

Counter-Terrorism: Speech by the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the ministerial meeting of the Global Coalition against Da'esh

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Thank you, Minister [of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Luigi] Di Maio and [US] Secretary of State [Antony] Blinken, for convening this meeting.

The EU remains firmly committed to the Global Coalition against Da'esh. The job is not yet finished in Iraq and Syria, where the core of Da'esh is still active, even if gone largely underground. Stabilisation and reconstruction are key to prevent its resurgence. We also see a growing influence of Da'esh in areas already made vulnerable by conflict, including West Africa and Mozambique. The pandemic and its impact on local economies are also creating new opportunities for Da'esh to exploit.

This is why our collective action remains crucial to ensure sustainable progress.

In Iraq, the EU has invested over €1.3 billion since 2014 in development, humanitarian and security assistance. Since 2017, we support civilian Security Sector Reform through an EU Advisory Mission (EUAM Iraq), with a team of up to 80 international staff. The mission works very closely with the Ministry of the Interior and will soon extend its presence also to Erbil.

When I met with Foreign Minister [of Iraq, Fuad] Hussein last week, I also announced the deployment of an EU Election Observation Mission for the October elections.

On Syria, we continue to push for a political solution in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2254. We insist on the importance of non-normalisation with Syria in order to maintain pressure on the regime to engage in the UN process. In March, the EU co-chaired the 5th Syria Conference in Brussels to mobilise the international community in support of the Syrian people.

The EU also supports the stabilisation of the North East with projects to build resilience against radicalisation, prevent violent extremism, and in support of vulnerable children and youth.

[The humanitarian and security conditions in the camps remain difficult. The EU visited the region last week and will launch new stabilisation assistance, including for camps and prisons.]

Turning to Africa, I warmly welcome the new Coalition members from the African continent who join us for the first time today.

In Sahel, we have to pay closer attention to the region: in Central Mali we see every day two grave security incidents causing deaths or injuries. This is of concern to all of us. For this reason, the EU is committed to keep up its military and civilian engagement. We have three [Common Security and Defence Policy] CSDP missions in the region, with around 1,000 staff to support host countries in the fight against terrorism. The EU also supports the G5 Sahel Joint Force and stabilisation efforts in support of local populations.

We again welcome a role for the Coalition in the Sahel region. A role that has to be played in close coordination with international efforts in the framework of the Coalition for the Sahel.

Finally, on Mozambique. The humanitarian and security situation in Cabo Delgado is rapidly deteriorating. At the request of the Mozambican government, the EU is finalising the planning for an EU military CSDP mission aimed at providing human-rights compliant training and capacity building to selected units of the Mozambican armed forces.

The EU is further engaged with humanitarian, development and stabilisation assistance adding up to nearly €60 million for projects to build confidence between security forces and local communities.

Two years after the defeat of Da'esh by Coalition forces in Iraq and Syria, it is clear that there is still much work to do. The EU will continue to do its part, together with the Global Coalition and its partners.

Thank you.

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G5 Sahel