

“No Fly Zone” War for Syria: Replicating The “Libya Scenario”

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Russia’s Western partners in the Action Group for Syria have demonstrated unwillingness to help Moscow contribute to a cease-fire in this Middle Eastern country. The planned session of the Action Group for Syria with the participation of Turkey, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and the EU has been postponed indefinitely.

It was Russia that earlier offered the five permanent UN Security Council members to take part in the Action Group for Syria’s ambassadorial meeting in New York on Friday. Also, Russia hammered out a draft declaration where it formulated its initiatives on the Syrian settlement. The document, in particular, urged the conflicting parties to agree on an early cease-fire in Syria by notably appointing special envoys tasked with holding peace negotiations.

The West has preferred to keep mum on Russia’s proposal on exerting pressure on both parties to the Syrian conflict. Small wonder, given that the West is playing its own card in Syria, our political commentator says.

Western countries continue to lend military support to the opposition in a bid to oust a legal power in Syria. Earlier this week, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton tried, in fact, to create a new anti-Syrian coalition that could bring together Britain, France, Germany and Turkey.

During a video conference, the five coordinated steps to render additional assistance to Syrian opposition. They pledged more arms and means of communication to militants who are keen to topple the Assad regime.

Additionally, more mercenaries are set to be dispatched to Syria in the near future. A year ago, the same steps were in place with respect to then-Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, says Boris Dolgov, of the Moscow-based Institute for Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

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Earlier in the week, two field commanders from Libya joined those foreign mercenaries who are currently helping armed Syrian opposition depose President Bashar Assad. The two men were at the helm of militants attacking Gaddafi’s presidential palace in Tripoli in 2011.

On Friday, the Al-Arabya TV channel quoted a source in the United States as saying that 14 surface-to-air Stinger missiles have been delivered to the Syrian opposition at an area on the border with Turkey. The source added that both the United States and Turkey are aware of the arms delivery, and that “financing has probably come from Saudi Arabia.”

Alexander Sotnichenko, a St.Petersburg- based Middle East expert, warns that the West’s playing with fire in Syria is fraught with grave consequences. This will further exacerbate the situation, and is unlikely to help spread democratic values in Syria, Soitnichenko says.

“Hefty sums injected into the Syrian opposition may finally lead to Bashar Assad stepping down,” Sotnichenko says. “This will mean Syria ultimately turning into a battle zone where a civil war is very likely,” he concludes.

Meanwhile, the use of a force-leaning scenario was not supported by a summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) which wrapped up in Mecca earlier this week. A statement to this effect was made by OIC Secretary-General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, which was echoed by Sergei Demidenko of the Institute of Strategic Assessments and Analysis in Moscow.

“Saudi Arabia and Qatar have realized that the West will not meddle in the conflict now that the presidential elections in the United States are yet to be held,” Demidenko says. “Right now, they pretend to join the international community in saying ‘no’ to military interference in Syria, something that is nothing but lip-service. ”

On Friday, Algerian diplomat Lakhdar Brahimi was appointed the new UN-Arab League envoy to Syria. He will replace Kofi Annan who earlier said he will quit in late August. In the meantime, Moscow has already expressed hope that Lakhdar Brahimi will successfully interact with the Action Group for Syria.

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