



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on May 16, 2015

U.S. Special Forces Raid Syria, Kill ISIS Commander

U.S. Special Operations forces killed a  senior Islamic State commander during a raid conducted in eastern Syria Friday night and early Saturday, U.S. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter said. The raid was intended to capture Abu Sayyaf, but the ISIS commander fought the effort and was among the dozen ISIS fighters killed in the firefight at a residential building in Deir Ezzor, [CNN reported](#). All the U.S. troops involved returned safely the report said.

The raid was part of a continuing campaign against the terrorist organization that is called both the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The organization has become infamous for its beheading of hostages and the execution of a captured Syrian pilot by burning him alive.

“Abu Sayyaf was involved in ISIL’s military operations and helped direct the terrorist organization’s illicit oil, gas, and financial operations as well,” Carter said. Sayyaf’s wife, an Iraqi named Umm Sayyaf, was captured and is currently in military detention in Iraq. National Security Council spokeswoman Bernadette Meehan issued a statement, saying Umm Sayyaf “played an important role in ISIL’s terrorist activities, and may have been complicit in what appears to have been the enslavement of a young Yezidi woman rescued last night.”

The United States and other nations have been conducting an air war against the Islamic State since last August, when Secretary of State John Kerry said the campaign, later dubbed Operation Inherent Resolve, was not a war, but a “heightened level of counterterrorism operation.” Earlier this year, President Obama submitted to Congress a proposed new Authorization for the Use of Military Force, but Congress has still not acted on it. The operation has so far lasted nine months and has cost the United States \$2.1 billion, [National Interest.org reported](#) on May 11.

The Constitution gives Congress the authority to declare war and the War Powers resolution, passed by Congress in 1973, forbids the engagement of U.S. military forces in hostilities for more than 60 days without an authorization or declaration of war by Congress. President Obama in 2011 conducted an air war over Libya for several months without seeking authorization from Congress.

The success of the Syrian raid may give rise in Congress and elsewhere to the commitment of U.S. “boots on the ground” in the fight against ISIS. According to the Pentagon, the only ground forces in the campaign are Special Operations units. President Obama, in an address to the nation last September, pledged that operations against the Islamic State would not involve another U.S. ground war in the region where the United States and coalition forces battled insurgents in Iraq for nearly nine years and are still engaged in Afghanistan, more than 13 years after the invasion of October 2001.

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