Innovations

Terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria and their threat to societal peace, A case study of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

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Abstract:

The terrorist group ISIS has posed a major threat to social peace in Iraq and Syria, employing violent tactics and promoting an extremist ideology that has led to widespread violence and destruction. The consequences of their actions have been devastating, causing immense human suffering, displacement, and a decline in living standards. The long-term implications include community fragmentation, institutional degradation, and decreased security in the region. The impact on human security has been significant, with civilians constantly living in fear of violence and insecurity. The effects of terrorism have resulted in extensive human suffering, displacement, and economic hardship. Fragmentation of communities and degradation of public institutions have further destabilized these countries. Addressing the threat of ISIS requires a comprehensive and sustained response from the international community.

Keywords: ISIS, Terrorism, Extremism, Middle East

Introduction:

Even though terrorism is a political phenomenon that human civilizations have been aware of since the dawn of time, it has received little attention in terms of definition, treatment, or research into the root causes and motivations of terrorism. Such terrorist activities have substantially increased in frequency after the fall of the Soviet Union. The quality and danger of terrorist activities have increased, and they now pose a "great" threat to the security and stability of global society(Hassan .2021).

At the national and international levels, terrorism is becoming a topic of worry due to its rising tendency in today's world. One of the main obstacles to international peace

and security is the proliferation of terrorist groups around the world. Terrorism was a key tool employed by both sides in revolutionary or liberation battles around the world in the 1950s and 1960s, whether they were in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, or Latin America. Terrorism can be widely construed as a coercive technique that utilizes or threatens to use violence to sow fear and advance political or ideological aims, even though there is no agreed-upon definition for the term. Modern terrorists use a variety of violent methods to indiscriminately target citizens, military sites, government employees, and other targets(UNODC. 2018). Everywhere in the world, terrorism spreads like wildfire, and its effects are felt far from the crime scene. Therefore, states now seriously worry about their security due to the growing prevalence of terrorism. The threat posed by international terrorism is still very real and present(Ogaba .2013).

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have experienced an upsurge in terrorist attacks and armed conflicts since 1989, which has led to a major increase in the region's military spending. For instance, between 2002 and 2018, the proportion of terrorist acts committed globally in the MENA region increased from 9.8% to 36.1% in this latter time frame, and 21.4% of all conflict-related deaths worldwide occurred in MENA, due to the spillover effects of international terrorism, losses in foreign direct investment (FDI), disruptions of oil exports, decreased economic development, and a significant refugee movement, the political violence and turmoil in the MENA area had adverse effects on neighboring regions(Kim & Sandler .2020).

 The 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq resulted in a continued division. Western troops and private contractors continued to occupy Iraq under the auspices of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), which was supported by the US Department of Defense, despite the widespread debunking of the false claims made by the US and UK that Saddam Hussein had WMD and had violated UNSC Resolution 14411 to justify regime change in Iraq. However, since the existence of WMDs could no longer be used as an excuse for the US to remain in Iraq, Washington's attention moved from the necessity to compel Iraq to abide by international conventions and treaties to the need to accomplish a democratic transition in Iraq (Calculli . 2019).

The beginning of the Syrian movement is very similar. first in Egypt, then at the beginning of the Libyan movement. Although Egyptian protesters used Cairo as a symbolic center of their movement, the uprising in Syria, such as in Libya, began in the governorates and southern Daraa province, triggering a small uprising. From there, protests spread to Houla in Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Latakia, Hama, Raqqa, Idlib, and many other places. The system components react strangely. This caused anti-regime sentiment and fueled the rebellion. When the protests were violently retaliated for, they led to even larger demonstrations, which in turn led to civil conflicts and another major global crisis, the influx of many Syrian refugees to Europe (Irwan . 2019). The Islamic State, often known as Daesh, has dominated the Western media for many years, perhaps the second most well-known terrorist group after Al-Qaida, known for its brutal killings of its enemies and the terrible destruction

of historical sites, and the first terrorist group in history to hold important territory in present-day Syria and Iraq, spreading the idea that they had established a truly Islamic state. To gather future extremists who subsequently served as spies for the group and laid the foundations for a takeover in some places, Daesh established a Dawah office in Syria. Due to intelligence, extortion, and mafia tactics, Daesh was able to take over areas that were not under the jurisdiction of the central government. At the same time, IS increased its operations in Iraq and a widespread insurgency led to a conventional conflict after the counterinsurgents (Borárosová et al . 2015).

concept of religious terrorism:

When people today hear the word 'terrorism', they often associate Al-Qaeda and other Islamic radicals. Although there is evidence that some types of terrorism are influenced by Islamic fanaticism, there are also many other subtypes, each with unique characteristics and implications for policy. Although types are often used to define a single terrorist organization, they are important for distinguishing the targets and drivers of these organizations. Furthermore, when someone or a group uses violence to fear people to promote a cause, promote political change, or take power from it, terrorism occurs in many different ways (John Shola. 2015). Religious beliefs and complaints can serve as sources of terrorism. Due to the enthusiasm of its practitioners and their willingness to die for this cause, religious terrorism is particularly dangerous. All-in techniques such as suicide bombing are more commonly used by religious terrorists. The religious doctrine that encourages and even justifies this kind of sacrifice makes it feasible (Hoffman. 2006).The best-known example of an organization that fits the definition of religious intolerance is al-Qaeda. The history of religious terrorism also includes the conflict between Muslims and Hindus in Pakistan and India and between Catholics and Protestants. Moreover, just like Al Qaeda in the Maghreb, Al Shabab in Somalia, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and other religious terrorist organizations, Boko Haram in Nigeria is another example of such a group, see Table 1 (John.Shola . 2015).

Table 1. Islamic extremist organizations and their affiliations.

The name of the terrorist group or organization	state	Religion or principles
Al-Qaeda	Middle East	Islamic extremists
ISIS	Iraq and Syria	Islamic extremists
Boko Haram	Nigeria	Islamic extremists
Al-Shabab	Somalia	Islamic extremists
Taliban	Afghanistan	Islamic extremists
Hezbollah	Lebanon	Islamic extremists

Given the table above, it is not an overstatement to say that the trend of terrorism can be linked to the Islamic world; this is an ideology that mostly originates from Islamic radicals in Islamic nations. Religious terrorism is a significant concern in the modern world. Ben Ali's. (2018) research on the topic of terrorism and Islamic law found that terrorism is not confined to any specific country or population, but rather it exists worldwide throughout history. It is

not inherently tied to any religion, although religions have been used as a disguise for terrorist actions. No nation or people are immune to terrorism, and religion itself is not the cause of terrorism. Instead, individuals who follow religious beliefs often become victims of terrorism (Ali .2018).Different Muslim schools, both Sunni and Shiite, hold their own understandings of jihad. While they may view other Muslims as the main adversaries of Islam, it is an oversimplification to claim that Muslims justify their war against Americans solely due to a general hatred for them. Rather, their animosity is primarily directed towards American foreign policy, which they believe hampers the promotion of democracy and freedom in the Muslim world. Their opposition is not aimed at American democracy or the American way of life in general (Hashmi . 2015).

The phenomenon of terrorism and extremism in Iraq:

The deployment of significant US forces to the Gulf in August 1990 had a series of subsequent effects. These included the emergence of Al Qaeda in the 1990s, the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the second US conflict with Iraq in 2003, and the rise of ISIS. Although various political and social factors were involved, the continuous presence of the US military and the strategies employed by US soldiers were crucial factors contributing to the turmoil in the Arab and Islamic world. Furthermore, this sequence of events influenced the Arab Spring and led to the establishment of failed governments in Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and Syria (Ould . 2017). On 19March 2003, the United States launched an attack on Iraq. According to a Gallup survey conducted shortly after the invasion, 72% of Americans expressed support for the war in Iraq. Moreover, 73% of Americans believed that the US involvement in Iraq was morally acceptable. However, in 2013, 63% of Americans stated that sending soldiers to Iraq was a mistake. By 2019, 50% of Americans (Gallup . 2022).

