
United States Counterterrorism on ISIS

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ABSTRACT

The U.S. counter terrorism on ISIS had implemented with various strategies including degrading ISIS's capability, shaping global coalition to defeat ISIS, and using trained military armed men for Iraq army forces, Kurdi army, Arabian army, and moderate opposition groups to fight against Bassar. In early 2015, U.S. government described the group as "losing this fight" and reported that anti-ISIS operations had killed more than 8,500 fighters, destroyed hundreds of vehicles and heavy weapons systems, and significantly degraded IS command and control capabilities. Unfortunately, ISIS still exists with their weapons. Moreover, the fear against ISIS and the worst conditions it brings are not exclusive in Syria, Iraq and Libya as the conflict has already spread to many countries in Europe. These countries are in dilemma because despite being affected by the conflict, still they intend to give asylum to the refugees, but their concern is that with refugees coming in, there might be exporting of ISIS's ideologies which leads to bigger and more serious concerns than the possibility of economic instability. Inevitably, there have been questions regarding the existence of ISIS today: How can groups such as ISIS still exists despite being attacked for 3 years by the U.S? The reality is that the U.S. initiated the establishment of new and democratic governments in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya few years ago bothers some experts on the continuing existence of ISIS.

Key Words: U.S. Counterterrorism, Coalition, Defeat, ISIS.

INTRODUCTION

This article describes how U.S. "defeats" terrorism. When ISIS first appeared, the U.S released its counterterrorism policy to defeat it. This discussion includes background of the problem, theoretical framework, methodology, findings, discussion, conclusion, and implication. The obvious challenges in the 21th century are the war against terrorism, globalization and failed states. The first challenge is the hottest issue next to the two others because of

the sudden impacts to the welfare of human being.

Terrorism is the concern of all countries this century and they are taking various actions against it. Such actions are not only implied in among foreign policies but also in the internal state policies. The United States of America (USA) leads the campaign against terrorism as it has been very active with its counter-terrorism policy.

Now in an interdependent world, the United States can no longer keep global problems such as terrorism at a distance because of terrorists' organizations had large members and spreading operations in many areas (Goldstein, 2007:202). Thus, their strategy was to spread democratic ideas.

This is validated with the democratic wave in the Arabian countries. After the Iraqi revolution and the decline of Saddam Hussein in 2003; there was a people power of Tunis which pulled down Ben Ali from his leadership in 2011; and in Libya, Muammar Gaddafi was captured and killed in October 20 2011, and in Egypt, Mursi ended his presidency in 2012. With this turbulence in the Arab's political conditions, Syria was then targeted.

President Bassar Assad, the Syrian dictator is known for its brutality. On March 2013, the United Nations (UN) reported that there were seventy thousand (70,000) Syrians died in the uprising against the dictator. There were almost half a million Syrians who left their lands, and up to two hundred and fifty thousand were refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and in European countries. The economy of Syria was shattered, with inflation soaring and exports collapsing (Jackson, 2013:321).

There are various Islamic movements who want to implement Islamic sharia. There are famous name known as Islamic movements or groups such as Hamas, Moslem Brotherhood, Taliban, Jamat Tabligh, Jama'at Islami, Hizbut Tahrir, Al Qaida and Jabhah Al Nusra. They sounded da'wa and Islamic Jihad for it (Baylis, 2001:464). In Syria, one organic strong group which is not only a movement but an Islamic State called *Khilafah* (Caliphate) came to power in 2014.

In the summer of 2014 there was a resounding success for ISIS. Their movement already expanded, not only in Iraq and Syria, but also in Libya as of 2015. In the spirit of Islamic jihad guiding their thoughts and actions, many cities fell to their forces. In March 2015, the Iraqi forces started their intense counter-attack until ISIS (Dais) was seized in May 2015 (Ramadi Welby, 2015:1).

The ISIS or Dais is a transnational Sunni Islamist flow and has expanded its control over areas of northwestern Iraq, Syria and now Libya. The Islamic State has Sunni dominated. The existence of ISIS or Dais actually created deep conflict in many countries which support Bassar or the oppositions (Blanchard, 2015:1).

This group triggered questions among many experts: Is ISIS an originally Moslem group who want to implement their ideology purely? Is it made by U.S and Allies, or made by Israel? Is this supported by Arabian Leaders? The evidences found were unclear but offered four arguments.

The first view, the Islamic State was a true *khilafah* (Manjanik, 2015:1). While second view is about the desire of the US to topple Syrian President Bashar Assad that it channeled arms and funds to the Syrian rebels, and many of whom splintered off and formed the Dais, which is now giving the US far more problems than it had bargained for (Manjanik, 2015:3). Moreover, the third view is that ISIS was made by Israel and its allies (Weber, 2014:3). There is a site called Veterans Today apparently started a rumor that ISIS leader Baghdadi is a Mossad agent who want to establish the Israel imperium (Weber, 2014:3). The fourth view, that ISIS was made by Arabian Leader to bring down Bashar Assad (Weber, 2014:2).

All views from their side were logical; however, there is a need to consider which of those views were true or false. The current situations suggest that everything could happen; all actors came from inside or outside region. These situations showed that World War III may nearly happen.

The logical argument for the first view is that ISIS is an Islamic group attempting Islamic Law in factual khilafah as their known and belief. They implement their belief concerning the war situations. The argument for the second view is that ISIS can be made by United States as a measure to defeat Bashar Assad but cover Iraq government because Bassar's dictatorship and his regime was controlled by Russia, China, and Iran. The argument for the third view is that ISIS is created by Israel and its allies to divert the issue of Israel-Palestine conflict and the other hand to worsen the image of Islam with their ruthlessness. And the fourth argument is that ISIS is supported by Arabian leader since Bashar Assad is a Shiite leader minority in Sunni Arabian majority. Also because of Assad has tight relations with Iran and their Shiite communities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Counterterrorism was started from United States after one of its vital properties have been attacked on 9/11. The world witnessed the fall of World Trade Center in New York and Pentagon in Washington D.C. The terrorist attack brought horror to the public with its more than 2000 victims. Consequently, the United States has launched foreign policy for countering terrorism almost in all states and today, the US has large alliances on their security campaign.

