

## **Islamic State of Iraq and Syria – A Threat to Global Peace and Security**

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**Abstract:** *The Islamic state of Iraq and Syria which precisely is named 'ISIS' is an Islamic fundamental sect that came in the world scene two decades ago under the leader of an Islamic extremist named Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Though, before the emergence of this deadly group, there had been other Islamic groups that had unleash terror in our time. No matter the nomenclature they assume, all we know is that they have one aim. And that is to carry out a jihadist movement that is hell-bent in converting everyone to Islam if possible. One of the mission statements of Islamic state of Iraq and Syria is that anyone who dares to resist any Islamic system of worship in the world would be dealt ruthlessly with. Iraq which abi initio have been termed axis of evil secured a veritable ground to hatch their evil plans by liaising with troubled Syria to attack the west which they accused of being enemy to Islam. Operating within Iraq and Syria alone could not have constituted a global threat by this social miscreants, but their encroachment into other neighbouring countries like Turkey and other countries around the middle-east is worrisome to the entire world. The U.S plan of using airstrikes to attack this group may not yield the desired result unless land troops are used. This has been the useful suggestion of some militant analysts. So this text is geared towards discussing or describing the situation in Iraq and Syria caused by this deadly group nicknamed (ISIS) and to proffer possible means of curtailing their excesses before their plan of obliterating non—Islamic groups is successfully carried out by them. All hands should be on deck to support the U.S. and U.N in attacking this group until they are eliminated from the world scene.*

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### **I. Introduction**

Terrorists are not invisible spirits. They reside among men in various countries that exist on this planet earth. Islamic state of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) being a new form of terrorism in the terrorists world order perpetrate their evil acts from those countries they have the interest in attacking because they are somewhat being allowed some free hands to operate from there. This makes it possible for them to take off, hit their targets, return and feel accommodated.

Many countries' governmental regimes had in the past been indicted for abating terrorists to operate such act, tagged as "state-sponsored terrorism" has never been received with ease by the United nations because it could cause out-break of crises and endanger the co—existence and mutual inter-relationships among the member states or nations. The fall-out of responsible government in some nations like Iraq, and Syria prompted the alliance of this social miscreants that formed the deadly group called the "ISIS". Their sole aim is to work together to weaken the effort of United Nations in achieving global peace and security. If all member states of the UN truly gear up in oneness to this measure, a permanent solution to the menace is very likely to be demystified. Thus, tackling any terrorist group like the "ISIS" is as workable as getting every nation to root out terrorist groups operating in or from its enclave, even at the express requirement of the already and standby assistance of the international community.

Well, this text is designed to address the issue of Islamic state of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and how such group constitute a very big threat to peace and security of the world, but certain mention would be made on other types of terrorists groups, how they are formed and funded coupled with how they stand a big threat to global peace and security.

### **II. Brief History Of Some Terrorist Groups In The World**

The creation of modern state of Israel by the year 1948 has triggered series of Marxist and anti-western transformations and movements through the Arab and Islamic world, with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and other Islamic/Arab nations championing a course of actions against Israel. Their failure to achieve the creation of the state of Palestine from the land in which the state of Israel has been created also engendered a war between combined Arab forces and Israel in 1967. Some Arab nationalists and revolutionary movements therefore came to terms that terrorism could be the only effective approach to reach this goal of pushing Israel out of the territory. This particular initiative gives rise to the first phase of modern international terrorism, Emesowum C.K. (2008: 117).

The Palestine and other Arab militants thus, moved away from their classic guerrilla pattern of attack which was typically rural-based, and transformed their warfare into urban terrorism and hence began to target civilian outside the immediate arena of the conflict. They also took advantage of modern communication and transportation systems to internalize their struggle. Those radical Arab militants began to launch series of sporadic hijackings, kidnappings, bombings and shootings. (Ibid).

On July 22, 1968, one of those Arab groups – popular front for the liberation of Palestine (PFLP) hijacked an Israeli commercial flight, EL AL, which was routed from Rome, Italy to Tel Aviv, Israel. The terrorists created international publicity and crisis and also created the upsurge of international – terrorism that still exist today. Some other terrorists groups are:

### **III. The Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine (PFLP)**

The PFLP was one of the member allies of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) founded in 1967 by George Hatash. It committed different forms of international terrorist acts in the 1970s. It continues to oppose negotiations with Israel. Some Arab powers are reportedly the key sources of its strength, with logistic supports and safe haven.