Since the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, there has been a surge in suicide terrorism, which sets it apart from previous instances in terms of frequency, racial dynamics, and sectarian distribution (Kelly.2008). The past few decades have been marked by conflict, including the Gulf War and the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. These wars have resulted in increased violence against women and ethnic minorities and have triggered a devastating civil war in Iraq. The conflict has left nearly two million people internally displaced, exacerbating the fragility of the nation (Aubert . 2021). ISIS adopts a stricter stance on takfir, which involves declaring other Muslims as infidels and excommunicating them. Their ideology, influenced by Zarqawi, emphasizes purifying Islam from within and labeling Muslims deviating from their authorized understanding of the religion as heretics deserving execution. On the other hand, AQ avoids killing Muslims as it contradicts their broad jihadist agenda and risks losing support within the Muslim ummah, regardless of whether the victims are Shia or Sunni. AQ focuses on a jihad against the West and seeks to avoid obstacles to its global campaign whenever possible (Jasko et al. 2021).

As a result of the deteriorating security situation, Iraq experienced an upsurge in suicide bombs during 2003, with 87 incidents, 6 suicide bombings, 347 fatalities, and 1261 injured, these numbers have increased, culminating in 2007, the total number of terrorist attacks (1041) and suicide bombings (203), the number of suicide assaults (682), the number of suicide deaths (6334), and the number of injured (11965) (24354) the results are shown in the following table, along with the number of injured (45172), (Mahmud .2020).

Table 2 Terrorist statistics in Iraq for the Period (2003-2010).

year	Terrorist attacks	Suicide attacks	Wounded	Dead
2003	87	6	1261	347
2004	305	25	3961	2990
2005	619	162	5974	3337
2006	836	95	8256	4591
2007	1041	203	11965	6334
2008	1103	88	6637	2841
2009	1134	53	9373	2573
2010	1176	50	6745	2041
Total	6301	648	45172	24354

Table (2) Source:(JASSEM et al. 2010)

The prevailing narrative surrounding the War on Terror, particularly the Iraq War, suggests that Bush, Cheney, and their neoconservative allies orchestrated a calculated scheme to deceive and manipulate the American people in pursuit of their neoimperialist agenda for uncontested US hegemony. Although certain aspects of this narrative may be accurate, it oversimplifies the situation, undermines public agency, and neglects to account for broader sociopolitical changes that unfolded after the Cold War (Philippe. 2022).

In 2003, Al-Qaeda infiltrated Iraq as foreign militants flocked to the country to combat American forces. To attract recruits and fulfill one of Al-Qaeda's original objectives of establishing a transnational Islamic caliphate under Sharia law, Al-Qaeda in Iraq later changed its name to Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) in 2006. The Islamic State's stated goals include targeting Americans and Israelis. The war in Iraq and the subsequent occupation by coalition forces have been the most significant developments in American relations with the countries of the Greater Middle East in the past 50 years. This occupation marked the first time since the decolonization of the Middle East that a Western nation took control of a Muslim nation's government. The implications of this situation are substantial. Evaluation of the effects of the Iraq War can be done in three ways: its impact on the Muslim world, the Greater Middle East, and the future development of Iraq. Modern terrorism in Iraq employs various tactics, including bombings and car bombs. The detonation of vehicles, explosives, and suicide belts significantly affects human security and development in the country. From 2010 to 2014, a total of 15,964 deaths and 15,964 injuries were attributed to these attacks. The peak occurred in 2013, as shown in Table (3), which provides details on the number of deaths (11,965), injuries (4,950), vehicle bombings (470), explosive devices (344), explosive belts (502) and total injuries (40,627) (Mahmud. 2020). Chart (1) shows the number of people killed during the same period (2010-2014) due to explosives and explosive belts.

