

Troops on the Ground? Martin Dempsey's Five Options for War with Syria

By [Global Research News](#)

Global Research, July 24, 2013

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

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [SYRIA](#)

In a July 22 article by Chris Carroll , The US military online news site Stars and Stripes provides a review of US war plans against Syria as outlined in a letter by Chief of Staff General Martin Dempsey addressed to the US Congress.

Dempsey outlined five options for U.S. military action in the Syrian conflict:

* **The least involved - a train, advise and assist mission** - would require no U.S. troops to be directly involved with fighting as they delivered supplies and training to opposition fighters, Dempsey said.



* A second option, **limited stand-off strikes**, would target "high-value regime air defense, air, ground, missile, and naval forces as well as the supporting military facilities and command nodes," with strikes launched from beyond Syrian borders. "Depending on duration, the costs would be in the billions," Dempsey wrote.

* A third option, **establishing a no-fly zone**, would go further, taking out Syrian air-defenses to control the skies throughout the country. Because U.S. aircraft would be required to fly over Syrian airspace, the risk to U.S. troops would be higher, Dempsey said.

* The U.S. military could also establish buffer zones to protect Turkey's or Jordan's borders, or to protect Syrian civilians, Dempsey wrote. Doing so would require partial no-fly zones and carry many of the same risks and costs.

* The fifth and most complex option Dempsey outlined, controlling chemical weapons, would require **a no-fly zone, air and missile strikes, and thousands of troops on the ground.**

Dempsey's response, released on Monday, focused on Syria, stressing that **the decision on military action is not his to make.**

"The decision over whether to introduce military force is a political one that our

Nation entrusts to its civilian leaders," he wrote. "I also understand that you deserve my best military advice on how military force could be used in order to decide whether it should be used. "

And, Dempsey warned, the U.S. should be prepared to deal with the aftermath of any military action.

"Once we take action, we should be prepared for what comes next," he said. "Deeper involvement is hard to avoid." (Star and Stripes, July 22, 2013)

The broader consequences of US military action are not addressed by General Dempsey.

Military observers have emphasized that at least four of these options including a limited no fly zone could lead to a war with Iran as well as confrontation with Russia, which is supporting Syria's air defense system. Direct U.S.-NATO military intervention in Syria could potentially lead to a regional war which has been on the drawing board of the Pentagon since 2003.

Michel Chossudovsky contributed to this report

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Global Research News](#), Global Research, 2013

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Global Research News](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca