

# Bashar al-Assad on the Future of Syria, “Failure of the West” and America’s “Deep State”. “Several Parallel Wars on Syrian Soil”

Speech by the President of the Syrian Arab Republic Bashar al-Assad on August 20th, 2017 to the Syrian Diplomatic Corps

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## **Full transcript:**

*Ladies and gentlemen, diplomats and administrators of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,*

*I am pleased to meet with you on this day of the inauguration of your congress, which offers an important opportunity to share perspectives and experiences, discuss future State policies and propose innovative ideas that would push this Ministry to fulfill its missions even more effectively.*

This meeting is important because of the acceleration of the dynamics of events in the world and in the region, particularly in Syria, especially since traditional or modern means of communication cannot replace these direct meetings aimed at configuring unified visions and formulating adopted positions. It is also a particularly important meeting given the complexity of the current situation in Syria.

## **Several parallel wars are taking place on Syrian soil**

Indeed, this war that we have been living for years has proved that several parallel wars are taking place on Syrian soil. World and regional wars carried out by Syrian, Arab and foreign hands; which does absolutely not mean that it is by chance that the belligerents came to confront each other on this land. Throughout its history, Syria has been a target, the one who controls it gaining an important influence on the world stage or the international balance.

In order not to give in boasting as some might believe, let us recall once more the Battle of Qadesh about the year 1274 BC. It culminated in the first peace treaty drafted between the Pharaohs and the Hittites who met southwest of Homs. From this time on, the Pharaohs believed that the security of their kingdom passed through the domination of this region. Many other examples of this struggle for the control of Syria extend throughout the period of the Ottoman occupation and that which followed the departure of the French occupant. And, today, we are part of this struggle.

This is why it is very superficial to say that this war is the consequence of the positions

taken by Syria, the West having decided to correct the Syrian state. Although this is absolutely true, it is only part of a wider reality related to the international conflict and attempts to change, or stabilize, international balances, through military or political ways and according to their economic or geographical consequences. In other words, by the creation of new States, the disappearance of other States or the modification of their borders.

For the West, this conflict is a valuable opportunity to settle its accounts and to subject many countries that have rebelled against its hegemony in recent decades. Among these countries: Syria, Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Belarus, etc. Even Russia, a superpower and not an emerging country, is not allowed to revolt against Western hegemony.

### **The political West and the global conflict between two forces**

When I speak of "the West" it is in the political sense of the term. I will not name the States that constitute it, we all know who runs it, as we know that much of this "political West" – with probably states located in extreme Asia – has nothing to do with politics, but walk with it. It is therefore about this West that I shall speak in my speech today.

This West is today experiencing an existential struggle, not because an enemy would seek to demolish it – such an enemy does not exist at all – but because it thinks that the pleasurable period of its hegemony since the dismantling of the Soviet Union is on the decline. A decline that accelerates every time States rebel against its hegemony. A hegemony that it believes can be prolonged indefinitely by the repression of the rebel states.

**And today, the West lives a state of hysteria** whenever it feels that a state wants to be a partner in making an international decision, in any field and anywhere in the world. This indicates its lack of self-confidence. But a lack of confidence that results in even more use of force and, therefore, less politics, less reason or no reason at all.



Because for the West, partnership is refused wherever it comes from. Dependence is the only option. In this case, the United States are not even the partner of their Western allies. They designate roles for them, specify the orientations, each step being strictly laid in the wake of the American line. And as a reward, the United States throws them economic crumbs.

**Add to the scene that in the United States, the President is not the maker of policies, but the executor; which seems even more evident today.** The real policy

makers are lobbies, banks, large weapons manufacturers, big oil, gas and technology companies, and other lobbies, which run the state through democratically elected officials but who govern in the interest of the ruling elite. So the lobbies, the State or the regime, and here I will talk about “the US regime” rather than the State – which we are accused of – because the State respects the values of its people, fulfills its obligations, respects international law, respects the sovereignty of nations, respects the principles of humanity, and finally respects itself; while the “regime” does not respect any of this, but works only for the ruling elite, whether it is a financial elite or something else.