Table 3 shows the impact of terrorist attacks on human security and development (2010-2014).

year	Car bombs	explosive belts	explosive devices	Others affected	wounded
2010	86	147	42	356	31938
2011	71	7	36	80	2011
2012	120	5	84	224	2223
2013	470	502	344	40627	4950
2014	314	29	578	397	9964
total	1061	690	1084	41684	51086

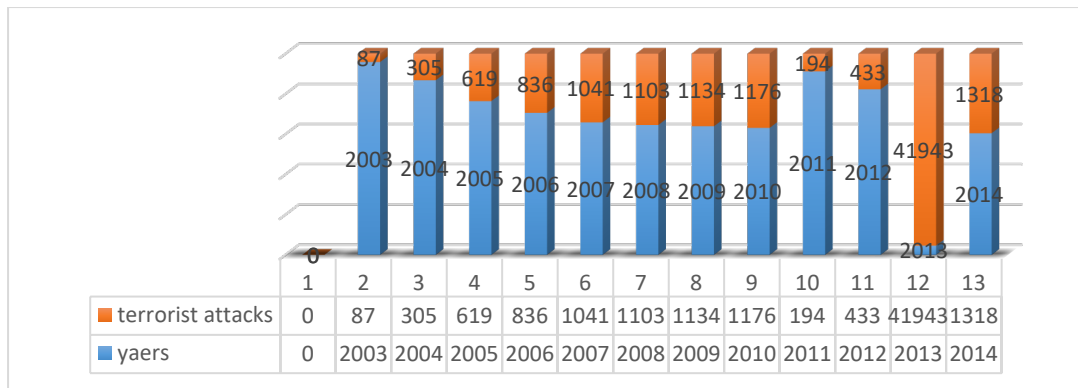**Table (3) Source: The Impact of Terrorism on Human Rights, 2003-2008. (2009-2011), (www.protectinged.cation.org).**

Chart (1) Number of people killed.

number killid people	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
number killid people	1074	747	584	11965	1594	

According to Bicer (2018),Al Qaeda and ISIS are two significant Salafist organizations of fundamentalists that engage in religious terrorism in the 21st century. Following the start of the US-led coalition's operations in Iraq, ISIS played a significant role in the Sunni rebellion. ISIS movement is openly at odds with the governments of Syria and Iraq (Biçer . 2018).When introducing his concept in 2004, David Rapoport issued a warning that the life cycles of previous terrorist groups might deceive us, suggesting that the resilience of religious groups could prolong this wave of terrorism longer than its predecessors. The argument that the work is ongoing, and the objectives have not yet been achieved is supported by subsequent acts of international terrorism after 2004, which trace back to the emergence of Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (Jamal Khan . 2022).

Tables 2 and 3 provide information on the number of terrorist operations or attacks carried out by various terrorist groups and organizations in Iraq from 2003 to 2014, as depicted in chart No.2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
■ terrorist attacks	0	87	305	619	836	1041	1103	1134	1176	194	433	41943	1318
■ yaers	0	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014

In the aftermath of the 2003 invasion that triggered sectarian strife, Iraq became an insurgency. The terrorist organization ISIS also took control of several Iraqi cities, and a large part of the population was displaced to other regions as soon as the Islamic State organization took control of those places(Martini et al. 2019).

The phenomenon of terrorism and extremism in Syria:

Since its establishment, the Syrian Arab Republic has experienced numerous acts of terrorism, primarily perpetrated by rebel groups and anti-government forces. Terrorism has deep roots in the history of the country, passed down from one generation to another (Alharbi. 2021). The onset of the Arab Spring in 2011 triggered violent clashes in Syria (Altaweel. 2019). Unlike Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, where the governments were overthrown by the revolution, the Assad regime has managed to retain power in Syria despite the ongoing war. However, this has generated various security concerns among different factions within the country. The Syrian uprising began differently compared to the uprisings in Libya and Egypt. While the demonstrations in Egypt centered around Cairo, the capital city, the revolts in Syria and Libya originated in the countryside. In March 2011, the Syrian people chose peaceful protests President Bashar Al-Assad and his wife, Asma Al-Assad, as they believed the couple had been exploiting the nation's resources for nearly a decade (Irwan et al. 2019).

