

Video: Syria War Report, Towards a US-Russia Deal?

By [South Front](#)

Global Research, July 04, 2016

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The last week was marked with reports about the possibility of the closer Russian-US cooperation over the Syrian conflict. Rumors increased amid the recent failures of Washington to demonstrate any efficient secular force among various jihadi groups that are the core of the so-called "Syrian moderate opposition". There are no doubts that the fail of the US-backed New Syrian Army's operation against ISIS near Al-Bukamal, resulted in heavy casualties and loses in military equipment, pushed President Barack Obama to consider a plan to coordinate strikes against terrorist groups in Syria with Russia.

Under the proposed plan, the U.S. military and Russian Air Force would launch joint airstrikes against the al Qaeda-linked Jabhat al-Nusra. In turn, Russia would halt its attacks on U.S.-backed rebels, first of all the New Syrian Army.

However, the US's unwillingness to oppose the expansion of Al Nusra was not the only point of contention between Washington and Moscow. For a long time, the US has supported the jihadi militant groups of Jaysh al-Islam and Ahrar al-Sham, calling them the moderate opposition. If the Russian-US deal includes at least an abatement of resistance to Russian air strikes against these moderate oppositioners, it will be a diplomatic victory for Moscow. The joint operations against Al Nusra, and intensification of Russian actions against Jaysh al-Islam and Ahrar al-Sham could become the beginning of the end of the Turkish-Saudi game in Syria. The aforementioned groups are clearly supported from Ankara and Riyadh and play a crucial role in the Turkish-Saudi plans in the country. Will this play upper hand to the recently started normalization between Russia and Turkey? Likely no, because it will mean the decrease of Turkish influence in the region and end of Erdogan's strategic plans for Syria.

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