

Syria: White House preaches peace as Pentagon prepares for war

By [Global Research](#)

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The White House is saying “no” to arming opposition and other military involvement in the Syrian conflict – for the moment. Pentagon and US Central Command launched a review of US military capabilities in case that “no” turns a “yes.”

The backdoor for military action was ajar with State Department, spokesman Victoria Nuland saying that US never takes any option off the table, even though they “don’t think more arms into Syria is the answer.” It appears the Pentagon has a similar view, as it has reportedly launched a full-scale review of its available military might.

Two senior administration officials told CNN that “options are being prepared in the event President Barack Obama was to call for them.” Support for opposition groups and outright military strikes are among the options being looked at.

This type of planning exercise is typical for the Pentagon, which would not want to be in the position of not having options for the president, if and when they are asked for, both officials told CNN. One of them called the effort a “scoping exercise,” with Pentagon looking into what capabilities are available given other US military commitments in the region.

US President Barack Obama said in an interview Sunday that he believes it is possible to resolve the conflict peacefully “without recourse to outside military intervention.” However, some congressional lawmakers, including Arizona’s Republican Senator John McCain, called for the US to explore the prospect of arming opposition forces in Syria.

“We should start considering options, arming the opposition,” McCain said. “The bloodletting has got to stop.”

The US and other Western powers are wary of engaging closely with would-be rebel forces without the legal protection of a UN resolution, similar to the one that was passed in the case of Libya. But in the wake of Russia and China vetoing a Security Council resolution calling for Syrian President Bashar Assad to step down, they are forced to look for other solutions.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has called Sunday for “friends of democratic Syria” to unite and rally against Assad’s regime. She has also vowed to strengthen existing sanctions against the Syrian regime and seek further ones to dry up funding and arms shipments.

“We will work to seek regional and national sanctions against Syria. They will be

implemented to the fullest to dry up the sources of funding and the arms shipments that are keeping the regime's war machine going," Clinton told journalists. "We will work with the friends of a democratic Syria around the world to support the opposition's peaceful political plans for change."

Clinton did not specify who those "friends of a democratic Syria" are, but it could be that the United States proceeds to form a group of like-minded nations to coordinate assistance to the Syrian opposition.

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