

Another UN Security Council Resolution on Syria: Hold the Cheers

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On Friday, Security Council members unanimously adopted SC Res. 2254 on Syria.

It calls for a ceasefire and diplomatic settlement to the long-running conflict – launched by Obama in March 2011 for regime change, using ISIS and other terrorist groups as imperial foot soldiers..

Washington's key objective remains unchanged. Although SC resolutions are binding under international law, history shows they're regularly breached or ignored unaccountably. America, its key NATO partners, Israel and Middle East regimes notoriously flout binding international law with impunity.

SC Res. 2254 may prove as empty and ineffective as all previous attempts to resolve Syria's conflict diplomatically. Credit goes to Russia for trying.

It calls for all parties in Syria's conflict to "immediately cease any attacks against civilians."

The only elements guilty of these high crimes are ISIS and other terrorist groups – so Friday's vote changed nothing on the ground.

Groups excluded from resolution terms include ISIS, Al Qaeda and Jabhat al-Nusra. Various other terrorist elements operate in Syria. Moscow listed 160, failing to list them with ISIS and the others, a glaring omission because of US obstruction.

Resolution terms call for opposing sides (excluding named terrorist groups) to convene talks in January under UN auspices – initiating a political process toward establishing "inclusive and non-sectarian governance" within six months by Syrians alone.

The aim is drafting a new constitution (likely not much different from the overwhelmingly approved current one in February 2012 by national referendum), as well as holding new elections in 18 months.

Following SC 2254's adoption, John Kerry's comment rang hollow, saying it's time "to put an end to indiscriminate bombing, torture and the bloodshed." Progress made so far "gives us grounds for encouragement."

He ignored why Obama launched war in the first place, supporting, not combating ISIS and other terrorist groups – now escalated with heavier bombing of Syrian infrastructure and government targets, along with unknown numbers of US combat troops on the ground with

more coming, an entirely illegal offensive, naked aggression by any standard, along with imperial partners.

Sergey Lavrov struck a positive note, despite knowing huge obstacles lie ahead. He called Friday's vote the way forward "for the formation of a broad front against terrorism on the basis of the UN Charter, with the support of all on Earth who are opposed to terrorism, including the army of Syria, the Kurdish militia, and the armed forces of the Syrian patriotic opposition."

More than once Lavrov explained no so-called moderate opposition exists. All anti-Assad elements are terrorists. Including any of them in peace talks assures failure – Washington the biggest obstacle of all.

"The air force of the Russian Federation, at the request of the legitimate government of the Syrian Arab Republic, is contributing to the completion of this task," Lavrov added.

Only Syrian-led inclusive dialogue can put an end to untold suffering," he stressed – maintaining the nation should remain secular, unified, undivided and multi-ethnic.

"Only the Syrian people are to decide on their future, including the fate of President Assad. This is an answer, included into the resolution, to (counter) attempts to enforce outside will on the Syrians," Lavrov stressed.

The fight against terrorism must be consistent and not opportunistic in nature, whether it be in Syria or anywhere else. Attempts to separate terrorists into good and bad are unacceptable.

The resolution stresses the need to provide humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people... It must be provided in strict accordance with the guidelines of the United Nations, enshrined in General Assembly resolutions and the decisions of the Security Council, including the principle of the consent of the host government.

Since late October, foreign ministers from 18 nations (US-led NATO ones, Russia, China and regional states), along with EU and UN representatives met twice in Vienna – to help establish a roadmap for peace in Syria, deplorably without Damascus' involvement, impossible to achieve without its participation.

Agreement to disagree followed. Friday's resolution changed little or nothing on the ground. Rhetoric aside, Washington and Moscow remain world's apart on resolving things equitably.

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