

News story: RAF continue to strike a retreating Daesh

Already in November UK aircraft have struck Daesh command posts in Al Qaim, supporting the Iraqi Security Forces liberating the city, and eliminated mortar teams and destroyed parts of the terrorist's tunnel network in eastern Syria. As the Defence Secretary joins counterparts in Brussels today for a meeting of the Counter-Daesh Coalition, the UK remains steadfast in its commitment to destroy Daesh militarily and to counter its poisonous propaganda.

Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson, said:

Our forces are working tirelessly to defeat the evil of our time. Daesh is weakened and in retreat having now lost its last remaining major strongholds in Iraq and Syria.

The battle is not yet over. We will continue to hit the terrorists hard in both Syria and Iraq while supporting efforts to rebuild – only by defeating Daesh for good will we reduce the threat to both our nations at home.

In the fight for the last remaining major strongholds, the UK continued to support coalition partners fighting on the ground. Having received intelligence from a coalition surveillance aircraft on Wednesday 1 November, RAF Tornados launched two Paveways at a command post near Al Qaim destroying the building, the terrorists and their vehicles.

Tornados continued to support Iraqi Security Forces in the battle for Al Qaim the following day, and successfully bombed a Daesh observation post, which was attempting to direct mortar fire against the rapidly advancing Iraqi ground forces.

On Saturday 4 November, two Tornados patrolled the far east of Syria, destroying a mortar team north-east of al Mayadin. The aircraft also bombed the entrance to a Daesh tunnel network nearby. Typhoons flew missions over eastern Syria on Sunday 5 November, eliminating a mortar team near Abu Kamal, as well as striking another tunnel complex near Al Mayadin.

British aircraft have struck Daesh 1348 times in Iraq and 262 times in Syria. In that time the group has lost territory, finances, leaders and fighters as the 73-member coalition liberate its last remaining strongholds in both countries.

But despite military progress in Syria and Iraq, the threat posed by Daesh and their poisonous narrative remains substantial. Their continued ability to

inspire attacks means that we must remain resolute in our work to defeat them in their branches worldwide and counter their propaganda.