Therefore, the “deep State” in the United States does not govern in partnership with the President, but leaves him a small margin; the President and his administration do not work in partnership with the Europeans, but leave them a small margin; and the united Europeans are not partners of their agents and clients in our region and in the world, they leave them just a margin, while not themselves being partners for the rest of the world.

Hence, at present, a conflict between two forces. The former works for the interests of the ruling elites, even if it leads to violations of all international laws and norms, as well as the Charter of the United Nations, even if it leads to the murder of millions of people anywhere in the world. The latter confronts it and works to preserve the sovereignty of States, international law and the Charter of the United Nations, seeing in it its own interest and stability for the World.

Such is the result of the present forces. And if we were to speak of the Arab situation within this resultant, we would say that its weight is zero and that it is non-existent on the international political scene. That’s why I do not see any need to talk about it.

### **The Western project failed, but war continues**

Apart from the strengths and balances of the moment, and apart from the winner and the loser, it is always the smallest countries that pay the price in this type of conflict. In Syria, we paid dearly for this war, but the counterpart is the failure of the Western project in Syria and in the world.

As far as we are concerned, this “Western project” obviously has several aspects, but its essence was that the Muslim Brotherhood governs our Arab region and the Middle East. Because they are representatives of religion, they were supposed to use it as a cover to dominate a believing society and street and lead them in the direction of western interests; which has always been the role of this brotherhood.

However, talking about the failure of the Western project does not mean that we have won the victory. In reality and without exaggeration: they have failed, but the war continues. Where will it take us and when can we talk about victory? That’s another topic. That is why we must remain precise: they have failed so far and we have not yet triumphed, the signs of victory being one thing and victory something else.



Some would say that they still achieved their goal because they destroyed Syria. I am simply saying that their aim was not the destruction of Syria. Their purpose was to seize it intact but subordinate and submissive, so that it was doomed to disintegrate and disappear. And that's why, with regard to losses and profits, I repeat what I said in 2005: the price of resistance is much lower than the price of capitulation.

At the time, they were talking about the tree bending before the storm to straighten out once it's gone. I told them that when it is not a storm, not a storm, but a bulldozer rushing through the ground to strike the roots, bending is useless. The only solution is that the roots are strong enough to break the bulldozer.

**To our great regret, twelve years have passed and some people still use the same language without having learned the lessons**, although the so-called storm did not flare up with the Iraq war but with the Iran-Iraq war in 1980, followed by the entry into Kuwait, and then the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and is still blowing over our region and Syria.

Therefore, it is not a storm, not a tree, nor a bulldozer. In fact, it is a guillotine erected above all the heads in our region, a guillotine that has already worked and harvested millions of souls. In this case, folding is therefore unnecessary. It is necessary either to remove the heads from below the guillotine, or to destroy it. There is no other solution.

Such a language repeated in the manner of parrots is not fitting here. Events proved it. I will give a simple example: in 2002, when we took a stand against the Iraq war, it was not only a position of principle against its invasion, but against what was preparing and was even more dangerous from the point of view of sectarianism and federalism that we find today in Syria.

### **The sectarian weapon**

From that time on we had seen that what was happening in Iraq was not a mere invasion of the country or a temporary storm, but a different plan, which had been going on for at least three decades and was soon to reach the fourth. In the face of sectarian and federalist slogans, we had understood that to submit ourselves by "political pragmatism" was to place our head under the guillotine. That is why we opposed this war.

Now, if we compare the current repercussions of the Iraq war with those who immediately followed it, we would find that they are far more dramatic. They are growing, not the other way around, because it's a plan. When we understand this image, we will understand that tactics and superficial pragmatism, suggested by some, have no place in our current reality.

