

Kazakh efforts to repatriate ISIL fighters should be replicated

It feels like a long time ago that we fought the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as ISIS). The world has moved on, yet the problems that the military defeat of this terrorist group in March 2019. Yet the challenges associated with ISIL are far from over.

As well as the continuing global threat of terrorism, one of the key issues is what to do with disarmed ISIL soldiers, their families, and those that joined the group at the height of its power.

For one reason or another, roughly 40,000 people travelled to be army controlled by the group from 81 countries. The Syrian Humanitarian Relief (SDP) reported thousands of foreign fighters and their families. In January this year, SDP said it held around 2,000 foreign fighters and 12,000 foreign women and children who are directly involved in ISIL-related fighting.

The question now is what to do with these individuals. While many countries, including those in the West, have hesitated to repatriate their citizens, Kazakhstan has taken a very different approach.

Its country carried out operations "Zhuam" and "Rusaf", as part of which around 100 of our citizens have been brought home, including 50 children.

The others are mostly women. Twenty-five men who were brought back have been prosecuted as ISIL fighters.

Our effort is based on humanitarian grounds. Many women and children were stranded without access to basic needs, including food, shelter, clean water, health and education. They were exposed to sexual abuse, exploitation and potential recruitment by terrorist groups.

Bringing back individuals who were part of ISIL can certainly carry security risks. Nevertheless, many of the women were deceived by ISIL propaganda, then sold against their will. Some were simply naive. Crucially, the children had no choice in this matter, and it is therefore morally and ethically right to give them another chance.

It is for this reason that the first president of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, made the decision to repatriate our citizens from Syria and Iraq. This policy has continued under the current President, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

Repatriating our citizens has only been half the battle. It has been just as important to ensure their rehabilitation and integration into society.

Our selective rehabilitation programme has been designed to offer mental health care, family support, housing, education and job opportunities.

Children of ISIL fighters have been given Kazakh birth certificates and Kazakh names, while women have been issued clean passports and documents to facilitate social integration and facilitate their integration into society. Accommodation was initially provided in specially created adaptation centres.

They included round-the-clock support from social workers, psychologists, teachers, translators and medical workers. Most of the children spoke Arabic, so we involved Arabic language specialists to establish contact. To help the children integrate into society, individual learning programmes were developed with the involvement of teachers, who provided classes in mathematics, languages, and other subjects.

The stage of rehabilitation lasted for six months, after which the families were introduced to the place of residence of their relatives and friends.

An important part of the rehabilitation programme was de-

radicalisation. Children were encouraged to start school with other pupils, while younger kids joined preschool education centres and kindergartens.

The families have also been offered stationary, clothing and food supplies, while they get back on their feet. Overall, more than 200 specialists have been trained across the country. As well as giving families and children second chance, we believe that this policy will contribute to preventing radicalisation and violent extremism in Kazakhstan, as many families publicly spoke about how far they were they witnessed in Syria and

the ISIL role.

Our hope is that this will deter others from wanting to join terrorist organisations.

We have certainly faced challenges along the way. Some children have struggled to readjust. Some relatives and friends of ex-fighters who joined ISIL decided to cut all ties with them, hampering reintegration efforts. Nevertheless, we believe that the decision to repatriate our citizens has been vindicated and we are proud of the work that has been carried out, including with the support of UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United States and other partners.

The US State Department, for example, has been highly appreciative of Kazakhstan's repatriation efforts, and plays an important role in assisting Kazakh authorities with delivering effective rehabilitation.

Unfortunately, many families from other countries are still left stranded in Syria and Iraq. The authorities in these countries do not have enough resources to keep ISIL prisoners and their families in captivity indefinitely, especially during the economic downturn. Other countries should therefore study Kazakhstan's experience and consider repatriating their citizens as well.



Russia will benefit from the US-China economic Cold War

With a new Cold War on the horizon between China and the United States, Russia will step in as the major beneficiary.

