

# Washington Celebrates Al-Qaeda's Victory in Syria

By <u>Kyle Anzalone</u>
Global Research, December 14, 2024
Antiwar.com 9 December 2024

Region: <u>Middle East & North Africa</u>
Theme: <u>Intelligence</u>, <u>US NATO War Agenda</u>

In-depth Report: **SYRIA** 

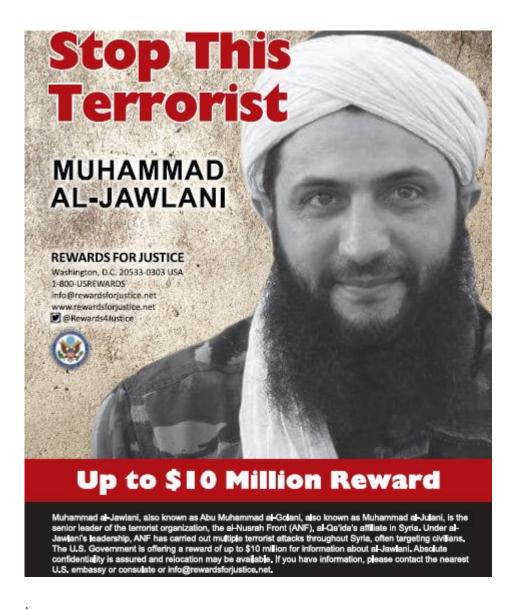
Washington finally completed its dirty war in Syria. What <u>started</u> as a CIA covert operation to smuggle weapons and jihadists from Libya to Syria has resulted in Syria leader **Bashar al-Assad** being deposed and replaced by **Abu Mohammad al-Julani**.

Julani found his way to Damascus by rising through the ranks of al-Qaeda in Iraq. Julani was a close associate of both AQI leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and founded the al-Qaeda affiliate group Syria in coordination with Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

As more Americans became aware of the CIA's covert operation in Syria to back jihadists, Julani changed his organization's name from Al Nusra to Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, then Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham (HTS) to obscure his group's al-Qaeda links. However, HTS was no moderate group and focused on bringing ISIS forces under Julani's control following the collapse of Baghdadi's caliphate.

Even the US State Department was not fooled by Julani's rebrands. In 2017, the State Department <u>issued</u> a \$10 million reward for the capture of Julani.

.



For most of the past decade, Julani has ruled over northwestern Syria under the protection of Washington's NATO ally, Turkey. Had Turkish troops not set up outposts surrounding Julani's territory, Syria, and its Russian, Iranian, and Hezbollah allies may have eliminated the lingering jihadist threat. During this period, Julani's Idlib province was the largest safe haven for jihadists on the planet.

Since the ISIS caliphate was defeated, the frontlines in the Syrian War largely froze. Still, Washington and its allies engaged in a relentless assault on Damascus.

Turkey protected jihadists on Syria's northern border, allowing them to <u>terrorize</u> the Kurds that lived there.

Israel <u>engaged</u> in weekly strikes on Assad and his <u>allied</u> forces. Over the past year, those strikes have escalated to hit <u>civilian</u> and diplomatic targets in downtown Damascus. Tel Aviv even bombed the Aleppo Airport <u>following a major earthquake</u>, preventing aid from reaching the desperate citizens.

The US <u>illegally</u> occupied the eastern quarter of Syria, <u>exploiting</u> and stealing some of Damasus's most valuable resources. In this region, the US allowed the Kurds to lord power over <u>the local Arabs</u>. The Kurdish SDF runs a massive torture prison known as the al-Hol camp, and local citizens protest the Kurds conscripting their children as young as

Washington <u>waged</u> an economic war on Syria, <u>deliberately</u> meant to prevent Damascus from rebuilding its war-destroyed infrastructure. The US also bombed Assad's allied forces near the Iraq-Syria border.

Additionally, Turkey and <u>Ukraine</u> used this period to bolster the HTS forces.

