

# Conflict in Iraq and Syria

## Recent key developments on the Iraq and Syria conflict and potential future actions

July 2017:



**NDAA introduced by Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX) passes the House:** Passing 344-81, this act would provide additional US support to train and equip Syrian fighters and other forces under Operation Inherent Resolve and to recover territory from ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

October 2017:



**Raqqah, the self-proclaimed ISIS capital, falls to US-backed, Syrian Democratic Forces:** It is estimated that 6,000 to 10,000 ISIS militants remain in Iraq and Syria.

November 2017:

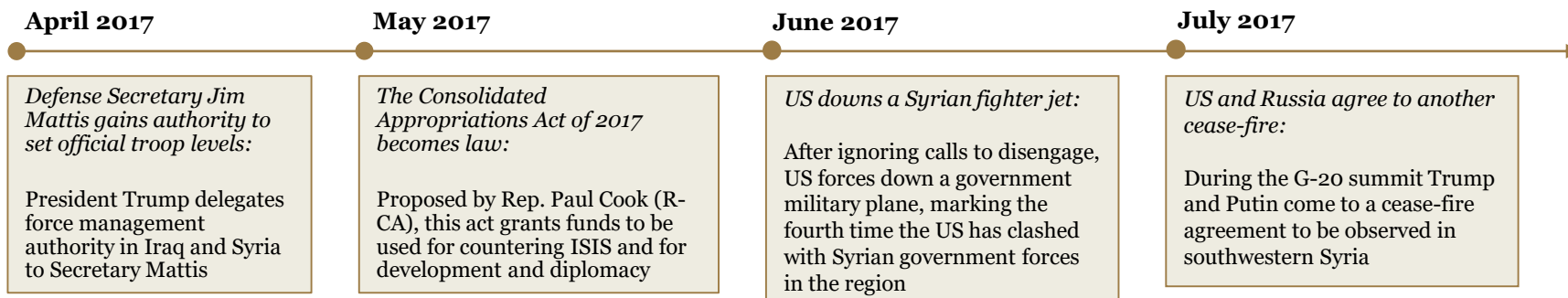


**The House and Senate reach an agreement on the FY2018 NDAA:** The \$692 billion defense authorization bill does not extend the “train and equip” program, which is set to expire at the end of 2018. The program may be authorized in next year’s NDAA. The authorizations for assistance and cooperation in Iraq are extended with only minor modifications.

### Potential actions

- The budget disparities between the NDAA and the Defense Appropriations Act will spark debate over funding as FY2018 begins
- Congress has not addressed the spending levels set by the Budget Control Act, which are far below those laid out in the NDAA
- Congress begins to see an end to the conflict. The focus shifts from war tactics to legislation regarding the long-term stability of the region as multiple hearings addressing Iraq and Syria post-ISIS are on the House and Senate calendars

### Legislative timeline



Sources: National Journal Research, 2017; GovTrack.us research, July 2017; Christopher Woody “Congress may repeal the post 9/11 act the US military used to justify the fight against ISIS” Business Insider, June 29, 2017; “Morning Defense” Politico, July 31, 2017; Joe Gould, “As GOP’s Obamacare repeal fails, optimism for NDAA” July 28, 2017; The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations, “House Appropriations Committee Releases Fiscal Year 2018 Defense Bill,” June 25, 2017; Scott R. Anderson, “Some Highlights from the likely NDAA for FY 2018,” Lawfare; November 15, 2017.