

## Syria Extends Donald Trump an Olive Branch

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Global Research, November 12, 2016

[The Duran](#) 11 November 2016

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

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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*The Syrian government is willing to discuss options for cooperation with a Trump-led United States, says prominent politician and adviser to President Assad.*

The reverberations of Donald Trump's seismic victory were not just limited to Russia, China and Europe. They were felt in Damascus where as it is for many others, a cautious optimism surrounding the foreign policy potential of a Trump led America, has replaced years of utter pessimism and consternation with the neo-imperial policies of Bill Clinton, George Bush and Barack Obama.

Syrian politician and an adviser to the president Bouthaina Shaaban was interviewed on American radio where she said that Damascus would be willing to work with a Trump administration, should he deliver on his statements that he doesn't seek to remove the legitimate President of Syria in a misguided and illegal regime change war. In his debates with Hillary Clinton, Trump stated multiple times that he would prefer to work with Russia and by extrapolation with Syria in going after Islamic terrorism, rather than hysterically agitate for regime change.

Shaaban said that, "I think the American people have sent a great, a very important message to the world" and indeed this is the case. Whilst many say that most voters were more concerned with domestic American issues than foreign policy, during his [recent interview](#) with Peter Lavelle, Dr. Ron Paul partially challenged this received wisdom.

Dr. Paul said that when offered the clear alternative between costly war which ultimately puts American lives in danger and destroys America's credibility abroad, and a non-interventionist/cooperative and diplomatic approach to world affairs, people would generally vote for the latter. He went on to blame the mainstream media for drumming up war fever and effectively brainwashing an otherwise peace loving public into believing that aggression is virtuous.

What Dr. Paul did not mention is that new media sources have taken away much of the influence that mainstream pro-war media once had on the public. As the public become more informed, they become more anti-war.

Furthermore, I believe that Donald Trump did a far better job of selling the anti-war message than he is given credit for, even among his supporters. Whilst Hillary's line about Russia being a source of evil in the world clearly [fell flat](#), Trump's pragmatic anti-war but also anti-Islamic terror message, resonated. Even if people state that jobs, tax, health, immigration and trade were the 'issues of the day', the unconscious effect of Trump's challenge to the pro-war establishment is more important than many seem to think it was.

Even for those who know little about foreign affairs, Dr. Paul is absolutely right in saying that most people want peace. The problem is that between the old dying mainstream media and pro-war politicians, they rarely feel that this option is a choice that's on the table. Trump has changed that.

Even before he is inaugurated, Trump ought to clutch the olive branch being cautiously offered from Syria and open channels of communication with Damascus. Both Trump and Assad are deeply pragmatic men, both are deeply patriotic and both share a hatred for Islamic terrorism. If they were to find common ground, even on a personal level, it could go a long way in opening up meaningful inter-governmental dialogue which could lead the way towards new cooperative efforts in Syria.

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