

# The United Nations' Response to ISIS Beheadings in Syria. "Resolutions" Calling for "Regime Change" on Behalf of Washington

The Politicization of the UN Third Committee

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*On December 18, 2014, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution A/c.3/69/L.3 overwhelmingly condemning the Syrian government for human rights abuses. The resolution had been referred to the General Assembly by the Third Committee. On November 18, 2015, the United Nations Third Committee adopted three distorted and biased resolutions containing unfounded allegations of human rights abuses against Syria, the DPRK and Iran. Numerous delegations from developing countries and the non-aligned movement opposed these resolutions.*

The resolution demonizing Syria, A/C.3/69/L.31 is particularly distorted.

The Russian Federation stated: "The text of these resolutions are attempts to turn the Third Committee into a politicized body with the aim of exerting pressure on one of the Member States. That approach is unacceptable.

China stated that "human rights issues should be addressed in an equal and fair manner, without politicization. "Opposing the use of pressure on countries under the guise of protecting human rights," his country voted against the resolution.

Chile stated that: "Armed non-State actors were committing crimes in Syria, and the report should have reflected that in a more detailed manner.

Indonesia expressed "concern about the use of country-specific resolutions"

Singapore stated it: "did not agree with country-specific resolutions, as they are counterproductive."

Belarus "endorsed the statement made by the Non-Aligned Movement and underscored the unacceptability of country-specific resolutions. The sponsors of the draft resolution were undermining the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter."

Point "3" of the resolution devotes 13 lines to unsubstantiated allegations of human rights abuses by the Syrian government, and devotes only two lines to gross human rights abuses committed by anti-Government groups, though Syria is now infested with Saudi and Qatari funded terrorist organizations. At no point does the resolution mention the epidemic of beheadings of Western journalists and aid workers by the ISIS terrorist organization, beheadings which were used by US/NATO as an excuse to renew bombings on Iraq, and

expand bombings to Syria.

Following the gruesome beheading of James Foley, by a terrorist group called “The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria,” and the group’s threats to behead other captives in August 2014, The New York Times headline on page A19 reads, with Kafkaesque “logic”: “U.S. Invokes Defense of Iraq in Legal Justification of Syria Strikes.” US/NATO had failed, for three years, to get UN Security Council authorization for military action against Syria, and unilateral military action against Syria would be a violation of international law.

However, the very visible emergence of ISIS, now defined as the most dangerous terrorist organization in the Middle East, or, perhaps, globally, and their widely publicized video beheadings of James Foley, Steve Sotloff and others, appeared to give some form of de facto justification for broader military action, including against Syria. On August 22, 2014, The New York Times reported, page A6:

“When the United States began airstrikes in Iraq this month, senior Obama administration officials went out of their way to underscore the limited nature of their action. ‘This was not an authorization of a broad-based counterterrorism campaign,’ a senior Obama administration official told reporters at the time. But the beheading of an American journalist and the possibility that more American citizens being held by the group might be slain has prompted outrage at the highest levels of the American government.”

The front page headline states:

“U.S. General Says Raiding Syria is Key to Halting Isis. The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria cannot be defeated unless the United States or its partners take on the Sunni militants in Syria,’ General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said on August 21, 2014. ‘This is an organization that has an apocalyptic end-of-days strategic vision that will eventually have to be defeated. Can they be defeated without addressing that part of the organization that resides in Syria? The answer is no.”

Public horror at the beheading of James Foley and Steven Sotloff transformed public reluctance to engage in yet another seemingly endless and futile distant war, paid for by the U.S. taxpayer, into public outrage and support for retaliation against the terrorists who beheaded Foley and Sotloff. US/NATO now had a de facto form of support and legitimacy for attacking Syria. Given little publicity, however, then and now, was the fact that ISIS offered to exchange the lives of James Foley and Stephen Sotloff for \$100 million dollars in ransom. Although top U.S. officials used their “outrage” at the beheading of Foley and Sotloff to “justify” a unilateral attack on Syria, they were not sufficiently outraged to do what was necessary to prevent these beheadings, which, once executed, provided a convenient fig-leaf for the attack on Syria for which they had sought and failed to attain legal justification during the preceding three years.

Indeed, it can be asserted that these same administration officials who claimed “outrage” after the beheadings, inflicted the most extreme psychological torture upon the families of James Foley and Stephen Sotloff, who were desperately trying to save the lives of their sons and brother.

