

Damascus: We Are on the Verge of Defeating ISIS

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Global Research, August 27, 2018

[Fort Russ](#) 26 August 2018

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Syria is on the verge of a final and total victory over the ISIS terrorist group, Syrian ambassador to Russia Riyad Haddad said Saturday.

"We are on the verge of the final victory over the terrorism represented by Daesh [ISIS]," Haddad said during a meeting with the president of the South Ossetian republic in Tskhinvali.

The conflict between government forces, and jihadist terrorist groups has been ongoing in Syria since 2011. Since 2015, Russian forces have supported the Syrian army in its fight against terrorism. At the end of 2017, the defeat of ISIS in the Arab country was declared.

Government forces that have recently regained control over most previously terrorist-controlled territories are still conducting terrorist offensives in some parts of the country where ISIS still exists.

However, the ISIS terrorist group has been transformed into a clandestine network and currently has more than 20,000 members in Iraq and Syria, according to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in his report on the ISIS threat.

The text states that "despite continued efforts by countries undertaking measures to combat terrorism and prevent violent extremism that leads to terrorism, many problems remain to be resolved."

"These problems are due to the continuous transformation of Daesh from a territory to the clandestine network," the document says.

He notes that the core of this network is "weak" but still alive "in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, with regional subsidiaries in the Middle East, Africa and Asia."

Another troubling problem, he adds, is "the return and movement of foreign terrorists and members of their families."

According to UN estimates, ISIS has a total of more than 20,000 members in Iraq and Syria, including foreign jihadists.

The report notes that the flow of foreign terrorists to ISIS in Iraq and Syria "has generally

ended,” but what remains a serious problem is their return to their countries of origin, a process that takes “slower than the expected.”

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