I would like us to understand that what we are experiencing is not an isolated stage, but linked to those that have preceded it for several decades. **We have lost the best of our young people and an infrastructure that has cost us a lot of money and sweat**

**over several generations. But in return, we have gained a healthier and more harmonious society.** It is the truth, not mere words said to please one and the other. This harmony is at the foundation of national cohesion, regardless of beliefs, ideas, traditions, customs, conceptions and opinions. Harmony does not imply their homogeneity, but the complementarity between them. It is this complementarity that leads to a single national color, which forms the unifying national union of all the children of the same country.

Some might reply: “What national union are we talking about when we always hear a sectarian discourse?” I would tell them that this is a speech already heard following the crimes of the Muslim Brotherhood in the eighties and that it did not last. The important thing is not what is said but what resides in the soul. Indeed, if this “separatist dimension” of a language heard in different circles of our society resided in souls, Syria would have fallen a long time ago and the so-called civil war harped on about by the Western media would be a fait accompli.

It was the first year of war that was the most dangerous because a “sectarian dimension”, although limited, was somewhere present in souls like fire under ashes. If it could have spread among the Syrians a few more years after the outbreak of this war, we might have lived an even more dangerous reality.

Therefore, the cohesion of society as we see it is our reality today. Society plays the essential role, a cumulative role throughout history. As for truths and the State, they undoubtedly have a role to play in the light of the lessons we have learned from the war. Nevertheless, if society had not been anti-sectarian, by nature, Syria would not have resisted as it did.

In this context, what happens is therefore a temporary situation, and we must distinguish between reactions and convictions. There is a confessional reaction, it is true, but there is no conviction in this matter and the difference is great between the first and the second.

The best example of this war is the reaction to a draft Constitution that speaks of a Syrian Republic and no longer of the Syrian “Arab” Republic. Now, how often has Arabism been insulted during this war, because some Arabs, and even a large part of the Arabs, have betrayed, while others were not of a great help. It was enough that the media talked about the removal of the word “Arab” so that these same Arabs would make a whole fuss about it. This confirms that most of the time we are dealing with reactions and that you, as diplomats and administrators of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, must remain vigilant about the terminology used and not be deceived by appearances.

### **The tactics and turn-arounds of the West**

The result of this resistance (of Syria) and the price we paid (for it) is (also) the shifts that have occurred recently in Western statements, which did not occur because their human conscience awoke and regained its health, or because they have (finally) felt that Syria is oppressed or anything like that. (The West) made this change because of the resistance of the people, of the state and of the armed forces (of Syria). And of course because of the support of our allies.

(The West) did not make this change because it has ethics or morality, because we have never seen any such thing, even before the war. But it is the reality on the ground in Syria, and the reality on the ground in their own countries (which imposed this turnaround on

them). And today, a week or a month do not go by without an event (terrorist attack) occurring which is the direct result of their stupidity in their decision making and support for terrorism in the region. It is these realities that have forced them to change their positions, even partially, in a shy manner and without conviction, but these shifts were imposed on them.

This change of position does not mean a change of policy. The West, like the snake, changes its skin depending on the situation. At first they talked about supporting the popular movement, the popular movement that has never exceeded, in the best case, 200,000 people paid (by the West and the Gulf) throughout Syria, a country of 24 million inhabitants.

And after having tried their best, with weapons beings present on the stage but in a hidden way, to perpetrate massacres and foment sedition, they have failed, and passed to the open support to armed groups but they gave them the name of “opposition” as a cover, that is to say they presented them as political (factions), giving them a political color, and they were presented as “moderate”, that is to say, as not extremists. Or the political denomination “opposition” was to (suggest) that they are not terrorists.



When this project failed and they were exposed for what they are (terrorists) in the eyes of the world public opinion, and in the eyes of the regional and local public opinion in their own countries, they switched to another version, the humanitarian pretext. We are currently at this stage. To summarize, it consists in keeping absolute silence as the terrorists advance or whatever, and perpetrate massacres and killings against civilians, but when it's the (Syrian) Army that is advancing at the expense of terrorists, then suddenly we begin to hear cries, lamentation and intercession to stop us, with the pretext of humanitarian slogans to stop the effusion of blood, to escort humanitarian aid, and other excuses that we Syrians know well. Their real goal is to provide an opportunity for armed groups to reform their ranks, to motivate, to bring equipment and to send reinforcements to help them, so they can continue their terrorist acts.

