European External Action Service (EEAS)

Statement by Members of the Small Group of the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL

2015-11-04

1. The Small Group of the Global Coalition to counter ISIL met today in Brussels at the invitation of the Belgian Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Didier Reynders, to take stock of recent developments on the ground, continue expanding Coalition efforts to degrade and defeat ISIL, and delineate our common understanding of ISIL's operations in Syria and Iraq, as well as our shared approach to defend against its global ambitions.

2. After liberating parts of Iraq and Syria from ISIL, constraining its freedom of movement, decreasing its finances, slowing its reinforcement of fighters and countering its messaging, we recognize the complexity of the task that still lies ahead, and reaffirm our commitment to work together against ISIL under a multifaceted, long-term strategy. ISIL is an uncompromising threat to the international community. Our Coalition is driven by our common desire to stop this scourge and we will bring to bear every tool available to that end, with strength, unity, and determination. We are committed to tackle ISIL globally by adapting our means and our response in light of the different needs on the ground.

3. We recognize the dedication and steadfastness of the Iraqi Security Forces, Kurdish Peshmerga Forces, Popular Mobilization Forces, Sunni tribal forces, and Syrian moderate opposition forces, all of whom are critical to the success of this effort. We will continue our long-standing support for the Iraqi Security Forces as they reclaim areas held by ISIL. We will also support moderate Syrian forces allied with the Coalition, while seeking new opportunities to advance progress on the ground in both Syria and Iraq. We reaffirm our continuing support for the efforts of Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's government to address corruption, decentralize certain federal authorities, and reconcile ethnic and sectarian divisions in Iraq.

4. In Syria, the Coalition stands with the Syrian people against ISIL and supports the discussions that have taken place in Vienna aimed at establishing a firm foundation for a political transition based on the principles of the Geneva Communiqué, with the goal of achieving a democratic, inclusive, and pluralistic government that represents the will of all Syrian people. We also appreciate the participation of the United Nations in these talks and the role it will play going forward.

5. We have used today's gathering of the Coalition to enhance our understanding of the likely opportunities and challenges that will arise over the coming year and to prepare for them accordingly. We have also identified priorities for coordinated actions with the military

campaign and the Coalition Working Groups – foreign terrorist fighters, counter-finance, stabilization support, and counter-messaging - in the months ahead. We look forward to the next meeting of the Small Group of the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL to take place in Rome in early 2016.

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