

Political Gangsters at UN: Silencing the Syrian Narrative.”There’s no United Nations anymore, it’s over”

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“Welcome to the United Nations. It’s your world,” reads the UN logo. Apparently, however, there are limitations as to just how “welcome” some of its representatives are.

Syria’s Ambassador to the UN, [Dr. Bashar al-Ja’afari](#), was sworn in as Permanent Special Representative in 2006. Yet, in spite of his thirty plus years as a diplomat, his being highly-educated and multi-lingual, and the fact that he is the UN’s official Representative of the state of Syria, the United Nations has little interest in hearing what he has to say. Not only do they lack interest, since the Western-NATO-Israeli-Gulf war on Syria began in early 2011, they actively work to silence him or distort his words.

The UN has pulled endless stunts on Syria’s Ambassador, with the obvious intent of distorting reality and prolonging the proxy war on Syria.

Ambassador al-Ja’afari maintains that he is routinely assigned the worst translators, to convolute his message. *“Every time I speak at the Security Council (SC), they choose a bad interpreter who is not able to fully interpret what I am saying,”* he said. On one occasion at the SC, the Syrian Ambassador said he saw a staff member signal to the interpreters to switch the adept interpreter for the inept. *“I saw it with my own eyes. They changed the interpreter to a poor one.”*

Ambassador al-Ja’afari is one of the only—if not the only—ambassadors to the UN to repeatedly over the years have his microphone and/or video feed cut when he speaks.

Correspondent Nizar Abboud has been an invaluable source of footage of the Syrian Ambassador’s speeches otherwise unavailable thanks to cut UN feeds. Abboud says the cuts are not due to *“technical problems,”* but instead often done *“by senior officials at the United Nations.”* Of one such incident, Abboud said: *“The journalists were furious about it, they wanted to hear what the Ambassador was saying and suddenly he went off air.”*

Matthew Lee, a journalist with Inner City Press (ICP), [reported](#) on an April 5, 2012 feed cut, noting that the speeches of the then *“Special Envoy for Syria,”* Kofi Annan, as well as the (Qatari) President of the General Assembly (GA) and Ban Ki-moon were all broadcast on UN television. However, *“just as Syria’s Permanent Representative Bashar Ja’afari took the floor to respond, UN TV went dark. When the session was over several Permanent Representatives were critical of what they called ‘the PGA’s use of the UN for Qatar’s foreign policy.’”*

Later that day, [in a press conference](#), Ambassador al-Ja'afari addressed the feed cut, additionally noting that the President of the General Assembly had orchestrated, *"a session where only the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia spoke, plus Kofi Annan."* He noted that other ambassadors were not invited to speak, and that *"the purpose of the meeting was how to defame the reputation of Syria, not to help stop the violence in Syria."*

On June 7, 2012, UN TV again cut as Ambassador Ja'afari spoke in the GA, following a request he had attempted to make in April, *"to observe a minute of silence, in order to mourn the death of victims in my country."*

The Syrian Ambassador was again cut out of the feed on June 18, 2014. ICP's Lee reported that on June 20 he was told by the same Dujarric regarding the June 7 cut that (in Lee's words), *"in fact the error in 2012 was been (sic) to allow Ja'afari to speak AT ALL on UN TV. He said the arrangement was that Ban and the Qatari PGA could speak, then the UN TV was supposed to go off."*

Following the June 2014 Syrian elections, international representatives who had observed the elections in Syria convened at the UN to report back. Roughly five minutes in, after Ambassador al-Ja'afari had opened the meeting and thanked the Secretariat for facilitating it, the webcast feed was cut. Ironically, the Ambassador had stressed he wanted to leave *"enough time to give you the right picture of the Syrian landscape that was prevailing during elections. They are eyewitnesses."*

Witnesses not meant to be heard

Thanks to [independent footage](#), the meeting was still recorded. Panelists spoke of the massive turnout to vote, first for two full days in Lebanon, and then in Syria. They noted the turnouts in important cities like Homs (the media-dubbed so-called *"capital of the 'revolution'"*), and the enthusiasm of voters who faced threats of mortar and missile attacks by Western-backed armed groups. They spoke of the average Syrians they had met during the elections and the ardent support for both the President and the Syrian army.

The UN is consistently determined to silence the Syrian narrative. In January, 2014, at the Geneva II conference on Syria in Montreux, Switzerland, Foreign Affairs Minister Walid Muallem was himself cut off by none other than the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon.

Pointing out the ridiculousness of the situation, [Muallem noted](#): *"You live in New York, I live in Syria. I have the right to give the Syrian version in this forum. After three years of suffering, this is my right. You spoke for 25 minutes. I need at least 30."* While Ban interrupted Muallem's speech, asking him to *"wrap up in just one or two minutes,"* the Syrian Minister refused to be silenced and did eventually finish his speech.

What is the UN afraid of hearing?

Ambassador al-Ja'afari is clever with his words. In May, 2014, speaking at the UNSC, where the French Ambassador had without any substantiated reasons suggested Syria be referred to the ICC, the Ambassador remarked:

"Mr. President, some member states introducing this draft resolution while dealing with the Syrian situation remind me of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Those states are trying to impersonate the role of Dr. Jekyll, the good man, by

promoting noble principles, while in reality they represent Mr. Hyde, the evil man. This evil role is manifested through their involvement in backing terrorism in Syria and contributing to the continuation of Syrian bloodshed, while shedding crocodile tears over bloodshed in Syria. The hands of Mr. Hyde are stained with Syrian blood, although he falsely claims his friendship for the Syrian people.”

Ambassador al-Ja’afari is one of a small number of representatives at the UN who dare to call out the House of Saud and other corrupt monarchies, as well as Israel and Turkey, for their role in funding and training terrorists in Syria. He also corrects and reprimands UN representatives when they intentionally use loaded lexicon to discuss the Syrian government and reality, to distort understanding.

In an Orlando, Florida panel, in July 2013, he likewise warned the audience against falling into the trap of using the misleading terminology used against Syria by media and political representatives. *“How can you call them ‘jihadists’ when what they are doing is not from Islam? When they attack Syrians, then escape into Israel and are treated in Israeli hospitals,”* he noted, clarifying *“terrorists”* not *“jihadists”* is the appropriate term. He encouraged Syrian-Americans to feel and act as ambassadors of Syria, also reminding them that they are part of the fabric of American culture. Unlike the anti-Syrian bloc, he stressed the need for discussion. *“Rupture and the absence of dialogue doesn’t serve anyone, it deepens the misunderstanding. Dialogue is very important.”*

In a similar Los Angeles panel, in December 2013, he received a standing ovation, Ikhra news reported. Many in the Syrian-American community want to hear his voice.

And so it was that, in March 2014, the Ambassador was slapped with a travel ban. US Department of State spokesperson, Jen Psaki, reluctantly admitted to having informed him that *“he is restricted to a 25 mile travel radius. I’m not in a position to comment any further on it.”*

When I met with Dr. al-Ja’afari in his New York office in January 2015, I asked why he thought he had been restricted. His answer was that they didn’t like his activism, which was meeting with the very people he represents and *“explaining to them what’s going on in Syria. They needed information; they needed to be briefed about what’s going on in their homeland. They are all extremely worried, they have families there,”* he said.

Ignoring international law & abandoning ship

The UN is being used as a vehicle for the US and allies to justify their illegal airstrikes and intervention in Syria. The November 2014 resolution [A/C.3/69/L.31](#) on Syria is a litany of unsubstantiated rhetoric against the sovereign state of Syria.

At no point in the seven pages of vitriol does the resolution condemn or express outrage at the states supplying and enabling terrorists and their attacks within Syria. Nor does it condemn Israel’s repeated violations of Syria’s borders and providing medical and material support to terrorists. The resolution further fails to address, much less condemn, Israel’s repeated bombing of Syrian territory.

The Syrian Ambassador to the UN has repeatedly noted the meetings of US representatives

with terrorists in Syria. Michel Chossudovsky, Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization in Montreal, likewise noted these glaring violations:

“There is a list of terrorist organizations, which is made up by the State Department and John Kerry is negotiating, interfacing, with representatives of that terrorist organization, and the same thing is true for John McCain when he crosses into Syria, and the same thing is true with regard to the former ambassador to Syria Robert Steven Ford, who is also supporting these terrorists. So in other words these Western officials should be arrested on anti-terrorist charges because they are in violation of international law.”

Along the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, UN Disengagement Observer Forces (UNDOF) stationed along the 1974 demarcation line are mandated to:

“Maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria; Supervise the disengagement of Israeli and Syrian forces; and Supervise the areas of separation and limitation, as provided in the May 1974 Agreement on Disengagement.”

