

Syria: Obama's Pretext for War

By [Phil Greaves](#)

Region: [Asia](#)

Global Research, September 05, 2013

It seems many have forgotten the last two and a half years of western sabre-rattling and covert military aggression against the Syrian state. It is worth reiterating that without the vast amount of military, financial, and diplomatic largesse the west and their regional clients have thrown at the "revolutionary rebels" in Syria - who have now beyond doubt been exposed as sectarian extremists, lead and dominated by Al Qaeda ideologues - the violent insurgency in Syria would have been defeated long ago by the Syrian army.

These extremist-dominated "rebels" were [armed and funded](#) by Syria's enemies - with the tacit approval and coordination of the west - from an early stage in the supposed "Syrian uprising" (read: local protests), to wage a sectarian insurgency upon the Syrian state and its security apparatus on behalf of the US and its various allies. The US-led military and intelligence alliance comprises of: the United States, Israel, United Kingdom, France, Qatar, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, as well as numerous Lebanese political and paramilitary factions under the influence of Saudi Arabia.

Although individual relationships and objectives have been in flux between this group, elements within all their respective establishments; governments; intelligence agencies; wealthy private donors and military contractors have worked to facilitate the transfer of arms and militants into Syria since the onset of the insurgency in March/April 2011. Although their individual desired outcomes and long-term objectives may differ; this alliance has held one common objective throughout: the destruction of an independent Syrian state.

The pathetic attempt at media "debate" surrounding Obama's imminent plan to bomb Syria in response to an alleged chemical weapons attack - which morphed from a couple of hours of feigning scepticism straight into accepting unsubstantiated western allegations as fact, and then repeating them verbatim - all have one common theme: that of a reluctant Obama, unwilling to sacrifice "boots on the ground" and desperate to avert wider regional conflict in another endless war in the Middle East.

Yet, upon analysing the conflict from a realistic perspective - which was from the onset, a sectarian, foreign-funded insurgency - as opposed to the corporate-media, and western politician's manufactured fantasy-narrative of a "democratic grass-roots uprising" - it becomes clear that the reluctant facade of Obama has also been manufactured from false media narratives - propagated by the government "sources" that shape them.

In contrast to Obama's apparent reluctance to exacerbate the Syrian crisis; at every periodic occasion that the Syrian opposition have had setbacks - be it on the battlefield; diplomatic theatre; or within public opinion - the US has stepped up its covert militarism with its partners operating on Syria's borders. For example, we now know that when the much-desired No Fly Zone was blocked by China and Russia in the UNSC the White House made efforts to step up its covert support to the "rebels" through the CIA and Qatar, transitting

the shipments through the Turkish/Syrian border. Accordingly, with the increase of militarism; [came the increase of death-toll and displacement.](#)

With regard to the early demands for a sovereign states' President to "step aside"; westerners must first ask ourselves: do any world leaders demand Obama, Cameron, Bush, Blair, or any other variety of western diplomatic mass-murderer "step aside" for killing possibly millions of innocent civilians of countless nations? Or does the "International Community" only frown upon dictators allegedly "killing their own people" with "Weapons of Mass Destruction"? Is this the moral bar for western society as a whole? "Our leaders" can be proven to kill vast numbers in illegal wars anywhere on earth with impunity, but those "our leaders" deem enemies cannot defend allegations, let alone defend their nation from a foreign-funded insurgency?

Even if one finds this repugnant, hypocritical state of affairs as agreeable; how do Obama and Cameron explain their lack of condemnation toward Egypt's coup-leaders; killing up to a thousand people from mainly peaceful protests in the space of a few days? One suspects any real condemnation of the military coup and subsequent crackdown (justified or not) will only come from the "moral" leaders of the west when and if Sisi and his feloul cohorts decide to cut-off the US' vital "interests" in Egypt; those "interests" being primarily the protection of Israel; unfettered access (control) of the Suez Canal, and a continuation of the long-standing US-dominant military relationship and billion-dollar contracts. Those US "interests" do not include the lives, much less the "freedom" or "democracy" of the Egyptian people.

Furthermore, how do Obama and Cameron explain their silence or complete lack of "action" regarding their close ally the Al-Khalifa monarchys' brutal crackdown of protesters and dissidents in Bahrain over the last two years? Of course, the United States does not need regime change from a compliant monarchy in Bahrain that dutifully host its fifth-fleet in one of the world's most strategic locations. Further still, where is the "moral outrage" regarding Saudi Arabia's brutal regime and its decades-long sponsorship of terrorism? The Saudi type of terrorism is often purported in the west as in "our interest". Saudi-sponsored terrorism comes only in the name of supporting "freedom fighters" who at the time may just so happen to be enemies of our enemies, who are then dutifully facilitated, fomented and sponsored by the west; inevitably resulting in small instances of blowback that provide the western security establishment further pretext to encroach upon civil liberties with draconian and over-expansive "anti-terror" laws – a win-win for the National Security State and the Military Industrial Complex.

The west's proxy-forces in Syria are, in reality, close to defeat. Against the odds, and a considerable multi-national effort to destroy an army and divide a nation; Assad has solidified his core base and territories. In the last few months the Syrian army has made considerable gains on the battlefield, recapturing strategic choke-points along the rebel supply route and utilising its bolstered numbers from the National Defense Forces to protect regained territory. Assad has also maintained his own critical supply lines, both of a military and diplomatic nature and has upheld his side of whatever bargains he has made with international allies.

Russia has remained steadfast in its support of Assad up to the point of writing, but this may yet change in the face of a possible world war III scenario. Russia's military supplies have been critical to the Syrian army's success on the battlefield, and its diplomatic efforts in the UN have stalled what has been a determined effort by the west to gain a pretext for military

intervention. Moreover, anti-rebel sentiment has been on the rise in Syria for months. An example lies in the border town of Tal Kalakh, [which was recently peacefully transferred to army control](#); not out of any particular love for Assad I must add, but simply due to the fact the extremists had moved on and the locals were more inclined to keep their livelihood and live in peace than face death or imprisonment. In a recent interview Assad also highlighted an increase in defections from the rebels back to the army as a result of government amnesty's This, and an and added impetus from the Hezbollah-aided victory of Qusair had set the army on a trajectory that would be difficult to stop without massive foreign intervention.

On the other hand, the disparate factions of Bin-Ladenite "rebels" have been bogged down with infighting and internal conflict, which has resulted in a further increase of their brutality toward the civilian population. Just this week the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) executed three Alawite truck drivers on video for the crime of forgetting prayer ritual. A prominent Alawite cleric was also recently executed by "rebels", the latest in a long line of clerics and religious officials that have been targeted by the extremists. The cleric was kidnapped during the ISIS/JaN sectarian onslaught in Latakia; the [mass graves](#) that were found as a result of this particular sectarian assault on a civilian area didn't merit much attention in the western press. Moreover, recent rebel attacks - predominantly ISIS and Jabhat al Nusra - on the Kurdish community in the north have taken on a broader and intractable dimension; resulting in the mass exodus of 30,000 Kurds over the border to Iraqi Kurdistan. In relation to the north of Syria where jihadist groups are most dominant; ISIS recently released a message to all international aid organisations to leave the region or be killed. Accordingly, the "rebels" public appeal is arguably at an all-time low. Several defining events throughout the course of the conflict have been imprinted on the minds of millions of people across the globe. From children being forced to behead prisoners; to rebels - from the supposed "moderate western-backed" militants no less - eating the organs of slain Syrian soldiers.

There is little sympathy in the west for the militants western governments support. A [recent Reuters poll](#) showed only 9 percent of Americans support any form of US military intervention in Syria. Even if the Assad government were found to be guilty of using chemical weapons that figure only rose to 25% percent. With a resounding 60% percent against. These figures are almost mirrored in the UK and have reflected such opinion throughout the Syrian conflict. Yet if military intervention was to occur, it would undoubtedly be the UK and the US at the forefront of the attacks: that is western "democracy".

President Assad and the Syrian establishment have long known that they have been on the US' target list. Indeed, it was public knowledge in the west that during the post-9/11 Bush administration Syria was placed under "the axis of Evil". During that decade several [prominent reports highlighted covert policies](#) the US and its allies were directing at Syria. These covert policies ran parallel to [USAID "democracy"](#) programs that the US had implemented in Syria in order to bolster opposition elements and leverage the Assad government - as is the protocol for US subversion. Many of these same initiatives have formed a part of the US State Department-trained anti-Assad "activists", so prevalent on social media and often touted as objective sources in the western corporate press. More importantly, Assad has also known for a long time that any use of chemical weapons would undoubtedly result in the west - at the very least - abandoning any pretense of negotiations and reverting to type: the military option. Why would Assad choose now to entice a western military intervention? What can he possibly gain from his own certain downfall? At a time

when it was becoming more and more likely that the Assad government would hold on to some sort of power in Syria and the “rebels” and their international alliance were looking increasingly likely to fall apart, why would Assad choose to use chemical weapons? Not only that, we must also remember that the UN team is in Damascus at the Syrian governments request, it simply defies logic that Assad would willingly commit such a grave act right under the nose of the UN, particularly when the trajectory of the war was firmly in his favour?

Conversely, there are multiple logical scenarios in which the “rebels” would benefit from staging a chemical weapons attack. This is plain objective common sense. Since Obama declared his famous “red-line” it has been a *casus belli* waiting to happen. The “rebels”, and their many international backers, intelligence agencies and private contractors are all in the knowledge that a chemical weapons attack will incur a western military response, resulting in their desired objective: the removal of Assad. There is already a strong case being made that the “rebels” have deployed a form of sarin in a home-made shell fired on government forces in Khan al-Assal. Russia has provided the UN with evidence to this effect and Khan al-Assal was one of the sites on the list to be visited by the UN inspection team. Moreover, in May this year UN investigator Carla Del Ponte [pointed the finger](#) at the “rebels” for the use of chemical weapons, a fact that has been thoroughly whitewashed in both western media and from the duplicitous mouths of western diplomats – who still claim that “rebels” don’t have the capability to launch chemical weapons. Contrary to western diplomats hollow claims; in late May militant cells with links to Jabhat al Nusra and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham were found in both Iraq and Turkey with [sarin and other chemical weapons materiel in their possession](#) – another fact that received only light attention in western media, and has been virtually ignored in any western diplomats talking points.

Framed in the above context, and with the “evidence” – or glaring lack of it – to date to prove the US’ assertions; it cannot be logically, or honestly implied that the Syrian military has used chemical weapons – or has any intention to, knowing it would be certain suicide. Thus, one can only logically draw the assumption that this latest alleged CW attack is a repeat of previous attempts to incite western intervention, but on a much larger and deadlier scale. It could have any number of culprits, but the Syrian government is possibly the least likely. Yet the United States (arbiter of the world) has dismissed such notions on the premise that the “rebels” don’t have the capability: the United States is quite literally overruling UN investigators in order to carry out regime change to meet its own geopolitical objectives (again).

The clearest signal of this intention came when several members of the Obama administration intentionally mislead reporters and stated several times that the Syrian government blocked an immediate investigation into the recent alleged CW attack in Ghouta. This was a blatant lie and the US knew it; [it was in fact the UN that held up the investigation](#) through fear for their own safety in a what was a contested area. The Syrian government gave its immediate blessing for an investigation and escorted the UN team to the site for a short time; at which point it was fired upon by unknown snipers and retreated to the safety of an army checkpoint. Another clear indicator of Obama’s aggressive intention is the blatant double-standard being applied; the UN team is inside Syria to specifically investigate alleged CW attacks that occurred 5 months ago, and presumably the US would have accepted its findings. Not only this, but the UN team does not have a mandate to determine the source of chemical weapons use – only to determine whether they have been used or not. Yet the UN team has been granted access to an alleged CW attack site by the Syrian government only 5 days after the alleged event, and the Obama administration is

claiming that any results from the investigation are now “too late to be credible”?

Now why would the Obama administration lie? I thought they were reluctant for war?

Phil Greaves is a UK based writer/analyst, focusing on UK/US Foreign Policy and conflict analysis in the Middle East post WWII. <http://notthemsm.com.wordpress.com/>

The original source of this article is Global Research

Copyright © [Phil Greaves](#), Global Research, 2013

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Phil Greaves](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca