

Towards A “Soft Invasion”? The Launching of a “Humanitarian War” against Syria

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The Obama administration, in liaison with London, Paris, Tel Aviv and NATO headquarters in Brussels, is mulling over various military “intervention options” directed against Syria, including the conduct of both naval and air operations in support of “opposition” rebel forces on the ground.

The US and its impervious British ally are on a “humanitarian war footing”.

Allied forces including intelligence operatives and special forces have reinforced their presence on the ground in support of the opposition’s “Free Syrian Army” (FSA). The British Ministry of Defense is reported to be “drawing up contingency plans in case the UK decides to deploy troops to the volatile region”.

Naval and air force deployments have already been announced by the British Ministry of Defense. According to London’s news tabloids, quoting “authoritative” military sources; “...The escalating civil war [in Syria] made it increasingly likely that the West would be forced to step in.” ([Daily Mail](#), July 24, 2012)

An Iraq-style “shock and awe” bombing campaign is, for practical reasons, not being contemplated: “defence analysts warned that a force of at least 300,000 troops would be needed to carry out a full-scale intervention [in Syria]. Even then, this would face fierce resistance. ...” (Ibid)

Rather than carrying out an all out Blitzkrieg, the US-NATO-Israel military alliance has chosen to intervene under the diabolical R2P frame of “humanitarian warfare”. Modelled on Libya, the following broad stages are envisaged:

1. A US-NATO backed insurgency integrated by death squads is launched under the disguise of a “protest movement” (mid-March 2011 in Daraa)
2. British, French, Qatari and Turkish Special Forces are on the ground in Syria, advising and training the rebels as well as overseeing special operations. Mercenaries hired by private security companies are also involved in supporting rebels forces
3. The killings of innocent civilians by the Free Syrian Army (FSA) are deliberately carried out as part of a covert intelligence operation. (See [SYRIA: Killing Innocent Civilians as part of a US Covert Op. Mobilizing Public Support for a R2P War against Syria](#), Global Research, May 2012)

4. The Syrian government is then blamed for the resulting atrocities. Media disinformation is geared towards demonizing the Syrian government. Public opinion is led into endorsing a military intervention on humanitarian grounds.
5. Responding to public outrage, US-NATO is then “forced to step in” under a Humanitarian “Responsibility to Protect” (R2P) mandate. Media propaganda goes into high gear. “The International Community” comes to the rescue of the Syrian people.”
6. Warships and fighter jets are then deployed to the Eastern Mediterranean. These actions are coordinated with logistical support to the rebels and Special forces on the ground.
7. The final objective is “regime change” leading to the “break-up of the country” along sectarian lines and/or the installation of an “Islamist-dominated or influenced regime” modelled on Qatar and Saudi Arabia.
8. War plans in relation to Syria are integrated with those pertaining to Iran. The road to Tehran goes through Damascus. The broader implications of US-NATO intervention are military escalation and the possible unleashing of a regional war extending from the Eastern Mediterranean to Central Asia, in which China and Russia could be directly or indirectly involved.

Stages 1 through 4 have already been implemented.

Stage 5 has been announced.

Stage 6 involving the deployment of British and French warships to the Eastern Mediterranean is slated to be launched, according to the British Ministry of Defense, in “later Summer”. (See Michel Chossudovsky, [The US-NATO War on Syria: Western Naval Forces Confront Russia Off the Syrian Coastline?](#) Global Research, July 26, 2012.

Phase 7, namely “regime change” -which constitutes the end game of humanitarian warfare- has been announced on numerous occasions by Washington. In the words of Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, referring to President Bashar Al Assad: “It’s no longer a question of whether he’s coming to an end, it’s when.”

The End Game: Destabilizing the Secular State, Installing “Political Islam”

The [Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security](#) (RUSI), a London based think-tank, with close links to both Britain’s Ministry of Defense and the Pentagon. has intimated that “some sort of western [military] intervention in Syria is looking increasingly likely... ” What RUSI has in mind in its Syria Crisis Briefing entitled [A Collision Course for Intervention](#), is what might be described as “A Soft Invasion” leading either to a “break-up of the country” along sectarian lines and/or the installation of an “Islamist-dominated or influenced regime” modelled on Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Several “scenarios” involving “clandestine” intelligence operations are put forth. The unspoken objective of these military and intelligence options is to destabilize the secular State and implement, through military means, the transition towards a post Assad “Islamist-

dominated or influenced regime” modelled on Qatar and Saudi Arabia:

