



1.3. International involvement

1.3.1. US-led coalition

Following a large wave of US strikes on the ISIL sites in the central desert in the aftermath of the downfall of the Assad regime,[257](#) offensives by the US-led Global Coalition continued over the year 2025[258](#) and at least into February 2026,[259](#) in collaboration with the transitional government[260](#) and the SDF.[261](#) Notably, large-scale strikes were launched as part of Operation Hawkeye Strike, announced by the US on 19 December 2025 in response to an ISIL attack on 13 December in Palmyra that had resulted in three US fatalities.[262](#)

Meanwhile, after having been stationed in Syria since 2015,[263](#) the US government started to withdraw troops in April 2025,[264](#) handing over or closing down multiple bases.[265](#) On 16 April 2026, the US announced that it had completed the withdrawal of its forces from Syria and handed over its last remaining military base[266](#) (Qasrak air base in Hasaka). The transitional government has taken over control of all bases where US forces had been stationed.[267](#)

At the same time, longstanding US support for the SDF as a partner in fighting ISIL shifted during the reference period towards backing the transitional government.[268](#) The US envoy to Syria, Thomas Barrack, declared on 20 January 2026 that the 'original purpose of the SDF as the primary anti-ISIS force on the ground has largely ended'[269](#) and called on Kurds in the country to integrate into the new Syrian state.[270](#)

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