

# News

## Summer News Recap: The Four Most Important Stories of Summer 2014

Monique Kreisman, news editor

### ISIS

ISIS stands for the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. It is known for extreme violence, and as the group moves through Iraq, many people are forced to flee their homes.

ISIS has roots in al Qaeda, but the two groups split in February. In June, ISIS took control of several Iraqi cities and some towns on the Syrian border. On June 29, ISIS announced the creation of a Caliphate, and an estimated 1.2 million Iraqis had been displaced by then, CNN reports.

Three hundred U.S. troops were sent to Iraq at the end of June, almost doubling the American military presence in the country. ISIS gained momentum in July, taking control of more cities and a large oil field. On Aug. 19, U.S. journalist James Foley was publicly beheaded by ISIS, and on Sept. 2, a second U.S. journalist, Steven Sotloff, was similarly executed.

### Border Crisis

NBC reports that more than 50,000 unaccompanied Central American children migrated to the U.S. from Central America, fleeing gang violence in their home countries. Although each child is legally entitled to a deportation hearing, many Americans protested their arrival and called for immediate deportation. Others labeled the situation as a humanitarian crisis and asked that the children be given refugee status.

Some argue that U.S. policy is to blame; many Democrats argue that if more aid had been given to the Central American region, the crisis would not exist. Many Republicans respond by

arguing that President Obama's executive order allowing children who migrated to the U.S. before 2007 to stay is to blame.

### Russia and Ukraine

Protesters have been clashing with the Ukrainian government since January. In late February, a coup was staged and protesters took control of the Ukrainian government. Russia annexed Crimea a month later, and pro-Russians regained some control of Ukraine. Throughout the summer, diplomatic discussions were held, but violence continued to escalate; a passenger plane was shot down, and dozens of people were killed in several skirmishes. Now, there is a shaky cease-fire.

For more information, please see [meredithherald.wordpress.com](http://meredithherald.wordpress.com).

### Ebola

There was an outbreak of Ebola in West Africa. According to the World Health Organization, the fatality rate for an Ebola outbreak can be as high as 90 percent. The virus is first contracted from animals, but it can also spread through human-to-human transmission. The WHO reports that several vaccines are in development, but for now, there is no vaccine and no specific treatment available. Although the virus has proven very deadly in West Africa, the Center for Disease Control reports that Ebola "poses no significant risk to the United States."

## ISIS: a Crisis of Faith?

Anna Cheshire, staff writer

ISIS, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, also known as IS and ISIL, is a rebel force of Sunni jihadists with old ties to some al Qaeda members. They have been around since late 2006 and are led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Their mission is to "unite" Muslims all over the world by creating a borderless, boundless Islamic state (or caliphate) in which al-Baghdadi would lead with supreme authority. The word caliphate is supposed to mean a peaceful, glorious, all-encompassing figurative home for all Muslims, world-wide. The group's actions suggest that ISIS may have their own definition of caliphate.

According to CNN, since May, the group has kidnapped dozens of Syrian schoolboys and begun to forcibly indoctrinate them; seized Mosul's airport, media outlets and government offices, and they have taken control of Tikrit and several other Iraqi towns, forcing an estimated 1.2 million Iraqis into exile. Additionally, the terrorist group commandeered Syria's largest oil field; leveled a Mosul holy site, Jonah's tomb; crucified dozens of people by nailing them to crosses for punishment; and, with cameras rolling, beheaded two American journalists, James Foley and Steven Sotloff. The footage, graphic and horrifying, was placed on YouTube for the world to see.

Why all the violence? Ask them, and they'll tell you that they are fighting for Allah or God. According to many major news outlets and eyewitnesses, when ISIS enter a new region, they immediately offer an ultimatum to any and all who do not follow their particular brand of Islam: Leave, pay an exorbitant



via Getty Images

tax or die. Those who have stayed (with or without paying the tax) have often either been killed themselves or seen their entire family wiped out. Those who have tried to flee often get killed anyway. And those who have managed to get away have horror stories of hiding under dead bodies, seeing their friends beheaded in the street and even crucifixions where bodies have been left hanging from crosses for up to three days. Steps have been taken in an attempt to stop ISIS, but they have proved futile so far.