



# OIR CAMPAIGN REVIEW

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**And**

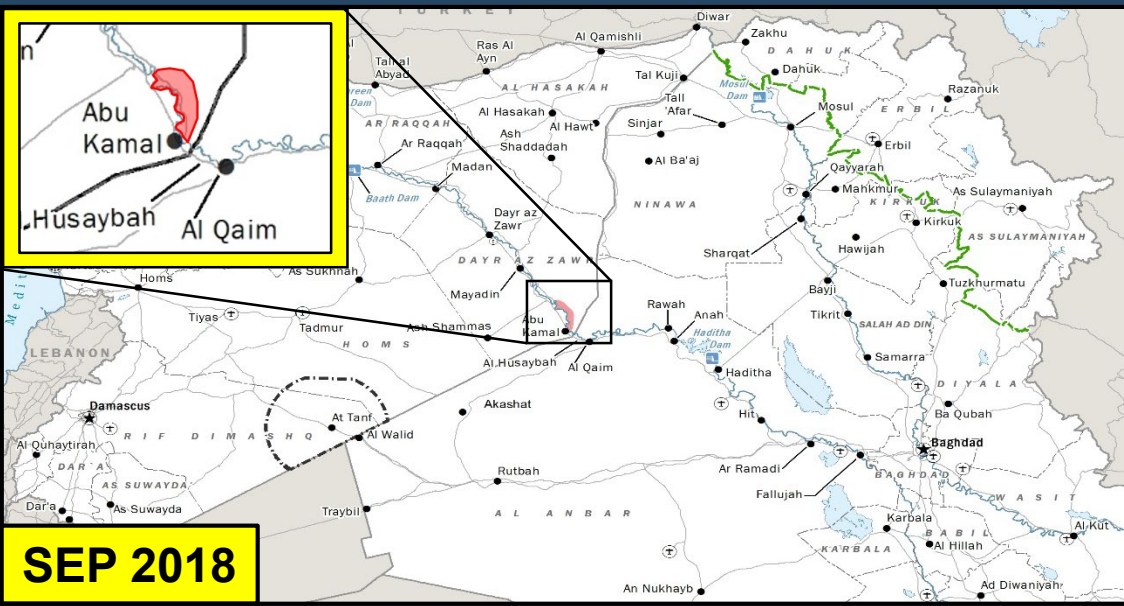
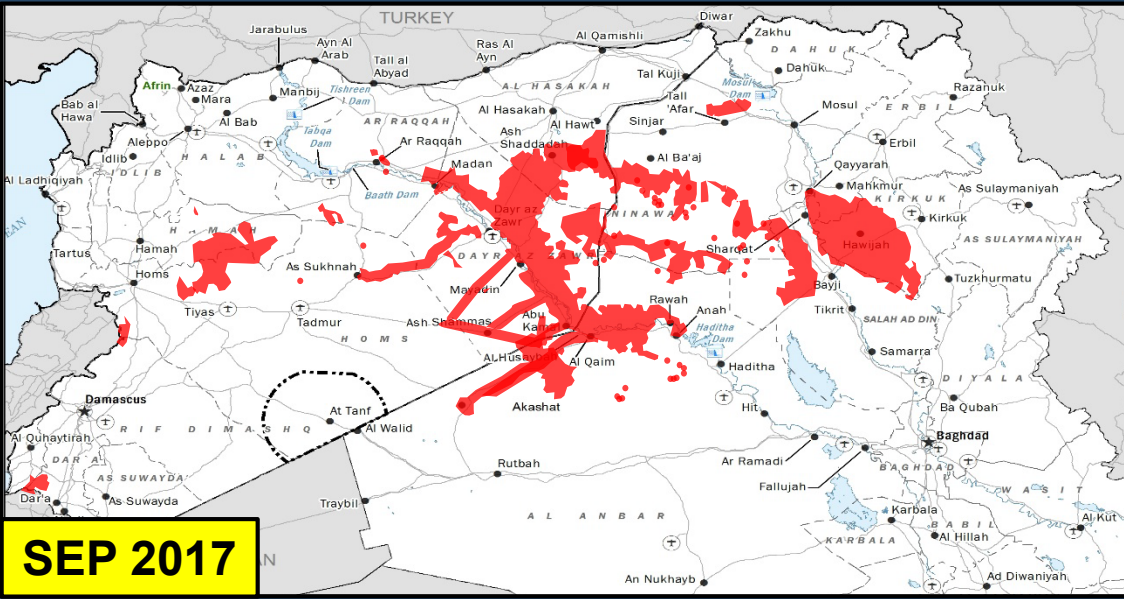
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**UNCLASSIFIED**

# ISIS Annihilation: SEP 17 – SEP 18

**Annihilation:** Elimination of the enemy's military power to the point they are so demoralized and disorganized that they become unable to effectively interfere with the achievement of our political goals.