The initial focus of the protests in Syria was on local issues, such as the removal of an unpopular governor. However, as the demonstrations gained momentum, they shifted to national concerns, including the brutality of the Syrian regime, corruption, the lack of democratic institutions, and ultimately the demand for the immediate overthrow of Assad. This uprising eventually led to one of the bloodiest confrontations in recent Arab history, its roots grounded in the democratic ideals of the early revolutionaries who took to the streets (Irwan et al. 2019).Before the Arab uprising, the situation in Syria was comparable to that in Egypt, which inspired the populace to rebel against the ruling class (Alrowaiti . 2017).The situation in Syria became more complex due to international and regional intervention, which further divided the Syrian people into opposing and hostile groups. Countries such as the United States, Russia, France, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia have supported different factions, deeply impacted Syrian national security and undermined the country's core national

interests (Alharbi .2021). ISIS emerged in 2012 during the peak of the civil war, bringing chaos and destruction to the nation. The group has been held responsible for numerous bombings, large-scale destruction in Syria, and the execution of thousands of civilians, pro-government forces, as well as local and foreign journalists. Estimates indicate that over 1,400 individuals have been killed by ISIS (Bellin.2012). According to a study conducted in 2014 by Sarihan, the Islamic State has carried out a total of 143 attacks. in 29 countries, killing a great number of people and destroying property. It is important to note that the Islamic State does not simply launch attacks in Syria alone (Sarihan . 2014).The civil conflict that began in Syria in March 2011 created favorable conditions for ISI (Islamic State of Iraq) to thrive. In January 2012, the Al-Nusra Front, also known as the "support front," was established as ISI's Syrian affiliate. However, the Al-Nusra Front later separated from ISI, which changed its name to the Islamic State in Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS), due to an early disagreement between the two groups. Ayman al-Zawahiri, the commander of Al-Qaeda, declared support for the Al-Nusra Front and its separation from ISI. After the split, ISIS declared itself the Islamic State, also known as the "Caliphate State," while the Al-Nusra Front weakened (ITIC . 2014). According to Sity Daud (2015), violence and civil war have devastated the state's infrastructure and the overall nature of the state, leading to environmental instability. Conflict and instability can arise from various political, economic, and social factors (Daud et al . 2015). This includes the central desert regions of the governorates of Hama, Homs, Aleppo, and Deir Ez Zor, where persistent, low-level activity was still being observed in mid-2017 after Syrian troops took control of the region (Carter Center Syria . 2019).ISIS is not the only source of instability in the area or threat brought about by the rise of sectarian and ethnic warfare in Syria, although all nations must keep in mind that while certain terrorist attacks can be prevented and thoroughly beaten, a long-lasting triumph cannot be achieved unless the root causes of terrorism are jointly tackled and a concerted campaign against all forms of terrorism is maintained.

Table (4) The changes in uneasy relations in Syria are depicted in the table below.

	ISIS	USA/EU	TUR	IRAN	RUSS	SDF	FSA	SYR.GOV.
ISIS	-	E	E	E	E	E	E	E
USA/EU	E	-	F	E	E	F	N	E
TUR	E	F	-	N	N/U	E	F	E
IRAN	E	E	N	-	F	N/M	E	F
RUSSIA	E	E	N/U	F	-	F	E	F
Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)	E	F	E	N/M	F	-	E	E
Free Syrian Army (FSA)	E	N	F	E	E	E	-	E
SYRIA GOVERNMENT	E	E	E	F	F	E	E	-

(N: Neutral, U: Unfriendly, M: Mistrust, F: Friendly, E: Enemy).

