



Discussion Points

- The withdraw of the jets, and the move away from a combat role for Canada in Iraq and Syria is positive. The government's decision to move away from a combat role is welcomed, and reflects the long-term futility of dealing with ISIS only militarily.¹
- The aid packages from the Trudeau government for Syria and Iraq are wise. Canada has committed \$650-million in humanitarian aid for those affected by the Syrian civil war and \$233-million in longer-term development assistance to countries hosting large numbers of Syrian refugees. For Iraq, the government has committed \$840-million over three years in humanitarian assistance and \$270-million for social services on the ground. As Trudeau stated, "The lethal enemy of barbarism isn't hatred. It's reason. And the people terrorized by ISIL every day don't need our vengeance, they need our help."²
- Canada must be careful with its expanded military training and assistance to the region. Military involvement – even non-combat – always runs the risk of deepening conflict. Such Canadian involvement must be embedded in a broader commitment to reduce conflict, reduce arms, and promote respect for human rights.
- Canada must support international efforts to establish a cease fire, and achieve a non-military solution to the crisis. At this point, a durable non-military solution in Syria will likely require participation by both pro- and anti-government political forces. Canada should accept that the full spectrum of Syrian political opinion will have to be represented in any post-conflict government, in order to overcome the legacy of the conflict.³

¹ Zilio, Michelle, "Canada to pull fighter jets, triple training in mission against Islamic State," The Globe and Mail, Feb. 8, 2016

² Ibid.

³ Darke, Diana, "Syria peace talks and polls signal Assad's growing confidence," BBC News, Apr. 13, 2016