

## Questions Linger as US Special Ops Claims Credit for Killing ISIS Leader Abu Sayyaf

By [Brandon Turbeville](#)

Global Research, May 18, 2015

[Activist Post](#) 17 May 2015

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

With its latest phony narrative used to justify US military action inside Syria, the mainstream media and the US Government have now openly admitted that US forces are already active inside the country and that they are taking part in combat operations on the ground.

The US military, who is supposed to exist for the sole purpose of protecting and defending the nation from invasion and whom [President Barack Obama promised](#) would not be committed to “boots on the ground” in Syria, is now directly involved in initiating and participating in yet another foreign war for geopolitical standing and the benefit of international banks and corporations.

[According to mainstream Western reports](#), US Special Operations Forces carried out a raid in Deir al-Zour in Syria, allegedly killing Abu Sayyaf (aka Mohammed Shalabi), and capturing Sayyaf’s wife. The US has described Sayyaf as the equivalent of ISIS’ Chief Financial Officer and that he was responsible for directing ISIS’ financial operations related to oil and gas.

[As USA TODAY writes](#),

U.S. Special Operations forces carried out a major raid deep inside eastern Syria, killing a senior Islamic State leader who oversees illicit oil production and capturing his wife, Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter said Saturday.

Carter said Abu Sayyaf, also known as Mohammed Shalabi, “was killed during the course of the operation when he engaged U.S. forces.”

He said none of the U.S. forces was killed or injured during the raid.

Abu Sayyaf was involved in the extremist group’s military operations and helped direct its illicit oil, gas and financial operations, Carter said in a statement.

Although Sayyaf was not taken alive, U.S. forces did capture some of his communications equipment, sources familiar with the operation [told CNN](#).

A U.S. defense official said the raid was conducted overnight Friday (Friday evening Washington time) by a team of Army Delta commandos who flew from Iraq into eastern Syria aboard V-22 Osprey aircraft and Blackhawk helicopters, the Associated Press reports.

Upon arrival at the target, which was a multi-story building, the Americans met stiff resistance. A “fairly intense firefight” ensued, including hand-to-hand combat, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss details of the raid by name.

One unidentified source with contacts in the area [told the BBC](#) that the operation lasted for about 30 minutes around dawn in the residential quarters of the al-Omar oil field, which houses about 500 families of Islamic State fighters.

“The operation represents another significant blow to ISIL, and it is a reminder that the United States will never waver in denying safe haven to terrorists who threaten our citizens, and those of our friends and allies,” Carter said.

The White House said in a separate statement that ISIL’s oil and operations are “a key source of revenue that enables the terrorist organization to carry out their brutal tactics and oppress thousands of innocent civilians.”

Sayyaf’s wife was allegedly taken to Iraq for interrogation.

Interestingly enough, it was previously announced by the Syrian government that the SAA had killed an ISIS “oil minister” along with 40 ISIS fighters in an operation in Deir al-Zour, although the oil official was reported as being Abu al-Taym al-Saudi. The report stated that he had been killed in Omar oilfield, Deir al-Zour’s largest oilfield.

With these new reports coming from the mainstream press and the subsequent propaganda narrative being produced and shoveled to the American people, however, it is necessary to make a number of points and ask some relevant questions.

### **American Boots On The Ground In Syria**

The fact that the United States and a number of other Western countries are engaged in a [bombing campaign inside Syria](#) is evidence enough that the US military is directly involved in combat operations there. That the United States and NATO along with the GCC and Israel have [funded, facilitated, trained, and armed](#) the terrorists running rampant across Syria is also well-known. However, with the recent announcement that US Special Forces have conducted a raid in Deir al-Zour marks the first public announcement that US military personnel are physically on the ground inside the country and are conducting military operations.

This, of course, is despite repeated promises by US President Barack Obama that there would be no boots on the ground inside Syria.

This would not be the first time that Western personnel has been found on the ground inside Syria, however, since, early on in the conflict, [French intelligence officers were captured](#) by Syrian government forces but returned to the French government. The US [CIA has long been involved inside Syria](#), ever since the beginning of the conflict until the present day.

### **Are US Forces Taking Credit For Syrian Military Victory?**

Considering the fact that the Syrian military, one of only a handful of governments who are actually fighting ISIS (Iraq, Iran, Lebanon/Hezbollah, Houthis) in the Middle East, had claimed

a victory strangely similar to that which the US claimed later, it is reasonable to wonder whether or not the US is simply taking credit for an operation that was conducted by the Syrian military. This would have removed the ability of the Syrian government to take advantage of such a useful morale booster as well as provided the ability to broadcast more chest pounding propaganda to audiences back home in the West.

After all, this would [not be the first time that the American military took credit for another country's victory](#). Remember, during the crisis where Yazidis had been trapped on top of Mt. Sinjar in Iraq, it was Kurdish fighters from Iraq and Syria that fought hard and long to defeat ISIS fighters at the bottom and evacuated the trapped civilians. Western media, however, was plastered with headlines praising the brave American soldiers who were given credit for the operation.

While the name of the individual allegedly killed the Syrian military was different from that of the name of the man allegedly killed by the US, given the shadowy nature of the US-backed al-Qaeda and ISIS forces, it is also reasonable to question whether or not Sayyaf ever actually existed or whether or not he was actually killed if he did.

Indeed, it should be remembered that the United States has no interest in defeating ISIS, at least not until the Syrian government or other non-compliant nations have been removed from their positions.

### **The US Supports ISIS**

It is important to point out that the Islamic State is not some shadowy force that emerged from the caves of Afghanistan to form an effective military force that is funded by Twitter donations and murky secretive finance deals. IS is entirely the [creation of NATO](#) and the West and it [remains in control of the organization](#).

As Tony Cartalucci writes in his article "[Implausible Deniability: West's ISIS Terror Hordes In Iraq](#),"

Beginning in 2011 - and actually even as early as 2007 - the United States has been arming, funding, and supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and a myriad of armed terrorist organizations to overthrow the government of Syria, fight Hezbollah in Lebanon, and undermine the power and influence of Iran, which of course includes any other government or group in the MENA region friendly toward Tehran.

Billions in cash have been funneled into the hands of terrorist groups including Al Nusra, Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), and what is now being called "Islamic State in Iraq and Syria" or ISIS. One can see clearly by any map of ISIS held territory that it butts up directly against Turkey's borders with defined corridors ISIS uses to invade southward - this is because it is precisely from NATO territory this terrorist scourge originated.

ISIS was harbored on NATO territory, armed and funded by US CIA agents with cash and weapons brought in from the Saudis, Qataris, and NATO members themselves. The "non-lethal aid" the US and British sent [including the vehicles we now see ISIS driving around in](#).

They didn't "take" this gear from "moderates." There were never any

moderates to begin with. The deadly sectarian genocide we now see unfolding was long ago predicted by those in the Pentagon – current and former officials – interviewed in 2007 by Pulitzer Prize-winning veteran [journalist Seymour Hersh](#). Hersh’s 9-page 2007 report, “[The Redirection](#)” states explicitly:

To undermine Iran, which is predominantly Shiite, the Bush Administration has decided, in effect, to reconfigure its priorities in the Middle East. In Lebanon, the Administration has cooperated with Saudi Arabia’s government, which is Sunni, in clandestine operations that are intended to weaken Hezbollah, the Shiite organization that is backed by Iran. The U.S. has also taken part in clandestine operations aimed at Iran and its ally Syria. A by-product of these activities has been the bolstering of Sunni extremist groups that espouse a militant vision of Islam and are hostile to America and sympathetic to Al Qaeda.

