

# Baghdad Conference on Terrorism - transcript of Dr Tim Anderson's speech

**Source:** [Tim Anderson FB](#)

Thank you to the organisers and thank you Hashd al Shaabi (Iraq's Popular Mobilisation Forces). I want to extend my recognition of the Martyrs who fell in defence of this country when it was invaded by the US-led force, when it was destabilised by western powers, and when western powers got behind terrorist groups to further destabilise this country.

It is very important to talk about the sponsorship of terrorism, I believe, because as the war is being won against DAESH in Syria and Iraq, the terrorism persists and may still persist after the war is won, and the sponsorship of terrorism is the key to that: Can the war against terrorism be won after the country is liberated? Now, I know that some people are going to focus on the social background, context of terrorism, the ideology ...but if they forget those who are providing finance and weapons to these groups, they are going to miss something very important. That is why I am going to focus on the role of the United States of America in Iraq, and in this region, as the principal sponsor of terrorism in the entire region.

I wrote an article two years ago saying that all of the terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq have been directly or indirectly sponsored by the United States of America. Of course evidence and reason are one important way of discussion, but that is not what determines political debate. Political debate is conditioned by consistent repetition of particular lines and particular myths. And of course, there is intimidation of voices that tend to counter those myths.

So I think it is important for us, particularly those of us who aren't diplomats, to speak more directly about these issues because if not the same mistakes will be made.

I want to look at the role of the United States in supporting terrorism in this region as though it were a criminal prosecution. That is to say, where evidence is led about the two principal elements of the crime: one is the intention or the mental element and the other is the act, the actual act of involvement in terrorism. And of course we also have to take the regional look at this problem because for the last decade and a half we had wars and terrorism in six countries in this region, so given that context Iraq can't be considered alone.

If we look at the mental element, the guilty mind, the 'mens rea' of the British legal system, we see that there has been a plan to dominate this country and its neighbours that goes back many, many years. The thought or the idea of a new Middle East – that was articulated more clearly after this country had been subjugated and invaded – in 2005 and 2006 is on public record. There were also plans to use sectarian violence in this country, to prevent a close relationship between Baghdad and Teheran, between neighbours, to try to block that constructive relationship; and that has a long history too. There is widespread evidence of control and integration of all of the regional terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq, for example, by use of US intelligence through its allies in the region, in particular, the al-Saud regime, Qatar and the government of Turkey.

There are admissions by senior US officials of strategic support for DAESH in Syria. You know for example, in late, no, in mid 2012 that the US DIA said that the construction of an Islamic state in Eastern Syria and Western Iraq was exactly, quote "exactly" what the US and its allies wanted in order to weaken the 'regime' in Damascus. We know that there are repeated, demonstrable lies over the pretext for the US re-entering this country, on the invitation of the Iraqi

government, nevertheless a pretext (was) to be fighting DAESH. And that follows on the earlier false pretext of the invasion. After the invasion this idea of a New Middle East and 'constructive chaos' was announced in Tel Aviv just prior to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which of course was defeated. We know that in Libya the situation was different. The Libyan State was destroyed by a NATO invasion, and the Salafist terrorists in that country, linked to DAESH, were directly linked to senior US officials. And they haven't been ashamed by showing themselves photographed giving awards to the leaders of DAESH in Libya.

We know Seymour Hersh wrote about the 'redirection' in 2006 of the Bush Administration. We know that Al Qaeda in Iraq which became ISI, which became ISIS, became heavily internationalised in the year 2006. The main component of that internationalised force worked from Saudi Arabia, followed by North Africa and other countries. We know that DAESH fought with the Free Syrian Army, together, for a period of time in Northern Syria. We know the head of the US armed forces admitted, at the time of the US, let's say reoccupation of this country, militarily, on the pretext of fighting DAESH, that the then head of the US army Mark Dempsey admitted that their "key Arab allies" were financing DAESH. We know that the (US) Vice President said that their key allies in the region were financing DAESH and all of the other groups to try and overthrow the government in Damascus.

The guilty acts, the guilty acts involved the overt weapons supply to the principal direct sponsors of DAESH. We know that the Bush Administration, the Obama Administration, the Trump Administration have sold increasing amounts of weapons, to the al Saud regime and Qatar in an increasing spiral, that is to say Obama sold more than Bush and Trump has been selling more than Obama. We know that the ideology and weapons have come from, from those countries. We know that the US even accuses Qatar of being a sponsor of terrorism.

The indirect supply of weapons, I was in Deir Ezzor two weeks ago, I saw a large cache of NATO weapons there, there were weapons from all over, some of those have come from this country DAESH brought them into Syria, including a NATO howitzer with a 40km range, a whole range of technology that the Syrian Army captured.

We know that there have been reports of direct US assistance to DAESH commanders in this country and in Syria. The reports began in late 2014 and carry to 2015 where a number of senior Iraqi officials are complaining about the US using helicopters, for example, to remove DAESH commanders from one part to another. I spoke to a Syrian General in Deir Ezzor two weeks ago, he told me the same thing had happened down in the Euphrates in Deir Ezzor. They had three coordinates with US pick ups of DAESH commanders being evacuated as DAESH was being defeated by the Syrian Arab Army and its allies.

We know the omissions that took place that there was, while the US and the government of my country (Australia) pretended they were in this country and they were operating in Syria to fight DAESH, when in fact they mounted a brutal attack on Syrian soldiers just over a year ago, on a low mountain range south of Deir Ezzor, killing 123 soldiers, claiming it was a mistake. The same day DAESH took over that mountain range with the aim of trying to take the airport in Deir Ezzor.

I spoke with a survivor, a commanding officer of the Syrian Army two weeks ago and he told in detail how that the attack of five planes, including a line of sight machine gunning of Syrian soldiers on that mountain range, took place. At the same time United States forces bombed bridges going north to Raqqa and going East, sorry, going West to Tadmor. The US forces there to fight DAESH did nothing to prevent DAESH taking over the city of Tadmor, or Palmyra. In fact they actively assisted DAESH in Deir Ezzor, we have very clear evidence of that.

So when we look at that evidence, and we have to I suggest as

reasonable people look at that evidence, there is an overwhelming case for the US role in masterminding these terrorist groups for its broader political strategy in this region.

Why is this important? It's important because if we are going to have conversations about the post war situation and the reconstruction of Iraq, and we have broad general ideas of the international community being involved in that, we have to think: why would rational people invite those who have destroyed this country, destabilised it, thrown it into terrorism, to play a leading role in the reconstruction of this country. It deserves serious thought, I suggest.

Now I am not going to tell Iraqi people what to do because there are too many westerners who have been doing that for too long. But I just suggest that those who invited the wolf into their house have to find ways to get the wolf out. Many of us have diplomatic roles, but I suggest that the rest of us can and should talk more directly and honestly about who is behind terrorism in Iraq, and in this entire region. Thank you.

*Tim Anderson's presentation at the Baghdad Conference 'Conference for International Dialogue on Terrorism', 28 October 2017. Hosted by Hashd al Shaabi (Popular Mobilisation Forces), under the Office of the Prime Minister of Iraq.*

---

## [Serena Ghoukah interviews Dr Tim Anderson](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXQU8X8PIM4>