In truth, all these various tactics they employed during these stages could never deceive us in any case. From day one, we recognized terrorism, and on the first day, we hit terrorism, during the first stage, the second and third, and will continue to do so, as long as there is any terrorist anywhere in Syria. As for the media and the psychological war they conducted during the last several years, it could never, not a single moment, influence us to be distracted from this goal, namely combating terrorism, or to push us towards fear or hesitation.

### **Initiatives stemming from bad intentions and traitors**

This objective of combating terrorism has never been an obstacle to political action. Any

action, initiative or proposal that does not base itself on this objective has no value. Therefore, the fight against terrorism is the objective and, at the same time, the basis of each of our actions. And as long as it is, this base will be the reference and the compass that guide us. This means that all their maneuvers had no effect.

That is why, based on this foundation and conviction, we have treated with great flexibility the various initiatives proposed since the first day of the crisis, although we already knew that most of them were based on bad intentions.

The aim of these initiatives was to achieve specific results that they could not achieve through terrorism. And, as everyone knows, they have resulted in modest results or, if we speak in non-diplomatic language, non-existent. Why? Because our interlocutors were either terrorists, either agents (working for foreign powers), or both. They receive money from their masters, and every word that comes out of their mouths is approved by them, and maybe even stamped on their tongue.

In other words, in practice, we engaged in dialogue with slaves. What could we expect from such a dialogue? What could we hope for when, at every meeting and dialogue, direct or indirect, they proposed everything that corresponded to the interests of foreign states, enemies of Syria, and went against the interests of the Syrian people and against the territorial unity of the homeland ?

These groups paid for by foreigners – today I speak very frankly, because after almost seven years, there is no longer any way to use diplomatic language, even if this is a meeting of diplomats. Naturally, we know this truth. We know that these characters and these groups are imaginary ghosts that do not exist and do not weigh – they have recently discovered that they do not weigh much and that they are simple instruments intended to be used only once before being thrown into the trash. That is to say, they are like single-use medical equipment, which is opened, used and thrown, with the essential difference that they are not initially sterilized but are contaminated to the point of not being recyclable.

What is charming is that recently they began to talk about the errors of the revolution. During the past year, articles and declarations have spoken of this pure and immaculate revolution, themselves being pure and immaculate, but sometimes stained by the militarization of the revolution, sometimes because they have opened their space to extremists, and so on.

I disagree with them on this point and I think you agree with me. They were not mistaken. They did their duty. They were tasked to collaborate and fulfilled their collaborative role. In this field they have almost achieved infallibility in terms of discipline, dedication and loyalty, with irreproachable professionalism. But they made some mistakes: the first when they believed that the master attaches importance to his slave, I mean their masters. The second when they believed that a people who is his own master, such as the Syrian Arab people, would agree to submit to collaborators and traitors of their kind. The third error is when they said that the revolution had failed.

The truth is that the revolution has not failed. It has been a model of success and we are proud of it. But I am not talking about their revolution. I am talking about the revolution of the Syrian Army against the terrorists and the revolution of the Syrian people against the collaborators and the traitors.

They thought they had monopolized the term “revolution”, which had become a title that had been stuck to other titles and whose use was forbidden to anyone: the Revolutionary Professor so-and-so, the Revolutionary Doctor so-and-so, and so on. Faced with this, many Syrian patriots took this term in aversion, just because they had monopolized it. No... The term “revolution” is part of our language, we are always proud of it and we have not given it to anyone. That they have been called revolutionary, does not mean that they are and does not change anything to what they really are. How many people wear the names of Prophets, peace and blessings be upon them, without possessing anything of faith? The same applies to them. To be presented as revolutionary does not mean that they are. We are telling them now: the real revolutionaries are the patriotic elite, the human elite and the moral elite; but you, humanly, morally and patriotically, are no more than garbage.

