

# French Politicians Call on Francois Hollande to Reconsider France's Foreign Policy towards Syria

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Global Research, November 16, 2015

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*A number of French deputies and politicians called on the French government to alter its foreign policy and correct its course immediately and reconsider its relations with Syria following the recent terrorist attacks in Paris.*

Deputy Jacques Myard said that there's a need for revising France's foreign policy, particularly in regards to Syria, voicing belief that France adopted an erroneous policy towards Damascus, asserting that France's enemy today is ISIS and Al Qaeda, not President Bashar al-Assad.

Likewise, deputy Jean-Frédéric Poisson said that there's need to revise France's foreign policy and to become closer to those who are fighting ISIS, in addition to calling on his government to reconsider its relations with Saudi Arabia and Qatar, something that fellow deputy Bruno Le Maire also called for.

That sentiment was also echoed by president of the National Front (FN) party Marine Le Pen who said that there is need to specify who are France's allies and who are its enemies, and that states that sponsor extremism are supposed to be France's enemies along with states that have a vague position toward terrorist organizations, while those who fight terrorism are France's allies and should be treated as such.

For his part, deputy Gérard Bapt voiced regret over the fact that the French Interior Ministry had ignored his advice to cooperate with Syria, noting that after his visit to Syria, he informed the Ministry that Syria is prepared to cooperate in exchanging information if France agrees to reopen its embassy in Paris.

Bapt asserted that France must stop its policy of ostracizing Syria and lift the diplomatic embargo imposed by the French Foreign Ministry.

In turn, deputy and former Prime Minister François Fillon said that French authorities should have worked with Russia rather than stop cooperation with it, and that they should have also worked with Iran and to accept a degree of cooperation with Damascus, asserting that the war on terrorism cannot be won without cooperating with Damascus.

In the same context, former Prime Minister Alain Juppé said that priorities now dictate that ISIS must be crushed, and afterwards one can see how to carry out reconciliation among Syrians, stressing the need to clarify the goals of the international alliance fighting ISIS in Syria and Iraq, describing the alliance's performance thus far as ineffective.

*Hazem Sabbagh*

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