### **IV. Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine – General Command (PPELP – GC)**

This group was formed by Ahmed Fibril splitting from (PFLP) in 1968. It wanted to focus more on terrorism than combining it with politics. It conducted multiple attacks in Europe and the Middle East in the 1970s and 1980s. It devised a unique cross-border attack on Israel.

### **V. Abu Nidal Organization ((ANO)**

This group was formed as anti-western and anti-terrorist organization. It was led by Sabril Al-Bama. It also left the (PLO) in 1974. It had carried out attack against Israel, U.S, UK, and France, Moderate Palestine, the PLO and various uncompromising Arab countries. The group attacked the Roman and Vienna airports in 1985 and Pam AM flight 73 which it hijacked in Karachi in 1986. In December, 1998, Al-Bama relocated to Iraq where the group maintains a presence as a safer haven.

In fact, the era of the 1980s also witnessed state-sponsorship of terrorism, of various kinds.

### **VI. Radical Religious Group Called Hezbollah**

It is a radical Shia Islamic religious group founded in Lebanon in 1982. It became closely allied with and often directed from Iran. The group claimed responsibility for some of the numerous terrorist attacks on the US and other western countries for protecting Israel and for which in an open letter said “our sons are now in a state of ever—escalating confrontation against the enemies (Israel, America, and France) until the following objective are achieved: - Israel’s final departure ....” as a prelude to its final – obliteration from the entire earthly – existence, Hydra of carnage. The group’s operation bases are in the Bekaa valley, southern suburbs of Beirut and southern Lebanon. It also established terrorists’ cells in Europe, Africa, South America, North America and Asia. It reportedly receives financial training, weapons, diplomatic and organizational aids from some Arab powers.

Here in Nigeria, one of their members by name Moustafa Reda Darwish Fawaz who owns a vastly patronized Amigo supermarket in Abuja was arrested by the state security services (SSS) for using his financial outlets in collaboration with Iran to run and finance terrorists acts both in Nigeria and other countries suspected to be anti-Islam. (Tell, June 17, 2013: 21 – 22).

### **VII. Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS)**

The group emerged from the Islamic brotherhood during the first Palestine intifada of 1987. Hamas became a religious opposition to the Israelis in the occupied territory, and was mainly known for its suicide bomb attacks. It condemned American politics which favoured Israel to justify its attacks on the US and other western countries. It was based in Gaza and certain areas of the west bank.

### **VIII. Al-Qaeda Network (THE BASE)**

Following the steps of other religious terrorists organizations of the past, Osama Bin Laden formed this group in 1989 with the aim of being the base from which a transnational muja hidden networks would be coordinated to establish Islamic regime all over the world. The groups’ operational format was to first crushed and removed American presence from the Arab world, Israel from the middle east, overthrow the corrupt regimes in the Islamic world and then move ahead to extend complete Islamic regime throughout the whole world. (Ibid: 123). Al-Qaeda provides financial, manpower and training supports for the extremist groups worldwide that are linked to its network. Its aim of eliminating the Jews and declaring of wars against US and her allies led to the bombing of world trade centre in September, 11, 2001 on the US.

Truly, time and space would fail me if I begin to mention the activities of other terrorists groups like Palestine Islamic Jihad (P.I.J), Boko Haram based in Nigeria, Armed Islamic Group (G.I.A) based in Algeria, Aden Abyan Islamic Army (A.A.I.A) based in Yemen, Hara Kat UI-Muja Hidis (HUM) based in Pakistan, Jaish – E – Mohammed (Army of Mohammed) based also in Pakistan, Lash Kar – E – Tayyiba (LT) (Army of the righteous) also based in Pakistan, the Salafist Group for Call and Combat (GSPC) based in Algeria, Khmer Rouge, based in Cambodia, Manuel Rodriguez Patroofic Front (FPMR) based in Columbia and Venezuela, Al-Jihad (Egyptian Islamic Jihad) based in Egypt but also operates in Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sudan, Palestine, Lebanon and united kingdom; Al-Gama'a Al-Islamic Ya (Islamic Group (IG) also based in Egypt, Abu Nidal Organizations (ANO) aka Fatah Revolutionary Council, Arab Revolutionary Brigade, Revolutionary Organization of socialist Muslims and Black September that has its presence in middle east, Asia and Europe and Zviadists based in Russia. Marie A.S. (1997).