Counterterrorism is important measure in the foreign policy of U.S. Modelski told that foreign policy is the effort of states to change the behavior of other states and for implementing their own interests in the international system (Kegley, 2006:58). He also mentioned that foreign policy is the authority measures to realize their international objectives (Kegley, 2006:58).

According to Jackson, that counterterrorism is trying to interrupt or demolish terrorists with using of special forces - drones also used as new measure in this measure (Jackson, 2013:307). Counterterrorism as Jackson explained, need some measures: strong regional and large partnerships in intelligence and law

enforcement agreement, cooperating with states where terrorist can organize their supporters, block terrorists funding and its supporters with international cooperation, rewards for providing the information related terrorism activity, emphasizing counter radicalization as a main activity, long-term set up programs under the U.S. Antiterrorism Assistance Program (ATA) to provide partnership in training, equipment and technology to find and arrest terrorists with other countries (Jackson, 2013:356).

United States dealt with many agendas and measures of counterterrorism in many countries and in various forums but it resulted to more violence. After Afghanistan, Iraq, Tunis, Libya, and Egypt, now Syria became the hottest arena. Many movements came from that region, such as Taliban, Al Qaeda, Jabhah Al Nusra, Hezbollah, Al Sahab, Mahdi Army, and ISIS as the greatest contemporary movement. ISIS was the new one and it included in the terrorist list of West.

U.S government, as Mc Cants pointed out, proclaimed that they defeated the ISIS and maintains the peace of region. Obama said on November 5, 2014, that the United States will isolate and reduce the areas of the Islamic State operation in Syria and support of the U.S. priority of rolling Iraq government. On September 2014, U.S. officials warned the Syrian government to strike Syrian territory, without any coordination with the regime of Bashar. He emphasized that now, people are standing against terrorism (Mc Cant, 2015:1).

He also cited the U.S. Department of State declaration on September 10, 2014, where President Obama announced the broader international coalition to defeat ISIS (Dais). He proclaimed that U.S. will defeat and ultimately destroy ISIS with a comprehensive and systematic strategy in operating counterterrorism” (U.S. Department of State, 2015:1).

He showed for now there is a coalition with 65 states in one commitment to eliminate ISIS terror. This coalition demonstrates the global support and show the similar goal of destroying terror-

ism and peace building (U.S. Department of State, 2015:1).

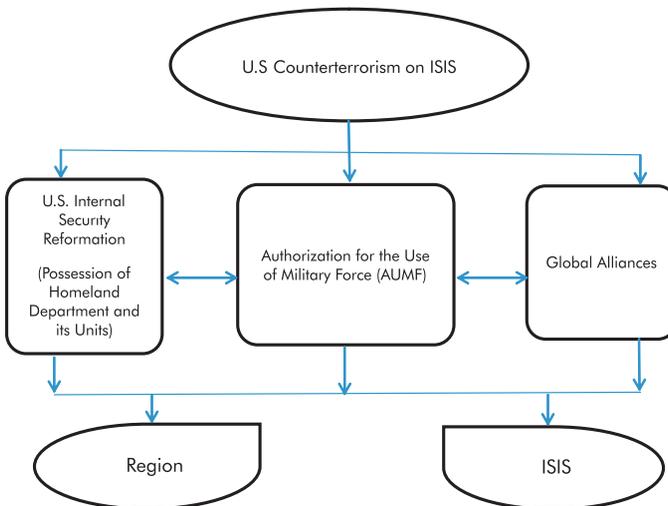
Conceptually, U.S. counterterrorism was very obvious and ambitious to defeat ISIS, and this strategy intends to maintain the region in peace. If the U.S. counterterrorism will be sustained, then the ISIS will be defeated and the region will be peaceful.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was explained the impacts of U.S Counterterrorism implementation as independent variable to the ISIS existence and peace of that region (Iraq, Syria and Libya) as dependent variables with deductive approach. This is a qualitative research which utilizes case studies to analyze the strategies of the U.S counterterrorism policy to defeat ISIS and the impacts of these strategies to the region.

ROAD MAP OF RESEARCH

FIGURE 1. ROAD MAP OF RESEARCH



FINDINGS

The focus of this study is still new and a hot issue because of the emergence of ISIS and the U.S. counterterrorism is still on-

going. This topic is rarely found specially as a master project in international relations affair. So this study will be one of the new issues in this topic and can be a basis for next research and also for who concern about this issue.

The purposes of study were found of academic and practical purpose.

- a. In academic purpose, this research could be expected to gain answers related to: first, the U.S. counterterrorism policy in defeating ISIS and second, the impacts of the U.S. counterterrorism policy implementation to ISIS and the region partly Syria, Iraq and Libya. Hoping the research will enrich theory or at least to enrich contemporary view in international relations.
- b. In practical purpose, this research is expected to be one of reference for international affairs offices or to whoever is interested with global perspective.

United States, after the fall of Soviet Union, is a great political and economic state. The U.S. views the world in the neo realist perspective that threat is never ending in life. Even Soviet Union has collapsed but it evolved in other form of Soviet threat because both states still is competing as a great power. On the other hand, the new threat is raised from other kind of enemies.

If the Presidency of W. Bush emphasized the “war on terrorism” because it is not “law enforcement,” it is also in the same way with Obama. As shortly after Obama came into office, it is no longer “terrorism,” it is “man-made disaster,” or “work place violence;” and there is no more “Islamic extremism” because it is not politically correct. We must identify our enemy. The enemy is not Islam; it is not all Muslims (Zaideman, 2015:3).

