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## INTRODUCTION

Mr President, this year we face extraordinary tests of our values and our resolve.

In responding to the aggression against one of our member states, Ukraine.

In seeking peace in the Middle East.

In dealing with the terrifying spread of the Ebola virus in West Africa.

And in overcoming what I want to focus on today – which is the mortal threat we all face from the rise of ISIL in Syria and Iraq.

Deir al-Zor is a province in Eastern Syria.

Home to the al-Sheitaat tribe, it was captured by ISIL last month.

700 tribesmen were executed, many were beheaded.

The vast majority were civilians...

...Muslims - who refused to take an oath of allegiance to ISIL's sick extremist world view – and who paid for this with their lives.

They are not alone.

Across Syria and Northern Iraq thousands have suffered the same fate.

Muslims – both Sunni and Shia.

Christians, Yazidis, people of every faith and none.

ISIL is not a problem restricted to just one region.

It has murderous plans to expand its borders well beyond Iraq and Syria...

...and to carry out terrorist atrocities right across the world.

It is recruiting new fighters from all over the world.

500 have gone there from Britain...

...and one of them almost certainly brutally murdered two American journalists and a British aid worker.

This is a problem that affects us all. And we must tackle it together.

**PAST MISTAKES MUST NOT BECOME AN EXCUSE FOR INDIFFERENCE OR INACTION**

There is not one person in this hall who will view this challenge without reference to the past.

Whether in Iraq.

Whether in Afghanistan.

Of course it is absolutely right that we should learn the lessons of the past, especially of what happened in Iraq a decade ago.

But we have to learn the right lessons.

Yes to careful preparation; no to rushing to join a conflict without a clear plan.

But we must not be so frozen with fear that we don't do anything at all.

Isolation and withdrawing from a problem like ISIL will only make things worse.

We must not allow past mistakes to become an excuse for indifference...or inaction.

The right lesson is that we should act – but act differently.

We should be comprehensive – defeating the ideology of extremism that is the root cause of this terrorism - so we win the battle of ideas and not just the battle of military might.

We should be intelligent – supporting representative and accountable governments and working with them at their request, not going in over their heads.

We should be inclusive – working with partners in the region who are prepared to be part of the solution, potentially including Iran.

And we should be uncompromising – using all the means at our disposal – including military force – to hunt down these extremists.

Let me take each of these in turn.

## COMPREHENSIVE

The root cause of this terrorist threat is a poisonous ideology of Islamist extremism.

This is nothing to do with Islam, which is a peaceful religion that inspires countless acts of generosity every day.

Islamist extremism believes in using the most brutal forms of terrorism to force people to accept a warped world view and to live in a quasi mediaeval state.

To defeat ISIL – and organisations like it - we must defeat this ideology in all its forms.

As evidence emerges about the backgrounds of those convicted of terrorist offences, it is clear that many of them were initially influenced by preachers who claim not to encourage violence, but whose world view can be used as a justification for it.

The peddling of lies: that 9/11 was a Jewish plot and the 7/7 London attacks were staged.

The idea that Muslims are persecuted all over the world as a deliberate act of Western policy.

The concept of an inevitable clash of civilisations.

We must be clear: to defeat the ideology of extremism we need to deal with all forms of extremism – not just violent extremism.

For governments, there are some obvious ways we can do this.

We must ban preachers of hate from coming to our countries.

We must proscribe organisations that incite terrorism against people at home and abroad.

We must work together to take down illegal online material like the recent videos of ISIL murdering hostages.

And we must stop so called non-violent extremists from inciting hatred and intolerance in our schools, universities and prisons.

Of course some will argue that this is not compatible with free speech and intellectual inquiry.

But I say: would we sit back and allow right-wing extremists, Nazis or Klu Klux Klansmen to recruit on our university campuses?

So we shouldn't stand by and just allow any form of non-violent extremism.

We need to argue that prophecies of a global war of religion pitting Muslims against the rest of the world are nonsense.

We need Muslims and their governments around the world to reclaim their religion from these sick terrorists.

We all need to help them with programmes that channel young people away from these poisonous ideologues.

And we need the strongest possible international focus on tackling this ideology...

...which is why here at the United Nations, the UK is calling for a new Special Representative on extremism.

## INTELLIGENT

But fighting extremism will never be enough.

Communism wasn't defeated simply by pointing out its flaws – but by showing that the alternative of economic freedoms, democracy and the rule of law could build a better society and a better world.

Young people need to see the power of a different, better, more open, more democratic path.

The twentieth century taught us the vital role of representative and accountable governments in offering their people opportunity, hope and dignity.

