

SYRIA: Moscow and Tehran to Provide Military Aid to Curb US-NATO Supported Armed Insurrection

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According to an unconfirmed statement by a senior Iranian military official, reported by the Middle East and Israeli press, the commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard special forces (Quds) Kassam Salimani, was in Damascus on February 6 for top level consultations regarding military support as well as the possible dispatch of Quds Special Forces to Syria.

The Salimani mission to Damascus, according to reports, preceded the visit by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, which arrived in Damascus on February 7. The Lavrov mission included a delegation of senior of military and intelligence officials.

The delegation accompanying Minister Lavrov consists of Director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service Mikhail Fradkov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mikhail Bogdanov, Deputy Director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service Vladimir Zimakov, Director of the Middle East and North Africa Department of Russia's Foreign Ministry Sergey Vershinin, and Russia's Ambassador to Damascus Azamat Kulmukhametov.

In a statement to the press after his meeting with President al-Assad, Minister Lavrov said that he conducted very important meetings with the Syrian leadership, primarily with President al-Assad, Vice President Farouk al-Shara, and Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem, during which he affirmed Russia's readiness to assist in emerging from the Syrian crisis as soon as possible on the basis of the Arab League plan dated November 2nd 2011. ([President al-Assad to Lavrov: Syria determined to Fulfill National Dialogue](#) DayPress News February 8, 2012)

What is significant is the timing of these two missions to Damascus. Although no official statements were forthcoming, the reports intimated that both the Russian and Iranian missions integrated by senior military officials focussed on cooperation with a view to curbing the armed insurrection, which is covertly supported by foreign powers. Foreign troops are already on the ground working in liaison with the Syrian Free Army. The presence of British and Qatari special forces in Homs was, according to Debka, the Israeli intelligence news emdia, on the agenda of the talks between president Bashar Al Assad and Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in DamsCUS on February 8.

Unconfirmed reports by the Al Arabiya news network suggest that some 15, 000 Quds Special Forces are to be dispatched to Syria in support of government forces. ([Syria: Iran Military Chief Said to Be in 'War Room' with Assad - International Business Times](#), February 8, 2012)

Michel Chossudovsky contributed to this report

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