



# OIR IN BRIEF

The 19th quarterly report submitted by the Lead Inspector General for Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) summarizes the quarter's key events and oversight of the U.S. mission to defeat ISIS and train, advise, and assist partner forces in Iraq and Syria. Due to the events that unfolded in Syria after the quarter ended on September 30, this report covers events through late October.

## Turkey Launches Offensive in Syria *pp. 16-17*

- On October 9, **Turkey launched an air and ground assault in northeastern Syria**
- President Trump ordered **about 50 U.S. forces to pull back** from Syria-Turkey border, then ordered **a full withdrawal**

## U.S. Administration Orders New Deployment to Northeastern Syria Oilfields *pp. 18-19*

- As U.S. troops withdrew, **the United States ordered mechanized forces** to deploy to **northeastern Syria oilfields**
- Defense Secretary Esper said troops withdrawing from Syria will **continue the OIR mission from Iraq**, but later said they will only transit through

## SDF Pulls Troops from ISIS Fight *pp. 18, 21-22*

- The SDF, facing attack, **halted the counter-ISIS fight** to respond to Turkish incursion
- An SDF contingent continued to guard ISIS prisons; **fewer than 200 ISIS detainees** escaped
- SDF called U.S. withdrawal a **betrayal**, but said it will **continue to partner** with U.S. forces to fight ISIS

## Syrian Regime and Russian Forces Move To Fill Vacuum *pp. 17-18, 24*

- **Syrian and Russian troops** moved to fill the void left by U.S. forces and block Turkey's advance
- **Turkey agreed to halt advance** in U.S.-brokered arrangement; Turkey conditioned freeze on **Kurdish forces' pullback** from area of incursion
- Russia brokers **long-term deal** for Turkey to halt advance and SDF to withdraw from expanded area

## ISIS Exploits Turkish Incursion and U.S. Troop Withdrawal *pp. 20-21*

- The Defense Intelligence Agency reported that absent counterterrorism pressure, **ISIS is likely to reconstitute** in Syria in the short term, and globally in the long term

## ISIS Leader al Baghdadi Dies In Raid *p. 26*

- On October 26, a U.S. special forces raid into his northwestern Syria compound resulted in **ISIS leader Abu Bakr al Baghdadi's death**
- ISIS announced Abu Ibrahim al Hashimi al Quraishi as **new ISIS "caliph"**
- USCENTCOM Commander Gen. McKenzie said that **al Baghdadi's death does not end ISIS**

## Turkish Incursion Endangers Stabilization, Humanitarian Aid *pp. 40-42*

- U.S. **stabilization personnel** were again withdrawn from Syria in wake of Turkish incursion, although most **activities continued remotely**
- Turkish incursion **displaced 215,000**; although some returned home, **some 14,000 fled** to Iraq

## Turkish Incursion, U.S. Withdrawal Have "Minimal Impact" on Iraq Mission *p. 46*

- OUSD(P)/ISA said that the events in Syria had **minimal impact on the OIR mission in Iraq**
- ISIS in Iraq continued to solidify **command and control structures** during the quarter

## Iraq Imposes Air Restrictions Following Airstrikes on Iranian-Aligned Units *p. 51*

- Iraqi government **imposed air restrictions on foreign aircraft** following suspected Israeli airstrikes on Iranian-aligned militia bases

## Staff Drawdown Reduces Oversight of \$1.16B USAID Portfolio *pp. 59-60*

- Since the **ordered departure of U.S. personnel from Iraq** in May, USAID has had on average 6 staff in country versus 26 at the start of 2019
- USAID said that its remaining staff are only able to engage in the **bare minimum coordination** with other agencies and governments