(MCDP 1, Warfighting, 20 JUN 97; MCDP 1-1, Strategy, 12 NOV 97)



**Total ISIS controlled territory:**  
 ~ 24,600 KM<sup>2</sup>  
**Territory liberated:**  
 ~23,800 KM<sup>2</sup>

Liberated in Iraq: ~ 14,700 KM<sup>2</sup>  
 Liberated in Syria: ~ 9,100 KM<sup>2</sup>

**Population liberated:** ~ 1.8 million

Liberated in Iraq: ~ 1.1 million  
 Liberated in Syria: ~ 700 K

# Legal Challenges of Accelerated Success

- **Organizational Structure**
  - **CJFLCC-OIR deactivation returned a Division HQ back to the Army**
- **Legal (Especially Fiscal) Authorities**
  - **Consolidation of the CJFLCC-OIR responsibilities and authorities into CJTF-OIR**
  - **While authorities geared towards PH III operations, the command's priorities shift towards PH IV, which has created an increasing number of challenges**
- **Shifting Assets and Resources to Syria**
  - **Continued BPC operations in Iraq compete with MCO ongoing in Syria**



The CJFLCC-OIR HQ was deactivated on 30 April 2018 signifying a shift in focus from enabling combat operations in Iraq to building and enhancing Iraqi Security Forces capabilities and sustainability.

# Legal Challenges of Accelerated Success (Con't)

- Force Management Levels
  - HQ consolidation and asset shift
  - “Right size” while maintaining adequate manning levels in both Iraq and Syria
- Expectations and Impact on Coalition Cohesion
  - Combination of the physical caliphate’s impending defeat, competing strategic interests in the region, and financial toll of stability operations risks divergent goals within the Coalition
  - Partner forces begin reassessing the shift to building and enhancing Iraqi Security Forces capabilities and sustainability
- Syrian Civil War Has Led to a Renewed Focus on Coalition Presence
  - With the Syrian opposition on the precipice of defeat, Syrian regime priorities focus more heavily on complete control of all Syrian territory