In this respect, since 2005, there is a seven-stage strategy to victory that has subsequently been only modestly adjusted and adapted to both unforeseen and emerging global developments. This strategy entails the following phases:

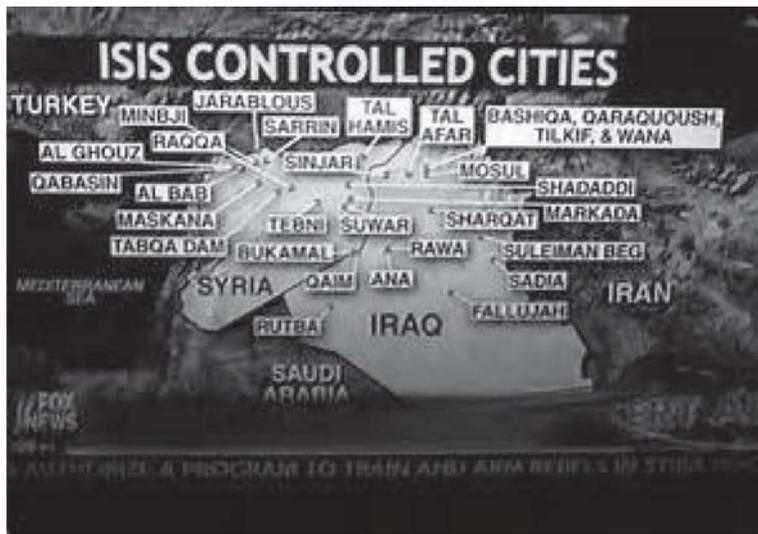
- The Awakening Stage (2000–2003), which coincided with the 11 September 2001 attacks, and is described in Al Qaeda propaganda as “Reawakening the nation by dealing a powerful blow to the head of the snake in the U.S.”
- The Eye-Opening Stage (2003–2006), which unfolded after the U.S. invasion of Iraq and was allegedly designed to perpetually engage and enervate the United States and the West in a series of prolonged overseas ventures.
- The Rising Up and Standing on the Feet Stage (2007–2010) involved Al Qaeda’s proactive expansion to new venues of operations, as we have seen in West Africa and the Levant.
- The Expansion Stage (2010–2013), which continued after bin Laden’s killing and sought to exploit the new opportunities created by the “Arab Spring” to topple apostate regimes, especially in Syria.
- The Declaration of the Caliphate Stage (2013–2016) when Al Qaeda will achieve its ultimate goal of establishing trans- or supra-national Islamic rule over large swaths of territory in the Muslim world. ISIS has clearly stolen a march on them in this respect.
- The Total Confrontation Stage (2016–2020) will occur after the Caliphate has created an Islamic Army and commences the final “fight between the believers and the nonbelievers.”
- The final, Definitive Victory State (2020–2022), when the Caliphate will ultimately triumph over the rest of the world (Zaideman, 2015:2).

The story of the ISIS is intimately linked to the American occupation of Iraq and the civil war in Syria. Iraq laid down the initial conditions: heightened sectarianism caused by inadequate appreciation of the need to engage in social balancing to prevent grievances, the use of violent tactics to project power, and the ability to attract a flood of foreign fighters. The Syrian civil war helped shape ISIS’s tactics (seizing territory, controlling smuggling routes, and working with local actors), but more importantly it linked the conflict in Iraq, where Sunnis clashed with

the Maliki regime, and in Syria, there are majority of Sunni fighting minority of Siite of Bashar regime (Kfir, 2015:237-238).

There are many civilians army that occupied each lands and territory. The presence of ISIS and its occupied territory and civilian army are shown in figure 2 below.

FIGURE 2. ISIS CONTROLLED CITIES:



Source:<http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Syria+Isis+Map+September+2015&FORM=IDMHDL>.

The US Central Intelligence Agency believes IS may have up to 31,000 fighters in the region, many of whom are foreign recruits. The figures from the London-based International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence (ICSR) and the New York-based Soufan Group show an estimated 20,000 fighters from almost 80 countries have travelled to Syria and Iraq to fight with extremist groups. The figures suggest that while about a quarter of the foreign fighters are from the West, the majority are from nearby Arab countries, such as Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and Jordan and Morocco (Battle for Iraq and Syria in maps, January 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27838034>).

The origins of ISIS are mired in controversy and dispute, but

it appears to be a product of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), which was established in 2006 by several Iraqi Al Qaeda- based or affiliated groups such as Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), the Mujahedeen Shura Council in Iraq, and Jund al-Sahhaba (Soldiers of the Prophet's Companions) (Battle for Iraq and Syria in maps, January 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27838034:240>).

However, fanciful ISIS's caliphate and embryonic Islamist Empire may seem, it is equally undeniable that ISIS is now sovereign over a territorial expanse stretching from Aleppo in Syria to the suburbs of Baghdad. In this respect, history has often shown how splits within terrorist movements have led to increased levels of violence and greater blood shed as factions compete with one another for prestige, support, and viability (Hoffman, 2015:81-82).

U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM ON ISIS

U.S. strengthened the counterterrorism strategy after being cheated on the 9/11 attacks. There are two contrasting public policy approaches to terrorism: a military response and a more moderate approach based on a combination of diplomacy, aid, intelligence, and law enforcement. The comprehensive approach to terrorism was accompanied by a U.S. switch from the established foreign policy strategy of containment and deterrence to a preventive strike strategy. This new, preventive counterterrorism policy found its first expression in the 2003 invasion of Iraq (Jackson, 2013:329-332).

Counterterrorism need some measures such as following: regional strength and large partnerships in intelligence and law enforcement, cooperating with states where terrorist can organize their supporters, block terrorists funding and its supporters, rewards for providing the information related terrorism, emphasizing counter radicalization as a main activity, long-term set up programs under the U.S. Antiterrorism Assistance Program (ATA) to provide partnership in training, equipment and

technology to demolish terrorists (Jackson, 2013:356).

The Bush and Obama broadly interpreted the scope of permissible action in dealing with terrorism. In short, the executive has retained broad latitude, particularly in terms of defining what constitutes “necessary” military action (McIntosh, 2015:25-26).