“A better insight is needed on the activities and relationships of Al-Qa’ida and other Syrian and international Salafist jihadists that are now entering the country in increasing numbers. **The floodgates are likely to open even further as international jihadists are emboldened by signs of significant opposition progress against the regime. Such elements have the support of Saudi Arabia and Qatar and would undoubtedly have a role in Syria following the collapse of Assad.** The scope of their involvement would need to be factored into intervention planning. (Ibid, p. 9, emphasis added)

While recognizing that the rebel fighters are outright terrorists involved in the killing of civilians, the RUSI *Briefing*, invoking tactical and intelligence considerations, suggests that allied forces should nevertheless support the terrorists. (i.e. the terrorist brigades have been supported by the US led coalition from the very outset of the insurgency in mid-March 2011. Special Forces have integrated the insurgency):

“What military, political and security challenges would they [the jihadists] then present in the country, to the region and to the West? **Issues include the possibility of an Islamist-dominated or influenced regime** inheriting sophisticated weaponry, including anti-aircraft and anti-ship missile systems and chemical and biological weapons that could be transferred into the hands of international terrorists. **At the tactical level, intelligence would be needed to identify the most effective groups, and how best to support them. It would also be essential to know how they operate, and whether support might assist them to massacre rivals or carry out indiscriminate attacks against civilians, something we have already witnessed among Syrian opposition groups.**” ([RUSI - SYRIA CRISIS BRIEFING: A Collision Course for Intervention](#), London July 2012, emphasis added, p. 9)

The foregoing acknowledgment confirms the US-NATO’s resolve to use “Political Islam” -including the deployment of CIA-MI6 supported Al Qaeda-affiliated terrorist groups — to pursue their hegemonic ambitions in Syria.

Covert operations by Western intelligence in support of “opposition” terrorist entities are launched to weaken the secular state, foment sectarian violence and create social divisions. We will recall that in Libya, the “pro-democracy” rebels were led by Al Qaeda affiliated paramilitary brigades under the supervision of NATO Special Forces. The much-vaunted “Liberation” of Tripoli was carried out by former members of the Libya Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG).

Military Options and Actions. Towards a “Soft Invasion”?

Several concrete military options -which largely reflect ongoing Pentagon-NATO thinking on the matter- are contemplated in the RUSI *Syria Crisis Briefing*. All these options are based on a scenario of “regime change” requiring the intervention of allied forces in Syrian territory. What is contemplated is a “Soft Invasion” modelled on Libya under an R2P humanitarian mandate rather than an all out “shock and awe” *Blitzkrieg*.

The RUSI *Briefing*, however, confirms that continued and effective support to the Free Syrian

Army (FSA) rebels will eventually require the use of **“air power in the form of fighter jets and sea, land and air launched missile systems”** combined with the influx of Special Forces and the landing of “elite airborne and amphibious infantry” (Ibid, p 16.)

This transition towards concrete naval and air power support to the rebels is no doubt also motivated by the setbacks of the insurgency (including substantial rebel losses) following the backlash by government forces in the wake of the July 18 terror attack against the National Security headquarters in Damascus, which led to the death of the Minister of Defense General Daoud Rajha and two other senior members of the country’s national defense team.

Various overlapping military actions are envisaged, to be carried out sequentially both prior and in the wake of the proposed “regime change”:

“The top-of-the-range option, destruction of the Syrian armed forces through an Iraq-style ‘shock and awe’ invasion, could undoubtedly be achieved by a US-led coalition. As with all other forms of intervention, however, handling the aftermath would be far less predictable, and could draw coalition forces into a long-running and bloody quagmire. At present that option can be excluded as a realistic possibility. ... There is no doubt that the substantial neutralisation of Syria’s air defence infrastructure could be achieved by a US-led air operation. But it would require a major, sustained and extremely costly campaign including Special Forces deployed on the ground to assist targeting. ...

The remaining intervention options fall broadly into three sometimes overlapping categories. ... **The first category is military enforcement action to reduce or end the violence in Syria**, ... to prevent Assad’s forces from attacking the civilian population by direct [military] action. [RUSI ignores the fact that the killings are committed by the FSA rather than by government forces, M.C.].

