

China-Syria Strategic Partnership Faces the US-imposed Stalemate

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On September 22, during a diplomatic meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, he told Syrian President Bashar al-Assad that China would help Syria to rebuild its ruined economy by upgrading ties to a "[strategic partnership](#)", which means close coordination on regional and international affairs, including in the military sphere, and is just one grade below what Beijing calls a "comprehensive strategic partnership". After the talks, the two heads of state witnessed the signing of bilateral cooperation documents in the areas of the Belt and Road cooperation, economic, and technological cooperation.

On September 21, [Assad and his wife](#) touched down in Hangzhou, China, accompanied by a high-ranking Syrian delegation, where they will attend the opening of the [19th Asian Games](#) on September 23. Syria has sent Majid Aldeen Ghazal (track and field), Ahmad Hamsho and his brother Omar Hamsho (equestrian), Maen Assad (weightlifting) and Omar Sarem and Enal Braze (boxing) to the sporting event representing Syria.

"China supports Syria's opposition to foreign interference, unilateral bullying ... and will support Syria's reconstruction," Xi said.

Syria fell victim to a US-NATO attack for regime change in 2011, which failed to produce results, but was successful in cutting the country into pieces, aided by the US military occupation, and the US-EU sanctions on Syria have prevented reconstruction or investments.

"China is willing to strengthen cooperation with Syria through the Belt and Road Initiative ... to make positive contributions to regional and world peace and development," said the leader of the world's second-largest economy, who offers an alternative to the global US-domination. Xi called on the US and EU to lift the sanctions on Syria, for the benefit of the suffering Syrian people, who are facing poverty and food insecurity.

Under the 2020 Caesar Act in the US Congress, any company who has any business dealing

with any private or public business entity in Syria can have their financial assets frozen by the US Department of Treasury. Elizabeth Hoff, former WHO director in Damascus, said medical machines in hospitals across Syria often sat idle because the firms who made the replacement parts were not willing to risk sanctions.

Syria's location offers a huge leverage for China, or any international player. Turkey, Iraq, Jordan are all neighbors of Syria and important for China. Russia and Iran are inside Syria, so it's in geo-economic interest for China to increase its' presence in Syria.

China and Russia are united on the global stage, and that's clear in Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East.

The central government in Damascus controls most of the territory, with the exception of the Al Qaeda controlled province of Idlib in the northwest, and the US occupation's partner in the northeast. Syria and China share intelligence because of China's fears of the 3,500 radicalized [Muslim Uyghurs from China fighting in Idlib](#), where they have been supported by President Erdogan of Turkey.

In March, Beijing helped broker a deal between Saudi Arabia and Iran to end a seven-year-long diplomatic rift, which has furthered peace and stability in the region, much to the surprise of Washington, who has depended on creating problems among neighbors in the Middle East to further US interests.

After 67 years of diplomacy, Syria joined China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2022, in which China has been investing in and building infrastructure on several continents to establish land and sea trade routes linking Asia to the rest of the world, harkening back to the ancient Silk Road which stretched from China to Syria. 17 countries in the Middle East and North Africa have joined the BRI.

China is will strengthen Belt and Road cooperation with Syria, increase the import of high-quality agricultural products from Syria, and perhaps gain additional energy sources.

On 20 June, China's state-owned energy and chemical giant [Sinopec named a new manager for Syria](#). Sinopec's entrance into Syria's oil sector dates back to 2009 when the corporation acquired Canada's Tanganyika Oil Company. Sinopec's holdings encompass the Oudeh, Tishreen, and Sheikh Mansour oilfields are today all occupied by the US military, who confiscates the oil production to deprive the Syrian people of electricity and gasoline. Trump ordered the US military in 2019 to steal the Syrian oil, not because the US needs oil, but only to make Syria suffer more, and it has.

In 2008-09, China had invested around \$3 billion in petroleum extraction and other energy ventures in Syria, but the projects were shut down in 2014 amid US-EU sanctions.

China become a net importer of energy in 1993, and by 2017, it became the largest crude oil importer globally, and 48%, comes from the Middle East, which is why the Middle East will continue to gain significance in the next decade for China.

In 1998, Richard N. Haas wrote a paper "[Economic sanctions: too much of a bad thing](#)". In that policy briefing, he proves that economic sanctions to not work on big projects, like regime change, and only hurt the innocent people living under sanctions, while having no effect on administrations. After 25 years you would think someone in the US Congress would

have learned the lesson, but they doggedly follow political strategies which have no merit, and yield no results.

While the US government is spending billions on weapons for Ukraine, they sent absolutely nothing to the people of Syria in Aleppo and Latakia, who were the hardest hit areas in Syria from the February 6 earthquake of 7.8 magnitude, which took 10,000 lives in Syria. Latakia sits on three fault lines, one of which is directly connected to the Turkish epicenter. The US sent tons of aid to Idlib, which is occupied by Al Qaeda's affiliate in Syria, and controlled by Mohammad al-Julani, formerly of ISIS.

The Obama-Trump-Biden war on Syria for regime change utilized foot soldiers following Radical Islam, the same terrorist ideology that some of the Uyghur community follow in western China, where they have carried out horrific terrorist attacks on Chinese civilians. Russia and Iran have also been the victims of numerous attacks by terrorists following Radical Islam. The UN charter calls for all members to fight terrorists where they are, and in the case of Russia, Iran and China they do their part; but, in the case of the US and EU it is a selective process. If there is a terrorist attack in New York or Paris, then it is condemned. But, if the same brand of terrorists' attack Aleppo, they are idolized and called 'freedom fighters', and if they manage to occupy Idlib, they are supported by UN humanitarian aid, US aid, and international charities.

The US and EU have prolonged the suffering of the Syrian people by the sanctions, and the protection of the terrorists in Idlib, which has turned the Syria conflict into a status quo. The Syrian war is over, the battlefields are silent since 2017, and people want to rebuild and start their life anew, but the western governments refuse to give them a break. Without an influx of foreign investments, Syria cannot be rebuilt. All eyes are on China now, to see if they can break free of the status quo.

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