Yet, UNDOF routinely fails to observe or report violations such as terrorists crossing to and from the Israeli side. One recent example, noted by Nizar Abboud on January 19, 2015, was the Israeli assassination of Hezbollah and Iranian resistance in Quneitra, Syria on January 18.

To Abboud’s question on the silence of the UN, Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesman for the Secretary-General, replied that the details were “*murky*” and merely implored all sides to “*exercise restraint.*” Haq cited UNDOF having observed two UAVs flying from Israel into Syrian territory, smoke billowing from a post in Syrian territory, and UAVs returning to the Israeli side. But UNDOF could not identify the origin of the smoke, he said.



Ambassador al-Ja'afari with Syrian-Americans at an exhibition at the UN. Photo by Eva Bartlett

Earlier, in a September 16, 2014 press conference, following UNDOF soldiers’ abandonment

of their posts, the Syrian Ambassador criticized the *“total inaction by all those who are responsible for the lives of UNDOF forces soldiers as well as for fulfilling the mandate of UNDOF, in accordance with the disengagement forces agreement of 1974.”*

He noted the presence of al-Nusra along most of the Syrian side of the line of demarcation, and the sudden evacuation of UNDOF forces from the Syrian side, *“in violation of the mandate, and without prior consultations with the Syrian government.”* To the Ambassador’s knowledge, the Chief Commander of UNDOF had, *“ordered the Filipinos to surrender and give up their weapons to the terrorist groups,”* noting that the Chief of the Filipino army had in contrast ordered them *“not to surrender and not to give up their weapons.”*

The surrender of the Fijian UNDOF forces’ weapons, uniforms, and vehicles, according to Ambassador al-Ja’afari, enabled al-Nusra and company to *“take over UNDOF forces’ positions, and created by doing so a kind of ‘safe zone’ for the terrorists to operate against the Syrian army and civilians,”* using United Nations cars, uniforms, weapons, and locations.

Ambassador al-Ja’afari maintains that the UN’s Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) routinely accuses the Syrian army of *“violating the disengagement forces agreement”* when fighting against terrorists in the ceasefire area, but hypocritically does not call on the Israelis, Qataris, Saudis, Jordanians, or Turks to stop enabling terrorists to infiltrate into the area. *“They forgot that resolution 2170 spoke about ISIS and Jebhat al-Nusra, not only about ISIS,”* the Syrian Ambassador said.

In a November 2014 report, the Secretary-General mentioned the presence of al-Nusra and other terrorists in the ceasefire area *“unloading weapons from a truck,”* as well as a *“vehicle with a mounted anti-aircraft gun”* and Israeli *“interactions”* with *“armed gangs.”* Nonetheless, he went on to condemn strongly the Syrian army’s presence, offering no alternative solution to how to fight against those who fire on Syrian army and civilians from within the UNDOF-deserted area.

In his September press conference, Ambassador al-Ja’afari had warned of the possibility of terrorists and Israelis further infiltrating into Syria and *“starting a war of attrition against the Syrian army”* with no UNDOF forces to witness. There would be *“nobody to, even theoretically speaking, brief the Security Council and the DPKO about what’s going on in the Golan.”*

When the real human rights abuses of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Israel, and Turkey are so amply-documented, and yet the house of Saud is sponsoring the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, the nefarious nature of the UN is crystal clear.

The Qatari, Saudi, British, French and other ambassadors to the UN are joined in their *‘gangsterism’* by none other than the US Ambassador to the UN, the same Samantha Power who was *“one of the chief influences behind the Obama administration’s decision to intervene militarily in the Libyan conflict in 2011.”* In September 2014, Power unabashedly stated that the US’ training of terrorists was to impose a change of government in Syria. *“The training also will service these troops in the same struggle that they’ve been in since the beginning of this conflict against the Assad regime,”* she said on NBC.

As for the UN, as [Ambassador al-Ja’afari said](#): *“There’s no United Nations anymore, it’s over. Multilateral diplomacy is not working; it’s being manipulated by the powerful. This is why*

they want to privatize the United Nations, so that the influential donors can control the decision-making mechanisms, without giving a damn about the provisions of the Charter.”

The UN, American and world leaders, and the corporate media attempt to stifle the Syrian narrative, to allow only the mainstream media’s manufactured narrative on Syria, which runs contrary to the reality on the ground in Syria. Many continue to naively believe that the UN can or will do anything positive for Syria (and Palestine), yet its corruptness and servitude to global wars and imperialism is blindingly evident.

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