

[WORLD NEWS ★ ★] OBAMA JUST DOUBLED DOWN ON THE BATTLE AGAINST ISIS

(P1) WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The US military has drawn up plans to significantly increase the number of American forces in Iraq, which now total around 1,400, as Washington seeks to bolster Iraqi forces battling the Islamic State, US officials told Reuters on Friday.

(P2) The United States aims to help advise and train Iraqi and Kurdish forces battling Islamic State fighters who swept into much of northern Iraq.

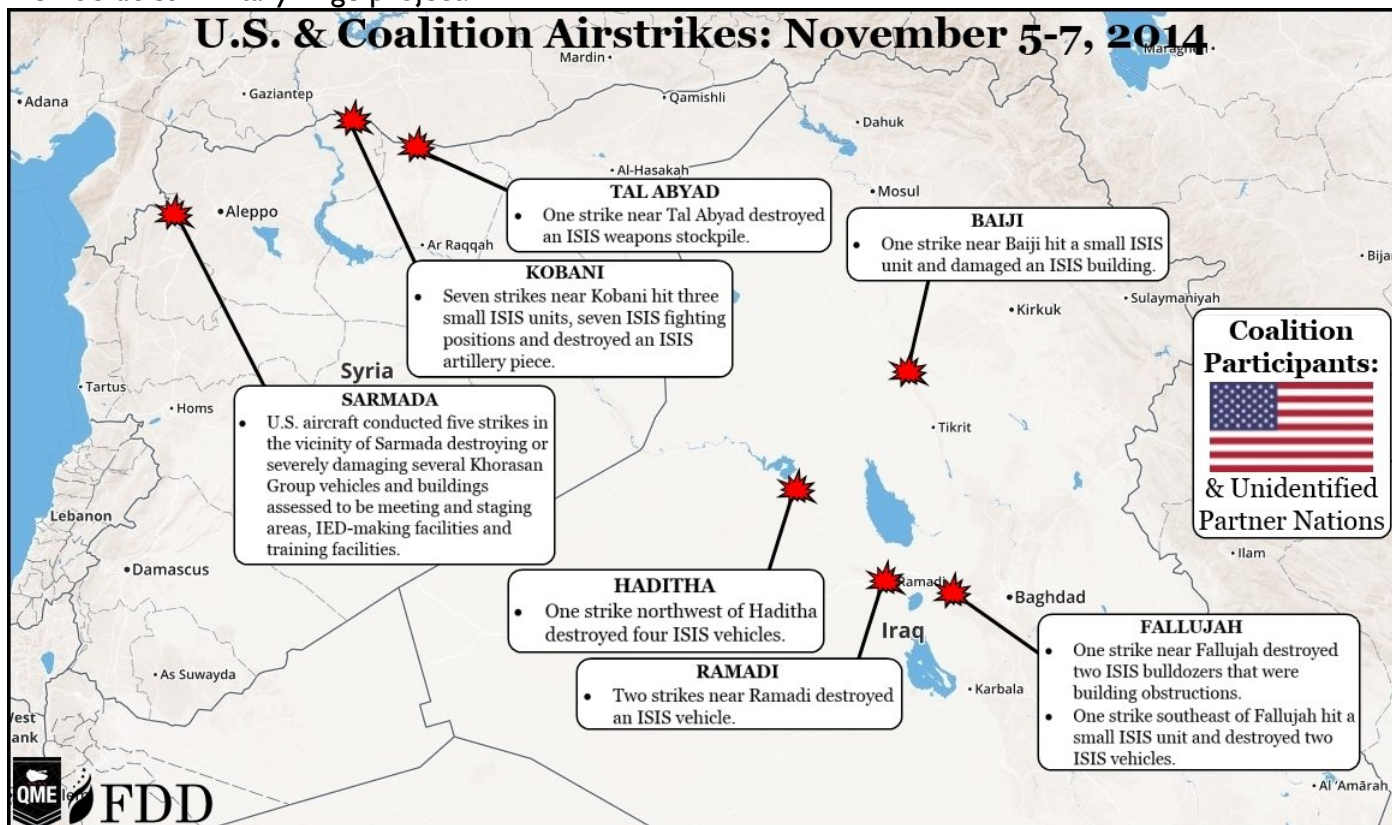
(P3) According to a statement from the Pentagon, "The commander-in-chief has authorized Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel to deploy to Iraq up to 1,500 additional US personnel over the coming months, in a non-combat role, to expand our advise and assist mission and initiate a comprehensive training effort for Iraqi forces."

(P4) This deployment will accommodate the training of 12 Iraqi brigades, including 9 from the Iraqi Army and 3 from the Kurdish Peshmerga, the paramilitary of Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government.

(P5) The decision was made "based on the request of the Government of Iraq, US Central Command's assessment of Iraqi units," and "the progress Iraqi security forces have made in the field."

(P6) This doubling of the US's ground presence in Iraq would come at a time when the American-led coalition in the country has made ambiguous progress in the fight against ISIS. Heavy aerial bombardment against ISIS positions outside of Kobane have managed to prevent the group from taking over the fiercely contested town, which sits on the Turkish-Syrian border.