There are a lot of them that mainly operates from religious point of view and ends in political points. Those of them that attack Israel may stem from the point of religion but when it extends to US and Britain, world politics have come into play. Those revolutionary groups that originated from Russia for instance, may have nothing to do with Israel, but being that Israel is a strong ally of US and Britain; they may be attacked by these groups from Russia. The reason being that the Russian society abi initio operated a communists/socialists economy as against capitalists that belongs to the US and Britain, so the enmity can intensify from this point. This scenario can warrant some Muslim groups that do not support Israel or their allies like US and UK to begin to attack US and UK while taking sides with Russia. From this point however, it becomes difficult to rout terrorism out of the world.

And no matter the nomenclature all these terrorists groups assumes, they all geared towards one goal; the goal being to introduce Islamic system of worship in the world and deal ruthlessly with any country that deviates from their policy. The latest is the Islamic state of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), wrecking havoc in the world now.

### **IX. Origin Of Islamic State Of Iraq And Syria (ISIS)**

The group began more than two decades ago as a fervid fantasy in the mind of a Jordian named Abu Musab al – Zaraqawi. A onetime street thug, he arrived in Afghanistan as a Mujahideen Wannable in 1989, too late to fight the Soviet Union. He went back home to Jordan and remained a fringe figure in the international violent “Jihad” for much of the following decade. He returned to Afghanistan to set up a training camp for terrorists and met Osama bin Laden in 1999, but chose not to join Al-Qaeda. Bobby Ghost (2014).

The fall of the Taliban in 2001 forced Zaraqawi to flee to Iraq. There, his presence went largely un-notified until the Bush administration used it as evidence that Al-Qaeda was in cahoots with Saddam Hussein. In reality, though Zaraqawi was a free agent looking to create his own terror organization. Shortly after the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, he set up the forerunner to today’s Islamic state; Jama’ at al – Tawhidw’al – Jihad (the party of monotheism and Jihad) which was made up mostly of non-Iraqis. (Ibid).

Although Zaraqawi’s rhetoric was similar to bin Laden’s, his targets were quite different from the start. Zaraqawi directed his malevolence on fellow Muslims especially Iraq’s majority Shiite population. Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda regarded the Shiites as heretics, but rarely targeted them for slaughter. Zaraqawi’s intentions were underlined with the bombing of the Imam Ali shrine in Najaf, the holiest place of Shiite worship in Iraq. One reason of targeting this tribe according to him is sheer convenience. The Shiites were easier targets because they didn’t yet have the ability to fight back. But there was also a political calculation after Saddam was toppled, Shiite politicians replaced the Sunnis who had long dominated power structures in Iraq. Zaraqawi was counting on Sunni resentment against the Shiites to build alliances and find safe haven for his groups.

Soon, however, Zaraqawi started using his groups to sent dozens of suicide bombers to blow themselves up in mosques, schools, cafes and markets usually in predominantly Shiite neighborhoods or towns. By 2004, Zaraqawi’s campaign of suicide bombings across Iraq had made him a superstar of the international Jihad movement and won the endorsement of Bin Laden himself. Zaraqawi now joined his group to Bin Laden’s rebranding it al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), (it is also sometimes called al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, but don’t confuse that with AQIM, which refers to the Algerian Franchise, al-Qaeda in the Maghreb). Thought this tactics of killing innocent civilian by Zaraqawi has been seriously condemned by other al-Qaeda groups but Zaraqawi ignores their chidings and continued in his merciless activities on the civilians mostly the Shiites.

Unfortunately, Zaraqawi’s ambitions were cut short in June, 2006 when U.S Air Force dropped a pair of 500 pound bombs on his hide-out, 20 miles north of Baghdad. His death came just as the tide was turning against AQI; many Sunni tribes, chafing at Zaraqawi’s sharia rules had begun to fight back. The US military led by General David Petraeus capitalized on this to finance and support an insurgency within an insurgence known as the “awakening”. The death of Zaraqawi did not stop the activities of this deadly group as his remaining members still scout for avenues within the middle-east and beyond to perpetuate their brutal onslaughts. The situation in Syria now gives this Zaraqawi’s group safe haven to operate.

