

Pentagon Intends Continued Aerial Operations in Syria De-Escalation Zones

By <u>Stephen Lendman</u> Global Research, May 07, 2017 Region: <u>Middle East & North Africa</u> Theme: <u>Terrorism</u>, <u>US NATO War Agenda</u> In-depth Report: <u>SYRIA</u>

Washington wants war and regime change in Syria rather than conflict resolution.

On Thursday, Russia, Iran and Turkey agreed on creating four de-escalation zones in the Syria, these nations serving as guarantors.

Sergey Lavrov said America

"proposed (the idea) at the beginning of this year, with a view to creating conditions to ensure safety of the civilian population, to stop violence in those regions where fierce fighting was underway between government and armed opposition forces."

Not exactly following Thursday's announcement. Washington isn't part of the agreement. It supports halting all aerial operations in designated zones – except its own.

According to Pentagon spokesman Major JT Rankine-Galloway on Friday,

"the [so-called US-led] coalition will continue to target ISIS wherever they operate to ensure they have no sanctuary," adding:

The US continues "to effectively de-conflict coalition operations. However, we are not going to discuss the specifics of how we de-conflict operations in the highly congested and complex battle space in Syria."

"Opposition groups" haven't accepted the plan, expressing "fears and doubts." They reject Iran as a guarantor country.

Their spokesman Abo Zayd called it "incomprehensible (for) Iran (to be involved as) a peacemaker, adding ceasefire is "unsustainable" under these conditions.

US-backed opposition terrorists are preparing a formal response to Russia's plan – now in effect. In a show of good faith, Moscow ceased all aerial operations in de-escalation zones on May 1.

Kremlin envoy to conflict resolution talks Alexander Lavrentyev said de-escalation zones are now closed to Russian, Syrian, Turkish and US-led coalition aircraft. "There are absolutely no arrangements for the operation of aircraft, in particular, those of the (so-called US-led) coalition, with or without notification. The subject is closed," he stressed.

"As guarantors, we will see to it," he added.

Monitors will check for violators. The Pentagon supports cessation of Russian, Syrian and Turkish aerial operations, not its own, on the phony pretext of combating ISIS which Washington supports, shows how shaky the agreement is, unlikely to succeed like earlier failed Moscow good faith efforts.

Russia, Syria and Iran can be counted on to refrain from aerial operations in agreed on deescalation zones. Although Trump expressed support to the plan with Putin by phone days earlier, Washington appears unwilling to go along.

US-supported terrorist opposition groups walked out of the Astana, Kazakhstan signing ceremony, refusing to accept Iran as a guarantor state, a phony pretext to reject the deal, likely to continue hostilities, not end them.

The State Department expressed

"concerns about the Astana agreement, including the involvement of Iran as a so-called 'guarantor.'"

Russia, Syria and Iran alone are committed to keep working for conflict resolution. Washington and its rogue allies want endless war and regime change.

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at <u>lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net</u>.

His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html

Visit his blog site at <u>sjlendman.blogspot.com</u>.

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editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III." http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cuttingedge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

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