As a response to the existence of ISIS, U.S. strategies including degrade the capability of ISIS, made multilateral coalition, and using military forces. On September 10, 2014, President Obama announced a series of actions intended to “degrade, and ultimately destroy” the Islamic State organization. (McIntosh, 2015:23). Their strategies are the following:

First, the response of the United States to 9/11 as mentioned by Jackson included both – President George W. Bush declared a “war on terror,” also set up a New Homeland Security to be responsible for domestic security as a new governmental department, and initiated other less aggressive approaches. Then Bush modified his approaches in larger field from a “war on terror” game to a “global struggle against violent extremism” (Jackson, 2013:329).

Second, U.S. government has an agreement to use military forces as the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF). Then as part of the strategy, in June 2015, approximately 3,100 U.S. military personnel and 450 special military trainers have deployed to the Iraq Theater of operations to advise and train Iraqi forces, gather intelligence on the Islamic State, and secure U.S. personnel and facilities. Coalition partners also have pledged and begun deploying about 1,500 advisers and trainers for the ISF. U.S. and coalition personnel are implementing joint Iraqi-coalition plans for the training of 12 Iraqi brigades (9 Iraqi Security Force [ISF] brigades and 3 Kurdish peshmerga brigades—a total of about 25,000 personnel) (The Global Coalition to Counter ISIL U.S. Department of State., [Http://www.state.gov/s/seci/](http://www.state.gov/s/seci/), 2015:16-17).

As the sub strategies of military forces, U.S. used the “Train and Equip” Assistance programme which included Iraqi Secu-

ity Forces, Foreign Military Sales and Arms Transfers, Iraqi Kurdish and Sunni Arab Forces, Support for Kurdish Forces, and U.S. Training and Equipment for Vetted Syrians.

Third, on the same day, Obama announced the formation of a broad global coalition to defeat the ISIS soon with 65 members states. The coalition had run The Five Lines of Effort include providing military support to our partners, impeding the flow of foreign fighters, stopping ISIL's financing and funding. U.S. and coalition forces have used combat aircraft, armed unmanned aerial vehicles, and sea launched cruise missiles to conduct more than 3,700 strikes in Iraq since August 8, 2014, and in Syria since September 22, 2014. Now it is supporting defensive and offensive military operations by Iraqi military and Kurdish forces and weakening the Islamic State organization's ability to support its operations in Iraq from its bases inside Syria (The Global Coalition to Counter ISIL U.S. Department of State., [Http://www.state.gov/s/seci/](http://www.state.gov/s/seci/), 2015:15).

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM

The implementation of U.S. strategies to defeat ISIS as mentioned above consist of eradicating and degrading the power and ability of ISIS, build the global coalition, and military forces attack. In its strategies, the effective implementation was questioned because of the ISIS continued existence and operations in the ground of government and battle. The succeeding paragraphs will discuss the details of implementation and strategies.

The implementation of a New Homeland Security. U.S. strengthened homeland security with a new governmental department, and initiated other less aggressive approaches. Obama activate the personnel officially to implement the strategies. Retired General John Allen serves as Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL, and Brett McGurk, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs (Iraq and Iran), serves as General Allen's deputy senior envoy with the rank of Ambassador. U.S. military operations as part of the anti-

IS strategy have been termed “Operation Inherent Resolve.” U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Commander General Lloyd Austin is the lead U.S. officer in the military operations against the Islamic State and other extremists in Iraq and Syria. Daniel Rubenstein serves as U.S. Special Envoy for Syria. Ambassador Thomas Krajeski serves as the State Department Bureau of Counterterrorism Senior Advisor for Partner Engagement on Syria Foreign Fighters. The Department of the Treasury’s Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence leads efforts to disrupt IS finances. Major General Michael Nagata, Commander, Special Operations Command—Central, is leading the new congressionally authorized program to train and equip vetted members of Syria’s opposition and other vetted Syrians (Hodge, 2015:15).

The implementation of Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF). In September 2014, U.S. officials reportedly warned the Syrian government of penetrating strikes on Syrian territory, without any permission with the Asad regime. U.S. launched 6.288 air strikes in Iraq, and 3.104 in Syria until January 2016 as seen in figure 3.

The implementation of global coalition. The coalition have implemented measures disrupting IS financing policy, disrupting revenue streams, restricting access to the financial system, financial sanctions, and restricting flows of foreign fighters. The goal of implementing such strategies was only to eradicate ISIS. The ISIS has 20,000 fighters from 90 countries with more than 3,400 fighters who are Westerners still exist (The Global Coalition to Counter ISIL U.S. Department of State., [Http://www.state.gov/s/seci/](http://www.state.gov/s/seci/), 2015:23-25).

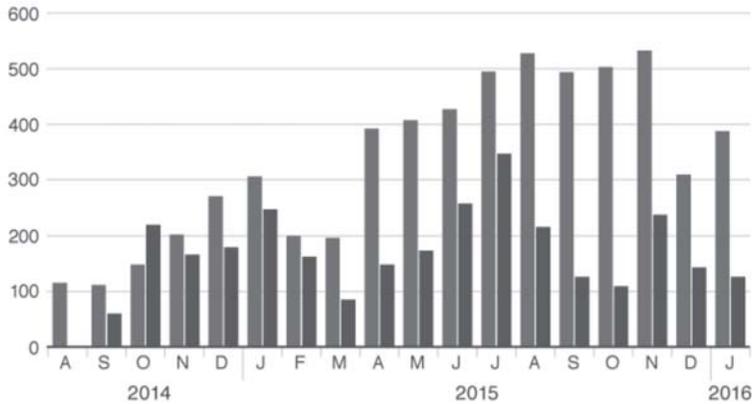
U.S. and coalition forces have used combat aircraft, armed unmanned aerial vehicles, and sea launched cruise missiles to conduct more than 3,700 strikes in Iraq since August 8, 2014, and in Syria since September 22, 2014 (The Global Coalition to Counter ISIL U.S. Department of State., [Http://www.state.gov/s/seci/](http://www.state.gov/s/seci/), 2015:1).

