad, Iraq, and compare contract requirements, regulations and DoS requirements.

Project Title	Objective
<i>Audit of Jordan Fuel Acquisition and Distribution</i>	To determine whether 1) fuel acquisition, storage, and distribution are performed in accordance with contract terms and Federal regulations, and 2) the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs is adhering to policies and procedures to ensure the safety and security of Post personnel. This audit is one in a series of audits designed to assess the oversight of DoS fuel operations at locations directly supporting OIR.
NAVAL AUDIT SERVICE	
<i>Department of the Navy Overseas Contingency Operations</i>	To verify that the Department of the Navy's obligations and disbursements supporting overseas contingency operations are in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and that internal controls were in place and functioning as intended.
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Follow-up Audit of USAID Syrian Humanitarian Assistance Implementers Under Investigation</i>	To examine 1) what oversight USAID performs, 2) what improvements were made to implementer policies and procedures in response to agency demands, and 3) whether findings are potentially problematic in other implementer programs.
<i>Audit of the USAID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance's Oversight During a Humanitarian Crisis</i>	To examine the roles of the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance and its independent offices in conducting oversight and their effectiveness at monitoring and addressing program implementation.



Internally displaced men are transported to refugee camps near Mosul. (U.S. Army photo)





Iraqi Security Forces soldiers wait to begin urban assault night operations during training at Camp Manion, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo)

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

Methodology for Preparing This Lead IG Quarterly Report

This report is issued pursuant to sections 2, 4, and 8L of the Inspector General Act of 1978, which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on an overseas contingency operation. The DoD Inspector General is the designated Lead Inspector General for OIR. The DoS Inspector General is the Associate Lead Inspector General for OIR. This report contains information from the three Lead IG agencies—DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG—as well as from partner oversight agencies. This unclassified report covers the period from January 1 through March 31, 2017.

To fulfill its congressional mandate to produce a quarterly report on OIR, the Lead IG gathers data and information from Federal agencies and open sources. Data and information used in this report are attributed to their source in endnotes to the text or notes to the tables and figures. Except for references to Lead IG and oversight partner agency audits, inspections, evaluations, or investigations in the report, the Lead IG has not independently verified and assessed all the data included in this report. The humanitarian assistance section is based on public UN documents, and information provided by USAID and the DoS.

Data Call

Each quarter, the Lead IG agencies direct a series of questions, or data calls, to Federal agencies about their programs and operations related to OIR. The Lead IG agencies use the information provided by their respective agencies for quarterly reports and to determine where to conduct future audits and evaluations.

The agencies that responded to the data call for this quarter included the following:

- Department of Defense
- Department of State
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- Department of Homeland Security OIG
- Department of Justice OIG
- Department of the Treasury OIG

Open-Source Research

This report also draws on current, publicly available information from reputable sources. Sources used in this report include the following:

- Information publicly released by U.S. agencies
- Congressional testimonies
- Press conferences, especially DoD and DoS Briefings
- UN (and relevant branches)
- Reports issued by non-governmental or research organizations
- Media reports

The media reports used in this quarterly report included information from DoD News, Foreign Policy, Military Times, New York Times, Reuters, Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Post.

Materials collected through open source research also provide information to describe the status of OIR, and help the Lead IG agencies assess information provided in their respective agency data call. However, in light of the operational realities and dynamic nature of OIR, the Lead IG agencies have limited time and ability to test, verify, and independently assess the assertions made by these agencies or open sources. This is particularly true where the Lead IG agencies have not yet provided oversight of these assertions through audits, inspections, or evaluations.

Report Production

The Lead IG is responsible for assembling and producing this report. The DoD OIG coordinates with the DoS OIG and the USAID OIG, which draft sections of the report related to the activities of their agencies. Each Lead IG agency participates in reviewing and editing the entire quarterly report.

The DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG provide the agencies who have responded to the data call with two opportunities to verify and comment on the content of the report. During the first review, agencies are asked to correct any inaccuracies and provide additional documentation. The Lead IG incorporates agency comments, where appropriate, and sends the report back to the agencies for a final review for accuracy. Each OIG coordinates the review process with its own agency.