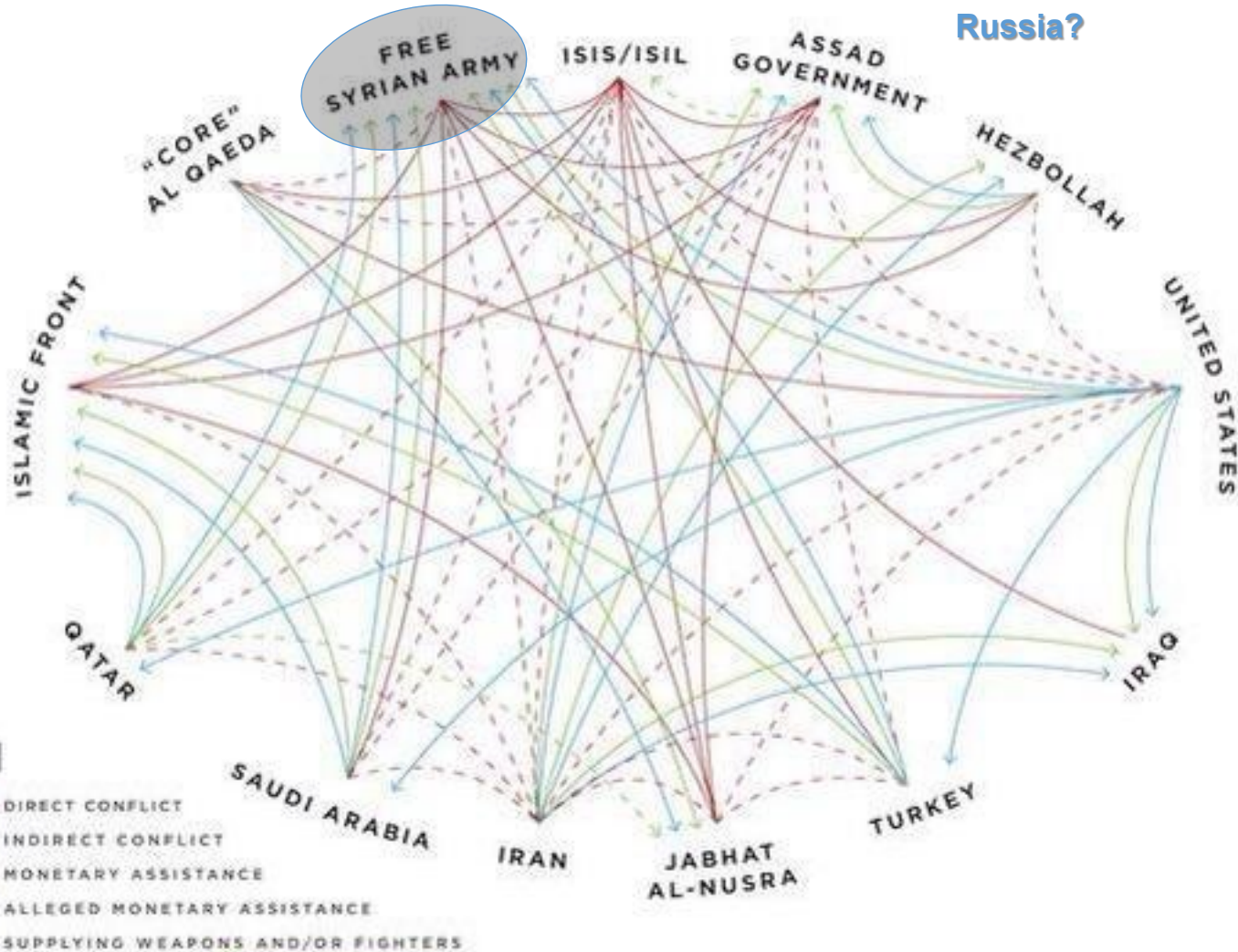
# Targeting Concerns

- Targeting in an urban environment
  - **Densely populated areas pose weaponizing challenges to avoid civilian casualties.**
- Fighting an enemy that uses Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) to their advantage
  - **ISIS occupy hospitals, Mosques, and other protected structures to avoid our targeting.**
  - **Fighters will often travel with children to avoid air strikes.**
- Force Protection
  - **There are many force protection challenges associated with a crowded battle space occupied by an amalgam of non-allied armed forces.**

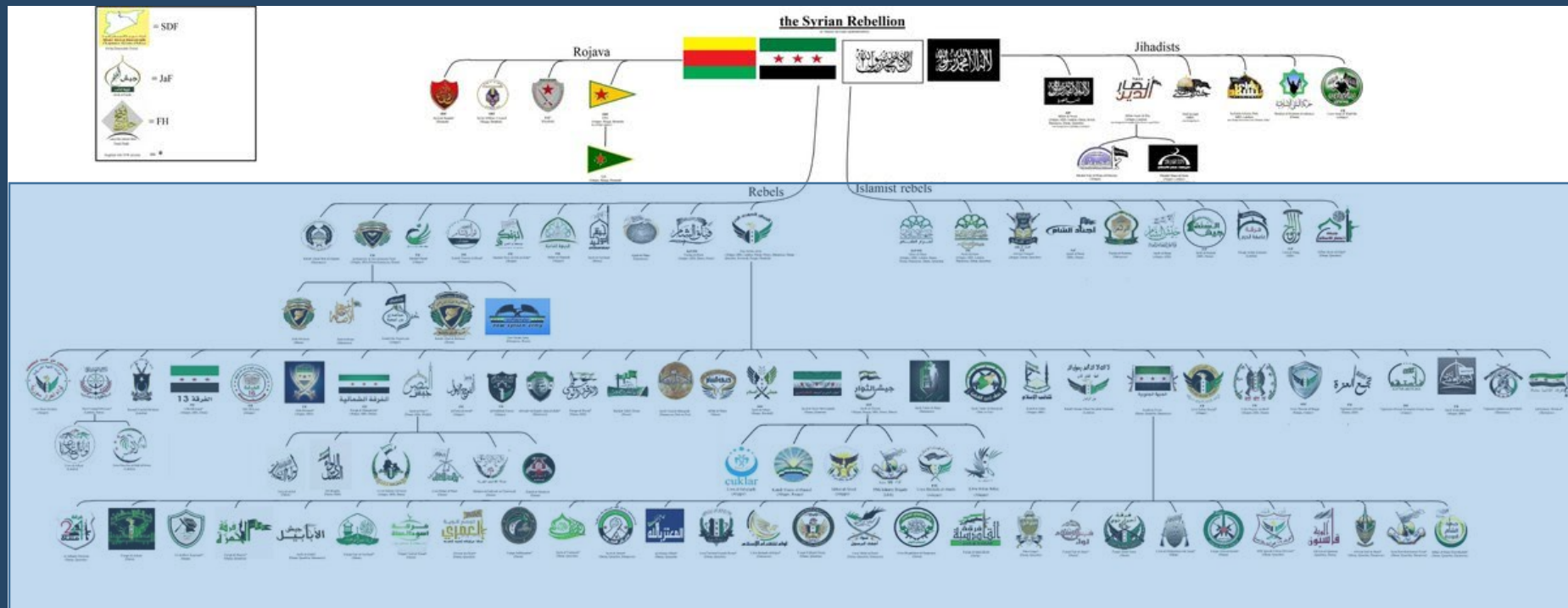


Before and after satellite images of Mosul reveal the devastation after ISIS was forced out. (Courtesy of *The New York Times*)