### **The initiatives of Astana, Erdogan and de-escalation zones**

Just as we have responded flexibly to promote dialogue initiatives, we welcomed positively those on the cessation of fighting, even if we had no doubt that terrorists would benefit from these initiatives to fool us (betraying their commitments), as they have done repeatedly. But our forces were on alert.



Hence the question: if the results of the meetings are non-existent and if they do not honor their agreements, why waste our time? Because since the beginning of the crisis, we have not missed any opportunity to stop the bloodshed without strive to grasp it, even when hope was minimal, in order to preserve the innocent.

From there, we attended the Astana meetings, starting from a clear national vision, and great trust in our friends, Iran and Russia. But what about the third partner Turkey?

We do not view it as guarantor or partner in the peace process and, of course, we do not trust it. It supports terrorists. It guarantees nothing but for terrorists. And the real reason for the participation of Turkey in Astana Congress is that Erdogan has no other options before him. Terrorists fall everywhere, successive defeats, scandals also because of his relations with terrorists. Therefore, to enter the process of Astana is on one hand a kind of cover, and also allows h to protect terrorists. That is what he did and, as you know, the blocking of a number of sessions took place to protect the terrorists.

On the other hand, the participation of Erdogan in the Astana meetings gives it a role in Syria, a role it seeks to legitimize its role and the presence of Turkish units in Syria, that is, to legitimize the occupation, whereas our position was straight away clear: **any Turkish individual present on Syrian soil without the consent of the Syrian government is**



## **an occupier.**

This means that **Erdogan has practically become a kind of political beggar on the roadside, begging for any role, because he feels the imbalance in Turkey and the scandal of his relationship with terrorists that is clearly discovered throughout the world.**

And indeed, if he remains in power, it is not for his wit and wisdom as some try to present it, but because he still has a role to play in supporting terrorists in Syria. But if the Syrian situation were to end in favor of terrorism or other forces supporting terrorism, he would become useless and no one would support his maintenance. He therefore remained in power because of his role of the moment in Syria: a destructive role.

One of Astana's results corresponds to "de-escalation zones". They have given rise to many questions. Do they correspond to a *fait accompli* in the direction of partitioning Syria? Will they benefit terrorists? Would they be equivalent to secured areas?

The truth is that, in general terms, they are not fundamentally different from previous initiatives concerning the cessation of hostilities. The differences are in form and concern geography, formulation and, to a certain extent, procedures, slightly different compared to previous initiatives, but their essence is the same: (they are meant) to stop the bloodshed, to allow the return of the displaced, channel humanitarian aid, give terrorists a chance to leave the terrorist strand and settle their situation so that they can return to the fold of the State. Such are the general aspect and the ultimate aim, which naturally includes national reconciliation, the restoration of the authority of the State, the exit of the terrorists who would lay down their arms; in other words, the return to normal status throughout the territory.

Concerning the "*fait accompli*": there is no *fait accompli* as long as we do not stop the fight. We are talking about a single arena, the same terrorism, regardless of its different bases moving from one group to another and from one gang to another. As long as we continue to hit terrorism in this same arena, it will only weaken everywhere else. We strike him in one place, he weakens in all the others. And as long as the fighting continues, the situation remains limited in time, not the other way around. This means that there is no *fait accompli* and there is no question that as a Syrian government we accept a partition proposal under any title. This in the event that such a proposal had been advanced, which is not the case.

As to whether de-escalation areas will benefit terrorists, there is no need to worry about this. They have already tried, but our armed forces were on the lookout and crushed them more than once.

