

Statement by the Department of Defense

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Earlier this evening, the United States conducted defensive precision strikes against Kata'ib Hizbollah (KH) facilities across Iraq. These strikes targeted five weapon storage facilities to significantly degrade their ability to conduct future attacks against Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) coalition forces. These weapons storage facilities include facilities that housed weapons used to target U.S. and coalition troops.

These strikes were defensive, proportional, and in direct response to the threat posed by Iranian-backed Shia militia groups (SMG) who continue to attack bases hosting OIR coalition forces.

Yesterday's attack on Camp Taji killed two U.S. and one U.K. service members and wounded 14 others. It marked the latest in a series of rocket attacks conducted by Iranian-backed SMGs against U.S. and coalition personnel – killing five and wounding dozens more, including Iraqi Security Forces.

“The United States will not tolerate attacks against our people, our interests, or our allies,” Secretary of Defense Dr. Mark T. Esper said. “As we have demonstrated in recent months, we will take any action necessary to protect our forces in Iraq and the region.”

During discussions with senior Iraqi officials, the department re-emphasized its commitment to the force protection of coalition service members and to preventing SMG attacks on coalition forces.

These terror groups must cease their attacks on U.S. and coalition forces or face consequences at a time and place of our choosing.

The U.S. and the coalition remain committed to the lasting defeat of ISIS, and the long-term security, stability, and sovereignty of Iraq.

Additional information regarding tonight's strikes will be provided at a briefing by General Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., Commander, U.S. Central Command at 8:30am in the Pentagon Briefing Room.