Of course we should not be naive: not every country can move at the same speed or even reach the same destination.

And we should respect different cultures and traditions and histories.

But, let's be clear: the failure to meet people's aspirations can create a breeding ground where extremist and even terrorist insurgency can take root.

Governments that only govern for some of their people cause deep resentment.

In Iraq the failure of the al-Maliki government to represent all of the people has driven some of them into the arms of the extremists.

Too often people have been faced with a false choice between an autocratic and unrepresentative government...

...or a brutal insurgency, with religion misused as its rallying call.

To combat this we must support the building blocks of free and open societies.

In Iraq this means supporting the creation of a new and genuinely inclusive Government capable of uniting all Iraqis - Sunni and Shia, Kurds, Christians and others.

In Syria, it must mean a political transition and an end to Assad's brutality.

I know there are some who think that we should do a deal with Assad in order to defeat ISIL.

But this view is dangerously misguided.

Our enemies' enemy is not our friend. It is another enemy.

Doing a deal with Assad will not defeat ISIL...

...because the bias and brutality of the Assad regime is one of the most powerful recruiting tools for the extremists.

Syria needs what Iraq needs: an inclusive, representative, democratic government that can look after the interests of all its people.

So to those who have backed Assad or stood on the sidelines, I would say this: we are ready to join with you in a new political effort to secure a representative and accountable government in Damascus that can take the fight to ISIL.

It is simply not credible for Assad to lead such a government. But we are prepared to look at every practical option to find a way forward.

### INCLUSIVE

Third, we must be inclusive, engaging the widest possible coalition of countries in this international effort.

ISIL is a threat to us all. But the greatest threat is to the region.

It is very welcome that a number of Arab countries have already taken part in the action to degrade ISIL. They have shown courage and leadership.

Iran should also be given the chance to show it can be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

Earlier today I met with President Rouhani.

We have severe disagreements.

Iran's support for terrorist organisations, its nuclear programme, its treatment of its people.

All these need to change.

But Iran's leaders could help in defeating the threat from ISIL.

They could help secure a more stable, inclusive Iraq; and a more stable, inclusive Syria.

And if they are prepared to do this, then we should welcome their engagement.

### UNCOMPROMISING

Finally, when the safety and security of our people is at stake, we must be uncompromising in our response.

That starts at home.

For our part in the UK we are introducing new powers.

To strengthen our ability to seize passports and stop suspects travelling.

To allow us to strip British identity from dual nationals and temporarily prevent some British nationals getting back in the country.

To ensure that airlines comply with our no fly lists and security screening requirements.

And to enable our police and security services to apply for stronger locational constraints on those in the UK who pose a risk.

Here at the United Nations we have led a Security Council Resolution to disrupt the flows of finance to ISIL...

...to sanction those who are seeking to recruit to ISIL...

...and to encourage countries to do all they can to prevent foreign fighters joining the extremist cause.

But what about the role of our military?

I don't believe this threat of Islamist extremism will best be solved by Western ground troops directly trying to pacify or reconstruct Middle Eastern or African countries.

But pursuing an intelligent and comprehensive approach should include a place for our military.

Our military can support the enormous humanitarian efforts...

..as our Royal Air Force did helping the millions of people who have fled from ISIL.

We should – together – do more to build the capability of the legitimate authorities fighting extremists.

This can mean training, equipping and advising. Providing technology and the other assets necessary for success.

Whether it is supporting action against Boko Haram in Nigeria...

...Al-Shabaab in Somalia...

...Ansar Al-Sharia in Libya...

... or Al Qaeda in Yemen...

...it is right to help those on the frontline.

Along with our European partners we have already been supplying equipment directly to Kurdish forces.

We are strengthening the resilience of military forces in neighbouring Lebanon and Jordan.

And British Tornado and surveillance aircraft have already been helping with intelligence gathering and logistics to support US strikes on ISIL in Iraq.

We now have a substantial international coalition in place, including Arab nations, committed to confronting and defeating ISIL.

We have a comprehensive strategy to do that – with the political, diplomatic, humanitarian and military components it needs to succeed over time.

The UN Security Council has now received a clear request from the Iraqi government to support it in its military action against ISIL.

So we have a clear basis in international law for action.

And we have a need to act in our own national interest to protect our people.

So it is right that Britain should now move to a new phase of action.

I am therefore recalling the British Parliament on Friday to secure approval for the United Kingdom to take part in international air strikes against ISIL in Iraq.

## CONCLUSION

My message today is simple.

We are facing an evil against which the whole world must unite.

And, as ever in the cause of freedom, democracy and justice, Britain will play its part.

