

Assad Pledges Full Cooperation, Pentagon Plans Countdown to War?

By <u>Stephen Lendman</u> Global Research, September 14, 2013 Theme: <u>US NATO War Agenda</u> In-depth Report: <u>SYRIA</u>

Assad's full cooperation isn't good enough for Washington. Obama wants regime change.

On Thursday, Free Syrian Army head Selim Idriss rejected Russia's peace initiative.

World powers, he said, shouldn't "be satisfied only by removing the chemical weapon, which is the tool of a crime, but judge the author of the crime before the International Criminal Court, who has clearly acknowledged possessing it and agreed to get rid of it."

Idriss urged military force. He wants weapons supplied his forces increased. He promised to "intensify operations in all regions of the country."

Peaceful conflict resolution faces long odds. Washington's going all out to prevent it.

On September 12, <u>Russia's Rossiya-24</u> prerecorded an interview with Assad. He pledged full cooperation for peace.

He'll sign the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Within days, he'll submit documents required to do so, he said.

He'll place Syria's chemical weapons under international control. He'll provide monitors with information about them one month after becoming a CWC signatory.

"I believe the agreement will come into force a month after the signing and Syria will start submitting data on its chemical weapons stockpile to international organizations," he said.

"These are standard procedures, and we are going to stick to them," he stressed.

He agreed to Russian proposed terms. They're fair, logical and workable. They seek peaceful conflict resolution. US threats didn't influence him.

He said "(t)errorists are tying to incite a US attack against Syria. There are countries that supply chemical substances to opposition rebels."

Obama's threat to attack Syria was "based on a US provocation."

He'll fulfill his obligation to place his chemical weapons under international control. He'll do so when Washington stops threatening to attack.

"When we see that the United States truly desires stability in our region and stops threatening and seeking to invade, as well as stops arms supplies to terrorists then we can believe that we can follow through with the necessary processes," he said. Washington should end its "politics of threats."

"Syria will send its address to the UN and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in the next few days."

"That address will be accompanied by technical documents required for signing this agreement."

"That will be followed by work that will lead to the signing of the Chemical Weapons Convention."

Assad said CWC has many clauses. They include prohibiting the production, storage and use of chemical weapons.

After agreeing to CWC provisions, it "will take effect and, in my view, the agreement will take effect one month after being signed, and Syria will begin providing information on its chemical weapons arsenals to international organizations."

At the same time, Syria won't follow procedural mechanisms unilaterally.

"That doesn't mean that (it) will sign the documents, fulfill the conditions and that that will be it. This is a bilateral process," said Assad.

He wants the region, including Israel, free from weapons of mass destruction.

"When we proposed a project to liquidate stores of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, the United States impeded the project," he said.

"One of the reasons was to allow Israel to have such weapons."

"If we want stability in the Middle East, all countries should adhere to agreements and the first country to adhere to the agreements should be Israel because Israel has nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and all types of weapons of mass destruction."

Insurgents may use chemical weapons against Israel as a provocation, he said.

"It has absolutely not been ruled out that this information is true and is used for the purposes stated earlier."

He denied reports alleging his military commanders asked permission to use chemical weapons.

America "resort(s) to all kinds of lies, including what you said. The truth is that there absolutely has not been such a conversation in Syria at any level."

Countries providing toxic agents to insurgents should be held fully responsible, he said.

"We should conduct an in-depth investigation into this case in order to learn about the composition of these substances and what party used them."

"And most importantly, we need to learn what countries supplied the toxic substances to the terrorists and hold these countries responsible."

"All countries are saying they don't work with terrorists, but we know that the West is providing logistical support to them" and much more.

"They are saying these are non-lethal objects or humanitarian aid, but as a result the West and countries of the region such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia, and earlier Qatar, contact terrorists directly and support them by providing them with all types of weapons."

"We think one of these countries supplied chemical weapons to terrorists." Saudi Arabia's been caught red-handed. Assad stopped short of saying so.

On September 12, <u>Press TV</u> headlined "Syria now full member of chemical arms treaty, Syria's UN envoy says."

Bashar al-Jaafari said "(I)egally speaking, Syria has become, starting today, a full (CWC) member."

On Thursday, UN officials confirmed receipt of proper documents. According to spokeman Farhan Haq:

"In the past few hours, we have received a document from the government of Syria that is being translated, which is to be an accession document concerning the Chemical Weapons Convention."

Jaafari added:

"The chemical weapons in Syria are a mere deterrence against the Israeli nuclear arsenal."

