



Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve

HISTORY

2014-2023

ONE MISSION, MANY NATIONS

History of Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve

On 17 October 2014, the Department of Defense formally established Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve in order to formalize ongoing military actions against the rising threat posed by ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

2013

Rise of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham), also referred to as Da'esh. Taking advantage of a lawless environment fueled by sectarian strife, ISIS ascended from relative obscurity in 2013 to claim it had created an Islamic caliphate. Organized around an extremist socio-political ideology, ISIS acquired conventional weapons, established sizeable-armed formations, and took control of large areas within Iraq and Syria, perpetrating atrocities that shocked the world. Da'esh has been used as a way of challenging the legitimacy of the terror group due to negative connotations of the word. Da'esh is essentially an Arabic acronym formed from the initial letters of the group's previous name in Arabic - "al-Dawla al-Islamiya fil Iraq wa alSham". Although it does not mean anything as a word in Arabic, it sounds unpleasant and the group's supporters object to its use. Da'esh also sounds similar to an Arabic verb that means to tread underfoot, trample down, or crush something.

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2014

In June, the security situation in Iraq had deteriorated and Iraqi cities of Mosul and Tikrit fell to ISIS control. Department of Defense designated Army Central Command as Joint Forces Land Component Command for conduct of operations in Iraq. This designation established the first operational headquarters since departure of U.S. troops from the region in 2011. On September 17, 2014, DoD re-designated Army Central Command as Combined Forces Land Component Command, which ultimately led to formal establishment of Combined Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve, meaning that the world community joined the fight against ISIS. Currently, CJTF-OIR is the military component of a global Coalition of 77 nations and 5 international organizations who are operating in Iraq at the request of the Government of Iraq and in Syria in

support of a lasting political settlement based on UN Security Council Resolution 2254.

2014-2015

DoD formally established CJTF-OIR on October 17, 2014, to provide mission command of the defeat-ISIS fight. CJTF-OIR took the fight to ISIS via air operations. Phase I, Degrade, was led by the first commander of CJTF-OIR, Lt. Gen. James Terry. CJTF-OIR conducted strikes against Da'esh to blunt their expansion into Iraq and to begin to reduce their combat effectiveness. Defensive and offensive operations rapidly matured with the rescue of innocent Yazidi victims trapped on Sinjar Mountain, the recapture of the Mosul and Haditha dams, and the defense of Baghdad and Kirkuk.

The second commander Lt. Gen. Sean McFarland of III Armored Corps, assumed authority of CJTF-OIR from Army Central Command, on September 22, 2015. CJTF-OIR vigorously increased pressure on ISIS and shaped the battlefield for the liberation of terrain from ISIS control. Coalition fires targeted ISIS leadership and infrastructure. Deliberate and dynamic precision airstrikes targeted ISIS economic infrastructure, significantly degrading its ability to govern. CJTF-OIR transitioned from Phase I to Phase II by the end of 2015.

2015-2016

During Phase II, Counterattack, CJTF-OIR supported Iraqi Security Forces and Partner Forces in Syria as they attacked to liberate territory and people under the control of Da'esh. The third commander of CJTF-OIR XVIII Airborne Corps, commanded by Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend, assumed authority of CJTF-OIR from III Armored Corps, on 21 August 2016. CJTF-OIR seized the strategic airfield at Qayyarah, positioning Coalition forces within striking distance of the ISIS-controlled city of Mosul. Following a brief pause, Iraqi Security Forces, supported by Coalition fires, began the ground battle for East Mosul on October 17, 2016. Iraqi Security Forces and Partner Forces in Syria liberated the two capitols of the self-proclaimed caliphate; Raqqah in Syria on July 17, 2017 and Mosul in Iraq by July 20, 2017.

2017-2020

During Phase III, Defeat, CJTF-OIR conducted strikes in support of decisive battles against Da'esh. Fourth commander of CJTF-OIR, III Armored Corps, commanded by Lt. Gen. Paul Funk II, assumed authority of CJTF-OIR from XVIII Airborne Corps, on September 5, 2017. Iraqi Security Forces and Syrian Democratic Forces freed 155 villages, the cities of Hawijah, Al Qaim, Anah, Rawah, Raqqah, Dashisha, and much of eastern Dayr Az Zawr province.