The second is seeking to bring about regime change by a combination of support for opposition forces and direct military action. The second category might apply in the aftermath of regime collapse. **The objective would be to support a post-Assad government by helping to stabilise the country** and protect the population against inter-factional violence and retribution. ... A stabilisation force would be deployed at the request of the new government. In any intervention scenario there might be a need to either destroy or secure Syria’s chemical weapons, if they were about to be used, transferred or otherwise made insecure. This would require such specialised and potentially substantial combat forces, it is likely to be a mission that only the US could execute. [Reminiscent of Iraq’s WMD, the pretext of Syria’s chemical weapons is being used to justify a more muscled military intervention, M.C.]

The third category is humanitarian relief – bringing in supplies and medical aid to besieged populations. This form of intervention, which would most likely be conducted under the auspices of the UN, would require aid agencies such as the International Red Crescent as well **as armed military forces including air power, again perhaps based on a NATO coalition. Humanitarian relief might be needed before or after a change of regime.** (See [RUSI – SYRIA CRISIS BRIEFING: A Collision Course for Intervention](#), London July 2012, emphasis added, p.9-10)

“Humanitarian relief” is often used as a pretext to send in combat units. Special forces and

intelligence ops are frequently dispatched in under an NGO cover.

Concrete US-NATO Military Actions

Does the RUSI *Briefing* reflect the current outlook of US-NATO military planning in relation to Syria?

What concrete military and intelligence actions have been taken by the Western military alliance in the wake of the Chinese and Russian vetoes in the United Nations Security Council?

The deployment of a powerful naval armada of French and British warships is already envisaged for deployment at an unstipulated date “later in the Summer”. (See Michel Chossudovsky, [The US-NATO War on Syria: Western Naval Forces Confront Russia Off the Syrian Coastline?](#), Global Research, July 26, 2012)

The British Ministry of Defense, however, has intimated that Royal Navy deployments to the Middle East could only be activated “after” the London Olympic games. Two of Britain’s largest warships, the HMS Bullwark and the HMS Illustrious have been assigned, at tremendous cost to British tax payers, to “ensuring the security” of the London Olympics. HMS Bulwark is stationed in Weymouth Bay for the duration of the games. HMS Illustrious is “currently sitting on the Thames in central London”. (Ibid)

These planned naval operations are carefully coordinated with stepped up allied support to the “Free Syrian Army”, integrated by foreign jihadist mercenaries trained in Qatar, Iraq, Turkey and Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Western military alliance.

Will the US-NATO alliance launch an all out air operation?

Syria’s air defense capabilities, according to reports, are based on Russia’s advanced S-300 system? (Unconfirmed reports point to the cancellation of delivery by Russia, following pressure from Israel, of the advanced S-300 surface-to-air missile system to Syria) (See [Israel convinces Russia to cancel Syrian S-300 missile deal: official, Xinhua](#), June 28, 2012) Reports also suggest the installation of an advanced Russian radar system. (See [Report: Russia Sent Syria Advanced S-300 Missiles, Israel National News](#), November 24, 2011).

The Role of Special Forces

In the months ahead, allied forces will no doubt focus on disabling the country’s military capabilities including its air defense, communications systems, through a combination of covert operations, cyber-warfare and US-NATO sponsored SFA terror attacks.

“The Free Syrian Army” rebels are NATO’s foot soldiers. FSA commanders, many of whom are part of Al Qaeda affiliated entities, are in permanent liaison with British and French Special Forces inside Syria. The RUSI report recommends that the rebels should be supported through the “**deployment into the country of Special Forces advisers with air support on call:**

“Advisers working alongside rebel commanders, perhaps accompanied by small units of Special Forces troops, could be tactically and strategically decisive, as it proved in both Afghanistan in 2001 and in Libya in 2011. (RUSI, op cit, p. 10)

Special Forces have been on the ground in Syria since the outset of the insurgency. Reports also confirm the role of private security companies including former Blackwater mercenaries in the training of the FSA rebels. In what is described as “America’s War Under the Table”, Special forces on the ground are in permanent liaison with allied military and intelligence.

The Influx of Mercenary Jihadist Fighters

In the wake of the UN Security council deadlock, a speeding up in the recruitment and training of mercenary jihadist fighters is unfolding.

