

Ready to supply ground troops to help anti-ISIS, says UAE

08/02/2016 21:04 by admin

Abu Dhabi: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has said that it was ready to supply ground troops to help support and train US-led coalition fighting against Islamic State in Syria.

"I think that this has been our position throughout ... that a real campaign against Daesh has to include ground elements," Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash said.

Saudi Arabia, one of several Sunni Muslim Gulf Arab states, including the UAE, who are opposed to Islamic State, has last week said that it was ready to participate in any ground operations in Syria if the international coalition decides.

"We are not talking about a thousand troops but we are talking about troops on the ground that will lead the way, that will train, that will support ... And I think our position remains the same and we will have to see how this progresses," the Minister said.

He added that the UAE had been frustrated at the slow pace of the international efforts against Islamic State although there has been some progress in Iraq recently, of confronting Daesh.

Following Saudi Arabia's announcement, Syria's Foreign Minister said that Damascus would resist any ground incursion into its territory and send the aggressors home "in coffins".

Sunni heavyweight Saudi Arabia and most other Gulf states are opposed to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Russian and Syrian government forces have intensified an assault on rebel-held areas around the Syrian city of Aleppo, prompting tens of thousands of refugees to flee to the Turkish border.