

Syria's President Bashar al-Assad. "The War Will End with a Political Solution": Foreign Affairs Interview

A Conversation With Bashar al-Assad

By [Bashar al Assad](#)

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Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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The civil war in Syria will soon enter its fifth year, with no end in sight. On January 20, Foreign Affairs managing editor Jonathan Tepperman met with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus to discuss the conflict in an exclusive interview.

I would like to start by asking you about the war. It has now been going on for almost four years, and you know the statistics: more than 200,000 people have been killed, a million wounded, and more than three million Syrians have fled the country, according to the UN. Your forces have also suffered heavy casualties. The war cannot go on forever. How do you see the war ending?

All wars anywhere in the world have ended with a political solution, because war itself is not the solution; war is one of the instruments of politics. So you end with a political solution. That's how we see it. That is the headline.

You don't think that this war will end militarily?

No. Any war ends with a political solution.

Your country is increasingly divided into three ministates: one controlled by the government, one controlled by ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusra, and one controlled by the more secular Sunni and Kurdish opposition. How will you ever put Syria back together again?

First of all, this image is not accurate, because you cannot talk about ministates without talking about the people who live within those states. The Syrian people are still with the unity of Syria; they still support the government. The factions you refer to control some areas, but they move from one place to another—they are not stable, and there are no clear lines of separation between different forces. Sometimes they mingle with each other and they move. But the main issue is about the population. The population still supports the state regardless of whether they support it politically or not; I mean they support the state as the representative of the unity of Syria. So as long as you have the Syrian people believing in unity, any government and any official can unify Syria. If the people are divided into two, three, or four groups, no one can unify this country. That's how we see it.

For complete interview see:

[Foreign Affairs](#)

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