

SYRIA: WESTERN POWERS ARE SUBVERTING THE PEACE PROCESS

Press Conference, Syria's Permanent Representative to the United Nations

By [Global Research](#)

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The Government of Syria was firmly committed to the success of the United Nations-supported plan to end the crisis in the country and would meet the deadline for pulling back heavy weaponry, but some countries were subverting the plan through their interventionist intentions and continued support for the armed opposition, the country's Permanent Representative said today.

"[Kofi] Annan should be given a chance to succeed in his mission," Bashar Ja'afari said, referring to the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States. "What would happen if the army withdrew from the hotspots and the armed opposition did not give up their fighting?"

Noting the Qatari nationality of the General Assembly President, Mr. Ja'afari said the ill intentions of Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, as well as unnamed Western Powers, had been revealed by the "biased" convening of this morning's closed Assembly meeting during which Mr. Annan reported on implementation of his six-point plan to end the fighting and begin a Syrian-led dialogue process.

He went on to enumerate such violations as the lack of prior consultation with the Syrian delegation, and the closure of the meeting to the public and in-house media despite a previous invitation to the press. He noted also that only the Saudi delegation had been allowed to speak, and that his own point-of-order calls had been disregarded, as had his proposal of a moment of silence in honour of all the victims of the violence. The Assembly President had misused his position to further the interventionist agenda of Qatar and Saudi Arabia, rather than to further implementation of Mr. Annan's plan, he said. "The purpose of the meeting for him was how to defame Syria, not to stop the violence."

In fact, Mr. Annan had credited Syria as being fully committed to the success of his mission, Mr. Ja'afari recalled. Excluding the media and keeping him from speaking had prevented that information from becoming public and giving Syria a chance to explain how committed it was. Those actions had also ensured the exclusion of any criticism of Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, which had organized the Istanbul meeting on 1 April, a week after the Syrian Government had agreed to the six-point plan. At that meeting, weapons, regular salaries and other support had been pledged for armed groups in Syria, he added.

Mr. Ja'afari went on to emphasize that it was not possible to support Mr. Annan's plan while at the same time supporting the "external armed opposition". Either they should commit

themselves to Mr. Annan's process, or admit that they were engaged on a parallel track to undermine his mission. Unfortunately, Mr. Annan had himself told the Assembly that he had not yet received any assurances from the Syrian armed groups or those supporting them that they would comply with the objective of ending all violence following a Government pull-back, as stipulated in the plan.

In response to questions, Mr. Ja'afari said the proposed observer mission, to be deployed after the cessation of violence, would have "perfect" freedom to monitor the ceasefire if all groups were committed to respecting it. He said the "patriotic national opposition" would participate in an inclusive national dialogue that would begin soon. However, the "external wing of the opposition" was being manipulated by petrodollars and Western capitals not to get on board with the dialogue or to meet the deadline set by Mr. Annan. Providing arms to rebels was against international law, and Qatar in particular was using its riches to worsen problems around the world, he said. "Somebody should stop them. They are not honest."

Asked about reports that hostilities had actually escalated in some areas following the Government's agreement to pull back, he said it was true in some cases, because the armed groups had not signed up to the agreement. Upon hearing that the Government was withdrawing, they tried to occupy those areas, thus filling the vacuum. "We need the agreement of the other parties otherwise it would be a Tom and Jerry situation," he said.

When asked whether police would remain in the areas from which heavy weaponry was being pulled back, he said they would indeed remain to protect civilians, emphasizing that it was Syria's obligation and prerogative as a sovereign nation to do so. For that reason as well, the Government would accompany all implementation of the six-point plan. "We are not a banana republic", he said, warning that those who failed to commit themselves to respecting and observing the ceasefire would "bear the consequences of their acts".

In answer to other questions, he criticized Saudi Arabia's presumption to be a judge of human rights when its Grand Imam had issued *fatwas* barring churches on that country's soil, as well as the burial of Christians or Jews in the entire Gulf. Saudi women were only now being allowed to attend football matches, albeit in separate sections, he pointed out.

Asked what form the other parties' guarantees of compliance with the Annan plan should take, he said they should be in writing, as the Government's communications with Joint Special Envoy had been.

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