

The islamic state essay sample

War



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Islamic State, previously calling itself the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant or the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, and also known by the Arabic acronym Da‘esh”, is an unrecognized state and a Sunni jihadist group active in Iraq and Syria in the Middle East. In its self-proclaimed status as a caliphate, it claims religious authority over all Muslims across the world and aspires to bring most of the Muslim-inhabited regions of the world under its political control beginning with territory in the Levant region which includes Jordan, Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Cyprus and part of southern Turkey. The group has been described by the United Nations and Western and Middle Eastern media as a terrorist group and has been designated a foreign terrorist organization by the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia.

The United Nations and Amnesty International have accused the group of grave human rights abuses. The Islamic State, also widely known as ISIS, ISIL and Da‘esh, originated as Jama‘at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad in 1999. This group was the forerunner of Tanzim Qaidat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn—commonly known as al-Qaeda in Iraq—a group formed by Abu Musab Al Zarqawi in 2004 which took part in the Iraqi insurgency against American-led forces and their Iraqi allies following the 2003 invasion of Iraq. During the 2003–2011 Iraq War, it joined other Sunni insurgent groups to form the Mujahideen Shura Council, which consolidated further into the Islamic State of Iraq shortly afterwards.

However, the violent attempts by the Islamic State of Iraq to govern its territory led to a backlash from Sunni Iraqis and other insurgent groups in around 2008 which helped to propel the Awakening movement and a

temporary decline in the group. As ISIS, the group grew significantly under the leadership of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, gaining support in Iraq as a result of alleged economic and political discrimination against Iraqi Sunnis. Then, after entering the Syrian Civil War, it established a large presence in the Syrian governorates of Ar-Raqqah, Idlib, Deir ez-Zor and Aleppo. In June 2014, it had at least 4, 000 fighters in its ranks in Iraq. It has claimed responsibility for attacks on government and military targets and for attacks that killed thousands of civilians.

In August 2014, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights claimed that the number of fighters in the group had increased to 50, 000 in Syria and 30, 000 in Iraq, while the CIA estimated in September 2014 that in both countries it had between 20, 000 and 31, 500 fighters. ISIS had close links to al-Qaeda until February 2014 when, after an eight-month power struggle, al-Qaeda cut all ties with the group, reportedly for its brutality and “notorious intractability”. The group’s original aim was to establish a caliphate in the Sunni-majority regions of Iraq, and following ISIS’s involvement in the Syrian Civil War this expanded to include controlling Sunni-majority areas of Syria. A caliphate was proclaimed on 29 June 2014, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi—now known as Amir al-Mu’minin Caliph Ibrahim—was named as its caliph, and the group was renamed the Islamic State.