The origins and development of isis in Iraq & Syria

ISIS originated as a splinter group of Al-Qaeda, which was established in Iraq in 2004 after the US invasion and led by Ayman al-Zawahiri. With the collapse of the Iraqi army and Saddam Hussein's administration, as well as the growing animosity among Sunni Muslims towards the Shiite-dominated central government in Baghdad supported by the United States, ISIS filled the security and political void. During the conflict with the US and its allies, an Iraqi faction of Al-Qaeda gradually emerged, adopting the name Islamic State in Iraq (ISI) and gaining prominence among anti-American militants (ITIC. 2014) The self-proclaimed "Islamic State" traces its origins back to jihadist organizations active in the 1990s. These organizations, such as Bayat al-Imam and Jama'at al-Tawidwa-al-Jihad, were led by the Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Following the invasion of Iraq in 2003, Zarqawi began targeting Shiite and Kurdish communities that were gaining prominence in post-Saddam Hussein Iraq, with the aim of both expelling foreign forces and inciting a sectarian civil war (Tomé . 2015).

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who was born in Samarra in 1971, emerged on the scene with an image similar to Al-Zarqawi. Samarra is situated in the "Sunni Triangle" north of Baghdad. Al-Baghdadi was one of the founding members of Ahl al-Sunnah Wal Jama'ah. Following his capture by US forces in Fallujah in 2004, he was held at Camp Bucca alongside numerous other prisoners (Tomé .2015).

The origins of ISIS are closely tied to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, often considered the group's founding figure. Although Zarqawi laid the ideological groundwork for ISIS, his early years did not exemplify Islamic purity (Jasko et al. 2021). In 2013, after the Islamic State and a faction of the Al-Nusra Front merged, the group adopted the names Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Islamic State. It is commonly referred to as "The State" in Syria. The term ISIL or ISIS, used by Western media to emphasize its armed group nature rather than a state, is highly controversial and arguably inaccurate, given the organization's strong emphasis on state formation (Serbakov . 2021).

The rise of ISIS, fueled by the Arab Spring protests and increasing sectarian tensions driven by the geostrategic competition between Shia and Sunni nations in the region, poses a new challenge to the Middle East's regional security order. ISIS not only threatens the lives of those living under oppressive regimes but also jeopardizes the stability of neighboring countries. Resolving the issues associated with ISIS requires more than just military actions; it necessitates addressing the underlying conflicts and considering global security implications (Biçer. 2018). Zarqawi aimed to draw the US into a prolonged conflict that would undermine its superpower status. He sought to instigate sectarian strife between Sunnis and Shias, viewing the latter as traitors and non-believers. Zarqawi believed that large-scale violence would intimidate his adversaries and rally support for the jihadist cause (Jasko et al. 2021).

After the Americans took over the country in 2003, a new period was born in Iraq, and this is when ISIS emerged. Saddam Hussein's administration was overthrown, the Iraqi army was dismantled, and the country's current political system was destroyed as a result of the Second Gulf War. The unstable Sunni-Shi'ite rift was in the center of the country's delicate social fabric, which was as a result seriously harmed. A security and government vacuum was also formed(ITIC. 2014).

The United States Army was stationed in Iraq for about nine years (from 2003 to 2011), but throughout that time, the Americans were unable to build up an efficient Iraqi military and security apparatus to fill the resulting security void. The Americans supported the formation of Nouri al-alleged Maliki's Shi'ite government when they were in Iraq. Despite being a minority (approximately 22% of Iraqis are Sunni Arabs, together with the Sunni Kurds; 60% of Iraqis are Shi'ites), the administration alienated the Sunni community, who had historically ruled the nation(ITIC . 2014).

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria has a long-term recruitment strategy. ISIS administrative growth of ISIS happened gradually and changed over time. The first indications of the ISIS rule appeared in the spring of 2013. It is crucial to note that ISIS's plan for growth involved some degree of gradualism in most locations where it had a presence since it was just one of several competing groups in those locations(Bloom . 2016).

ISIS declared an Islamic caliphate in June 2014 after extending its control over vast swaths of territory in both Syria and Iraq and taking advantage of the growing turmoil and chaos in these two countries. The organization wants to create a nation under strict Islamic law. Despite efforts to weaken and eliminate the group, ISIS still controls large parts of the territory in Syria and Iraq. The organization captured Ramadi in the Anbar Governorate in Iraq and the Syrian city of Palmyra in May 2015. According to the statistics of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, the Islamic State controls more than half of Syria (Alkaff . 2016).