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Chinese Foreign Direct Investment in Africa in 2019 reached \$110 billion, almost double that of American investment on the continent which reached almost \$42 billion in the same year.

The EU's priority is substantially different from that of the US. This is again where Moscow can benefit to advance its standing in the new Cold War. What is the impermissible priority for Washington, is less so for Moscow.

China can manipulate Russia by modelling its Central Asia, which Moscow considers its own problem, mutual cooperation of

Washington's position is to sit the balance in the ongoing confrontation with the other. Putin will watch happily attempting to exploit the country's leverage to manipulate developments in his advantage.

In the past century, the traditional Cold War between Washington and Moscow meant deep polarization across the globe.

China's land power policies in Georgia in 2008 and annexation of Crimea in 2014 are two examples that conflict with China's self-proclaimed strategy. Beijing is silently and gradually building its influence through major economic plans similar to the Belt and Road Initiative.

China and Russia are still ideologically similar, both standing against the West, but not as Communist comrades. Communism has been left behind as the catalyst of nuclear economies in Asia.

Their relations are very much affected by each country's relations with Washington. For example, when the US pushed the way for China to join the WTO back in 2001, and Obama used Mao's strategy to develop a positive relationship with China that was left on the back seat.

Earlier back in time, China was ready to give up on its socialist ally when President Richard Nixon paid his historic visit to China in 1972. During Trump's Presidency, mild steps of rapprochement were witnessed before either

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2D SEISMIC DATA ACQUISITION, PROCESSING, AND INTERPRETATION FOR KUSHKA ZONE AND TIRPELE BASIN-NORTHWEST OF N-PA-MO-MP-1408/NC-574/IC-B

National Procurement Authority on behalf of Ministry of Mines and Petroleum of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan request all the qualified bidders to participate in the bidding process of 2D SEISMIC DATA ACQUISITION, PROCESSING, AND INTERPRETATION FOR KUSHKA ZONE AND TIRPELE BASIN.

Bidding will be conducted through the international open tender procedures specified in the Procurement Law and procurement procedures and is open to bidders from all countries as defined in the bidding document.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be obtained by interested bidders by downloading from NPA Website: <http://npa.gov.af> or by contacting the NPA office in Kabul.

Interested bidders may contact the NPA office in Kabul at the following address: National Procurement Authority (NPA), Peshawar, Wazir, Kabul, Afghanistan. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Office PH NO: +93 (0) 20-292-6290

Attention: Bidding Facilitation Secretariat

Address: P.O. Box 6000, Kabul, Afghanistan. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Office PH NO: +93 (0) 20-292-6290

Phone: +93 (0) 20-21-6290. E-mail address: info@npa.gov.af

AA936

Announcement for Request for Expression of Interest (for Consulting Services - Consulting Firm)

Procuring Entity: National Procurement Authority on behalf of Ministry of Mines and Petroleum of Afghanistan

Project Description: CONDUCTING A HIGH RESOLUTION AIRBORNE, MAGNETIC AND GRAVITY SURVEYS OF HELM AND RASD

Procurement Ref No: NPA/MoMP/1408/CS-369/ICB

Deadline for Submission EOI: 16:00 Hours (Local Time) on August 11, 2021.

Address for Submission EOI: Attention: Abdul Saboor Saifi

Bidding Facilitation Secretariat/Deputy Operation & Resources

Address: National Procurement Authority (NPA), Peshawar, Wazir, Kabul, Afghanistan. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Office PH NO: +93 (0) 20-292-6290

Email: info@npa.gov.af

Availability of Complete EOI: Complete EOI (Request for Expression of Interest) can be downloaded by the interested Consultants from the following website: <https://tenders.gov.af>

Attention: [Sayad Nooruddin Sharaf]

Address: National Procurement Authority (NPA), Peshawar, Wazir, Kabul, Afghanistan. Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Office PH NO: +93 (0) 20-292-6290

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