Iraq declared victory over ISIS in that country on December 9, 2017, validated by largely peaceful elections for the Iraqi Parliament on May 12, 2018.

Additionally, the Iraqi Security Forces and Syrian Democratic Forces, working together, cleared all but the last 200 square kilometers of the Middle Euphrates River Valley. April 2018 was end of major combat in Iraq. Fifth commander of CJTF-OIR, XVIII Airborne Corps, commanded by Lt. Gen. Paul LaCamera, assumed authority of CJTF-OIR from III Armored Corps, on September 14, 2018. Increases in operational tempo, training and support to Iraqi Security Forces and Syrian Democratic Forces provided the foundation for broader strategic success. Train and equip funds provided necessary assets and capabilities to achieve increasingly higher levels of partner participation. With comprehensive and consistent Coalition support, Partner Forces steadily gained confidence needed to fight and win against ISIS. March 23, 2019, marked the end of ISIS control of any physical territory; culmination of a five-year fight; and ISIS reduced to an underground organization; its aspirations for a global caliphate laid to rest, as Da'esh was militarily defeated.

The sixth commander of CJTF-OIR III Armored Corps, commanded by Lt. Gen. Robert "Pat" White, assumed authority of CJTF-OIR from XVIII Airborne Corps, on September 14, 2019. Previously as Maj. Gen. White, he served with CJTF-OIR as commander of Combined Forces Land Component Command during July 2017 to March 2018. CJTF-OIR consolidated gains from 2019. Coalition and Partner Forces continued operations in Syria to target Da'esh smuggling, finance, media, and logistics networks. In Syrian airspace and along highways, Coalition de-conflicted operations with regional military forces. Throughout 2019, Coalition focused on Build Partner Capacity program to enhance Iraqi security capabilities through training, mentoring, and equipping our partner security forces.

2020

During Phase IV, Support Stabilization, CJTF-OIR provides security, planning, and required support to the Government of Iraq and appropriate authorities in Syria. On July 2, 2020, Task Force Iraq of CJTF-OIR transitioned to Military Advisor Group, as part of a new approach to support Iraqi Security Forces defeat Da'esh operations. Coalition advisor teams provide specialized planning mentorship to Iraqi Security Forces directorates overseeing operations, logistics, intelligence, and other military functions. Due to Iraqi Security Forces success in the campaign against Da'esh, Coalition adjusted its positioning and focus in Iraq. These military movements have been long-planned in coordination with Government of Iraq. On July 25, 2020, Coalition transferred the upgraded training site at Besmayah, Iraq, to ISF. This was the seventh base transferred to Iraqi Security Forces, as part of an ongoing partnership between

Iraqi Security Forces and anti-ISIS international military Coalition. On August 23, 2020, Coalition transferred the base at Taji, Iraq, to ISF. CJTF-OIR continues to relocate and consolidate personnel and equipment from Iraqi bases throughout 2020, in cooperation with Government of Iraq. Iraqi Security Forces increasingly conducts independent operations in the fight against Da'esh and defense of their homeland including the 2020 series of operations "Heroes of Iraq," in which they have cleared thousands of kilometers to capture enemy fighters and equipment.

The seventh commander of CJTF-OIR, Lt. Gen Paul T. Calvert, assumed authority of CJTF-OIR, on September 14, 2019.

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Maj. Gen. John W. Brennan, assumed command from Calvert on Sept. 9, 2021.

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Brennan transferred command to Maj. Gen. Matthew McFarlane on Sept. 8, 2022.

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20200903 This history of CJTF-OIR was adapted from several unclassified sources, for CJTF-OIR change-of-command ceremony 2020, compiled by COL Christopher Eng, CJTF-OIR Historian, <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/7mhd>

-- CJTF-OIR Campaign Design. <https://www.inherentresolve.mil/campaign/>

-- CJTF-OIR History 2014-2017. https://www.inherentresolve.mil/Portals/14/Documents/Mission/HISTORY_17OCT2014-JUL2017.pdf?ver=2017-07-22-095806-793

-- CJTF-OIR History from Change-of-command ceremony 2018.

-- CJTF-OIR History from CJTF-OIR Historian's portion of Joint Staff Orientation brief.

-- Definition of Da'esh from multiple sources.