

Statement by Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook on Recent Strikes in Northern Syria

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U.S. forces conducted a series of precision airstrikes this week against al-Qaida operatives in northwestern Syria.

On Jan. 1, U.S. forces struck two al-Qaida vehicles that had departed a large al-Qaida headquarters near Sarmada. On Jan. 3, U.S. forces struck the headquarters compound itself, including multiple vehicles and structures. Al-Qaida's foreign terrorist fighter network used this headquarters as a gathering place, and their leaders directed terrorist operations out of this location.

Although we're still assessing the results of these strikes, our initial assessment is that these strikes hit killed five al-Qaida militants and destroyed two vehicles on Jan. 1, and killed more than 15 al-Qaida militants and destroyed , six vehicles, and nine structures on Jan. 3. We are confident these strikes will degrade al-Qaida's ability to direct operations in Syria.

Al-Qaida remains committed to carrying out terrorist attacks against the United States and the West. We will continue to take action to deny any terrorist safe haven in Syria. We will not allow al-Qaida to grow its capacity to attack the United States or our allies and friends around the world.