

## AMERICA SHIFTS GEAR FOR WAR ON IRAN

The covert war on Syria is an integral part of the US-led covert war on Iran

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America's war plans for full spectrum dominance in the oil-rich Middle East and Central Asian region shifted up a gear this week with three significant and inter-related developments.

Forget about viewing events in countries as separate incidents. Syria, Iran and the Gulf monarchies are closely bound up in US-led war plans in the Middle East that are aimed at projecting American political, economic and military power across this vital region and beyond. Events today are but a continuum with US wars of conquest in Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Libya as part of an unfolding agenda for hegemony.

First, this week it emerged that the purported Kofi Annan Peace Plan is all but dead. For the past four weeks, the US-led foreign powers have done everything to make sure the supposed peace plan would fail, from Western governments and media constantly excoriating Syrian President Bashar Al Assad for allegedly not abiding by the ceasefire, while these same powers have assiduously supported mercenary groups to go on a full terror assault involving no-warning car bombs and shootings.

US officials are not yet declaring the Annan ceasefire over, but actions on the ground speak volumes. An influx of more powerful weaponry is reported to now have reached the so-called Syrian rebels. The mercenaries trying to topple the Assad government are largely foreign jihadist elements from Libya, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. In weeks prior to the 12 April ceasefire, the Syrian government forces were gaining the upperhand, routing these armed groups from their base in the city of Homs.

Under the strictures of the ceasefire, which were tightly and unilaterally applied by Western governments and media to the conduct of the Syrian army, the armed opposition groups appear to have taken advantage of the respite to inflict their worse and to reorganise. Two massive car bombs in the capital, Damascus, on 10 May killed 55 and injured more than 400. The blasts were so powerful they left two large craters in the roads.

This week the foreign-backed mercenaries were reported to have killed 23 Syrian army troops in the town of Rastan, near Homs. The surge in deaths among civilians and security forces reflects the increased firepower that is now making its way into the hands of the mercenaries.

According to the Washington Post, the Gulf monarchies, mainly Saudi Arabia and Qatar, are financing the new shipments of weapons. This is drawn from the war-chest of \$100 million

that was pledged by the US-backed Arab autocrats at the conference in Istanbul at the beginning of April. Officially, the Obama administration is maintaining a cynical fiction that it is only supplying “non-lethal material” to the Syrian armed groups. But it is the US that is now assuming the crucial lead role of overseeing the distribution and deployment of new weapons flowing into Syria.

“The US contacts with the rebel military and the information-sharing with Gulf nations mark a shift in Obama administration policy as hopes [sic] dim for a political solution to the Syrian crisis. Many officials now consider an expanding military confrontation to be inevitable,” reports the Washington Post on the 16 May.

The intensified US-led assault on Syria is not merely aimed at taking out the Assad government. It is an integral part of a long-held Washington plan for imperial dominance across the entire region that has been conducted under the pretexts of “war on terror” and “responsibility to protect”. That is why two other developments this week bear wider significance. Claims disseminated in the Western media that Iran has been using a blast chamber to test nuclear explosions are aimed at elevating again the “rogue spectre” of Iran and criminalizing the government of Tehran. The latest accusations of nuclear weaponisation by Iran come ahead of the second round of P5+1 negotiations next week, which the US-led Western powers have relentlessly used to browbeat Tehran over its legitimate right to develop civilian nuclear energy.

Of course, “nuclear ambitions” – so often said in pejorative tones by the Western powers and their subservient media – have got little to do with the real agenda, which is all about trying to engineer regime change in Tehran to one that will be pliable to Western imperialist interests.

The fatuous Western media coverage on events in Syria over the past year has tried in vain to portray them as part of an heroic Arab Spring revolt by the masses seeking democratic rights. In truth, the Western powers and their Arab/Israeli/Turkish proxies have been inflaming violence in Syria with callous disregard for human rights and democracy, with the immediate goal of achieving pliable regime change in Damascus and ultimately likewise in its regional ally, Tehran.

The covert US-led war on Syria is an integral part of its covert war on Iran. When this war on Syria moves up a gear as signalled by the influx of heavy weapons now flowing into that country, then the corollary is a stepwise aggression towards Iran.

The poisoning of P5+1 negotiations, before they have even resumed, with lurid, baseless claims about Iran testing nuclear weapons is a signal of stepped-up aggression.

Finally, the third development this week pertaining to America’s permanent war ambitions in the oil-rich region was the unveiling of plans for a closer political and military union between the US-backed Gulf monarchs, including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman. These autocratic Sunni regimes have grown increasingly hostile towards Iran under Washington’s tutelage in recent years.

Provocatively, the Gulf union plans cited the “threat of Iran” without providing an iota of evidence to support such a tendentious allegation. Significantly, when Iran objected to the proposed hostile Sunni bloc, it was met with fiery denunciations from its Persian Gulf neighbours of “flagrantly violating” their sovereignty in what sounded like a choreographed

collision course.

The idea for a closer Gulf union was previously promoted by US secretary of state Hillary Clinton when she visited the Saudi capital Riyadh at the of March on her way to the weapons fundraiser in Istanbul to support the Syrian mercenaries. On the agenda in her meeting with the Gulf dictators in Riyadh was the setting up of a joint missile system for the Persian Gulf shaihkdoms.

Taken together, the escalation of war in Syria, the imputing of casus belli against Iran, and the lining up of hostile Gulf Arab states, represent more than a sinister pattern of coincidences. It's a plan of war.

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### **About the author:**

Finian Cunningham has written extensively on international affairs, with articles published in several languages. Many of his recent articles appear on the renowned Canadian-based news website [Globalresearch.ca](http://Globalresearch.ca). He is a Master's graduate in Agricultural Chemistry and worked as a scientific editor for the Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge, England, before pursuing a career in journalism. He specialises in Middle East and East Africa issues and has also given several American radio interviews as well as TV interviews on Press TV and Russia Today. Previously, he was based in Bahrain and witnessed the political upheavals in the Persian Gulf kingdom during 2011 as well as the subsequent Saudi-led brutal crackdown against pro-democracy protests.

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