

McCain and Other Top US, French Officials Illegally Entering Syria, Meeting with Islamic State (ISIS) Jihadists

By [RT](#)

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Several senior US and French officials, including US Senator John McCain, entered Syria illegally - without proper visas - on separate occasions, thus violating the country's sovereignty, Syria said in a complaint submitted to the United Nations.

The list of officials also included former French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner and former US diplomat Peter Galbraith, according to a letter dated December 30 cited by Reuters and AFP.

In the letter, Syria's UN ambassador Bashar Ja'afari urged UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Security Council to put additional pressure on governments to implement "the necessary measures against their nationals who enter Syrian territory illegally."

"Such actions are a blatant violation of Syria's sovereignty and of the resolutions of the Security Council concerning Syria," Ja'afari said.

The letter included complaints from "*certain journalists and prominent figures*" entering Syria illegally, pointing out McCain's visit to the country in June 2013, as well as Kouchner's visit in November 2014 and Galbraith's in December 2014, along with other US political and military leaders.

Former Kuwaiti politician Walid Tabtabai is also mentioned as making an illegal visit in September 2013.

At the time, McCain's spokesperson only confirmed that the former Republican presidential candidate visited Syria in May 2013 to meet with Syrian rebels.

McCain responded to the complaint by downplaying the accusations, and in turn accusing Syrian President Bashar Assad of the "*massacre*" of his own people.

"It is a sad but unsurprising truth that the Assad regime is less concerned with its massacre of more than 200,000 men, women and children than it is my visit with those brave Syrians fighting for their freedom and dignity," McCain's statement said. "The fact that the international community has done virtually nothing to bring down this terrible regime despite its atrocities is a stain on our collective moral conscience."

According to earlier media reports, McCain crossed into Syria in May 2013 from Turkey with

General Salem Idris, who was in charge of the Supreme Military Council of the Free Syrian Army, and stayed there for several hours before returning.

During the visit, the senator met with leaders of Free Syrian Army units in Turkey and Syria.

McCain's visit created a media storm, especially after a picture surfaced of him posing with allegedly Islamic State-linked jihadists (formerly ISIS/ISIL).

The original claim came from Kentucky Republican Senator Rand Paul, who accused McCain of unknowingly meeting with Islamic State fighters.



US Senator John McCain walks on Independence Square in Kiev on December 15, 2013.(AFP Photo / Volodymyr Shuvayev)

Among the Senator's other controversial visits was a trip to Ukraine in December 2013 amid mass anti-government protests. During the visit, McCain met with Ukrainian opposition leaders in the country's capital of Kiev, voicing his support for the protests, adding that he saw Ukraine's future with Europe.

Also, back in 2011, McCain visited Benghazi to meet the Libyan rebels, calling them "my heroes." McCain boldly stated that the fall of the ousted Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi would inspire people all over world - including in Russia - which raised eyebrows globally.

"We believe very strongly that the people of Libya today are inspiring the people in Tehran, in Damascus, and even in Beijing and Moscow," said McCain.

McCain's travel tendencies landed him on Russia's black list in March, part of Russia's [retaliation](#) against US-led sanctions. The list bans the Senator along with other individuals from traveling to Russia as well as freezes any of his assets there.

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