

Possible U.S. Involvement in Covert Warfare in Syria

By [Raven Clabough](#)

Global Research, March 20, 2012

[The New American](#) 7 February 2012

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

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Media Disinformation](#),
[US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?](#)

Syria's civil war and its brutal treatment of dissidents have been prime topics in the mainstream media for months, provoking some U.S. officials to demand a "new policy" with the country. Last week Arizona's Senator John McCain even [called](#) for the United States to begin bombing Syria.

However, according to documents WikiLeaks has recently released, an insidious war on the Mideast nation may already have begun, as the Pentagon is planning to direct terrorist attacks and assassinations inside Syria in order to overthrow President Bashar al-Assad.

A leaked [e-mail](#), written by Reva Bhalla, director of analysis for the Austin, Texas-based global intelligence firm Stratfor, reveals details of a December 6 Pentagon meeting attended by members of the U.S. Air Force Strategic Studies Group, as well as other military officers.

Bhalla learned that despite official assertions by the U.S. government, there were already NATO powers on the ground in Syria. The e-mail states:

After a couple hours of talking, they said without saying that SOF [Special Operations Forces] teams (presumably from US, UK, France, Jordan, Turkey) are already on the ground focused on recce [reconnaissance] missions and training opposition forces.

[The mission's purpose is to] commit guerrilla attacks, assassination campaigns, try to break the back of the Alawite forces, elicit collapse from within.

According to Bhalla's e-mail, the goal was to "prepare contingencies and be ready to act within 2-3 months."

At that December 6 meeting, officials voiced concerns over an air campaign in Syria because of both the country's geography and its air defenses.

WikiLeaks published the e-mail in its *Global Intelligence Files* — which it says contain over five million e-mails from Stratfor — noting that the e-mails "reveal the inner workings of a company that fronts as an intelligence publisher, but provides confidential intelligence services to large corporations, such as Bhopal's Dow Chemical Co., Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, and government agencies, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Marines and the U.S. Defence Intelligence Agency."

Of the leaked e-mail, *Business Insider* [writes](#),

As more emails are published, the potential credibility of Statfor's network of informants becomes clearer. Reports with information attributed to a source often come with a name,

description, source reliability rating, item credibility rating, special handling and a handler.

There were reports of covert U.S. missions in Syria long before Bhalla's leaked e-mails, however. Last November, a Libyan source told the *London Telegraph*, "There is something being planned to send weapons and even Libyan fighters to Syria. There is a military intervention on the way. Within a few weeks you will see."

Libya's transitional ruling authority was reported to have agreed to send weapons and fighters to Syria to help the Free Syrian Army battle government forces.

The *Telegraph* also [reported](#) last November that terrorist commander Abdulhakim Belhadj, head of Libya's Tripoli Military Council, "met with Free Syrian Army leaders in Istanbul and on the border with Turkey." Belhadj was reportedly sent there by the interim Libyan President.

According to the *Telegraph*, "The 'covert operation' was immediately laid bare when a rival Libyan rebel brigade detained Belhadj at Tripoli airport, accused him of travelling on a fake passport, and declared they would jail the senior military leader.... Only a letter from the country's interim president was enough to persuade them to let him leave the country."

Just last month, the Israeli intelligence group DebkaFile [reported](#) that British Special Forces were already inside Syria "operating with rebel forces under cover in the Syrian city of Homs just 162 kilometers from Damascus." Those reports stated that the forces were not engaged in direct combat but were instead serving as advisors, while simultaneously placing requests for weapons outside of the country.

Egyptian security officials also [declared](#) that the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan were providing weapons and training to Syrian rebels. WND (World Net Daily) reports, "Several knowledgeable Egyptian and Arab security officials claimed the U.S., Turkey, and Jordan were running a training base for the Syrian rebels in the Jordanian town of Safawi in the country's northern desert region."

Those claims confirmed what former FBI translator Sibel Edmonds [said](#) about hundreds of NATO and American troops arriving on the Syrian border in December for the purposes of training militants to overthrow Syrian President al-Assad.

According to Edmonds, an Iraqi journalist confirmed that U.S. forces vacated the Ain al-Assad Air Base in Iraq as part of President Obama's so-called "drawdown of troops," but rather than being sent home, the soldiers were transferred into Jordan. Edmonds added that she was informed by another source that "soldiers who speak languages other than Arabic" have been making their way through Jordan, just miles from the border of Syria. Some of those troops were believed to be NATO/American-affiliated, she reported.

In fact, leaders of the Free Syria Army have allegedly claimed that both France and the United States have provided them with weapons and missiles.

Russia Today [reports](#), "In Homs on Tuesday, a general claiming to be from the rebel group appeared on camera and told a journalist from Reuters news agency that 'French and American assistance has reached us and is with us.' When asked to elaborate on the nature of the assistance, he added, 'We now have weapons and anti-aircraft missiles and, God willing, with all of that we will defeat Bashar.'"

And just as when U.S. warships surrounded Libya in the days before the NATO bombings began, the American aircraft carrier *George H.W. Bush* has now been repositioned off the coast of Syria.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton admitted during a BBC interview that the United States is on the same side as al-Qaeda when it comes to achieving regime change in Syria: "We have a very dangerous set of actors in the region, al-Qaeda, Hamas, and those who are on our terrorist list, to be sure, supporting — claiming to support the opposition [in Syria]."

But that has not stopped the United States from helping the rebels.

"It is richly ironic that the unelected fundamentalist Sunni regimes of the Persian Gulf are supporting Al Qaeda affiliated groups within Syria purportedly to 'bring about democratic reforms,'" [writes Professor Michel Chossudovsky](#). "This is the same dynamic that prevailed in Libya where the overthrow of that country's government by Western and Gulf Arab powers has now led to a collapse in human rights and social conditions."

Despite the assertions of some critics that claims saying civilized nations are working to destabilize other countries through terrorist attacks is merely conspiracy theory, it is a recognized form of warfare. Last month, NBC reported that Israel was engaged in the same activity: paying terrorist groups to carry out bombings and assassinations in Iran.

[According to NBC News](#),

Deadly attacks on Iranian nuclear scientists are being carried out by an Iranian dissident group that is financed, trained and armed by Israel's secret service, U.S. officials tell NBC News, confirming charges leveled by Iran's leaders.

Further, U.S. officials have admitted that the Obama administration is aware of the assassination campaign, but insist that he is not directly involved.

The original source of this article is [The New American](#)
Copyright © [Raven Clabough](#), [The New American](#), 2012

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Raven Clabough](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long as the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted

material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca