

**Question for written answer E-001613/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Jørn Dohrmann (ECR)

Subject: VP/HR - Long campaign ahead to expel the Islamic State group from Iraq

According to UK Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond, the campaign to expel the Islamic State group (ISG) from Iraq may take up to two years. Members of the international coalition fighting the ISG are meeting in London to discuss next steps in their campaign, including measures to block the flow of funds and foreign fighters. According to Hammond, it would be 'months' before Iraqi government forces were ready to begin a major ground offensive.

The US-led coalition plans to train an additional 80 000 frontline forces to join the fight against ISG by mid-2015. Coalition airstrikes have been the decisive factor in stemming the ISG's offensive and in securing Baghdad, southern Iraq and the Kurdish region.

However, the next stage of the coalition campaign – the transition from successful defensive to offensive operations – will depend much more heavily on Iraqi ground forces, and the speed at which they can rebuild and retrain following last year's sudden collapse.

What is the position of the Vice-President /High Representative on the long campaign the international coalition faces in Iraq?