Finally, "secured areas" mean that US-led coalition aviation creates an area of air coverage for terrorists, allowing them to travel and expand, even hitting anyone who advances to fight them. The situation is different for "de-escalation zones", because overflight of these areas is prohibited for all parties, but terrorists will be hit in case they move in any direction, and if they violate the agreement, as Syrian government, we have the right to make them the targets of our military operations.

And now what will happen? In practice, we are merely participating in the formation of dialogue committees representing the Syrian State, other committees will be formed by the

parties residing in these [de-escalation] zones, in order to discuss the points of agreement referred to above, with the ultimate aim of achieving national reconciliation; which can only be realized by the departure of the terrorists and the restoration of the authority of the State throughout the territory. Nothing less, because it would mean that we have not achieved our goal.

That is why it is in our interest that this initiative be a success, and we will do all we can to make it successful. But it also depends on the capabilities and sincerity of the other parties, whether they are inside these areas or outside the Syrian borders, as foreign parties can negatively or positively affect the local parties.

### **What History will remember about ourselves, our brothers and our friends**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Despite more than 6 years of this ferocious war against Syria and despite the fact that the Syrian army, with at its side the popular forces and our allies, leads the fiercest battles against the most formidable terrorist groups, supported by the most powerful and richest countries in the world, despite this, these forces, our forces made achievements and victories, week by week and day by day, crushing terrorists and purifying areas contaminated by (their presence), and they go on on this path.

What has been achieved by the heroes of the Syrian Arab Army, the armed forces and popular and allied forces, indeed heroic acts and sacrifices during the past war years, shows an example in the History of wars throughout History. And what they have accomplished in terms of sacrifices is a beacon for future generations, in the sense of commitment to national dignity, patriotism and sacrifices for the homeland and for the people. And the truth... [Applause]

And the truth is that it is these achievements that were the real lever to the march of national reconciliation that began 3 years ago, and it is they who have pushed many undecided (among armed groups) to come back in the lap of the nation. That is to say, to speak clearly and far from any embellishment, these military achievements of our armed forces were the very war and the very policy. Alongside the Army exploits, were it not for the endurance of the Syrian people, every citizen in his place, the student, the teacher, the worker, the civil servant, the diplomat, the employee, and so on in all layers and components of Syrian society, it would not have been possible that Syria resists to this day.

As for our friends and allies, they were a very important part of these achievements and successes.

Hezbollah, which needs no introduction and who willingly evades recognition and thanks, his fighters were no less attached to (the defense of) Syrian land than their brothers in arms in heroism of the Syrian armed forces. And when we talk about them, we speak with great pride, exactly the same as when we speak of any Syrian who defended his homeland. The same goes for their martyrs, their wounded and their heroic families.

As for Iran, it has not wavered in its presence with us since day one. It supplied weapons and quantities (of money, equipment and men) without any limit. It sent military advisers and officers to help us plan (the defense and offensive). It supported us economically, through the extremely difficult conditions we experienced. It led the political battles with us

in all international issues and proved in each instance that it is sovereign and sole master of its decisions, true to its principles and its commitments, in which one can have full confidence.

Likewise for Russia. She used her veto several times in succession in her policy, in defense of the unity and sovereignty of Syria, and in defense of the UN Charter and international law. China did the same. And Russia has not limited herself to support the Syrian Army and provide everything it needed for its anti-terrorist operations. She later sent its air force and was directly involved in the fight against terrorism, offering martyrs on Syrian soil.



Thus, if the successes on the field have been made thanks to the determination of the heroes of the armed forces, Army and popular forces, the direct support of our allies, political, economic and military has greatly strengthened our capabilities to gain ground in the field, and narrowed losses and burdens of war. And therefore, they are now our true allies in these achievements, in the way of striking and completely annihilating terrorism and restoring security and stability in Syria.

And if the Syrian Arab people and with it the armed forces today are writing a new history for Syria and the region in general, there will also be volumes that will be written about our friends. About Iran and Imam Khamenei. About Russia and President Putin. About Hezbollah and Sayed Hassan Nasrallah. [Applause] These volumes will be written about their principles, their ethics, their virtues, for future generations to read.