On the other hand, the IS has spread far beyond Syria and Iraq, carrying out acts that were organized into three circles by the Institute for the Study of War: an "inner ring" that included Jordan, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, as well as Iraq and Syria; a "near abroad" circle that included Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya, Turkey, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and the Caucasus; and an "outer abroad" circle that included the acts that were carried out in(Gambhir . 2015).

Understanding the ideology and aims:

The invasion of Iraq was initially planned with the assumption that overthrowing the government and restoring its institutions would be relatively easy. The Middle East was expected to undergo significant political restructuring, unlike anything seen since the establishment of contemporary Arab nations after World War I. Initially, most members of Al Qaeda in Iraq were foreign jihadists under the command of the

Jordanian-born Zarqawi. The Baathists, through their conflicts, brought suffering, poverty, and isolation to Iraq. By inciting sectarian strife and carrying out suicide attacks in Shia neighborhoods, they sought to establish themselves as the primary advocates for Sunni interests in Iraq (Hafez . 2007). Islamist Salafis pursued a plan to demolish the existing system and impose a Sunni-dominated limited government similar to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Their attacks mainly targeted Shia civilians and Iraqi security forces, while also targeting foreign media, interpreters, drivers, and Iraq's infrastructure. Al Qaeda went even further by deliberately provoking sectarian conflict through attacks on Shia worshippers and non-Shia individuals at mosques, markets, funerals, and other religious gatherings (Hafez. 2007).

A-ISIS ideology:

ISIS, also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, has exhibited remarkable popularity and the ability to attract Muslims from various parts of the globe(Mahood &Rane 2017). Similarly to al-Qaeda, the Islamic State is associated with the Jihadi-Salafi school of Islamic political thought, which is also known as jihadism (Bunzel . 2015).The ideology of ISIS is grounded in a militant interpretation of Sunni Islam. The group's objective is to establish an Islamic state, known as a caliphate, encompassing the Muslim world. ISIS finds inspiration in the early stages of Islam and the writings of Islamist thinkers such as Sayyid Qutb. Their beliefs are characterized by strict adherence to Sharia law and a rejection of Western values and modernity (Mahood& Rane.2017).ISIS supporters strategically utilize ideology to create divisions and garner support for their military actions. They label their opponents as nonbelievers, attributing this to the failure of implementing Sharia law or practice ingbidah (innovation). The conquest of parts of northern Syria and western Iraq by ISIS in 2013-2014 is evidence of the group's aspiration to establish a state based on Islamic principles, contributing to its territorial expansion. Non-Muslim residents have been faced with the options of paying a substantial tax, converting to Islam, or facing execution. Consequently, this has led to a significant influx of refugees from areas under the authority of ISIS, with communities such as Catholic, Orthodox, and Yazidi Christians among those forced to seek refuge (Tobing & Indradjaja 2019).The provisional nature of Islamic perspectives, particularly jihadi-salafism, makes it impossible to consider them as part of a unified and homogeneous movement. Although organizations such as Al Qaeda and ISIS share core theological ideas such as jihad (translated as "fight"), tawhid (translated as "monotheism"), takfir (translated as "ex-communication"), al-hakimiyya (translated as 'applying Allah's rule"), and al-wallawa al-bara' (translated as 'loyalty to Muslims and disavowal of non-Muslims"), the practical implementation of these concepts varies (Ajjoub . 2021)**.**

B-The aims of ISIS:

ISIS had the goal of creating a caliphate in Iraq and Syria, based on their radical interpretation of Sunni Islam. They intended to enforce their strict version of Islam on the people they conquered, eliminating anyone who opposed their ideology, even fellow Muslims (Gerges . 2016).Furthermore, ISIS aimed to extend its territorial control and increase its influence through acts of violence and terrorism, including brutal massacres, beheadings of religious and ethnic minorities, and targeting both civilians and military personnel (English et al.2017)Notorious for its ruthless tactics, ISIS has gained infamy through acts such as mass killings, beheadings, and the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war. Their actions have drawn widespread condemnation from the international community, leading to a coalition led by the United States that has been involved in military operations against the group in Iraq and Syria since 2014(United Nations. 2017).ISIS attempted to create a Caliphate, an Islamic State, that surrounded Iraq and Syria using brutal violence and terrorism. It aims to oppress the people of these nations and impose their governance. In 2014, the group achieved substantial territorial gains in both countries and declared the establishment of its caliphate. Despite the defeat of their territory by the international and local military forces in 2017, ISIS continues to carry out attacks in the region and threatens stability and security.