## **X. Islamic State Of Iraq And Syria – A Threat To Global Peace And Security**

The situation in Gaza and Israel is grim, but there is another situation that is pure evil and should have our attention. ISIS has taken over large chunks of Syria and Iraq and is now holding weapons, armor, and vehicles provided by the United States Army. ISIS has killed thousands of people in Iraq and Syria. Sadly, those lives lost don't get our attention because we are all busy watching Israel V Hamas. (ISIS) is a threat to every Iraqi and Syrian but also the rest of us. Every Muslim and non-Muslim alike are targets for ISIS and their followers. With control of so much land, oil and weapons, it is only a matter of time that ISIS goes global with their battle plan.

Already ISIS has proclaimed that they and their leaders are the leaders of all the Muslims in the world. That bold claim while widely brushed aside, is a serious one. An armed militant group that is hell-bent on domination is feeling so confident that they have lay claim on every Muslim life and land in the world. Today, it is in Syria and Iraq, tomorrow they will be sending fighters the world over to take what they think is theirs. What is theirs? One of the mission statements of ISIS according to their founder Zarqawi is to be a caliph of all Muslims in the world. They no longer feel content with alliance, but insist that his Iraqi Sunnis hosts submit to his harsh interpretation of sharia law where women wear veils always, beheading of criminals, and the whole nine yards of Islam. And those who resisted, even the prominent figures in the community, be executed. No wonder ISIS made the bold claim that they are the head of all Muslim anywhere in the world.

This Islamic militant group has so far killed over 5,000 people including women and children while 1.2 million people have been driven from their homes. Let us compare that with the more popular war between Israel vs. Hamas. In Gaza, close to 300 people have been killed. The entire world's media is focused on Israel and Gaza, all the social media and citizen action fronts are mobilizing to stop the bloodshed and rightly so. The question remains, why have we been so silent while 5,500 people have perished in Iraq alone? We haven't even looked at the death toll from Syria. Israel and Hamas both have their axe to grind with each other and Israel will agree to a truce again soon enough and Hamas eventually will be given in too. That war has an end that we can see; there is a clear list of demands on both sides to end the violence too, however with the ISIS, there is not such end to theirs, as can be seen in the shortest time. They are not asking for the lifting of a blockade or the end to rocket strikes, they are looking to dominate the people and eliminate all that stand opposed to them. Essam (2014).

ISIS is the biggest threat the middle-east has today. They have systematically terrorized civilian with mass murders, sexual violence, kidnappings and even destruction of places of worship. They are not sending any warnings, they are not giving an avenue for peace, it is either surrender to their will or be killed. The activities of this group have become so worrisome that many Muslims had chided their activities and sad that ISIS do not represent Islam. But rather they are drugged up militants getting high on murder, rape, and violence and must be stopped. Many American Muslims are ashamed and deeply distraught over the fact that their weapons, vehicles and other military equipment taken to Iraq and Syria in order to quell the disturbances there, had been used by ISIS to carry out their attacks. Some have become afraid that speaking up against ISIS means that there will be a target on their heads soon. They are afraid that this deadly group would bombard such ones with their hate emails and comments which eventually constitute a big threat to them and their families. It is not easy to speak up against a group that scary with no moral code. If the entire world did not speak up against this deadly group now, those in Iraq and Syria are going to be destroyed and soon their sights will turn to the rest of others. As likely as it may seem to take over so many countries, they have already managed to take over two countries. They don't need to take control for their presence to be felt, their terrorists tactics alone will change the way we live unless we stop them now.

The recent attacks these groups launched in Kobani, a northern region in Syria bordering them with Turkey shows that these groups wanted to encroach into Turkey and from there, they can penetrate into other European territories and the rest of other countries and continents thereby making their bloody incursions a global threat to peace and security in the entire world.

## **XI. Conclusion**

From the foregoing, it can be observed that just like other terrorists group that came before ISIS, the menace of ISIS to world peace and security is very alarming. The ugly situation in Iraq and Syria have provided a conducive environments for this deadly group who had vowed to convert everyone to Islam if possible. And from their mission statement, they have asserted that any resistance in the achievement of their obnoxious goal would be met with serious confrontational attack both in the two countries that they have dominated and beyond. Just like other Islamic militant groups mentioned earlier, ISIS which so far is the newest, is sending shock waves to the entire people of Iraq, Syria, Turkey and America which have been struggling to curtail the excesses of this organization.

With the awareness created via social media and the untireless efforts of the US and Turkey coupled with their allies in Iraq and Syria, the nefarious activities of this deadly group we pray, might be curtailed before they gain ground in most of the places they are showing interest.

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