

Mission Creep: Toward Full-Scale War on Syria?

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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On May 20, Secretary of State John Kerry headed back to the Middle East. It's his fourth regional visit since January.

On May 21, he met Oman's Sultan Qaboos. An air defense system/weapons sale, Syria, and related issues were discussed.

On May 22, he met with foreign ministers of 11 so-called Friends of Syria countries. He did so in Amman. Opposition group representatives also attended.

Among other issues, they discussed the US/Russian proposed peace conference. A Geneva June 10 date is scheduled. Reports suggest both Syrian officials and opposition representatives will attend.

At the same time, mixed messages were sent. On the one hand, senior opposition members said participation's conditional on Assad stepping down. He has no intention to do so. Syrians alone must decide who'll lead them. It's their right.

On the other hand, one senior opposition member said no decision on Geneva was reached.

"Both parties are taking advantage of the gray area and have decided it is right to take part" he said.

"From the regime's point of view, this is a good starting point, especially in light of its claims of achievements on the ground."

"At the same time, the opposition can gain strength and legitimacy and even take part in a future government if the parties reach agreement on a transition period."

In other words, conflict resolution depends on Assad stepping down. Expect no more in June than from last year's Geneva conference.

Failure defined it. Nothing changed except rhetoric. Washington needs conflict and instability.

Peace and stability defeat its interests. Expect nothing different this time. Assad must go remains policy. America's proxy war rages. Full-scale intervention looms.

Kerry will remain in the region through May 27. Other stops include Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Addis Ababa. He'll participate in the African Union Summit. He'll return to Amman for the World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa.

On May 21, an unnamed senior [State Department](#) official briefed reporters on his trip. It was done by teleconference. The official said:

According to Free Syrian army commanders, Hezbollah is “engage(d) directly in the fighting in Syria as a foreign force. We understand there are also Iranians” involved.

“I think this is an important thing to note, the direct implication of foreigners fighting on Syrian soil now for the regime.”

“There are real concerns.” He accused Syria of previous massacres. Washington-backed death squads bore full responsibility.

According to opposition representatives, he claimed liberated Al-Qusayr residents face the same threat.

They support Syria’s military. They depend on it defeating insurgents. They’re US-backed terrorists.

Syrians are grateful for outside support. Washington bears full responsibility for planning and implementing over two years of proxy war.

It’s illegitimate. It’s lawless. Syria’s a nonthreatening, nonbelligerent country.

According to international law, attacking it constitutes lawless aggression. Self-defense is a legitimate response. Volunteer participants are freedom fighters. They’re not belligerents.

The State Department official discussed the June conference, saying:

(T)he purpose of this meeting is to discuss how to implement fully a transition governing body established with full executive authority, including over the military and the security apparatus and that will be established by mutual consent.”

“I have not heard yet from the opposition definitively that they will attend.”

Washington recognizes the so-called “opposition coalition (as) the legitimate representative of the Syrian people.”

In other words, Assad must go. Syrians have no say. International law doesn’t matter. What Washington says, goes. It’s longstanding US policy.

On May 15, Lebanon’s [Al Manar](#) and other sources said the CIA expects Assad “to gain 75% of the Syrian people’s votes if he runs for” reelection next year. Polls suggest it.

Washington spurns the interests of the Syrian people. It’s own alone matter. Expect no end of conflict. Escalation appears likely.

Washington’s been arming, training and directing opposition fighters covertly. The CIA’s directly involved. US and other Western special forces likely are also.

On May 21, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 15 – 3 to send arms and

munitions to opposition fighters. Allegedly it's to so-called "vetted" ones.

Washington has a longstanding alliance with Al Qaeda. Al Nusra is an Al Qaeda affiliate. Both groups and similar ones constitute a key source of US-backed anti-Assad belligerence.

US special forces and perhaps enlisted private military contractors (PMCs) trained them in chemical weapons use. Perhaps they supplied them also.

Washington's direct and proxy wars are dirty ones. Anything goes is policy. Civilians are fair game. They're considered legitimate targets. Government loyalists are most vulnerable. US-sponsored death squads target them.

It's unclear if congressional legislation will pass. Doing so would make covert support overt. Either way it continues unabated.

According to a Tuesday [Reuters/Ipsos online poll](#), 60% of Americans oppose US intervention. Only 12% support it. Online polls aren't statistically significant. They're suspect. It doesn't matter.

Obama pays no attention to public opinion. Overtly he resists arming opposition fighters. Covertly he's been doing it all along. Hypocrisy defines his administration. He's a war criminal multiple times over. He remains unaccountable for unconscionable crimes.

Israel's a co-conspirator. Both countries are longstanding imperial partners. Israel's been upping the stakes in Syria. Previous articles explained.

On May 21, [Press TV](#) said Syria destroyed an Israeli military vehicle. It crossed the Golan ceasefire line. It did so lawlessly. It headed toward Bir Ajam village. A Syrian army statement said:

"Following that, the Israeli enemy fired two rockets from the occupied site of Tal al-Faras toward one of our sites in al-Zubaydah site; no casualties reported."

On May 22, the [Syrian Arab News Agency](#) (SANA) explained more.

Foreign intervention "aims at raising the terrorist groups' collapsed moral due to the painful blows they received at the hands of our armed forces."

"The General Command of the Army and the Armed Forces said that the blatant aggression confirms again the involvement of the Zionist entity in the ongoing events in Syria and the direct coordination with the armed terrorist gangs."

"The statement stressed that any breach or an attempt to violate the state sovereignty will be responded."

"It stressed that whoever thinks that he is able to test our strength, alert and readiness to maintain our dignity and sovereignty is mistaken."

Syria's Foreign Ministry called on the Security Council to end Israeli violations. It reiterated Syria's right to respond immediately to any breach of its sovereignty. Under international

law, doing so is legitimate self-defense.

On May 22, [Israel National News](#) headlined “(IDF chief) Gantz Warns Assad: Don’t Escalate the Situation,” saying:

If he “causes the situation in the Golan Heights to deteriorate, he will pay the price.”

“We will not allow the Golan Heights to become a comfort space for Assad,” he stressed. “If he causes a deterioration he will have to bear the consequences.”

Gantz denied clear evidence of Israel’s involvement. It’s Washington’s imperial partner against Syria. He claimed no Israeli military vehicle crossed the ceasefire line.

Israel’s been caught lying red-handed numerous times. Official statements have no credibility.

On May 22, [Lebanon’s Daily Star](#) headlined “Heavy shelling batters north Lebanon’s Tripoli.”

Fighting between Assad supporters and Salafist opponents erupted last weekend. On Tuesday into Wednesday pre-dawn, dozens of mortar bombs and rocket-propelled grenades struck Tripoli.

Since hostilities erupted Sunday, 10 deaths were reported. Over 70 others were wounded. Lebanon’s army was targeted.

Residents want it involved for protection. It’s unclear if Washington and/or Israel bear responsibility. Perhaps they spread Syria’s conflict cross-border.

Clearly it’s escalating. It remains to be seen what’s next. US/Israeli/Turkish provocations advance things closer to full-scale intervention. Kerry’s regional visit perhaps involves finalizing details.

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