

# Armed Groups Inside Syria: Prelude to a US-NATO Intervention?

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Russia and China have vetoed the UN Security Council draft resolution on Syria pointing to the existence of armed groups involved in terrorist acts including the killing of civilians.

These armed groups have been involved since the outset of the “protest movement” in Daraa, southern Syria, in March 2011.

The statement of Russia’s envoy to the UN Viktor Churkin remains within the realm of international diplomacy. It does not mention who is behind these armed groups and the fact that NATO is supporting an armed insurrection.

“Churkin said that resolution’s Western co-sponsors had not included key proposals such as isolating the Syrian opposition from violent extremist groups or a call to arms for other states to use their influence to prevent such alliances”. (Russia Today, February 4, 2012)

Ironically, Russia’s decision to veto the resolution is consistent with the report of the Arab League’s Observer Mission to Syria, which confirms the existence of an “Armed Entity”.

Unexpectedly, however, neither Washington nor the Arab League, which commissioned the Observer Mission to Syria in the first place, have accepted the interim report presented by the AL Mission.

Why? Because the Mission –integrated by independent observers from Arab League countries– provides a balanced and objective assessment of what is happening on the ground inside Syria. It does not serve as a mouthpiece for Washington and the governments of Arab states.

It points to the existence of an “Armed Entity”; it acknowledges that “armed opposition groups” including the Syria Free Army are involved in criminal and terrorist acts.

“In some zones, this armed entity reacted by attacking Syrian security forces and citizens, causing the Government to respond with further violence. In the end, innocent citizens pay the price for those actions with life and limb.

“In Homs, Idlib and Hama, **the Observer Mission witnessed acts of violence being committed against Government forces and civilians that resulted in several deaths and injuries. Examples of those acts include the bombing of a civilian bus, killing eight persons and injuring others, including women and children**, and the bombing of a train carrying diesel oil. In another incident in Homs, a police bus was blown up, killing two police officers. A fuel pipeline and some small bridges were also

bombed. ”

“Such incidents include the bombing of buildings, trains carrying fuel, vehicles carrying diesel oil and explosions targeting the police, members of the media and fuel pipelines. **Some of those attacks have been carried out by the Free Syrian Army and some by other armed opposition groups.**”

While the Mission does not identify the foreign powers behind “the armed entity”, its report dispels the mainstream media lies and fabrications, used by Washington to push for “regime change” in Syria.

The AL Mission report also intimates that political pressure was exerted by officials of Arab League states to unreservedly support Washington’s political stance.

Moreover, the Mission was also pressured into upholding the lies and fabrications of the mainstream media, which have been used to demonize the government of Bashar al Assad:

“Some observers reneged on their duties and broke the oath they had taken. They made contact with officials from their countries and gave them exaggerated accounts of events. Those officials consequently developed a bleak and unfounded picture of the situation.”

In recent development, the Arab League has announced that the Observer Mission will be withdrawn from Syria.

### **Armed Groups Inside Syria**

There is ample evidence that the armed groups including Salafists, Al Qaeda affiliated militia as well as Muslim Brotherhood are covertly supported by Turkey, Israel and Saudi Arabia.

The insurgency in Syria has similar features to that of Libya, which was directly supported by British Special Forces operating out of Benghazi. British and French Special forces operating out of Turkey are training Syrian rebel forces.

According to former CIA official Philip Giraldi:

**“NATO is already clandestinely engaged in the Syrian conflict, with Turkey taking the lead as U.S. proxy.** Ankara’s foreign minister, Ahmet Davitoglu, has openly admitted that his country is prepared to invade as soon as there is agreement among the Western allies to do so. The intervention would be based on humanitarian principles, to defend the civilian population based on the “responsibility to protect” doctrine that was invoked to justify Libya. Turkish sources suggest that intervention would start with creation of a buffer zone along the Turkish-Syrian border and then be expanded. Aleppo, Syria’s largest and most cosmopolitan city, would be the crown jewel targeted by liberation forces.

Unmarked NATO warplanes are arriving at Turkish military bases close to Iskenderum on the Syrian border, delivering weapons from the late Muammar Gaddafi’s arsenals as well as volunteers from the Libyan Transitional National Council who are experienced in pitting local volunteers against trained soldiers, a skill they acquired confronting Gaddafi’s army. **Iskenderum is also the seat of the Free Syrian Army, the armed wing of the Syrian National**

**Council. French and British special forces trainers are on the ground, assisting the Syrian rebels** while the CIA and U.S. Spec Ops are providing communications equipment and intelligence to assist the rebel cause, enabling the fighters to avoid concentrations of Syrian soldiers.

## **The Role of US Ambassador Robert Stephen Ford**

US Ambassador Robert Stephen Ford, who arrived in Damascus in January 2011, played a central role in setting the stage for an armed insurrection in Syria. As “Number Two” at the US embassy in Baghdad (2004-2005) under the helm of Ambassador John D. Negroponte, Ford played a key role in implementing the Pentagon’s “Iraq Salvador Option”. The latter consisted in supporting Iraqi death squadrons and paramilitary forces modelled on the experience of Central America in the early 1980s.

Ford’s mandate in Damascus is to replicate the “Salvador Option” in Syria, by promoting covertly the development of an armed insurrection. In this context, the killings of civilians perpetrated by armed gangs (supported covertly by the Western military alliance) are casually blamed on the Syrian government, thereby upholding the US-NATO mandate to intervene on “humanitarian grounds”.

Reports point to the development of a full-fledged and well organized armed insurgency supported, trained and equipped by NATO and Turkey’s High Command. According to Israeli intelligence sources:

NATO headquarters in Brussels and the Turkish high command are meanwhile drawing up plans for their first military step in Syria, which is to arm the rebels with weapons for combating the tanks and helicopters spearheading the Assad regime’s crackdown on dissent. Instead of repeating the Libyan model of air strikes, NATO strategists are thinking more in terms of pouring large quantities of anti-tank and anti-air rockets, mortars and heavy machine guns into the protest centers for beating back the government armored forces. (DEBKAFfile, NATO to give rebels anti-tank weapons, August 14, 2011)

A US-NATO led intervention, which would inevitably involve Israel, is already on the drawing board of the Pentagon. According to military and intelligence sources, NATO, Turkey and Saudi Arabia have been discussing “the form this intervention [in Syria] would take” (Ibid).

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