According to a British Army source, British Special Forces (SAS) are now training Syrian “rebels” in Iraq “in military tactics, weapons handling and communications systems”. The report also confirms that advanced military command training is being conducted in Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Western military alliance:

“British and French Special Forces have been actively training members of the FSA, from a base in Turkey. Some reports indicate that training is also taking place in locations in Libya and Northern Lebanon. British MI6 operatives and UKSF (SAS/SBS) personnel have reportedly been training the rebels in urban warfare as well as supplying them with arms and equipment. US CIA operatives and special forces are believed to be providing communications assistance to the rebels.” [Elite Forces UK](#), January 5, 2012

“More than 300 [Syrian rebels] have passed through a base just inside the Iraq border, while a command course is run in Saudi Arabia.

Groups of 50 rebels at a time are being trained by two private security firms employing former Special Forces personnel. “Our role is purely instructional teaching tactics, techniques and procedures,” said a former SAS member.

... “If we can teach them how to take cover, to shoot and avoid being spotted by snipers it will hopefully help.” ([Daily Mail](#), July 22, 2012)

The Role of Turkey and Israel

Turkey’s military high command has been in liaison with NATO headquarters since August 2011 pertaining to the active recruitment of thousands of Islamist “freedom fighters”, reminiscent of the enlistment of Mujahideen to wage the CIA’s jihad (holy war) in the heyday of the Soviet-Afghan war:

“Also discussed in Brussels and Ankara, our sources report, is **a campaign to enlist thousands of Muslim volunteers in Middle East countries and the Muslim world** to fight alongside the Syrian rebels. The Turkish army would house these volunteers, train them and secure their passage into Syria. ([DEBKAFfile](#), NATO to give rebels anti-tank weapons, August 14, 2011, emphasis added)

The recent influx of foreign fighters on a significant scale suggests that this diabolical Mujahideen recruitment program developed more than a year ago, has come to fruition.

Turkey is also supporting Muslim Brotherhood fighters in Northern Syria. As part of its

support to SFA rebels, “Turkey has set up a secret base with allies Saudi Arabia and Qatar to direct vital military and communications aid to Syria’s rebels from a city near the border” [Exclusive: Secret Turkish nerve center leads aid to Syria rebels | Reuters](#), July 27, 2012).

Israel’s role in supporting the rebels, largely characterised by covert intel ops, has been “discrete” but nonetheless significant. From the very outset, Mossad has supported radical Salafist terrorist groups, which became active in Southern Syria at the outset of the protest movement in Daraa in mid-March. Reports suggest that financing for the Salafi insurgency is coming from Saudi Arabia. (See [Syrian army closes in on Damascus suburbs, The Irish Times, May 10, 2011](#)).

While channelling covert support to the SFA, Israel is also supporting Syrian Kurdish separatists in North Syria. The Kurdish (KNC) opposition group has close links to the Kurdish Regional Government of Massoud Barzani in northern Iraq, which is directly supported by Israel.

The Kurdish separatist agenda is slated to be used by Washington and Tel Aviv to seek the break up of Syria along ethnic and religious lines- into several separate and “independent” political entities. It is worth noting that Washington has also facilitated the dispatch of Kurdish Syrian “opposition militants” to Kosovo in May to participate in training sessions using the “terrorist expertise” of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). (See Michel Chossudovsky, [Hidden US-Israeli Military Agenda: “Break Syria into Pieces”](#), Global Research, June 2012).

The not so hidden US-Israeli military agenda is to “Break Syria into Pieces”, with a view to supporting Israeli expansionism. ([The Jerusalem Post \(May 16, 2012\)](#)).

Confrontation with Russia

What can we expect in the months ahead:

- 1) a naval deployment in the Eastern Mediterranean, the military objective of which has not been clearly defined by allied forces.
- 2) a greater influx of foreign fighters and death squads into Syria and the conduct of carefully targeted terrorist attacks in coordination with US-NATO.
- 3) an escalation in the deployment of allied special forces including mercenaries from private security companies on contract to Western intelligence.

The objective, under the “Damascus Volcano and Syrian Earthquake.” operation, ultimately consisted in extending the SFA terror attacks to Syria’s capital, under the supervision of Western Special Forces and intelligence operatives on the ground. (See Thierry Meyssan, [The battle of Damascus has begun](#), Voltaire Net, July 19, 2012). This option of targeting Damascus has failed. The rebels have also been pushed back in heavy fighting in Syria’s second largest city Aleppo.

3) The weakening of Russia’s role in Syria –including its functions under the bilateral military cooperation agreement with Damascus– is also part of the US-NATO military-intelligence agenda. This could result in terrorist attacks directed against Russian nationals living in Syria.

