

Beat: Miscellaneous

Obama confirms 'pure evil'; murder of U.S. aid worker by ISIS

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USPA News - U.S. President Barack Obama on Sunday confirmed the death of American aid worker Peter Kassig, describing his beheading by Islamic State militants in northern Syria as an "act of pure evil" by a group that "revels in the slaughter of innocents." "Today we offer our prayers and condolences to the parents and family of Abdul-Rahman Kassig, also known to us as Peter. We cannot begin to imagine their anguish at this painful time," Obama said in a statement aboard Air Force One as he returned home from Australia.

"Abdul-Rahman was taken from us in an act of pure evil by a terrorist group that the world rightly associates with inhumanity." The confirmation of Kassig's death came about 12 hours after the Islamic State released a 16-minute video, showing in graphic detail the simultaneous beheading of at least 15 Nusayri officers and pilots. A second scene shows a bloodied, severed head in dirt at the feet of a masked jihadist, believed to be the same British man who beheaded previous Western hostages. "While ISIL revels in the slaughter of innocents, including Muslims, and is bent only on sowing death and destruction, Abdul-Rahman was a humanitarian who worked to save the lives of Syrians injured and dispossessed by the Syrian conflict," Obama said, adding that Kassig's life and deeds stood in stark contrast to everything the Islamic State represents. The president added: "ISIL's actions represent no faith, least of all the Muslim faith which Abdul-Rahman adopted as his own. Today we grieve together, yet we also recall that the indomitable spirit of goodness and perseverance that burned so brightly in Abdul-Rahman Kassig, and which binds humanity together, ultimately is the light that will prevail over the darkness of ISIL." The Islamic State identified the scene showing Kassig's severed head as the northern Syrian town of Dabiq, but that claim could not be independently verified. The video did also not include a statement from Kassig or show Kassig's beheading, making it impossible to determine whether he was killed by beheading or was beheaded after being killed.

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