

Syria: The Case for Peace. Appeal against Precipitous Military Strikes against Syria

Former high-ranking officials of the United Nations Speak Out

By [Global Research News](#)

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This appeal against precipitous military strikes against the Syrian government of Bashar al-Assad is signed by several former high-ranking officials of the United Nations, UNESCO, UNICEF and the International Labour Organization. "People who accuse the Security Council of inaction should remember how Western powers abused a Security Council resolution to stage a full-fledged attack on Libya in order to perform 'regime change' in that country - this is what motivates Russia and China's opposition to any Security Council motion that may lead to intervention in Syria," they argue.

Syria: the case for peace

The drums of war are beating once more in the Middle East, this time with the possibility of an imminent attack on Syria, after the alleged use of chemical weapons by its government. It is precisely in times of crisis such as now that the case for peace can be made in the clearest and most obvious manner.

First of all, we have no proof that the Syrian government has used chemical weapons. Even if proofs were provided by Western governments, we have to remain skeptical, remembering the Tonkin Gulf incident and the Vietnam war, the incubator baby massacre in Kuwait and the first Gulf war, the Racak massacre and the Kosovo war, the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and the second Gulf war, the threat of massacre in Benghazi and the Libyan war. All these justifications for previous wars were fabricated or dubious. We may also notice that evidence for the use of chemical weapons was provided to the U.S. by Israeli intelligence which is not exactly a neutral actor.

Even if, this time, proofs were genuine, it would not legitimate unilateral action from anyone. That still needs an authorization of the Security Council. People who accuse the Security Council of inaction should remember how Western powers abused a Security Council resolution to stage a full-fledged attack on Libya in order to perform "regime change" in that country — this is what motivates Russia and China's opposition to any Security Council motion that may lead to intervention in Syria.

What is called in the West the "international community" willing to attack Syria is reduced to essentially two major countries (US and France), out of almost two hundred in the world. No respect for international law is possible without respect for the decent opinions of the rest of mankind.

Even if a military action was allowed and carried on, what could it accomplish? Nobody can seriously control chemical weapons without putting “boots on the grounds”, which is not considered by anyone a realistic option after the disasters of Iraq and Afghanistan. The West has no real ally in Syria. The jihadists fighting the government have no more love for the West than those who assassinated the U.S. Ambassador in Libya. It is one thing to take money and weapons from some country, but quite another to be its genuine ally.

There have been offers of negotiations coming from the Syrian, Iranian and Russian governments, which have been treated with contempt by the West. People who say “we cannot talk or negotiate with Assad” forget that this has been said about the National Liberation Front in Algeria, Ho Chi Minh, Mao, the Soviet Union, the PLO, the IRA, the ETA, Mandela and the ANC, and many guerillas in Latin America. The issue is not whether one talks to the other side, but after how many unnecessary deaths one accepts to do so.

The time when the U.S. and its few remaining allies acted as global policemen and national sovereignty was considered passé is actually behind us. The world becomes more multipolar, not less, and the people of the world want more sovereignty not less. The greatest social transformation of the twentieth century has been decolonization and the West should adapt itself to the fact that it has neither the right, nor the competence, nor the means to rule the world.

There is no place where the strategy of permanent wars has failed more miserably than the Middle East, starting with the creation of Israel and the fateful decision to refuse the right of return to the Palestinian refugees. Then came the overthrow of Mossadegh in Iran, the Suez canal adventure, the many Israeli wars, the two Gulf wars, combined with the murderous sanctions against Iraq, the constant threats against Iran and now the war in Syria.

True courage does not consist in launching cruise missiles once more but in breaking radically with that deadly logic: force Israel to negotiate in good faith with the Palestinians, convene the Geneva II conference on Syria and discuss with the Iranian their nuclear program by taking honestly into account the legitimate security and economic interests of that country.

The recent vote against the war in the British Parliament, as well as reactions on social media, reflects a massive shift of public opinion in the West. We are getting tired of wars, and ready to join the real international community in demanding a world based on the U.N. Charter, demilitarization, respect for national sovereignty and equality of all nations.

The people of the West also demand to exercise their right of self-determination: if wars have to be made, they have to be based on open debates and direct concerns for our national security and not on some ill-defined and easily manipulable notion of “right to intervene”.

It remains to force our politicians to respect that right.

Signatories

Dr. Hans Christof von Sponeck, UN Assistant Secretary General and United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (1998 -2000)

Dr. Denis J. Halliday, UN Assistant Secretary General (1994-1998)

Dr. Saïd Zulficar, UNESCO official (1967-1996). Director of Operational Activities, Division of Cultural Heritage (1992 -1996)

Dr. Samir Radwan, Adviser on Development Policies to the Director-General of ILO (2001-2003). Egyptian Finance Minister (January-July 2011).

Dr. Samir Basta, Director of UNICEF's Regional Office for Europe (1990-1995). Director of UNICEF's Evaluation Office (1985-1990)

Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the UN General Assembly (2008-2009). Nicaraguan Foreign Minister (1979-1990).

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