

US Bombed Syrian Troops for Nearly One Hour, It was Not a “Mistake”, it was “Intentional”: Bashar al-Assad

By [Press TV](#)

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Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has said that US airstrikes on Syrian troops on Saturday were “intentional” and lasted for nearly one hour.

In an interview with the Associated Press conducted Wednesday, Assad said the attack targeted a “huge” area constituting of many hills, “so it was definitely intentional, not unintentional as they claimed.”

The US Central Command has said it may have unintentionally struck the Syrian airbase in Dayr al-Zawr while carrying out a raid against Daesh and that the strikes were stopped in less than five minutes when Russia called the US to halt it.

Daesh militants briefly overran government positions in the area until they were beaten back.

“How could they (Daesh) know that the Americans are going to attack that position in order to gather their militants to attack right away and to capture it one hour after the strike?” Assad asked.

“It wasn’t an accident by one airplane... It was four airplanes that kept attacking the position of the Syrian troops for nearly one hour, or a little bit more than one hour,” he said.

“You don’t commit a mistake for more than one hour,” Assad said in the interview.

US behind collapse of ceasefire

Assad also blamed the US for the collapse of a ceasefire deal brokered with Russia.

The strikes contributed to the collapse of the truce and cast serious doubt on chances for implementing an unprecedented US-Russian agreement to jointly target Daesh.

Assad said Washington “doesn’t have the will” to join the fight against Daesh, which the US, Turkey and their allies have cited as the reason for their military intervention in Syria.

Syrians who fled the country could return within a few months if the US, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Qatar stopped backing militants, he added.

Assad said the war, now in its sixth year, is likely to “drag on” because of what he said was continued external support for Takfiri terrorists and numerous militant groups.

“When you talk about it as part of a global conflict and a regional conflict, when you have many external factors that you don’t control, it’s going to drag on.”

‘US lies’ about aid convoy attack

Assad also rejected accusations that Syrian or Russian planes struck an aid convoy in Aleppo and denied that his troops were preventing food from entering the militant-held part of the city.

“If there’s really a siege around the city of Aleppo, people would have been dead by now,” Assad said, asking how militants were able to smuggle in arms but apparently not food or medicine.

The attack on the aid convoy outside Aleppo took place Monday night, hitting a warehouse as aid workers unloaded cargo and triggering huge explosions.

US officials have oscillated between blaming the Syrian government and the Russian military for the attack. At one point, they have described a sustained barrage that included barrel bombs.

One Thursday, however, the AP quoted an unnamed “senior US administration official” who claimed a Russian-piloted aircraft carried out the strike.

Assad dismissed the claims, saying whatever American officials say “has no credibility” and is “just lies.”

Russia has called for an independent investigation into the attack and has published a footage from a drone which apparently shows a militant vehicle towing a mortar alongside the aid convoy.

On Wednesday, Russia’s Defense Ministry said an armed US drone was in the vicinity of the humanitarian aid convoy that was hit by the airstrike.

War ‘savage’

Assad also brushed aside what is often described as eyewitness accounts to accuse the Syrian army, while acknowledging the war had been “savage”.

“Those witnesses only appear when there’s an accusation against the Syrian army or the Russian (army), but when the terrorists commit a crime or massacre or anything, you don’t see any witnesses.”

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