

# US, Saudi Vow to Boost the Number of Terrorist Fighters in Syria against Assad

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*US Secretary of State John Kerry and Saudi Arabia's ruler Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud have pledged to further boost anti-Syrian-government militants and reiterated the need for resolving Syria's crisis without its incumbent president involved.*

In a visit to the Arabian Kingdom on Saturday, Kerry met Salman at al-Oja palace in Dareya district on the outskirts of Riyadh, where they both called for the "importance of mobilizing the international community" to what they called restoring stability to the Middle Eastern country and "the need for a transition away from Assad," the US State Department said in a statement.

Kerry had earlier accused Syrian President Bashar al-Assad of "standing in the way" of peace efforts in Syria.

"One thing stands in the way of being able to rapidly move to implement that, and it's a person called Assad - Bashar Assad," he said during a meeting that was held in Vienna on Friday with his Russian, Turkish, and Saudi counterparts.

On September 30, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir had said Assad must leave office or face being removed via military intervention.

Kerry and Salman also expressed intensified support to the so-called "moderate Syrian opposition" operating in the war-torn country.

This is while the Pentagon has admitted that a number of US-trained "moderate" militants in Syria have handed over arms and equipment to an al-Qaeda-linked terror group in the country.

Meanwhile, Syrian armed forces, backed by the Russian air force, have made a series of new gains in the fight against the Takfiri militants of Daesh in recent weeks. Reports say large numbers of ISIS terrorists are abandoning the ranks of the extremist group amid the advances of government troops.

Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. The crisis has claimed the lives of more than 250,000 people so far and displaced millions of others; Press TV reported.

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