

# The Decade-Long U.S. Campaign to Foment Syria's "Revolution" and Unseat Assad

By [Sarah Abed](#)

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In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

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*The fingerprints of U.S. imperialism can be found all over the manufactured insurrection in Syria, in keeping with the ultimate goal of destabilization and eventual "regime change" through fomenting a sectarian civil war. Former NATO commander Wesley Clark has gone on record as stating that [Syria was on a list of targeted nations](#) to be toppled by the U.S. as early as 2001. In 2002, former Secretary of State John Bolton gave a [speech titled "Beyond the Axis of Evil"](#) that listed Syria as a handful of nations that could expect to be targeted.*

Fast forward to 2011, when an [uprising was manufactured](#) in the Syrian city of Dara'a, and Syrians desperate for economic change joined the calls for "freedom." Mainstream media outlets have largely described the uprisings as being part of a "protest movement" made up of demonstrators who demand the ouster of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

But in reality, the main organizers and leaders of this so-called protest movement have been revealed to be U.S.-backed insurgents and foreign militants who have been armed, trained and funded by U.S. and NATO proxies for the purpose of destabilizing Syria through sectarianism.

CIA-backed [Muslim Brotherhood assets](#) were already in place to snipe at both police and protesters the day the first demonstrations broke out. Since then, the CIA has funneled hundreds of billions of dollars, as well as staggering [amounts of arms, to jihadist recruits](#), many of whom have poured into Syria from surrounding countries.

The narrative most commonly put forth in mainstream media portrays the Syrian conflict as a popular uprising. However, a closer examination of the [events that occurred in Dara'a](#) in March 2011 - commonly described as the beginning of the conflict - reveals substantial and compelling evidence that not only contradicts the mainstream media's portrayal but also strongly suggests the involvement, both financially and militarily, of [outside influences](#) and actuators.



Dore Gold and Anwar Eshki shake hands at a CFR event, as Elliott Abrams looks on.

The evidence of such involvement has piled up in the years since the conflict started. In 2012, Saudi General Anwar Al-Eshki admitted in a BBC interview that his government had financed Salafist Muslim Brotherhood elements and had sent weapons to the Al-Omari Mosque, some of which were later discovered and seized by Syrian security forces. These Salafist elements went on to form the backbone of the “Free Syrian Army,” a guerrilla force that has the stated goal of bringing down Assad and his government.

The Salafists have done much to terrorize the civilian population of Syria. In Karak, a village near Dara’a, villagers were forced to join [anti-government protests](#) and remove photos of Assad from their homes. Those who refused were killed.

“People want to go out and peacefully ask for certain changes, but Muslim Salafi groups are sneaking in with their goal, which is not to make changes for the betterment of Syria but to take over the country with their agenda,” one Syrian Christian leader [told the International Christian Concern](#).

The following timeline portrays Syria’s descent into “civil war” as part of U.S.- and NATO-backed efforts to destabilize the country and achieve their ultimate goal of regime change.

Before the “revolution,” the U.S. makes an enemy out of Syria

2001:

Shortly after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, a classified plot is revealed to U.S. Army General Wesley Clark. [He is informed that the U.S. plans to attack](#) and destroy the governments of seven countries for the purpose of intimidating terrorists: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Iran.

2002:

U.S. Under Secretary of State John Bolton [declares Syria a member of the “axis of evil”](#) and warns that the U.S. will take action against countries in the axis.

2005:

The U.S. State Department's National Endowment for Democracy [organizes and implements the "Cedar Revolution"](#) in Lebanon - a movement directly aimed at undermining Syrian-Iranian influence in Lebanon in favor of Western-backed proxies.

Ziad Abdel Nour, an associate of Bush administration policymakers and president of the United States Committee for a Free Lebanon, admitted the following when asked about the future of Syria:

"Both the Syrian and Lebanese regimes will be changed - whether they like it or not - whether it's going to be a military coup or something else...and we are working on it. We know already exactly who's going to be the replacements. We're working on it with the Bush administration."

2007:

Seymour Hersh of the New Yorker [reveals that the U.S., Israel and Saudi Arabia](#), as well as the Syrian arm of the Muslim Brotherhood, are assembling, arming, training and funding sectarian extremists, many of whom have direct ties to al-Qaeda. Their goal is to exploit the sectarian divide between Sunni and Shiite Muslims. Hersh's report indicated that the extremists would be strategically located so that they would be able to cross into Syria.

2009:

The Brookings Institution publishes a report titled ["Which Path to Persia?"](#) that details a "new American strategy for Iran." In the report, the institute states the importance of neutralizing Syrian influence before any attack on Iran can be carried out.

2009:

Top British officials tell former French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Roland Dumas, that they were "preparing something in Syria." He claimed they were organizing an "invasion of rebels" in a [2013 interview with French TV station LCP](#).

The "revolution" begins - armed rebels masquerade as "protesters."

Jan. 17, 2011:

Prior to the anti-government insurgency, and in response to popular pressure, the Syrian government ["increased the heating oil allowance"](#) for public workers by 72 percent to the equivalent of \$33 a month."

Late January 2011:

A page is created on Facebook called [The Syrian Revolution 2011](#). It announced that "Day of Rage" protests would be held on Feb. 4 and 5.

Feb. 4-5, 2011:

The ["Day of Rage" protests](#) that were called for on Facebook fizzle and are largely

uneventful.

Feb. 9, 2011:

The government [lifts its ban](#) on Facebook, Youtube, and Twitter. The bans had been in place since 2007.

Feb. 13, 2011:

The government, through its newly-established National Social Aid Fund, starts [offering transfer payments](#) to help Syria's 420,000 poorest families.

Feb. 15, 2011:

The Syrian government "[reduced duties](#) on a range of basic foodstuffs, including rice, tea, powdered milk, coffee, and bananas. It also lowered taxes on vegetable oil, margarine, unroasted coffee, and sugar."

March 20, 2011:

[A courthouse is torched](#) in Dara'a.

"Protesters then forced their way through security barriers and headed toward the Baath Party headquarters and other government symbols. In addition to the party headquarters, protesters [burned the town's main courthouse and a branch of the SyriaTel phone company](#), which is owned by Rami Makhlouf, a cousin of the president."

[The governor's office and another SyriaTel office](#) are also set alight:

"A front-page story in the government-run Teshreen daily on Tuesday, Dara'a cleric Sheik Ahmad al-Sayasina was quoted as saying, "There were elements from outside Dara'a determined to burn and destroy public property ... These unknown assailants want to harm the reputation of the sons of Hauran." The cleric reportedly said, "The people of Dara'a affirm that recent events are not part of their tradition or custom."

March - May 2011:

"There were signs from the very start that [armed groups were involved](#)," journalist and author Robert Fisk recalls after seeing a tape from "the very early days of the 'rising' showing men with pistols and Kalashnikovs in a Daraa demonstration."

He recalls another event in May 2011, when "an Al Jazeera crew filmed armed men shooting at Syrian troops a few hundred meters from the northern border with Lebanon, but the channel declined to air the footage."

"Even U.S. officials, who were hostile to the Syrian government and might be expected to challenge Damascus's view that it was embroiled in a fight with

armed rebels, [acknowledged that the demonstrations weren't peaceful and that some protesters were armed.](#)"

March 23, 2011:

After sending a delegation to Dara'a to investigate events, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad sacks the city's unpopular governor, Faysal Kalthum, and orders the release of the fifteen teenagers who were detained for writing graffiti that featured anti-government slogans.

According to at least two dissident websites, protesters had given the Syrian government until the morning of March 25 to meet a list of demands that were relayed to the president by his delegation. The demands included lifting a 48-year-old emergency law and releasing all political prisoners. If the demands were not met, they said March 25 would become the "[Friday of the Martyrs](#)" throughout the country.

