

Terrorists Commit War Crimes, U.S. State Department: “We Continue to Have Dialogue with Them.”

By [Moon of Alabama](#)

Global Research, May 14, 2016

[Moon of Alabama](#) 13 May 2016

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#),
[Intelligence](#), [Terrorism](#), [US NATO War](#)
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Russia asked the UN to blacklist Ahrar al Sham and Jaish al Islam as terrorist groups. The U.S. rejected that. “We continue to have dialogue with them,” said the State Department.

A day later Ahrar al Sham joins al-Qaeda in breaking the ceasefire in Syria and in assaulting and ethnically cleansing a village loyal to the Syrian government. Meanwhile Amnesty International accuses both groups of indiscriminate attacks on civilians, including by use of chemical weapons, and of other war crimes.

May 11 [Russia’s bid to blacklist Syrian rebel groups at UN blocked by US, others](#)

The U.S. and other countries at the United Nations Wednesday blocked Russia’s bid to blacklist two rebel groups in Syria saying it would undermine the war-torn country’s halt in fighting. Reuters reported that Britain, the U.S., France and Ukraine blocked the bid to blacklist Jaish al-Islam [(Army of Islam)] and Ahrar al-Sham. Moscow claimed the groups should have been excluded because of their ties to militant groups including ISIS and Al Qaeda.

May 11 - [State Department Daily Press Briefing](#)

QUESTION: — on this issue? Both Ahrar al-Sham and Jaysh al-Islam - I mean, they have exactly the same bylaw, almost the same bylaws. They don’t have a constitution. They have what they call internal document. They espouse the same dogma, they believe the same thing, they practice the same practices as Jabhat al-Nusrah and as al-Qaida. Why shouldn’t they be designated as a terrorist organization? MS TRUDEAU: So we constantly review information. We are constantly assessing these groups. At this stage our position is that these groups are members of the cessation of hostilities. We continue to have dialogue with them. If our position changes, we’ll make that assessment then. But we are in constant review of this.

May 12 - [Syria’s al-Qaida branch seizes central Alawite village](#)

DAMASCUS, Syria - Syria’s al-Qaida branch and allied fighters from ultraconservative rebel factions on Wednesday seized a village of President Bashar Assad’s minority Alawite sect in central Syria, following fierce clashes

with government troops.

...

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an activist group tracking the conflict, said families disappeared from Zaara after the militants overran the village. Along with Syria's al-Qaida branch known as the Nusra Front, other hard-line factions that took part in the raid on Zaara included Ahrar al-Sham and Faylaq al-Rahman.

May 13 – [Syria: Armed opposition groups committing war crimes in Aleppo city](#)

Armed groups surrounding the Sheikh Maqoud district of Aleppo city have repeatedly carried out indiscriminate attacks that have struck civilian homes, streets, markets and mosques, killing and injuring civilians and displaying a shameful disregard for human life, said Amnesty International.

...

Two of the armed groups attacking YPG forces in Sheikh Maqoud – Ahrar al Sham and Army of Islam – have sent their own representatives to the UN-brokered negotiations over the Syria conflict in Geneva. The other armed groups have approved other delegates to represent them at the talks. "The international community must not turn a blind eye to the mounting evidence of war crimes by armed opposition groups in Syria. [...]," said Magdalena Mughrabi [interim Deputy Director of the Middle East and North Africa Programme at Amnesty International.]

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