

US Military Plans Thwarted, Washington's "Strategy of Isolation" in Syria: Assad Government Now to be Made 'as Miserable as Possible' with Sanctions

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Global Research, October 01, 2018
[Fort Russ](#) 30 September 2018

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
Theme: [Military and WMD, US NATO War Agenda](#)
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The United States, along with its allies, will implement a "strategy of isolation" in Syria if President Bashar Assad maintains the political process aimed at ending the war in Syria, an American diplomat was quoted as saying.

US Special Representative for Syria Jim Jeffrey said Washington would work with countries in Europe, Asia and the Middle East to impose tough international sanctions on Syria if Damascus did not want to cooperate to change the constitution before the elections.

"If the regime does that, we believe that then we can go after it the way we went after Iran before 2015 - with really tough international sanctions," Jeffrey said, referring to secondary sanctions against Tehran for its nuclear program.

In addition, the diplomat assured that not even the UN Security Council could contain this plan of the United States.

"Even if the U.N. Security Council won't pass them we will just do it through the European Union, we will do it through our Asian allies, and then we will make it our business to make life as miserable as possible for that flopping cadaver of a regime and let the Russians and Iranians, who made this mess, get out of it," Jeffrey said, quoted by Reuters.

However, it is highly questionable if the United States has enough pull on the whole of the EU to make such a threat a reality. As the global economy constitutes a complex network of trading partners, it will be only moderately difficult to get around any embargos masquerading as sanctions. Syrian goods can be sold through intermediaries who are critical to US allied countries, and goods produced around the world will not have much difficulty arriving in Syria.

The Syrian authorities consider the United States military presence in its territory to be illegal, and consensus interpretation of international law confirms this view.

Despite this, then Secretary of State Rex Tillerson announced last January that US forces will remain in the Arab country and that in the future there will be no place for President Bashar Assad. In the same speech, Tillerson stated that the US and its allies do not intend to

cooperate in rebuilding the Syrian-controlled areas of Damascus.

Assad's allies Russia and Iran, as well as China, have made some investments in the country, but they want other countries to share the burden.

Western countries have said they will not approve reconstruction funding for Syria, or drop sanctions, without a political settlement. U.S. sanctions are already making it hard for foreign companies to work there.

One of the odd points in all of this, is the fact that Syria today is a largely war ravaged country, the issue of 'sanctions' seems moot. Sanctions have been on Syria for more than 7 years, and it was these sanctions in part which then worsened the situation, giving some element of credibility to the western sponsored 'opposition' in the early stage of the conflict.

Among the most important facts that history will have to hold fast to, is that there was never a legitimate opposition that waved or used the seditious and colonial flag of the French Mandate - the Green/white/black tri-color. There has always been a civil society and electoral opposition in Syria, ranging from free market liberals, to communists, moderate Sunni groups, to the Syriac nationalists of the SSNP. Given that Syria is a typical 'developmental state', it is expected that the weakness of a sovereign civil society gives rise to harsher police and regulatory methods over civil society.

Assad ushered in a series of civil society reforms six years ago, and these met the demands of the legitimate opposition, who have long since been brought back into the fold of Syrian civil and political society and structures. What we have seen ever since is a coordinated mercenary, sectarian, and Salafist invasion force orchestrated by Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, the United States, and the United Arab Emirates.

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ISBN Number: 978-0-9737147-6-0

Year: 2015

Pages: 240 Pages

List Price: \$22.95

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