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Australia Asks Russia and China to Back Coalition Against Islamic State

By The Moscow Times

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Shi'ite fighters, who have joined the Iraqi army to fight against militants of the Islamic State, formerly known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), take part in field training in the desert in the province of Najaf, Iraq.

Australia's foreign minister has urged UN Security Council members Russia and China to back an international coalition against the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq, saying that such action was "appropriate."

"This is about rolling back a terrorist threat in the Middle East, so it doesn't spread beyond Syria and Iraq," Foreign Minister Julie Bishop told The Wall Street Journal in an interview published Wednesday.

Bishop, speaking ahead of a UN Security Council meeting on Friday, added that any action against the Islamic State, or IS, would be carried out with the backing of Iraq, which has asked for international help to battle the terrorist threat.

“I hope that China and Russia will see that a prudent and proportionate role is appropriate and that our efforts will be with the consent and in full coordination with the Iraqi government,” she was quoted as saying.

While the U.S. has already carried out several airstrikes on IS forces in Iraq, Russia said last week that any action without a UN mandate over Syria — a Russian ally — would be considered an “act of aggression.” China is yet to present its official stance on the IS threat.

At the Friday session of the Security Council, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, who will chair the meeting, is expected to call for members to underscore their support for the Iraqi government in its fight against IS.

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