The long-frozen conflict thawed rapidly over the past two weeks. Seemingly in coordination with the announcement of a truce in Lebanon, Julani's forces went on the march, <u>first seizing Aleppo</u>. Reported to be aided by <u>advanced drones</u>, HTS made quick work of any Syria forces that resisted, and on Sunday, Julani arrived in Damascus and declared the "<u>mujahideen</u>" won the war. And Washington celebrated.

"Syria is free. The rebels won. The people liberated themselves from tyranny. Freedom won," the *Washington Post's* Josh Rogin wrote on X. "Russia, Iran, Hezbollah & Assad lost. Historic. The road ahead for Syria won't be easy. But it will be better than the past. The world should celebrate Syria's liberation & help it succeed."

Post columnist Max Boot wrote,

"Assad – after a quarter-century of ruthless rule – had fled the country. Syria was free at last."

"The fall of Assad. On some days, one can believe that while the arc of the moral universe is long, it bends toward justice," neocon Bill Krystol wrote on X.

Of course, what happened to Syria is not about the Syrians. The real goal of Washington was to weaken Damascus because they believed it would weaken Moscow, Tehran, and Hezbollah.

What happens next in Syria is unlikely to be good for many of the minority groups that enjoyed some level of protection under Assad. However, Washington and its allies are swooping in like hungry vultures to feats on the remains of Syria.

Shortly after Assad left Damascus, in Tel Aviv **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** announced Israel would be seizing a "buffer zone" in southwestern Syria. Turkey also launched airstrikes on a Kurdish-held city in northern Syria.

No doubt, in the coming days, we will hear crowing from the hawks in Washington about their triumph in Syria by severing Tehran's land connection to Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon. In the White House, Biden's staff is no doubt discussing how to exploit Assad's downfall as far as possible; this includes attempts to remove Russia from its military bases along Syria's Mediterranean coast.

The biggest losers in Syria are the Syrian people, who, for nearly a decade and a half, have been subject to a brutal and complex war that shows no signs of ending. They have been bombed by a seemingly unending number of countries, all with their unique geopolitical interests. The Syrian people have been intentionally <u>starved and impoverished</u> by the US to bring about Assad's downfall. While Assad was a tyrant, no doubt Julani will come with his own, and likely more oppressive, tyranny.

Among the other losers are the American people. More American lives and treasure were wasted on a project to dispose of another Middle East dictator. In Iraq and Libya, this policy caused unimaginable suffering for the locals.

The top threat is that our government has empowered the only true enemies of the American people. Iran, Russia, North Korea, Venezuela, Cuba, Assad's Syria, etc. all present no threat to the American homeland. However, now an al-Qaeda terrorist sits on the throne in Damascus, and Washington's support for Tel Aviv's genocide in Gaza has given him an endless supply of anti-American hatred.

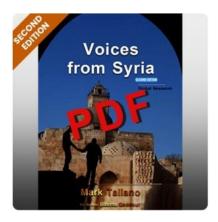
\*

Click the share button below to email/forward this article to your friends and colleagues. Follow us on <u>Instagram</u> and <u>Twitter</u> and subscribe to our <u>Telegram Channel</u>. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

#### **Global Research's Holiday Fundraiser**

**Kyle Anzalone** is the opinion editor of Antiwar.com and news editor of the <u>Libertarian Institute</u>. He hosts <u>The Kyle Anzalone Show</u> and is co-host of <u>Conflicts of Interest with Connor Freeman</u>.

### Order Mark Taliano's Book "Voices from Syria" directly from Global Research.



# \*\*Voices from Syria\*\*

Author: Mark Taliano

ISBN Number: 978-0-9737147-9-1

Year: 2017

Product Type: PDF File

List Price: \$6.50

**Special Offer: \$5.00** 

## Click to order.

The original source of this article is <u>Antiwar.com</u> Copyright © <u>Kyle Anzalone</u>, <u>Antiwar.com</u>, 2024

## **Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page**

#### **Become a Member of Global Research**

# Articles by: Kyle Anzalone

**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: <a href="mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca">publications@globalresearch.ca</a>

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: <a href="mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca">publications@globalresearch.ca</a>