So far they have launched airstrikes against ISIS amounting

FIGURE 3. AIR STRIKES ON ISIS:

Air strikes in Iraq and Syria

■ Iraq 6,288 ■ Syria 3,104



Figures are up to 20 January 2016

Source: US Central Command

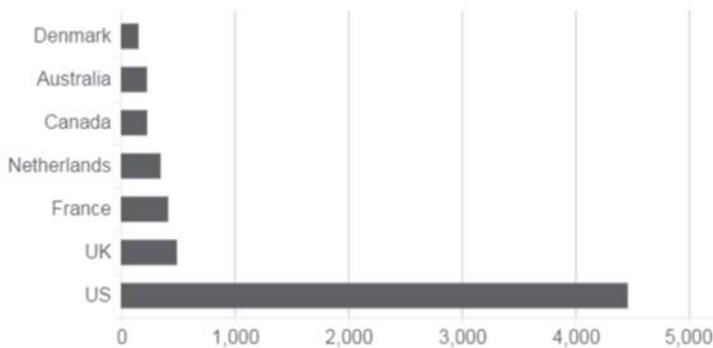


Source: Battle for Iraq and Syria in maps, January 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27838034>.

FIGURE 4. AIR STRIKES BY STATES:

US-led coalition air strikes in Iraq

Estimated number launched by each country



Source: Airwars.org (data to 17 Jan 2016)



Source: Battle for Iraq and Syria in maps, January 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27838034>.

to USD 2,275 in Syria and USD 3,198 in Iraq, Russia USD 2,716, and U.S allies USD 1,574 until October 31, 2015 (Brumfield, 2015:1, retrieved from <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/12/02/>

europa/isis-britain-germany-vote-iraq-syria/). The ISIS controlled areas and the airstrikes of U.S. and its allies at the end of year 2015 is shown in figure 4.

In the counterterrorism implementation U.S. has supported by U.N. Security Council Resolutions to strengthen international sanctions and halt the flows of foreign fighters and financing to the Islamic State, such as Resolution 2170 “to take national measures to suppress the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and bring them to justice in accordance with applicable international law, foreign terrorist fighters of, ISIS, ANF and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al Qaida,”. Resolution 2178 (September 2014) requires Member States, consistent with international law, to prevent the “recruiting, organizing, transporting or equipping of individuals who travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning of, or participation in terrorist acts” (The Global Coalition to Counter ISIL U.S. Department of State., [Http://www.state.gov/s/seci/](http://www.state.gov/s/seci/), 2015:25).

To get the U.S. attacks on ISIS, they run the “Train and Equip” Assistance operation. As of June 2015, the Iraqi Security Forces reported that approximately there are 3,100 U.S. military personnel deployed to the Iraq Theater of operations to advise and train Iraqi forces, gather intelligence on the Islamic State, and secure U.S. personnel and facilities. U.S. has deployed 1,500 advisers and trainers for the training of 12 Iraqi brigades (nine Iraqi Security Force [ISF] brigades and three Kurdish peshmerga brigades—a total of about 25,000 personnel) (Hodge, 2015:16-17). For this arrangement, the Congress authorized and provided \$1.6 billion in funding for the U.S. training efforts in Iraq and \$715 million in U.S. funding for the Iraq training program (Hodge, 2015:17-18).

On February 2, 2015, the Obama Administration released its preliminary FY2016 budget requests for foreign operations and defense. The Administration is seeking funding to continue the current lines of effort in response to the Islamic State threat, as

well as to respond to the challenges posed by the broader conflicts and regional displacements related to Syria and Iraq.

In the case of war, U.S. didn't intend to make "war business" with Foreign Military Sales and Arms Transfers programme. In conjunction with expanded training efforts, the United States also has undertaken new efforts to equip existing Iraqi forces. Since the Islamic State-led capture of Mosul in June 2014, the United States has proposed sales of over 5,000 additional HELLFIRE air-to-surface missiles to Baghdad and has delivered "the equivalent of roughly 5-6 brigades' worth of individual soldier weapons and equipment" (Hodge, 2015:18-19).

U.S. also runs the U.S. Training and Equipment for Vetted Syrians. Several hundred U.S. military training personnel and a similar number of support personnel have deployed in support of a program authorized by Congress in 2014 to train and equip vetted Syrians to fight the Islamic State and promote a negotiated solution to Syria's civil war. According to Administration officials, the program intends to field a force of 5,400 vetted Syrians a year for each of three-years (Hodge, 2015:22). In early 2015, U.S. officials began engaging with different Syrian groups with more than 2,000 planned participants and vetted 400 of them (Hodge, 2015:22). The Administration's FY2016 Defense appropriations request seeks \$600 million in additional U.S. funding for the program with the goal of training further 5400 personnel to add to the roughly 3000 planned to be trained using FY2015 funding (Hodge, 2015:22).

U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM AND ITS IMPACTS TOWARD ISIS AND IN THE REGION

On March 3, General Austin described the group as "losing this fight" and reported that anti-IS operations had killed more than 8,500 fighters, destroyed hundreds of vehicles and heavy weapons systems, and significantly degraded IS command and control capabilities. In April 2015, President Obama said, "About a quarter of the territory fallen under ISIS (Daesh) control has

been recovered. Thousands of strikes have not only taken ISIS fighters off the war theater, but their infrastructure has been deteriorated and decayed (Blanchard, 2015:26). However, noting that IS forces continue to show offensive capability in Iraq and Syria, Administration officials have more recently qualified the degree of success achieved to date and reminded the public that U.S. plans and strategy envision a multi-year effort that is likely to suffer setbacks (Blanchard, 2015:26).

