

Tillerson: Russia Must Ensure Syria Does Not ‘Illegitimately’ Retake Its Territory

US says Syria retaking Syrian territory from Pentagon-backed groups would be "illegitimate"

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*Widely reported as a US offer of cooperation on Syria given ahead of the Trump-Putin meeting, **Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's** recent comments on Syria are actually rather [scandalous and self-righteous](#):*

In a statement, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the U.S. is open to establishing no-fly zones in Syria in coordination with Russia as well as jointly setting up a truce monitoring and humanitarian aid delivery mechanism.

Tillerson noted that the U.S. and Russia have a variety of unresolved differences but said Syria is an opportunity for the two countries to create stability in Syria.

He said that Russia, as an ally of Syrian **President Bashar Assad** and a participant in the conflict, **“has a responsibility to ensure that the needs of the Syrian people are met and that no faction in Syria illegitimately re-takes or occupies areas liberated from ISIS’ or other terrorist groups’ control.”** Tillerson added that Russia has “an obligation to prevent any further use of chemical weapons of any kind by the Assad regime.”

What Tillerson has said here is that Syria attempting to regain control of any parts of Syria which have been taken by US-Kurdish or US-rebel forces from ISIS would be considered “illegitimate” by the US, and that Russia must ensure it does not happen.

Bizarrely the US believes it and its proxies have more legitimacy to hold Syrian territory than does the internationally recognized Syrian government which sits in its UN chair in New York.

Given such rhetoric by the “moderate” Tillerson we wonder what the US offer of cooperation on “no-fly zones” means. Neither Russia nor Syria have been talking about any such zones except in the sense of offering them to the opposition if the latter signs under Astana process and breaks off from al-Qaeda (Tahrir al-Sham).

Probably what Tillerson means is that the US is ready to cooperate on establishing no-fly zones over Syria for Syrians and Russians.

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