# Major Combatants in Syria



# Free Syrian Army (Rebels)



# Targeting Concerns (Con't)

- **Civilian Casualties (CIVCAS)**
  - CJTF-OIR - very transparent regarding self-accountability of civilian casualties.
  - Robust administrative procedure for self-reporting and investigation, along with independent reporters bringing allegations to our attention at the speed of the internet.
- **Impact of Social Media – Airwars.org (95% of allegations)**
- **Total Strikes in CJOA: 29,920**
- **Total Allegations: 2466**
- **Total Civilians Killed/Wounded: 1061/247**
- **Challenges**
  - **Time delay in allegations**
- **Solatia**





# CTEF Opportunities and Limitations

- **Opportunities**
  - **Enhanced war fighting capability through training and equipping**
  - **Incidental long-term benefits to foreign forces**
- **Limitations**
  - **No New Construction**
    - **Limited Repair and Renovation**
  - **Transferring CTEF equipment between Iraq and Syria**
  - **Late Stages of Conflict Challenges**
    - **Stabilization**
    - **Funding Local Iraqi Police**
    - **Bona-Fide Need**

# Complex Information Environment

**'Leveled like Dresden': Raqqa aid haste hints at cover up of 'barbaric destruction' – Moscow**



The ruins of a shopping centre are seen in Raqqa, Syria October 18, 2017 © Erik De Castro / Reuters

Russian media compares US operations in Raqqa to the firebombing of Dresden.



Peshmerga claims SMG attacked KSF with US equipment and Iranian artillery.



Turkish media claims US is using the Gol-KRG crisis to expand its influence, establish new bases.

**US-Led Coalition Jets Kill over 22 in Syria's Deir ez-Zor**  
[alwaght.com/en/news/114986](http://alwaght.com/en/news/114986) #Syria #DeirezZor #Airstrikes #Civilians #US



Syrian Regime accuses Coalition of inflicting civilian casualties in DaZ.



AAH leader post warns that US forces should be ready to leave Iraq once the excuse of ISIS presence is over.



Iranian media accuses US of selling arms to terrorists.

**Coalition is under attack from multiple actors in the information environment.**

# Legal Challenges: Information Space



- Limited authorities, withheld to highest levels
- Emerging Technology
- Counter-recruitment and counter-radicalization programs, support to moderate voices, and assisting partner nation counter-terror operations
- Prevention of ISIS recruitment and the growing reality that enemies focus heavily on their social media and cyber capabilities
- Disseminated via face-to-face communication, leaflets, television, radio, telephonically, and through the Internet; by, with, and through partner forces
- Can potentially trigger national interests and diplomatic concerns
- Other actors not held to the same standards

# Legal Challenges: Iraqi Elections

- What if new government is not favorable to the US and CF?
  - **Mandate/authorities**
  - **Coalition unity**
- What if new government lacks internal legitimacy?
  - **Local population**
  - **Tribal interests/PMF/Peshmerga**
- What is the reaction of other regional players and vested interests?

# Legal Challenges: Syria

- Manbij
  - **Independent Patrols**
  - **Working toward Joint Patrols**
  - **ROE considerations**
  - **Training**
- Partners to the political process
- Role of adversaries
- What does Northeast Syria look like post-Major Combat Operations?
  - **LBUF?**
- How do we partner with a non-government entity?
  - **Foreign fighters**
  - **FEPP/FERP**

# Legal Challenges: Stabilization and Humanitarian Needs

- Limitations of CTEF
  - Counter ISIS
- OHDACA = Not a Lot
  - Funding Limited
- Role of the Department of State
  - START FWD
  - USAID



# Takeways

- ISIS physical caliphate defeated BUT the ideology lives on
- The effort to defeat ISIS unified the coalition as well as the factions within Iraq. Once defeated, what can we do to maintain unity of effort?
- Near peer adversaries operating in increasing congested battlespace
  - **Opportunities for miscalculation**
- IO/MISO/Cyber – technology rapidly evolving, authorities are still withheld to high levels
  - **How do we rapidly respond to disinformation and propaganda**
- Authorities – focused almost exclusively on C-ISIS
  - **Operational**
  - **Fiscal**