### **The roadmap**

What are the future directions of the Syrian policy? We begin with the traditional rule that we adopted since the early days of the war, which rests on two points. The first: to continue to fight and crush the terrorists wherever they are, in cooperation with the Allied Forces and friends.

The second: to pursue national reconciliation, wherever necessary, as it has demonstrated its effectiveness in different ways, and that is for us a chance to stop the bleeding and rebuild the country.

The third point is the improvement of our external contacts. The fact is that Western public opinion has changed. And you, in the Foreign Ministry, you are best placed to monitor the details. It is not only Western public opinion that has changed, but the world public opinion, especially Western. It changed mainly because (people) have discovered, after years, that the story (propaganda) was not well put together. For seven years, the same lie was told about the state that kills its people, about the world that supports the people against the state, which remained standing. This is an inconsistent speech doomed to fail and illogical

even for children.

People have discovered that their leaders were lying and that their traditional media were also associated with the lies of the officials and state. Today, people have discovered that the story told is false, but it does not necessarily mean they know the real story; this task is up to you and your heart working diplomats. Now that the doors of the truth are open, we have to present it to the world public opinion and especially that of the West.

The fourth point is the promotion of the economy, especially as your congress coincides with the Damascus International Fair, which gives a great signal in this direction. Promoting economic opportunities already available and those that might be in the near future. At this point, let me say that the Syrian economy has entered a recovery phase, slowly but surely, although we are in a state of almost total siege. This too is part of the essential missions of the Syrian diplomacy.

The fifth point is very important: we must move politically, economically and culturally to the Orient (the East). The East is mostly taken in the political sense, and also in part in the geographical sense. This East today, without specifying the countries that comprise it, which as diplomats you know perfectly, the East has all the elements of development. It is no longer in the "Second World" as in the past, but is part of the "First World" in every sense of the term, at least in regard to our needs as a developing country. It is not necessary to look for the latest in science, but for all that is essential, the East has for sure all the goods and all the capabilities we need.

This East therefore has the elements of science and economy, it has the elements of civilization (that are lacking in the West), treats us as equals and with respect, without dictates, without pride or arrogance. All these behaviors are virtually absent from the side of the West, which never offered us anything even in the best times. The simplest things, such as scientific missions (were refused to us). Thus, when he thinks that such specialization could have a significant impact on development in Syria, he forbids us to enroll our students in it. Therefore, we must not rely on the West. I speak of an experience of over four decades, and especially since the October War in 1973.

### **About the reopening of some embassies**

The West today is suffering from paranoia. If he speaks of international community, he speaks of himself, and in their eyes, the world is probably made of livestock herds and not (human) societies. If he cut his relations with us, he thinks he has cut us the oxygen. And if he closes his embassy, he says that we are isolated even though we kept our relationship with dozens of other countries. So we are an isolated country (according to the West), but how many of our ambassadors abroad are now present in this room, and how many foreign ambassadors in Syria? We are not isolated as Westerners think. But their arrogance leads them to think that way.

Lately we have started to hear about the possibility of reopening the embassies of some western countries who behaved as enemies of Syria and who sided with the terrorists. Some say they will open their embassies in exchange for our security cooperation, or claim that we would accept security cooperation only if they open their embassies; despite the fact that they have not asked us if we would accept the reopening of the embassies. This discourse suggests that we expect this day forward, as if we were sitting on the side of the road waiting for the day of deliverance where these foreign embassies would open their

doors; and if not all of them, at least some. So maybe we might feel in our being, perhaps we might feel our legitimacy lost due to their absence, and more, maybe we would experience the feeling of having found our honor and national dignity when they reopen their embassies in Syria. This is how they think.