“Extremist groups that espouse a militant vision of Islam” and are “sympathetic to Al Qaeda” – is a verbatim definition of what ISIS is today. Clearly the words of Hersh were as prophetic as they were factually informed, grounded in the reality of a regional conflict already engineered and taking shape as early as 2007. Hersh’s report would also forewarn the sectarian nature of the coming conflict, and in particular mention the region’s Christians who were admittedly being protected by Hezbollah.

While Hersh’s report was written in 2007, knowledge of the plan to use death squads to target Middle Eastern countries, particularly Syria, had been reported on even as far back as 2005 by Michael Hirsh and John Barry for *Newsweek* in an article entitled “[The Salvador Option](#).”

Regardless, Cartalucci states in a separate article, “[NATO’s Terror Hordes In Iraq A Pretext For Syria Invasion](#),”

In actuality, ISIS is the product of a joint NATO-GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] conspiracy stretching back as far as 2007 where US-Saudi policymakers sought to ignite a region-wide sectarian war to purge the Middle East of Iran’s arch of influence stretching from its borders, across Syria and Iraq, and as far west as Lebanon and the coast of the Mediterranean. ISIS has been harbored, trained, armed, and extensively funded by a coalition of NATO and Persian Gulf states within Turkey’s (NATO territory) borders and has launched invasions into northern Syria with, at times, both Turkish artillery and air cover. The most recent example of this was the cross-border invasion by Al Qaeda into Kasab village, Latikia province in northwest Syria.

Cartalucci is referring to a [cross-border invasion](#) that was [coordinated with NATO, Turkey, Israel, and the death squads](#) where Israel acted as air force cover while Turkey facilitated the death squad invasion from inside its own borders.

Keep in mind also that, prior to the rapid appearance and seizure of territory by ISIS in Syria and Iraq, European media outlets like [Der Spiegel reported](#) that hundreds of fighters were being trained in Jordan by Western intelligence and military personnel for the purpose of deployment in Syria to fight against Assad. The numbers were said to be expected to reach about 10,000 fighters when the reports were issued in March, 2013. Although Western and European media outlets would try to spin the operation as the training of “moderate rebels,”

subsequent reports revealed that these fighters [were actually ISIS fighters](#).

Western media outlets have also gone to great lengths to spin the fact that ISIS is operating in both Syria and Iraq with an alarming number of American weapons and equipment. [As Business Insider](#) stated, “The report [study by the London-based small arms research organization Conflict Armament Research] said the jihadists disposed of ‘significant quantities’ of US-made small arms including M16 assault rifles and included photos showing the markings ‘Property of US Govt.’” The article also acknowledged that a large number of the weapons used by ISIS were provided by Saudi Arabia, a close American ally.

## **US Bombing Helps ISIS**

It was evident early on that the US bombing of alleged ISIS targets inside Syria was, in reality, an attempt to support the terrorist organization backed by NATO and the US as opposed to an attempt to defeat it. While such a suggestion has been repeatedly labeled as a “conspiracy theory” by the mainstream media and other gatekeepers in the “independent” media, the fruits of America’s labor in terms of the bombing campaign cannot be ignored. Likewise, neither can the world ignore the results of Saudi Arabia’s bombing of Yemen.

The truth is that the United States, NATO, and the GCC/Arab League are bombing in couched support of ISIS, increasing its gains and hold on power with every sortie fired. With this fact recognized, the NATO/GCC network of national governments can now officially be labeled as the Air Force of Al-Qaeda.

For instance, while the secular government of Bashar al-Assad remained the only force inside Syria actually fighting al-Qaeda and ISIS – terrorist organizations trained, funded, armed, and deployed by the United States, NATO, and the GCC – the brutality of these death squads was used by the Western propaganda machine to justify a bombing campaign that was actually directed at Syrian military and civilian infrastructure.

These [strikes were launched](#) against Syrian [oil refineries](#) (see [here also](#)), bridges, civilian neighborhoods, [warehouses, agricultural centers](#), and [grain silos](#). Others were made strategically against infrastructure that was set to soon be taken back by the Syrian military [after long-fought battles](#) with the terrorists.