"It's a deterrent weapon and now the time has come for the Syrian government to join the (convention) as a gesture to show our willingness to be against all weapons of mass destruction."

On Thursday, John Kerry and Sergei Lavrov met in Geneva. They're discussing Russia's peace plan. Talks are expected to continue on Friday. Important disagreement must be resolved.

State Department spokeswoman Jennifer Psaki said Washington will evaluate the credibility of Moscow's proposal. Kerry told Lavrov America is "not going to play games here."

On September 13, AP's Matthew Lee and John Heilprin <u>headlined</u> "US and Russia at Odds as Syria Talks continue," saying:

Contentious discussions began. "(T)echnical experts (on both sides are) meeting separately. (They're reviewing) details on the timing of the plan for the weapons to be inventoried, quarantined and destroyed."

"Kerry bluntly rejected (Assad's) pledge to begin a 'standard process' by turning over

information rather than weapons – and nothing immediately."

"The words of the Syrian regime, in our judgment, are simply not enough," he said. "This is not a game."

Obama's plan to attack Syria is very much "alive," said Lee. According to Kerry, turning over weapons must be complete, verifiable and timely.

Otherwise, "there ought to be consequences if it doesn't take place." He left no doubt what he means. Russia categorically rejects force.

Lavrov called it unacceptable. Security Council resolution language suggesting it won't be permitted. Russia wants peaceful conflict resolution.

Lavrov disagreed with Kerry. He said procedures Syria follows must be "in strict compliance with the rules that are established by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons."

Assad pledged to follow them to the letter. Nothing he's doing indicates otherwise. Kerry's comments reveal Washington's true intentions. Syria's best efforts aren't good enough.

"(D)istrust in US-Russia relations was on display even in" off-hand comments, said Lee and Heilprin.

Moscow's going all out for peaceful conflict resolution. Washington's hell bent for war. During Geneva talks, CIA operatives continue actively arming insurgents.

According to National Security Council spokeswoman Bernadette Meehan, Washington won't "detail every single type of support that we are providing to the opposition or discuss timelines for delivery, but it's important to note that both the political and the military opposition are and will be receiving this assistance."

Moscow's well aware of American support given anti-Assad insurgents. According to Lee and Heilprin:

"Current and former US intelligence officials said the CIA has arranged for the Syrian opposition to receive anti-tank weaponry such as rocket-propelled grenades through a third party, presumably one of the Gulf countries that have been arming the rebels."

"They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the classified program publicly."

On September 13, <u>Itar Tass</u> headlined "France undermines Russia's Syria initiative," saying:

Syria's UN envoy Bashar Jaafari accused France of trying to subvert resolving Syria's conflict peacefully.

He's spinning the yet to be released UN Ghouta massacre report. More on how major Western powers will interpret what it says below.

"I think Minister Fabius is trying to deprive of the positive impulse the Russian initiative, as well as Syria's positive reaction to it," said Jaafari. "We are dealing with the minister of one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, who runs forward and anticipates the conclusions of which will be contained in the report of the (UN) inspectors."

Fabius said they'll blame Syria for attacking Ghouta. They'll do so, he believes, by claiming only Damascus has chemical weapons stockpiles.

An unnamed diplomat said UN experts concluded that sarin was used. Clear evidence proves insurgents used it before. Russian analysis showed they used it in Khan al-Asal last March.

In May, Turkish police arrested 12 suspected Al Nusra fighters. They were caught redhanded. They had two grams of sarin.

Witnesses blamed them for attacking Ghouta. Syrian forces had nothing to do with it.

On September 11, <u>Foreign Policy</u> headlined "Exclusive: UN Report Will Point to Assad Regime in Massive Chemical Attack," saying:

"UN inspectors have collected a 'wealth' of evidence on the use of nerve agents that points to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad using chemical weapons against his own people, according to a senior Western official."

On September 16, they're expected to release their findings. They'll say whether or not chemical weapons were used. If so, which ones. They'll do so without attribution.

They won't point fingers either way. Syria will be blamed by implication. How this affects events going forward remains to be seen.

Washington will take full advantage. Moscow demands peaceful conflict resolution. AIPAC and other Zionist organizations want war.

Anti-Defamation League head Abraham Foxman said "It's Iran, Stupid..."

Syria's a sideshow. It's prelude to targeting Tehran. ADL wants military force against both countries. So do other Israeli Lobby organizations.

They're lobbying Congress to authorize it. Stopping it faces long odds.

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