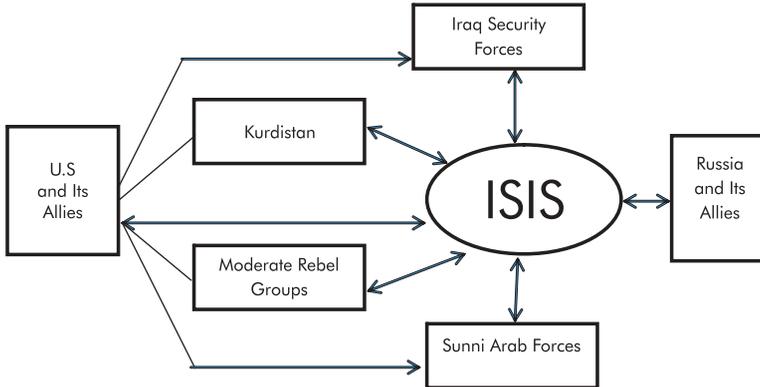
Administration critics argue that U.S. strategy lacks effective partners who can advance against Islamic State-held territory on the ground and suffers from a basic contradiction in not confronting the regime of President Asad of Syria (Blanchard, 2015:26).

The existence of ISIS was undeniable and undefeatable by U.S. and its allies attacks. They still control the areas and moreover enlarge the territory from Syria and Iraq to Libya. As their military power ISIS has estimated that about 30 T-55 tanks, 15 T-62 model tanks, T-62 with a 115-mm tank gun along with two secondary machine guns, 5 to 10 T-72 tanks, BRDM-2 Armored Vehicles, MT-LB Armored Vehicles, 2 BRDM-2s, BMP-1 Infantry Fighting Vehicles, 20 such infantry fighting vehicles in its arsenal, 122 mm 2S1 Gvozdika Self-Propelled Artillery, 3 2S1 Gvozdikas, Humvees, AK-47s, 82 mm B-10 Recoilless Rifle, 105 mm M40 Recoilless Rifle, 1 M40 recoilless rifle, M79 Osa Rocket Launcher, M79 Osa rocket launcher fires a 90-mm, RBG-6 Grenade Launchers, RPG-7s, grenades can reach distances of up to 920 meters, Multiple Rocket Launchers such as 57 mm UB-16, the 107 mm Type 63, and the 122 mm BM-21, M198 Howitzer, Type 59-1 Field Gun, D-30 Howitzer, Antiaircraft Guns, ZU-23-2, small numbers of 14.5 mm KPV, 14.5 mm ZPU2, 23 mm ZU-23, 37 mm Type 65, and 57 mm AZP S-60 antiaircraft guns, 23 mm ZSU-23-4 Self-Propelled Antiaircraft Guns, FIM-92 Stinger MANPADS, SA-16 MANPADS, SA-16s, 9K32 Strela-2 MANPADS, Antitank Missiles, The HJ-8 antitank missile, also acquired 9M14m Malyutka-M, 9M111M Faktoriya, 9M113

Konkurs, 9K115-3 Metis-M, 9M133 Kornet, and L-RAAD anti-tank missiles for its inventory, DShK 1938 Machine Gun, MiG fighter jets, A MiG 21-F, and MiG-21B fighters. Also, one of the most effective tools in ISIS' arsenal is its social-media savviness. The group routinely churns out slick propaganda videos. It has an English-language outreach magazine, and it puts out tweets hash tagged to trending events to achieve maximum exposure ([Http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/)).

Almost all of the ISIS fighters have experiences the war in Iraq and Syria during the recent conflicts. Actually ISIS has faced the siege of U.S. and its allies (65 states), Russia and its allies (Iran, Hizbullah, Israel), Kurdistan, and rebel groups as supported by U.S. and its allies. ISIS position under siege is shown in figure 5 below.

FIGURE 5. ISIS UNDER SIEGE AND ATTACKS.



The U.S. strategies couldn't defeat ISIS with its 3-year attacks and this group has enlarged its territory. When U.S. and its allies have claimed that they killed and bring down the ISIS power by their attacks, the fact is that the ISIS's territory was extended to Iraq, Syria, and also Libya. The existence of ISIS was not only in Syria and Iraq, ISIS is already present in Libya since 2015 as shown in figure 6 below.

FIGURE 6. PRESENCE MAP OF ISIS IN 2015.



Source: <http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Syria+Isis+Map+September+2015&FORM=IDMHDL>

The presence of ISIS in Libya is feared around the region. As ISIS makes inroads into Libya, officials in Rome are panicking about an Islamic State just across the sea—but have no idea how to combat the crisis. Last weekend in Italy, as the threat of ISIS in Libya hit Rome with a new video addressed to “the nation signed with the blood of the cross” and the warning “we are south of Rome,” Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi closed the Italian embassy in Tripoli and raised his fist with the threat of impending military action ([Http://edition.cnn.com/2014/11/18/world/isis-libya/index.html](http://edition.cnn.com/2014/11/18/world/isis-libya/index.html)).

Whether the time is right or not, there is no question that there is a palpable tension in Italy over the ISIS threat—Libya is just 109 miles away from the island of Lampedusa and 300 miles from Sicily—made worse by a 64 percent increase in illegal migrant arrivals by sea since last year. In 2014, more than 170,000 people arrived from Libya and Turkey, the highest number ever recorded. Last weekend, as the embassy staff made their way to Italy on a mercantile ship, 2,164 migrants left the same Libyan shores en route to Sicily ([Http://edition.cnn.com/2014/11/18/world/isis-libya/index.html](http://edition.cnn.com/2014/11/18/world/isis-libya/index.html)).

The war in Syria is exceedingly complex, with multiple actors fighting one another on the ground and foreign powers supporting their preferred proxies. Iran and Hezbollah are backing Bashar al Assad's regime, which is also now receiving increased assistance from Russia. The Islamic State (often referred to by the acronyms ISIS and ISIL) retains control over a significant amount of Syrian territory. Despite some setbacks at the hands of the U.S.-led air coalition and Kurdish ground forces earlier this year in northern Syria, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi's organization has not suffered anything close to a knockout blow by far. Sunni jihadists, led by Al Nusrah Front and its closest allies, are opposed to both the Islamic State and the Assad regime (Joscelyn, 2015:1).

