

Anti-war Protesters Disrupt U.S. Senate Hearing on Military Plans for Syria



Washington, September 17 (RHC)-- Anti-war protesters in the U.S. interrupted a Senate hearing on several occasions on Tuesday as the top military commanders were outlining military plans in Syria.

CodePink protesters were forced to leave the hearing as the Senate Armed Services Committee heard testimony from US Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel and other officials on President Obama's plan to destroy ISIL terrorists.

Medea Benjamin, co-founder of the CodePink, interrupted the proceedings at least four times during the first hour of the hearing, frustrating the committee's chairman, Senator Carl Levin. "Don't drag us into another war!" Benjamin shouted as police led her out of the room. She was holding a sign that read, "More war = More... extremism."

Hagel told senators that the U.S. is "at war" with the ISIL terrorists in Syria and Iraq. The Pentagon chief said the fight against ISIL "will not be an easy or brief effort. It is complicated."

"We are at war with ISIL, as we are with al-Qaeda," Hagel said. "But destroying ISIL will require more than military efforts alone. It will require political progress in the region, and effective partners on the ground in Iraq and Syria."

The Pentagon has deployed more than 1000 troops to Iraq. The U.S. calls them military advisors, but according to American defense officials, the troops are comprised of Marines and special operations forces from the US Central Command region.

The ISIL terrorists, who were initially trained by the CIA in Jordan in 2012 to destabilize the Syrian government, control large parts of Syria's northern territory. ISIL sent its fighters into Iraq in June, quickly seizing large swaths of land straddling the border between the two countries.

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