

PolitiFact: Sanders Blaming ISIS On Global Warming Is ‘Mostly False’

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Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders’ claim “climate change is directly related to the growth of terrorism” has been rated “mostly false” by the liberal fact-checking site PolitiFact.

“We couldn’t find any evidence of a ‘direct’ relationship between climate change and terrorism, though many reports have noted an indirect link,” PolitiFact says in its fact-check of Sanders’ comments during the Democratic presidential debate this month that there is a direct link between global warming and terrorism.

Sanders doubled down on the claim during an interview with CBS, saying, “When people migrate into cities and they don’t have jobs, there’s going to be a lot more instability, a lot more unemployment, and people will be subject to the types of propaganda that al-Qaida and ISIS are using right now.” Sanders’ website also claims America “must lead the world in tackling climate change, if we are to make certain that this planet is habitable for our children and grandchildren.”

PolitiFact states terrorism is far more closely associated with separatist movements, religious extremism, weak governing systems, and a lack of political legitimacy than droughts or other weather conditions that could conceivably be created by global warming. The fact-checking organization says “Sanders is overstating the ‘direct’ connection” and thus rated the claim “Mostly False.”

The rise of ISIS can be traced to al-Qaida in Iraq, a group of Sunni extremists that rose up to fight U.S. forces and that eventually broke from core al-Qaida. ISIS’ tactics were too brutal, even to other Muslims. ISIS took advantage of the Syrian civil war to rise to its current status, and the organization’s history has little to do with global warming or the drought in Syria.

Cato Institute scholars published a piece Wednesday calling his claim “absurd” and stating rainfall models which blame global warming for Syria’s drought are “fudged.”

In a previous debate, Sanders claimed global warming is the biggest threat facing the U.S., contradicting the stance his primary opponents have taken on the issue. Former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley said while global warming is a major threat to the U.S., there are much bigger threats currently facing the country.