A terror attack against Russia's naval base in Tartus was announced by the FSA less than 2 weeks following the UN Security Council face-off, no doubt was ordered by US-NATO, with a view to threatening Russia.

Following the arrival of Russia's naval flotilla of ten warships stationed off the Syrian coast, an FSA spokesman confirmed (July 26) their intention to attack Russia's naval base in Tartus:

"We have a warning for the Russian forces: if they will send any more weapons that kill our families and the Syrian people we will hit them hard inside Syria," said Louay al-Mokdad, a logistical coordinator for the Free Syrian Army (FSA).

"Informers inside the regime are telling that us that there is a big weapons' shipment arriving at Tartous in the next two weeks. We don't want to attack the port, we are not terrorists, but if they keep acting like this we will have no choice."

The FSA has formed a 'Naval brigade', made up of defectors from the Syrian navy, which operates close to Tartous. "Many of our men used to work in the port of Tartous and they know it well," said Captain Walid, a former officer in the Syrian Navy. "We are watching very closely the movements of the Russians."

"We can easily destroy the port. If we hit the weapons' stores with anti-tank missiles or another weapon it would trigger a devastating explosion," said an FSA representative. "Or we can attack the ships directly." ([Syrian rebels threaten to attack Russian naval base - World - DNA](#), July 26, 2012)

Were Russia's naval base to be attacked, this would, in all likelihood, be undertaken under the supervision of allied special forces and intelligence operatives.

While Russia has the required military capabilities to effectively defend its Tartus naval base, an attack on Russia's naval base would constitute an act of provocation, which could set the stage for a more visible involvement of Russian forces inside Syria. Such a course could potentially also lead to a direct confrontation between Russian forces and Western special forces and mercenaries operating within rebel ranks.

According to the RUSI *Syria Crisis Briefing* quoted above: "Anticipating Russian action and counter action would have to be a major factor in any Western [military] intervention plan [in Syria]. The Russians are certainly capable of bold and unexpected moves..." (RUSI, op cit, p. 5).

The World at a Dangerous Crossroads

An all out "humanitarian war" against Syria is on the drawing board of the Pentagon, which, if carried out, could lead the World into a regional war extending from the Eastern Mediterranean to the heartland of Central Asia.

A sophisticated and all encompassing propaganda program supports war in the name of World peace and global security.

The underlying scenario of Worldwide conflict goes far beyond the diabolical design of Orwell's 1984.

The Ministry of Truth upholds war as a peace-making undertaking by twisting realities upside down.

In turn, the lies and fabrications of the mainstream media are presented with various innuendos in a complex web of deceit.

In a cynical twist, documented atrocities against Syrian civilians committed by the West's "opposition" are now being acknowledged (rather than blamed on government forces) as "unavoidable" in the painful transition towards to "democracy".

The broader consequences of "the Big Lie" are obfuscated.

Global humanitarian warfare becomes a consensus which nobody can challenge.

The war on Syria is part of an integrated Worldwide military agenda. The road to Tehran goes through Damascus. Iran, Russia, China and North Korea are also being threatened.

With the deployment of the Franco-British naval armada later this Summer, Western warships in the Eastern Mediterranean would be contiguous to those deployed by Russia, which is conducting its own war games, leading to a potential "Cold War style confrontation" between Russian and Western naval forces. See Michel Chossudovsky, [The US-NATO War on Syria: Western Naval Forces Confront Russia Off the Syrian Coastline?](#), Global Research, July 26, 2012).

A war on Syria, which would inevitably involve Israel and Turkey, could constitute the spark towards a regional war directed against Iran, in which Russia and China could be (directly or indirectly) involved.

It is crucial to spread the word and break the channels of media disinformation.

A critical and unbiased understanding of what is happening in Syria is of crucial importance in reversing the tide of military escalation.

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TOWARDS A WORLD WAR III SCENARIO

THE DANGERS OF NUCLEAR WAR

MICHEL CHOSSUDOVSKY

It is essential that people in the UK, France and the US prevent "the late Summer" naval WMD deployment to the Eastern Mediterranean from occurring.

The British *Ministry of Defense* has announced that several British warships are required “to ensure the security” of the Olympic Games. HMS *Bulwark* is stationed in Weymouth Bay for the duration of the games. HMS *Illustrious* is “currently sitting on the Thames in central London”. The deployment of British warships including HMS *Bulwark* and HMS *Illustrious* to the Middle East is envisaged “after” the Olympic Games.

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Prevent the warships from leaving port.

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