The truth is that we never talked about it this way. We never said that we accept cooperation security in exchange for the opening of embassies. We said that no relationship is possible, including security, in case of “political cover”, which requires a sound political relationship, rendered impossible as these countries support terrorism. That is why we will be clear: there will be no security cooperation, not reopening embassies, or even any role for some countries who have recently started saying they would participate in the resolution of the problem in Syria, as long as they will not cut their relations with terrorism and terrorists, in a clear, explicit and unambiguous way. Only then will it be possible to talk about the opening of embassies.

### **The Western political system is incapable to produce statesmen**

This Western stupidity is not new. I still remember the subject of desertions that I never mentioned in my speeches and which has just been evoked to me in a question to which I replied. This subject is now forgotten, so it is good to remember it, especially as we had said that it was not of great importance for us, but it truly is. Indeed, (conceive that) dozens – some say hundreds, whatever – of people devoid of national feeling or paid by the abroad, were hidden in the various services of the State, that we knew nothing about them, and could not distinguish those who were attached to their country and those who were not, without our having the slightest clue. Imagine that all these years, these people were at the heart of (State) organizations, acting as a fifth column and plotting for the interests of these foreign states. So what was the situation? In all certainty, the situation was very difficult. How could we tell them, you are unpatriotic and untrustworthy, get out (of our services) of the State so that we can work correctly (since we did not know their identity)?

Well, these Western leaders in their stupidity did so. (These traitors) did not just come out of the State services, but of the whole country. That is, they made a cleaning operation, unprecedented, that we would have been unable to carry out. That is to say, whatever the points of difference between people and between countries, there are always points of convergence. Therefore I can say that the West supported these desertions, and we also stood by them and converged with him on that! We do not diverge on everything, and we agreed on this point.

Of course, there are also sanctions against Syria, even if they are secondary. The West also wanted to punish Russia with sanctions, but lost more than Russia has lost. In the end, this great power immediately compensated for its losses by its relations with other countries and increased its local production thanks to its diversified economy, with its vast territory and variety of natural resources. It is Russia who won. Thus, for at least twenty years, the West has continued to show his stupidity, as a consequence of the arrogance that characterizes him. The West has enormous resources and excellent capabilities in every area, but because of his lack of wisdom, he does not take advantage of them. That’s why he goes from a mistake to another, from one problem to another, from a dead end to another, and covers them with lies. It seems that the Western political system is no longer able to produce (true) statesmen.

As for Western society, it is undeniable that it is rich and advanced in all aspects of life. It is

a fact that we do not deny. And it is capable of producing (even more). But its political system only allows those serving political, economic, financial or other elites to access the controls. Hence the results we see today.

### **The foundations of Syrian policy**

What are the foundations on which rests the Syrian political and particularly at that stage, the stage of the war?

First: Everything about the fate and future of Syria depends 100% on the Syrians, not 99% and some cents, 100%. Even our friends clearly adopt this discourse. We accept the advice wherever they come from, but the final decision may only be Syrian.

(Second): The territorial unity of Syria is one of the evidences that absolutely admits no debate or discussion.

(Third): The Syrian national identity is indisputable, but the essence of this identity is Arabism in its civilizational unifying meaning of all children of the country and all sectors of society.

Fourth: We will not allow under any circumstances to enemies, adversaries or terrorists to get through the politics, what they could not accomplish on the ground through terrorism.

The last point: The war will not change our principles. The Palestinian cause stills remains essential to us, Israel is still the enemy who occupies our territories and we always support any resistance in the region as long as it is true and not falsified, as is the case of some resistance movements.

### **Ladies and gentlemen,**

In this war we are fighting on many fronts and in several areas in order to defeat the terrorist plot and restore peace and security in Syria. We must realize that its extension is, on a certain side, due to the fear of our enemies and adversaries to see Syria become much stronger than it was before the war. This is why we must now seriously work to build Syria's future on solid foundations: a Syria free, strong, independent, where terrorism, extremism, traitors and foreign agents do not have their place. And that is why we must realize that the work done will be the guarantee of our fidelity to the values, traditions and interests of Syria and the Syrians.

I wish you every success in your missions and your conference.

Peace be upon you.

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