

Beat: News

## 15 U.S.-led airstrikes hit Islamic State targets in Iraq and Syria

-, 28.11.2014, 16:15 Time

**USPA News** - The United States and its coalition partners have carried out another 15 airstrikes against Islamic State targets in Iraq and northern Syria over the past few days, striking jihadist units and destroying their hideouts along with equipment, U.S. officials said on Friday. All but two of the airstrikes since Wednesday were carried out in Iraq, where five airstrikes near the city of Kirkuk struck a large unit and four tactical units while destroying five bunkers, four vehicles and a bulldozer, U.S. Central Command said.

Two airstrikes near Mosul, which is the largest city under the control of the Islamic State, struck two units and destroyed five vehicles along with a heavy weapon. Six additional airstrikes were carried out near Ramadi, Ar Rutbah, Fallujah, and Bayji, striking three tactical units and a fighting position while destroying nine vehicles and a building. Only two of the airstrikes were carried out in northern Syria, including one near Kobani which struck a fighting position and one near Aleppo which struck a tactical unit. All units, buildings and equipment targeted by the coalition airstrikes were allegedly being used by Islamic State militants, but details about casualties were not available and it was not possible to independently verify the reported information. The airstrikes were carried out by both fighter jets and drones, the U.S. military said, adding that all of them returned to base safely. "The strikes were conducted as part of Operation Inherent Resolve, the operation to eliminate the terrorist group ISIL and the threat they pose to Iraq, the region and the wider international community," U.S. Central Command said in a statement. "The destruction of ISIL targets in Syria and Iraq further limits the terrorist group's ability to project power and conduct operations." The Islamic State (IS), which was previously known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/ISIS), is an al-Qaeda splinter group which declared itself an Islamic caliphate earlier this year after seizing much of northeastern Syria and making huge gains in parts of Iraq. Their rule has been marked by brutal violence - such as beheadings and crucifixions - of anyone opposing the "caliphate." Since early August, U.S. forces have carried out hundreds of airstrikes in Iraq to protect U.S. interests and to assist Iraqi forces as they attempt to fight off ISIS. A coalition of countries - including France, the United Kingdom, and Australia - later joined that effort. The United States - along with several Arab countries - has also launched a separate air campaign against ISIS in northern Syria.

### Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-3032/15-us-led-airstrikes-hit-islamic-state-targets-in-iraq-and-syria.html>

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