**Airmen load an HH-60G
Pave Hawk into a C-5M
Super Galaxy. (U.S. Air
Force photo)**



APPENDIX B

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
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.	88-106
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.	22-31
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.	88
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	10-13; 75-106
overall plans for the review of the contingency operation by inspectors general, including plans for investigations, inspections, and audits.	109-119
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.	1-141

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 C

Other Ongoing Oversight Projects Related to Efforts to Counter ISIS

Project Title	Objective
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Federal Air Marshal Service's Oversight of Civil Aviation Security</i>	To determine whether the Federal Air Marshal Service adequately manages its resources to detect, deter, and defeat threats to the civil aviation system.
<i>ICE's Screening of Aliens from Specially Designated Countries</i>	To determine whether Immigration and Customs Enforcement ensures the proper screening of aliens from specially designated countries.
<i>Federal Air Marshals Service's Policies and Procedures Covering Employee Misconduct and Misuse of Government Resources</i>	To determine whether the Transportation Security Administration has policies and procedures in place to identify and address employee misconduct and misuse of government resources.
<i>Operation Stonegarden Grants</i>	To determine whether the Federal Emergency Management Agency and U.S. Customs and Border Protection have sufficient oversight of Operation Stonegarden grants to ensure that the awarded funds are properly administered and spent effectively.
<i>DHS Joint Task Forces</i>	To determine if the Joint Task Force framework is designed to effectively coordinate the assets and personnel of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Coast Guard, and other resources of the Department; and is the Joint Task Force achieving expected results.
<i>Transportation Security Administration Carry-On Baggage Penetration Testing</i>	To determine the effectiveness of Transportation Security Administration's carry-on baggage screening technologies and checkpoint screener performance in identifying and resolving potential security threats at airport security checkpoints.
<i>Audit of IT Security Controls over Cargo Areas at Airports and Ports</i>	To determine how DHS has implemented computer security controls for their systems in the cargo areas at DHS airports and ports.
<i>Audit of DHS' Oversight of Cruise Ship Passenger and Baggage Screening</i>	To determine whether DHS provides effective oversight of cruise ship passenger/crewmember and baggage/cargo security screening, and how DHS assesses and mitigates risks posed by terrorists to cruise ships operating out of U.S. ports.

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Project Title	Objective
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>DoJ's Handling of Known or Suspected Terrorists Admitted into the Federal Witness Security Program</i>	To review the DoJ's handling of known or suspected terrorists admitted into the program, practices for watch-listing and processing encounters with this group of program participants, and procedures for mitigating risks to the public through restrictions placed on this high-risk group of program participants.
<i>Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Efforts to Protect Seaports and Maritime Activity</i>	To review the FBI's roles and responsibilities for 1) assessing maritime terrorism threats, 2) preventing and responding to maritime terrorist incidents, and 3) coordinating with the DHS components to ensure seaport security.
<i>Bulk Telephony Review</i>	To review the FBI's use of information derived from the National Security Agency's (NSA) collection of telephony metadata obtained from certain telecommunications service providers under Section 215 of the Patriot Act. The review will examine the FBI's procedures for receiving, processing, and disseminating leads that the NSA develops from the metadata, and any changes that have been made to these procedures over time; how FBI field offices respond to leads, including the scope and type of information that field offices collect as a result of any investigative activity that is initiated; and the role the leads have had in FBI counterterrorism efforts.
<i>The FBI's Efforts to Address Homegrown Violent Extremists</i>	To review the FBI's homegrown violent extremist casework and resource management; evaluate the FBI's coordination with relevant components and its strategic and tactical policies and processes to identify and address threats; and assess the FBI field divisions' implementation of strategic and tactical policies and processes to investigate homegrown violent extremist threats.
DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL	
<i>Audit of Treasury's Programs to Disrupt ISIS's Finances</i>	This effort covers projects the Treasury OIG will undertake to meet oversight responsibilities over Treasury's programs to disrupt ISIS's finances.



Iraqi Security Forces soldiers pause for a photo during react to enemy contact training at Camp Taji. (U.S. Army photo)

ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

Acronym	Definition
CENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
CJTF-OIR	Combines Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve
CSCC	Department of State, Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications
CTS	Countert Terrorism Service (Iraq)
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
DoD OIG	Department of Defense Office of Inspector General
DoJ	U.S. Department of Justice
DoS OIG	U.S. Department of State Office of Inspector General
ESF	Economic Support Fund
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FFES	Funding Facility for Expanded Stabilization
FFIS	Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization
FFP	U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of Food for Peace
GAO	Government Accountability Office
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ITEF	Iraqi Train and Equip Fund

Acronym	Definition
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
Lead IG	Lead Inspector General
Lead IG agencies	Refers to the DoD OIG, DoS OIG, and USAID OIG
LOE	Line of effort
MBN	Middle East Broadcasting Networks
NADR	Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining and Related Programs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCO	Overseas Contingency Operation
OFDA	U.S. Aid for International Development, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
OIR	Operation Inherent Resolve
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
PRM	Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
STEF	Syria Train and Equip Fund
Treasury	U.S. Department of the Treasury
TSA	Transportation Security Administration
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USAID OIG	U.S. Agency for International Development Office of Inspector General

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