On September 12, 2014, ABC news reported:

“Obama administration officials repeatedly threatened the family of murdered journalist James Foley that they might face criminal charges for supporting terrorism if they paid ransom to the ISIS killers who ultimately beheaded their son, his mother and brother said this week. ‘We were told that several times and we took it as a threat and it was appalling,’ Foley’s mother Diane told ABC news in an interview. She said the warnings over the summer came primarily from a highly decorated military officer serving on the White House National Security Council staff, which five outraged current and former officials with direct knowledge of the Foley case also recounted to ABC news in recent weeks.”

In an interview with Anderson Cooper, Diane Foley stated that a military official forbade the family from going to the media and threatened to prosecute them for supporting terrorism if they attempted to raise the \$1.32 million dollar ransom demanded by ISIS.

“Three times he intimidated us with that message. We were horrified he would say that. He just told us we would be prosecuted. We knew we had to save our son, we had to try,” Mrs. Foley told Anderson Cooper.

Foley’s brother, Michael noted in an interview that he was ‘directly threatened with possible prosecution for violating anti-terrorism laws by a State Department official.’ Reporter Michael Isikoff states, in a September 12 article:

“The parents of murdered journalist Steven Sotloff were told by a White House counterterrorism official at a meeting last May that they could face criminal prosecution if they paid ransom to try to free their son.”

“Sotloff’s father, Art, was ‘shaking’ after the meeting with the official, who works for the National Security Council. Sources close to the family say that at the time of the White House meeting the Sotloffs and Foleys were exploring lining up donors who would help pay multimillion dollar ransoms to free their sons. But after the meeting those efforts collapsed, one source said, because of concerns that ‘donors could expose themselves to prosecution.’”

James Nye for Mailonline reported:

“Mrs. Foley poured scorn on the Pentagon’s claim they tried to rescue Foley on July 4, only to raid the wrong base...Throughout the 20 month ordeal, Mrs. Foley said she came to regard her and her family’s efforts to rescue James as an ‘annoyance’ to the administration and began to feel that their desperation to bring James Foley home did not ‘seem to be in the strategic interest, if you will.’”

Mrs. Foley diplomatically implies that her son’s death was in the “strategic interest” and she stops just short of accusing the administration of using her son’s beheading as the fig-leaf they needed to justify the administration’s unilateral attack on Syria, which was in violation of international law. If saving Foley was not in the “strategic interest,” a very frightening possibility exists.

The murders of Foley and Sotloff, both of whom were beheaded by ISIS, were called ‘acts of barbarism’ by Obama in his speech announcing a military campaign to destroy the terrorist

organization.

Frenzied hysteria over human rights abuses in Syria continues to be incited by mainstream media, as the middle east is fragmented and decomposed by US/NATO bombings and internecine warfare so complex that the UN's call for the "diplomatic resolution" of multiple devastating conflicts becomes an increasingly remote possibility. Saudi Arabia and Qatar continue arming the terrorist opposition.

At the same time that the military-industrial complex thrives on huge profits derived from these geo-politically engineered conflicts, it is worth recalling the September 10, 2014 report by Mazzetti, Schmitt and Landler in The New York Times:

"Washington - "The violent ambitions of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria have been condemned across the world: in Europe and the Middle East, by Sunni nations and Shiite ones, and by sworn enemies like Israel and Iran. Pope Francis joined the call for ISIS to be stopped.

"As President Obama prepares to send the United States on what could be yearslong military campaign against the militant group (ISIS), American intelligence agencies have concluded that it poses no immediate threat to the United States. Some officials and terrorism experts believe that the actual danger posed by ISIS has been distorted in hours of television punditry and alarmist statements by politicians, and that there has been little substantive public debate about the unintended consequences of expanding American military action in the Middle East.

"Daniel Benjamin, who served as the State Department's top counterterrorism adviser during Mr. Obama's first term, said the public discussion about the ISIS threat has been a 'farce,' with 'members of the cabinet and top military officers all over the place describing the threat in lurid terms that are not justified.' "It's hard to imagine a better indication of the ability of elected officials and TV talking heads to spin the public into a panic, with claims that the nation is honeycombed with sleeper cells, that operatives are streaming across the border into Texas or that the group will soon be spraying Ebola virus on mass transit systems - all on the basis of no corroborated information,' said Mr. Benjamin, who is now a scholar at Dartmouth College."

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