



Archbishop Justin Welby responded in the House of Lords today to the Prime Minister's statement on extending British military operations in Syria.

“I thank the Leader of the House for the repetition of the statement, and particularly the publication of the Foreign Affairs Committee report, and particularly in both the statement and the report for the seriousness of their emphasis on a comprehensive approach – both of the seriousness of military action but also of the integration of soft and hard power; of the support for jobs, education, family and community life and stability, and of community flourishing in the neighbouring countries, which comes out very strongly and is very welcome.

“The test will obviously be the total mobilisation of effort in a focussed way that recognises the long-term needs of security for indigenous populations, and particularly the Christian populations, being harried out of the area at the time.

“For the first time in almost 300 years, we’re facing a conflict that has a distinct theological and religious element which we have not faced before. Recent studies demonstrate the theological basis of extremist groups behind jihadist thinking.

“Does the Government realise that in facing this conflict there must be an ideological response that is not only national in dealing with the threat of extremism here, but is global in challenging the doctrines that draw so many people to support ISIS internationally? And what steps are they proposing to take to put together the conflict at the ideological and theological level, as well as at humanitarian and military?”

2 min read

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