The situation is similar across the Syrian side of the border. Iran has buttressed Assad's regime with IRGC commanders and Hezbollah fighters, who are not going to drive Sunni jihadists out of their current strongholds and then provide stable governance in the vacuum left behind. It was Assad, we should not forget, who originally turned the peaceful protests against his regime into a violent conflict that has now cost more than 200,000 lives. Assad's use of barrel bombs and chemical weapons against Sunni areas are not a path to peace. Instead, Assad's actions have only continued to radicalize the Sunnis who are important as a long-term roadblock against the Islamic State, Al Nusrah Front, and other Sunni jihadists (Joscelyn, 2015:1).

Many have noticed that the Assad regime does not often fight the Islamic State. It is wrong to say the two never clash, however, as they have throughout this year. The Sunni jihadists in this camp are opposed to both Assad and the Islamic State, but that should not make them a partner in any American-led strategy (Joscelyn, 2015:1).

Soon after seizing Mosul, ISIS posted photographs of its fighters demolishing barriers marking the dividing line between Syria and Iraq. They were 'smashing the Sykes-Picot border' in an attempt to rally wider Arab support for their movement by claim-

ing that they were overturning a historic injustice (Dodge, 2014:7).

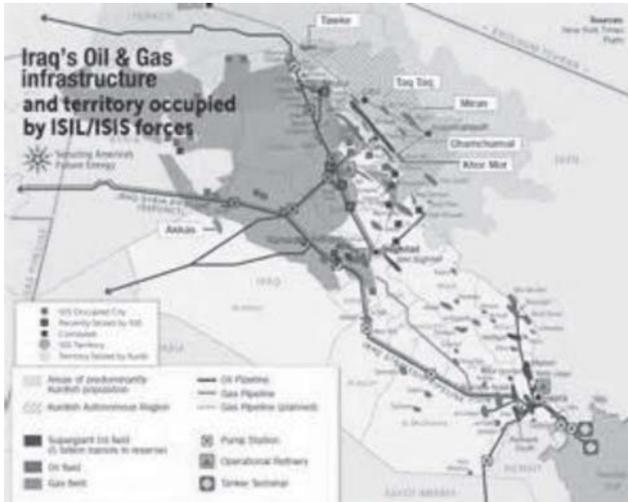
Baghdad's failure to repel the advancement of ISIS is best understood by examining the ways in which the first instance, by the collapse of the Iraqi military (Dodge, 2014:11). In order to neutralise the threat from ISIS, stabilise Iraq and create a sustainable future for the country, Iraq prime Minister Abadi will not only have to reform the state but persuade the elite to change (Dodge, 2014:17).

The region is really unsure and worsens after U.S attacks. Their attacks didn't gain any success among its targets. The war enlarged not only between U.S and its allies against ISIS, but also other movements with ISIS and has extended among civilian population whom trained by U.S. and its allies. In the case of Iraq, it has U.S. and its allies together with Russia, Iran, Hezbollah, Israel in defeating ISIS, but in the case of Syria, they are in opposite position. Russia and its allies supported Basar regime and U.S. and its allies supported opposition groups to Basar regime. Syrian and Iraq government didn't go for better condition and their lack of capacity to lead the country, caused the decrease of weapons which eventually weakened their authorities. On the other hand ISIS controlled the resources and execute their objectives.

In summer 2014, the world's largest and richest terrorist group, known best through its acronyms of ISIS or ISIL, took over about 40% of Iraq's territory, including several oil fields and agriculture lands. Oil has been the primary commodity that allowed for these dynamics (Wahab, 2015:271). See figure 7.

According to the UN, the conflict that started October 31, 2014 caused so many lives as 18,802 Iraqis were killed, 36,245 were wounded, and 3.2 million were displaced (<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/01/iraq-isis-civilian-deaths/424668/>). The figures are "staggering". The United Nations says that almost 19,000 civilians have been killed and more than 36,000 wounded in Iraq since the start of 2014 (<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/01/iraq-violence-reports->

FIGURE 7. RESOURCES OCCUPIED BY ISIS.



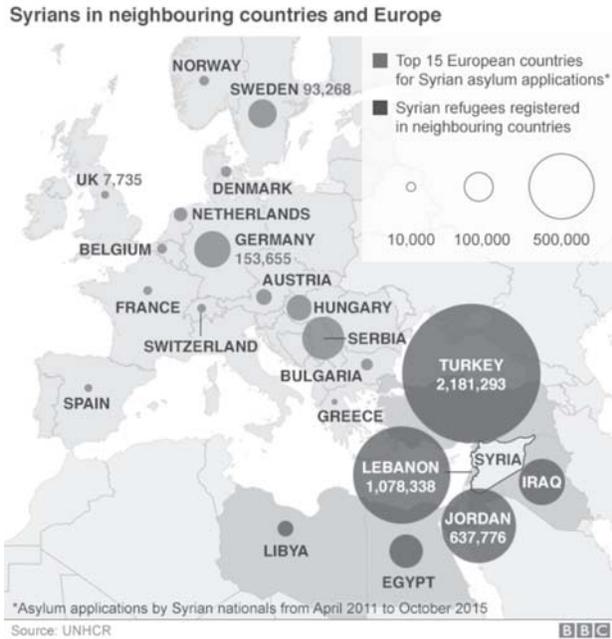
Source: (<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/01/iraq-violence-reports-staggering-civilian-toll-160119124911533.html>).

staggering-civilian-toll-160119124911533.html.).

The news came as the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights announced that the death toll from the four-year civil war topped 76,000 in the last year alone. An estimated 17,790 were civilians, including 3,501 children, making it the deadliest war of the year (Pleasance, 2015:1).

The conflicts have produced millions of refugees—12 million have fled the country or are internally displaced in Syria, plus nearly 4 million have fled the country or are internally displaced in Iraq. Those who have fled abroad cannot return while the fighting continues and cannot be absorbed by their neighbors (Jenkins, 2015:1). See figure 8. The conflicts went deep and wide in scale. The increasing number of victims, human suffering and starving, the damages in every field and the rising up the refugee's problems are perplexing. The worst conditions did not only happen in Syria, Iraq and Libya but the conflicts also spread to many countries specially in Europe. These countries are in dilemma: on the one hand, they intend to give the asylum to the refugees, but on the other hand they are scared that by doing so, they are

FIGURE 8. REFUGEES PROBLEMS.



