

Arab State Urges Citizens To Leave Syria

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Global Research, November 25, 2011

[Prison Planet](#) 25 November 2011

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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Yet another indication that Syria could be the next target of a NATO-led military assault arrived today with the news that the United Arab Emirates is the latest country to urge its citizens to leave, as a deadline imposed by the Arab League for Syria to respond to its demand to send in observers passed without comment.

“Emiratis who are already in Syria are advised to avoid large gatherings of people, exercise caution and leave Syrian territory because of the current circumstances there,” Director of Nationals’ Affairs at the Ministry [Ambassador Eissa Abdullah Al-Kalbani said](#).

The warning follows similar advisories by the U.S. Embassy in Damascus, which urged its citizens to leave Syria “immediately,” while Turkey’s foreign ministry told its citizens to avoid traveling through the country on their return home from Saudi Arabia.

Today’s deadline for Syria to accept an ultimatum issued by the Arab League that would have allowed 500 observers to enter Syria in a monitoring capacity [passed without response](#).

Although the Arab League said it would give the Syrian regime until the end of the day to accept the proposal, crippling sanctions are set to be imposed on Saturday that would suspend all commercial flights to Syria, which is why other governments are telling their citizens to leave while they still can.

The Arab League ultimatum was described by Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu as the “last chance” for the Syrian government.

Turkey, along with other Arab states, is [rumored to be preparing](#) to enforce a “no fly zone” over the country with U.S. logistical support. As we saw with Libya, a ‘no fly zone’ is a euphemism for an aerial bombardment.

These tensions have prompted Russia to respond by reportedly [arming Syria with a sophisticated missile defense system](#) designed to rebel enemy aircraft. Syrian sources claimed that [Russian warships entered Syrian territorial waters last week](#) as a deterrent to any NATO-led assault. Moscow declined to confirm or deny the story.

In an identical pattern to how U.S. warships surrounded Libya in the days before the NATO bombardment began, [the aircraft carrier George H.W. Bush](#) was repositioned off the coast of Syria in recent days having moved from its usual theater of operations in the Straits of Hormuz.

On Wednesday, French foreign minister Alain Juppé [assured Syrian opposition forces](#) that

NATO powers are planning to launch a military intervention by imposing “humanitarian corridors or humanitarian zones” in the name of protecting civilians from the alleged abuses of the al-Assad regime.

Although, like Libya, the situation in Syria is clearly descending into a civil war, with attacks on both sides, western powers have doggedly tried to portray the chaos as a series of atrocities by the Assad’s troops, downplaying attacks by Syrian rebel forces [such as the one reported today](#) that killed ten Syrian troops.

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