

Nobel Peace Laureate: Say No to the War on Syria

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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Open Letter by Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire to William Hague, British Foreign Minister, and Laurent Fabius, French Foreign Minister,

Arming rebels and authorizing military action by USA/NATO forces will not solve the problem facing Syria, but indeed could lead to the death of thousands of Syrians, the breaking-up of Syria, and it falling under the control of violent fundamentalist jihadist forces. It will mean the further fleeing of Syrians into surrounding countries which will themselves become destabilised. The entire Middle East will become unstable and violence will spiral out of control.

Contrary to some foreign governments current policies of arming the rebels and pushing for military intervention, the people of Syria are calling out for peace and reconciliation and a political solution to the crisis, which continues to be enflamed by outside forces with thousands of foreign fighters funded and supported by outside countries for their own political ends.

Having visited Syria in May, 2013, after leading a 16 person delegation I returned convinced that the civil community, with groups such as Mussalaha, who are working on the ground building peace and reconciliation, can solve their own problems if their plea for outsiders to remain out of the conflict is honoured by the international community.

During our visit we met with all sections of the community, most of whom are sick of violence and death and want peace and reconciliation and a political solution. We met with the Syrian Prime Minister and 7 other government ministers, and we were assured that the Government did not use sarin gas on its own people, and they invited the UN to send in inspectors to see what was happening.

Currently there is an International Commission of Inquiry on Chemical Weapons in Damascus staying at Four Seasons Hotel, which is less than ten minutes from the areas where the chemical weapons were allegedly used. The western media, particularly vocal being the British and French Foreign Ministers, are accusing President Assad of using chemical weapons on his own people but have no proof of this accusation, rather some things point to rebels as the ones who used such weapons.

The question must be asked, what would it benefit Assad to use sarin gas in the vicinity of visiting international UN inspectors and in his own environment and neighbourhood where it would affect his soldiers, etc., personally, I do not believe the latest accusations against the Assad government using sarin gas, and in order that the world can hear the truth, I would appeal to the International Commission of Inquiry to go into the areas in question

immediately and report as quickly as possible. In the meantime I appeal to the Foreign Ministers of Britain and France to encourage, as the Syrian people wish, dialogue and negotiation as a way forward. We all remember the fear, panic and lies spun by the British and American governments, and others that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and it was not true. Let us learn the lesson of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya where so many millions have been killed in invasions and war, and many continue to die in violence. Violence is not the answer, let's end this 'war on terror' and give nonviolence and peace a chance.

Mairead Maguire, Nobel peace laureate

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