Likewise, the US bombing campaign in Iraq has had much more to do with [protecting Western-owned oil fields and death squad herding](#) than eliminating ISIS. In fact, Iraqi armed forces and government officials have [repeatedly revealed](#) that the US military has actually been supplying ISIS during the entire course of the bombing.

Yet while the Western mainstream press has attempted to paint the Iraqi claims of American assistance to ISIS as “conspiracy theories” and the manifestation of jealousy, that same press has been forced to admit that the bombing campaign has resulted in a stronger ISIS presence in Iraq and Syria and that the terrorist group has become stronger in terms of strategic location and military presence.

[As the Daily Beast reported in January of 2015,](#)

American jets are pounding Syria. But ISIS is taking key terrain—and putting more and more people under its black banners.

ISIS continues to gain substantial ground in Syria, despite nearly 800 airstrikes in the American-led campaign to break its grip there.

At least one-third of the country's territory is now under ISIS influence, with recent gains in rural areas that can serve as a conduit to major cities that the so-called Islamic State hopes to eventually claim as part of its caliphate. Meanwhile, the Islamic extremist group does not appear to have suffered any major ground losses since the strikes began. The result is a net ground gain for ISIS, according to information compiled by two groups with on-the-ground sources.

In Syria, ISIS "has not any lost any key terrain," Jennifer Cafarella, a fellow at the Washington, D.C.-based Institute for the Study of War who studies the Syrian conflict, explained to The Daily Beast.

Even U.S. military officials privately conceded to The Daily Beast that ISIS has gained ground in some areas, even as the Pentagon claims its seized territory elsewhere, largely around the northern city of Kobani. That's been the focus of the U.S.-led campaign, and ISIS has not been able to take the town, despite its best efforts.

The report continued by pointing out that the ISIS gains were not only in terms of land mass but also in terms of "control of people," meaning populated areas and strategic locations. It reads,

"Assessing the map, ISIS has almost doubled its territorial control in Syria. But more importantly, the number of people who now live under ISIS control has also increased substantially," CDS political adviser Mouaz Moustafa said.

With the fall of that much territory into ISIS hands, Syrians who once lived in ungoverned or rebel held areas are now under ISIS's grip. Of course, in an irregular war like this one, control of people is far more important than control of territory. In that regard, too, things appear to be going in the wrong direction.

[...]

Since the U.S. campaign began in August, "there are little buds of ISIS control in eastern Homs, al Qalamoun [which borders northern Lebanon], and southern Damascus that do appear to be growing because of that freedom of operation that can connect those western cells to key ISIS terrains in Raqqa and Deir ez Zour" in northern and eastern Syria.

## **Conclusion**

At the end of the day, it is important to remember that the U.S. airstrikes against Syria are nothing more than a farce. The death squads running amok in Syria are themselves entirely creatures of NATO and they remain under NATO's command. The true enemy of ISIS, Khorasan, and the cannibals of the Levant has always been and continues to be Bashar al-Assad.

American propaganda claims to the contrary are just that – propaganda.

**Brandon Turbeville** is an author out of Florence, South Carolina. He has a Bachelor's Degree from Francis Marion University and is the author of six books, [Codex Alimentarius — The End of Health Freedom](#), [7 Real Conspiracies](#), [Five Sense Solutions](#) and [Dispatches From a Dissident, volume 1](#) and [volume 2](#), and [The Road to Damascus: The Anglo-American Assault on Syria](#). Turbeville has published over 500 articles dealing on a wide variety of subjects including health, economics, government corruption, and civil liberties. Brandon Turbeville's podcast *Truth on The Tracks* can be found every Monday night 9 pm EST at [UCYTV](#). He is available for radio and TV interviews. Please contact [activistpost \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:activistpost@gmail.com).

The original source of this article is [Activist Post](#)  
Copyright © [Brandon Turbeville](#), [Activist Post](#), 2015

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: **[Brandon Turbeville](#)**

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)