ISIS: A Threat to Global Peace, Security, and the Global Community:

ISIS (Iraq and Syria Islamic State) is a Sunni extremist group responsible for numerous violent and terrorist acts since its establishment in 2014. The group's ideology is based on a Puritan interpretation of Sunni Islam and its goal of establishing a caliphate or a state governed by Islamic law in the region. In recent years, ISIS's territorial control has declined considerably following military operations by various countries, including the United States, Russia, and Iraq. However, the group continues to pose a threat through its members and by the individuals inspired to carry out attacks in its name. ISIS is a serious threat to world peace and security, attacking many countries, including France, Belgium, Turkey, Iraq, and Syria, and carrying out dreadful attacks. His brutal tactics, such as decapitation, mass killing, and the use of chemical weapons, have provoked widespread fears and instability in the region and elsewhere. The threat posed by ISIS is felt worldwide, and the group has launched attacks in countries such as the United States, France, and the United Kingdom. In response, many countries, including the United States and its allies, launched military operations against the group in Iraq and Syria to defeat it and restore stability in the region. Some observers claim that the Islamic State wants these attacks to seduce Western nations in a prolonged military confrontation, perhaps to carry out the prophecy of the end. Two of the suicide bombers who carried out the Paris attacks in November 2015 fled to Europe through Greece as migrants. This fueled anti-immigrant sentiment throughout Europe, Turkey,

and Syria, which share a 500-mile border used by foreign militants to join and leave the battles. A U.S.-backed operation is currently underway to recover the last section of the border that the Islamic State has taken over. The actions of ISIS have not only caused immense suffering to individuals but also threatened the fabric of society in Iraq and Syria. The targeted violence against minority communities has deepened sectarian divisions and undermined social cohesion, while the widespread destruction of cultural heritage sites has erased a significant part of the region's history and cultural identity(*UNOCHA.* 2021).

The actions of ISIS not only caused enormous suffering to individuals but also threatened the fabric of Iraq and Syria's society. Violence against minority communities has deepened sectarian divisions and undermined social cohesion, while the widespread destruction of cultural heritage sites has erased an important part of the region's history and cultural identity (UNOCHA.2021). The response to these attacks was to continue the counter-terrorism operations of Iraq's security forces, which demonstrated that the threat posed by ISIS continued to persist in Iraq and highlighted the need for continuous vigilance and counter-terrorism efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region(United Nations Security Council.2023).

Women and children escaping the final ISIS-held territory cram into a bus to get to camps held by Kurdish-Syrian troops. Credit... For The New York Times, Ivor Prickett.

Conclusion:

ISIS, the Islamic State of Iraq and Lebanon, poses a major threat to Iraq and Syria's social peace and stability. The brutal tactics and ideology that include targeting religious and ethnic minority groups, widespread human rights violations, and destruction of cultural heritage sites have caused enormous suffering and deepened sectarian divisions in the region. The conflict between ISIS and government forces also led to the widespread destruction of infrastructure and housing, creating conditions of poverty and despair for many civilians. Population displacement has disrupted the local economy and communities and made it difficult for people to rebuild their lives. The constant threat posed by ISIS, as highlighted in the case study, underlines the need to continue to take care of the root causes of conflict, including political, economic, and social inequality. It is only through military operations, humanitarian assistance, and long-term development and reconciliation initiatives that

the prospects of peace and stability in Iraq and Syria can be improved. The international community must continue to support the efforts of the Governments of Iraq and Syria in combating terrorism and promoting stability, security, and peace in the region.

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