[Weapons that were stored in the Al-Omari mosque in Dara'a are seized.](#) Anwar Al-Eshki, a former major general of the Saudi military and president of the Center for Strategic Studies in Saudi Arabia, [gives an interview](#) in which he reveals information about the first days of the Syrian crisis and confirms his connections with "protesters."

[https://www.liveleak.com/ll\\_embed?f=e7236a5ed0ac](https://www.liveleak.com/ll_embed?f=e7236a5ed0ac)

March 25, 2011:

From a [letter published by Father Frans van der Lugt](#) (later murdered by extremists in April 2014):

"From the start, the protest movements were not purely peaceful. From the start, I saw armed demonstrators marching along in the protests, who began to shoot at the police first. Very often the violence of the security forces has been a reaction to the brutal violence of the armed rebels."

[A large pro-Assad rally is held in Damascus on March 25 as well.](#)

March 2011:

Wikileaks reveals that ["protesters," allegedly 500 of them, will receive payment to take up arms.](#)"

Early April, 2011:

[Massive demonstrations](#) are held in support of Assad and to reject extremists.





April 10, 2011:

Nine Syrian soldiers are ambushed on a bus and [fatally shot](#).

Syrian soldiers and police officers are [assassinated throughout April](#). Opposition forces claimed they were executed for desertion from the Syrian army, although video footage from their funerals refutes this claim.

Assad supporters rally against opposition, political reform arrives

June 15, 2011:

[A 2.3-km-long Syrian flag is unfurled](#) by thousands of Assad supporters in Damascus.

June 20, 2011:

[Assad announces a national dialogue](#) to begin a process of constitutional reform. One of the major demands is for an end to the constitutional privileges afforded to the Ba'ath party.

November 2011:

[Assad supporters hold more marches](#), most notably in the cities of Homs and Dara'a. Both cities are described by some as the "capital" and "birthplace," respectively, of the so-called "revolution."

Feb. 26, 2012:

A constitutional referendum is held, asking the electorate whether they would approve of new changes that were proposed for Syria's Constitution. Eighty-nine percent of the electorate voted in favor of the changes, which included significant reforms to the presidential election process. [The changes removed the institutionalized dominance of the Ba'ath party, as well as allowed for elections to be contested between multiple candidates.](#)

May 7, 2012:

[Syria's parliamentary elections are held](#) according to the new constitution to determine the composition of the 250-seat People's Council. The elections see a 51-percent participation rate among the electorate. The National Progressive Front, a political alliance of Syrian parties that includes the Ba'ath party, wins 168 seats. An opposition coalition of political parties called the Popular Front for Change and Liberation contests the NPF, but wins just five seats.

CIA confirmed providing arms to anti-Assad rebels, presidential election follows

June 21, 2012:

It is reported that the CIA is [secretly providing arms to Syrian rebels](#) through the Turkish border.



A well-equipped Syrian rebel using a US-made BGM-71 TOW against the Syrian Arab Army. (YouTube Screenshot)

August 2012:

According to a [Department of Defense document](#) released by Judicial Watch, the West, Gulf countries and Turkey support the opposition, while China, Russia, and Iran support Assad's regime. The document also confirms that Syria's Muslim Brotherhood and AQI (also known as al-Qaeda) are responsible for driving much of the ongoing insurgency in Syria.

[pg-291-pgs-287-293-jw-v-dod-and-state-14-812-dod-release-2015-04-10-final-version111](#)

June 4, 2013:

Data provided to NATO indicates that [70 percent of Syrians are in support](#) of the Assad-led government.

June 3, 2014:

[The first multi-candidate presidential election in Syria is held](#). It is contested between three candidates: the incumbent President Assad, Hassan Al Nour and Maher Al Hajjar. Assad wins

with 88.7 percent of the vote.

*Sarah Abed is an independent journalist and political commentator. Focused on exposing the lies and propaganda in mainstream media news, as it relates to domestic and foreign policy with an emphasis on the Middle East. Contributed to various radio shows, news publications and spoken at forums. For media inquiries please email sarahabed84@gmail.com.*

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