



Rethink Rebuild Society

The voice of the Syrian Community of Manchester

Press Release

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RR Raises Questions over IS's Expansion into Syria

As the US-led coalition (the Coalition) against the so-called Islamic State (IS) continues, Rethink Rebuild Society (RR) questions why the recent gains made by IS have been allowed to happen.

The Coalition took robust measures to prevent IS's takeover of Kurdish-controlled Kobane. However, IS was allowed in the last few weeks to expand towards regime-held areas in Palmyra and towards opposition-held areas near Aleppo. Despite the Coalition's efforts to destroy IS, the group is now larger and more dangerous than it was at this time last year. Additionally, while the BBC reports that IS controls 25% less Iraqi territory than it did when the Coalition first came together in August 2014,* such a pattern does not hold for Syria, which has witnessed the continued expansion of IS forces into its territory.

Coalition partners noted yesterday the 'continued deterioration of the situation in Syria and the inability and unwillingness of [the Assad] regime to fight [IS]', and they 'reiterated the urgent need to find a political solution to the Syrian conflict to address the root causes of [IS] expansion.* RR shares these thoughts and questions why IS's recent gains have been allowed to happen. Why is the US-led coalition not using force to halt IS's spread into new territories within Syria? And why is there an absence of real pressure on Assad (for example, through imposing a no-fly zone over opposition-held areas) to work towards a political solution?

We recall that IS poses a direct threat upon the Syrian civilian population and its expansion into any Syrian territory should be opposed primarily by ending the brutality of Assad regime and putting real pressure on him to reach a political solution.

ENDS

For further information and press enquiries, please contact 07730194083, or email: advocacy@rrsoc.org

Rethink Rebuild Society has established itself as a non-profit organisation that acts as an umbrella for the Syrian community in Manchester, and endeavours to clarify the Syrian cause to its audience in the UK and the wider public.

*<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-32962870>

*<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/iraq-304/events-2526/article/ministerial-meeting-of-the-small>