Source: Battle for Iraq and Syria in maps, January 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27838034>.

exporting ISIS's ideologies and it is a more serious problem that economic crisis.

The contemporary conflicts need global intervention and awareness because U.S. strategies failed to solve the problem. The U.S. used other methods such as supporting oppositions group against Basar regime and Iraq Army and Kurds to defeat ISIS. In fact this strategy was divided into social relations and serenity. In the case where ISIS has too much civilian victims, it is expected that the civilian will have their revenge. On the other hand the ISIS has been stronger with wider occupied territory.

U.S. didn't defeat ISIS directly nor decrease its losses and it seems that the U.S. was not serious in implementing the strategies. Moreover, they nourish the ideas of terrorism with its implementation of "training and arm programme". Also because of the business among weapons, the U.S. is able to maintain the conflicts as their new "game of terrorism". The data showed that

the weapons deal partly with Iraq government.

The US State Department has approved a possible Foreign Military Sale of F-16 weapons, munitions, equipment, and logistics support to Iraq in estimated cost is \$1.950 billion. (Source: Defense Security Cooperation Agency, <http://www.iraq-businessnews.com/2016/01/22/us-approves-1-95bn-iraq-weapons-deal/>). The data above excludes the programme of personnel trainings and weapons maintenance.

The game will continue further because of the on-going war and wide involvement of groups including civilian armies. The war also will rise the tensions in the regions with military dilemma. Then the terrorism will grow and “the business” will continue, but the impact will spread which will invite the next crisis such as refugees and its consequences.

The most important thing that the U.S. and its allies have neglected is the tension and hatred between Moslem people and U.S. The main ideas of U.S. war projects always carry out deeper conflicts and hatred. The conflicts came from the actors behind the gun, and then they come with their peace missions, sell arms and programmes, and watch its objects in deep conflicts.

CONCLUSION

U.S. counterterrorism policy includes the following: First, series of actions intended to “degrade, and ultimately destroy” the Islamic State organization. Second, the U.S. lead in forming coalition with 65 members states to defeat ISIS through a comprehensive and sustained counterterrorism strategy. Third, U.S. and its coalition used military forces and amount of measures including trained Iraq army and Kurdi army, Sunni army groups and Syrian opposition group.

The implementation of U.S. counterterrorism policy includes: First, degrading the ability of ISIS U.S. and disrupting IS Financing Policy, disrupting revenue streams base by using the U.N. Security Council Resolution 2178, 2199 and 2178. Second, global coalition of anti-ISIS has implemented the Five Lines of Ef-

forts to degrade and defeat ISIS with NATO. Third, they deployed 6,288 attacks in Iraq and 3,104 attacks in Syria until 20 January 2016. Also Russia had 2,716 attacks against ISIS until 31 October 2015.

Moreover, the coalition has instigated several amounts of efforts including: First, “Train and Equip” Assistance, an operation for the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the Peshmerga and provided \$1.6 billion FY2015, and \$715 million FY2016. Second, the U.S. took the chance to sell military equipment to Iraq nearly \$3 billion 2015. Third, the U.S. also supported the Training and Equipment for 5,400 Vetted Syrians.

In congressional testimony described that U.S. and its allies had killed more than 8,500 fighters, destroyed hundreds of weapons systems, and taken over the territory controlled by ISIS. Actually, the existence of ISIS was not impossible to defeat until 2016 U.S. attacks. Now ISIS has entered Libya.

The region’s condition can be described as:

First, the conflicts spreading to become civil war has invited civilian army groups such as Al Nusrah Front, Kurdish army, Hezbollah fighters, and other Sunni jihadists. The war enlarged not only between U.S and its allies with ISIS, but with other movements with ISIS and also it spread among civilian peoples whom trained by U.S. and its allies. Second, the regions were really unsure and situations may worsen politically and economically after U.S attacks. Their attacks didn’t gain any success among its targets but the victims were thousands of civilian peoples. As reported by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights that the death of civil war topped 76,000. Third, the conflicts have produced more than 12 million Syrian refugee and nearly 4 million have fled from Iraq.

IMPLICATION

The research showed that U.S. counterterrorism lack success. U.S. built the large coalition with huge budgets but ISIS still exists actively. Actually, the existence of ISIS was not easily de-

feated until 2016. They controlled the areas and moreover enlarge the territory from Syria and Iraq to Libya in 2015. The presence of ISIS in Libya is feared around the region. As ISIS made inroads into Rome. However U.S. and its allies preferred using “other hands” such as ISF, Peshmerga, Arab Sunni, Oppositions Armies, and moderate civilian armies to defeat ISIS. The strategies were questioned whether the U.S. counterterrorism has accomplished the mission consistently or they just provoked the larger conflicts between states and also among moslems peoples.

The worst conditions not only happen in Syria, Iraq and Libya but the conflict has spread to many countries specially among European countries. These countries are in dilemma. They intend to give asylum to the refugees, on the other hand they are very much concern that by doing so they are exporting ideologies of ISIS which is worse than economic crisis. The ISIS crisis was questioned obviously. How can the group such as ISIS can't be destroyed in 3 years given the U.S. attacks with the support of global coalition? Considering that the U.S. had defeated Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya in the previous years and set up new governments in each these countries. Whether this war is part of ISIS and U.S.'s game and its allies with strategies to maintain the regions and their interests on the moslems is the next big question for research.

Theoretically counterterrorism needs to be revised base on the principle of friendship approach different from nowadays as the principle of interests. Practically U.S. counterterrorism used other hands to defeat ISIS such as Iraq forces army, Peshmerga, and other allies groups which resulted into large and complex conflict. It seems that the attacks of U.S. and its allies should also be on the ground and not only air strikes. More importantly, the U.S. and its allies have to prove that they are defeating terrorism instead of making new enemy and war as their interests.

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