(P7) Here are the latest positions of US airstrikes against ISIS, according to the Foundation for Defense of Democracies' Military Edge project:



(P8) But ISIS is consolidating its gains in the heavily-Sunni Anbar Province of western Iraq, where it has carried out massacres against the Albu Nimr, a Sunni tribe whose militia had been fighting against jihadists in the region since 2004. And last month, Obama reportedly sent a letter to Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, suggesting that cooperation against ISIS could help smooth the way to an eventual nuclear deal.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If you found the passage difficult to read or had problems understanding specific words or idiomatic expressions, please discuss them with your tutor. The following discussion questions should be answered in your own words and with your own arguments.

1. Briefly summarize the content of the article in your own words.
 2. What was the decision made by the Pentagon (P2-3)? What is the purpose of this measure taken?
 3. What does the author mean by “Obama just doubled down”? What kinds of risks are we talking about here?
 4. “Obama reportedly sent a letter to Iranian Supreme Leader Khamenei, suggesting that cooperation against ISIS could help smooth the way to an eventual nuclear deal. (P8)” Explain what this sentence means.
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WHO / WHAT / WHERE ARE THEY?

Islamic State (ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria)

(Organization) a Sunni, extremist, jihadist unrecognized state and self-proclaimed caliphate based in Iraq and Syria in the Middle East.

Reuters

(Media) an international news agency headquartered in Canary Wharf, London, England, United Kingdom and a division of Thomson Reuters. Until 2008, the Reuters news agency formed part of an independent company, Reuters Group plc, which was also a provider of financial market data. Since the acquisition of Reuters Group by the Thomson Corporation in 2008, the Reuters news agency has been a part of Thomson Reuters, forming part of its financial and risk division. It transmits news in English, French, Arabic, Spanish, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese and Chinese.

Kurdish

(History) The sinking of the MV Sewol (Korean: 세월호 침몰 사고; Hanja: 世越號沉沒事故) occurred on the morning of 16 April 2014 en route from Incheon to Jeju. The Japanese-built South Korean ferry capsized while carrying 476 people, mostly secondary school students from Danwon

The Pentagon

(Organization) the headquarters of the United States Department of Defense, located in Arlington County, Virginia. As a symbol of the U.S. military, "the Pentagon" is often used metonymically to refer to the U.S. Department of Defense.

Chuck Hagel

(Person) an American politician who is the 24th and current United States Secretary of Defense, serving since 2013. He served as a United States Senator from Nebraska from 1997 to 2009.

Kobane

(Place) Kobanî (Kurdish: Kobanî , كۆبانى), officially known as ‘Ayn al-‘Arab (Arabic: العرب عین), is a city in Aleppo Governorate in northern Syria, lying immediately south of the border with Turkey.

Albu Nimr

(People) a Sunni Arab tribe (عشيرة ashirah) of some 10,000 people living in the area of Ramadi in

Anbar Province of Iraq. It is part of the larger Dulaim tribe.

Sunni

(People) the largest branch of Islam; its adherents are referred to in Arabic as ahl as-sunnah wa l-jamā'ah (Arabic: والجماعة السنة أهل), "people of the tradition of Muhammad and the consensus of the Ummah" or ahl as-sunnah (السنة أهل) for short. In English, its theological study or doctrine is called Sunnism, while adherents are known as Sunni Muslims, Sunnis, and Sunnites. Sunni Islam is the world's second largest religious body (after Christianity) and the largest religious denomination for any religion in the world. Sunni Islam is sometimes referred to as the orthodox version of the religion.

Ali Khamenei

(Person) the second and current Supreme Leader of Iran and a Shia Cleric. Ali Khamenei succeeded Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the Iranian Revolution, after Khomeini's death, being elected as the new Supreme Leader by the Assembly of Experts on 4 June 1989. His tenure as Supreme Leader has been marked by several major protests in Iran, such as Iran student protests, July 1999, 2009–10 Iranian election protests and 2011–12 Iranian protests. He had also served as the President of Iran from 1981 to 1989. In 2012, Forbes selected him 21st in the list of The World's Most Powerful People.

VOCABULARY

Double down	(expression) 도박에서 베팅을 2배로 올린다; To double or significantly increase a risk, investment, or other commitment.
Draw up plans	(expression) 계획을 만들다
Bolster	(v) 북돋우다, 강화하다
Aim	(v) 목표하다
Sweep into	(expression) (정당이) 선거에서 낙승하다; [정당]을 선거에서 낙승시키다
Deploy	(v) (군대·무기를) 배치하다
Assist	(v) (어떤 일에) 도움이 되다
Initiate	(v) 개시되게 하다, 착수시키다
Comprehensive	(adj) 포괄적인, 종합적인
Accommodate	(v) (…을 위한) 충분한 공간을 제공하다
Brigade	(n) (군대의) 여단
Paramilitary	(n) 불법 무장 단체의
Autonomous	(adj) 자주적인, 자치의
Assessment	(n) 평가(한 의견)
Presence	(n) (특정한 곳에) 있음, 존재(함), 참석
Coalition	(n) (둘 이상의 정당으로 구성된) 연립 정부, 연정
Ambiguous	(adj) 애매모호한, 여러 가지로 해석할 수 있는
Aerial	(adj) 공중의, 대기의
Bombardment	(n) 포격, 폭격
Contest	(v) (주도권이나 권력) 다투다
Consolidate gains	(expression) 이익을 확보하다.
Massacre	(n) 대학살
Militia	(n) 민병대, 의용군
Jihadist	(n) 극 이슬람교도; jihad: a holy war undertaken as a sacred duty by Muslims.; any vigorous, emotional crusade for an idea or principle.
Smooth the way to	(expression) 장애물[곤란]을 제거하다
Eventual	(adj) 궁극적인