

money, is being sent to the U.N. We must use that leverage at the U.N. to hold those entities accountable and to fight back this fraudulent unilateral statehood scheme and these efforts to delegitimize Israel.

We need to make every effort we can to signal to the world that our commitment is an unbreakable bond between the U.S. and the democratic Jewish state and that that bond is unwavering.

#### ARE WE IN OR OUT IN ELIMINATING ISIS?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on September 10, 2014, President Obama announced that the United States would “degrade and ultimately destroy” ISIS. ISIS has obviously not gotten the memo. This terrorist group keeps moving across the Middle East, killing those who stand in its way by raping, pillaging, and murdering those who disagree with them. ISIS controls half of Syria and large parts of Iraq. Civilized society is losing to these barbarians.

Despite the U.S. spending billions on a counterterrorism strategy, the terrorist group’s numbers have not decreased. In fact, ISIS has grown in size, with affiliates all over the world, including Indonesia, Yemen, Egypt, and even Libya.

A \$3 billion U.S. airstrike campaign has been plagued with little measurable successful results. From the very beginning, military officials warned that airstrikes alone that relied on virtually no human intelligence or on-the-ground intelligence would not be successful. Without good intelligence, the number of airstrikes the U.S. has carried out have been few, and the results are uncertain.

Also, ISIS fighters killed by our airstrikes are just replaced by other jihadists. Our intelligence estimates that ISIS’ numbers are the same as they were when our airstrikes began.

In addition, the administration’s \$500 million train and equip program has proved to be a failure by anyone’s measure. In July, officials reported they had identified 7,000 planned participants but only trained 60 of these mercenaries. Later that month, 54 fighters crossed into Syria to fight ISIS forces that numbered in the tens of thousands. Of those 54 mercenaries, virtually all were killed, captured, or scattered when attacked. We are now down to four or five U.S.-trained mercenaries, according to General Lloyd Austin of CENTCOM.

Despite this failed policy, just last week, we sent a second group of 70 U.S.-trained mercenaries into Syria. Just 1 day later, reports suggested that one of the officers defected and surrendered his arms to al Qaeda’s Syrian affiliate, and several truckloads of weapons were allegedly traded to the terrorist group al-Nusra for safe passage.

It is time to abandon this failed train and equip program.

The reality is just as bleak on the on-line battlefield. ISIS has 30,000 to 40,000 social media accounts. It uses the Internet to spread propaganda, raise money, and find recruits as far away as Washington State.

In 2011, the administration promised a strategy to combat terrorist use of social media. Four years later, we still haven’t seen that plan. No plan, no degrading ISIS, no defeating ISIS.

The intel given to the administration has also been doctored to cover up how badly the war against ISIS is going. Meanwhile, thousands of people are fleeing the Middle East—flooding Europe and demanding entry into other Western nations because of the ISIS carnage and the chaos in Syria as well.

In the face of our failure to destroy ISIS, we should be focusing on what we can do better and how we can improve our strategy without using U.S. ground troops.

ISIS’ advances in Syria translate into more direct threats to our national security and interests, both abroad and at home. ISIS wants to destroy the United States and everything we stand for. ISIS fears no one—certainly not the United States—so it continues to murder in the name of its radical jihad. It has already killed innocent Americans.

We need a strategy that protects American people from this radical Islamic threat. So what is the plan? Let the Russians defeat ISIS and prop up the butcher of Syria, Assad, and let him remain in power? Who knows. The current U.S. plan seems to be like the war in Vietnam: don’t win, don’t lose.

The American people need to know if the U.S. is in or out in the fight against ISIS. If it is in the national security interest of the United States to degrade and defeat them, we need to define the enemy and defeat them.

And that is just the way it is.

#### SITUATION IN SYRIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. HIMES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I am not generally in the habit of agreeing with my friend from Texas, but I do thank him for posing some really challenging questions about our activities in Syria.

I think it is fair to say that the situation in Syria has gotten worse, not better. And only now that the chaos in Syria results in the flow of hundreds of thousands of people into Europe and into surrounding and delicately constructed countries, only now that we are having a conversation about how many Syrian refugees we will take in the United States are we beginning to take notice of the moral tragedy that has been with Syria for many, many years.

The civil war in Syria has resulted in the deaths of more than 300,000 people. It has created 4 million refugees and

displaced more than 6.5 million people into places like Jordan and Turkey—and now, in Europe and elsewhere around the world.

Sadly, it appears that the efforts that we have made, which my friend from Texas referred to, have been ineffectual, to put it mildly, and the situation grows worse. We watch now the Russians introducing military equipment into Syria, something that can only result in more violence, more death, and more refugees. We see, sadly—and I have watched this closely from my perch on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence—ISIS gaining in strength, not losing strength.

There are lots of conversations to be had about U.S. efforts to train and equip the so-called Syrian moderates. There are conversations to be had about how we deal with Russian influence in the area. But something we must focus on now, and something that is the subject of a letter that I and 54 of my colleagues have sent to the President of the United States, is that the only real solution in Syria, a solution that should be implemented today, is for the international community, all of the players that have a stake and influence in Syria, to come together today to begin the process of working out an international agreement, the terms of which will undoubtedly be uncomfortable for us, but an agreement that will bring an end to the civil war. This agreement should provide for the exit of Bashar al-Assad. He has lost all credibility as a global leader, but he remains there.

Apart from ending the humanitarian and moral crisis in Syria, that conference would allow us to finally align behind an objective that I believe is shared by pretty much everybody in the region, which is the destruction of ISIS.

Until we take this step of coming together around a table that, yes, will involve some unsavory characters, that, yes, will not lead to an agreement that we regard as perfect, until we do that, we will simply be managing chaos. And maybe we will manage chaos well, but it will still be managing chaos: hundreds of thousands of refugees and the destabilization that that will cause, more weaponry being introduced, more U.S. taxpayer dollars expended.

We can do that. That is what we have been doing. We can do it for more months and more years. Or we can do the obvious thing, which is get around a table—and I do call on the President of the United States to show American leadership in this—and say we don’t leave the room until this moral tragedy is stopped.

This is what it would mean to be a leader in the world. We can bomb. We can send military equipment. We do that a lot. Real leadership will involve saying we will come together with people we like and people we don’t to solve this problem.

I call on this House to assist me and others in the effort to make sure that