

Syria and US War Crimes: The Reckoning Is Coming

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In an article published here in November 2018, I referred to the statement of the UK representative of a UN organisation named the International, Impartial, Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

I will repeat that statement because it is relevant to the current situation in Syria. That person stated,

"We must demonstrate that those who have committed the most serious crimes of international concern can have no place to hide. There must be no impunity for the horrendous acts taking place on a daily basis in Syria. There must be justice for the victims."

The UK representative said this without any sense of irony, without any sense of shame, for, of course, it is the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada and their gang who have committed war crimes, and crimes against humanity beyond number in Syria since they instigated the uprisings against the government of Syria, beginning in 2011, supported their allied terrorists groups to attack Syrian armed forces and civilians, and imposed their illegal sanctions on the people of Syria.

The history of the war against Syria by the US and UK, Israel and their allies is well-known, the cruel sanctions, the aerial bombings, the missile attacks, the assassinations, the torture, the illegal occupation of the Golan Heights by Israel with US support, and, finally, the US invasion of Syria that began in 2015 with US special forces raids into its territory on a number of occasions that year and 2016 and the formal entry of US forces on March 8, 2017. Their invasion has continued to this day.

During the summer of 2017 US forces laid waste the city of Raqqa, Their carpet bombing of the city, their heavy artillery strikes and use of white phosphorous shells, banned under international law, killed hundreds of civilians, and today Raqqa lies in ruins. Their terrorist

allies laid waste Aleppo, Damascus and numerous other cities and towns and villages with a savagery as common to US trained groups, as it is to the US forces themselves.

The Americans gave all sorts of pretexts for this invasion, none of which were true and none of which gave them any legal basis for their aggression, for that is what their actions were; direct and brutal aggression against a sovereign nation in violation of the Nuremberg Principles established in 1946, in violation of the Kellog-Briand Pact of 1928, in which all these nations agreed not to attack any other nation, and in violation of the UN Charter, all of which the aggressor nations were subject to as part of international law and their own domestic law.

The invasion ordered by President Obama, making him a war criminal, expanded in scope until President Trump ordered American forces to be pulled out in 2019. But US forces still remain in occupation of the northeastern parts of Syria. Their exact number is not known but it is at least one thousand and probably higher than that as they continue to build bases controlling the important oil fields that provide much of Syria's energy needs and cash for exports as well as areas of wheat production vital to the survival of the Syrian state and its people. The Americans continue to provide their usual pretexts for this, such as "fighting terrorism" "containing Russian influence in the Middle East, or supporting the Kurdish forces opposing both Syria and Turkey.

On January 10, 2023, in the magazine Defense One, William Roebuck, an American with the long title of Former Deputy Envoy for the Global Coalition against ISIS, repeated all these pretexts as justification for the American invasion but added, in calling for the invasion to continue,

"Our presence also blocks Russian consolidation of its military mission in Syria, undercutting one of the key sources of Moscow's surprisingly resilient prestige in the region and hence lending support to our Ukraine policy efforts,"

thereby linking the US invasion and occupation of Syria to the US-NATO aggression against Russia in Ukraine.

Of course Mr. Roebuck could not cite any legal reasons or justifications as to why the US should be able to continue its occupation, because there are none, but as is common with all American and NATO governments and their officials, they could not care less about the law or morality.

The Syrian government states the situation clearly.

On January 12, the Syrian Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, Muhammad Hassan Qatana, affirmed that the exceptional circumstances that Syria is passing through because of the terrorist war, instigated by the United States, and unilateral coercive measures have badly affected achievements of many years of sustainable development and caused large losses.

On January 13, Syrian Petroleum and Mineral Resources Minister, Bassam Tu'ma, said that the US occupation of parts of the Syrian territory, including oil resources, and the illegal sanctions imposed by Washington on Syria, cause great suffering on the Syrian People.

These statements follow the August 22, 2022, report in Tass that,

“According to the Syrian Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources, U.S.-led entities illegally export up to 66,000 barrels of oil daily, representing 80% of the daily production of hydrocarbons. The scale of Washington’s oil theft has reached a peak. Because of this the humanitarian situation in the country remains difficult, millions of Syrians face energy, food and water shortages and are in need of basic necessities.”

“Russia and Syria strongly condemn the plundering of the natural resources. The US-backed Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces currently control most of Syria’s eastern and northeastern Al-Hasakah, Deir ez-Zor and Raqqa provinces. The US military command has established nine military bases there since 2015. Damascus views the US military presence in Syria as an illegal occupation.”

On December 14, 2022, the Syrian government in a statement to the Security Council stated,

“Syria condemns the actions of the US occupation forces and demands an end to the illegal US military presence on its territory.

“Syria draws the attention of the international community to the systematic plundering of the natural resources of the Syrian people by the United States and associated paramilitary units,” the statement said.

“Damascus,” it said, “demands the return to the Syrian state of the captured oil and gas fields and the payment of compensation for the stolen resources.” The ministry’s statement provides data on the losses that Syria has suffered in recent years from the theft of its oil, gas and other minerals, as well as wheat. They are estimated by Syria at \$19.8 billion. In addition, the bombing by the Air Force of the Western coalition caused the country damage worth \$2.9 billion.”

The Syrian Foreign Ministry said

“further silence of the UN Security Council on the aggressive policy of the United States and the violation of the principles of international law is unacceptable.”

“It’s impossible to ignore the suffering of Syrians as a result of the sanctions imposed by the United States and the European Union, which have disastrous consequences for the daily lives of citizens and don’t allow them to receive the necessary services, fuel, household gas, electricity, especially in winter,” the statement said and concluded with,

“the blockade and coercive measures of the West against Syria are tantamount to war crimes, they increase the suffering of the people and slow down the process of post-war reconstruction.”

War crimes they are, yet, as the Syrians noted, nothing is said in the collective west in defence of Syria. Nothing is said about the crimes of the Americans and their allies, either by their governments, or their media. How can we expect them to since they are all complicit in these crimes?

Since the Americans will not leave unless forced to, it will take operations by the Syrian Army to drive out the invader, but that is complicated by the continuing incursions and occupation of parts of northern Syria by the Turks intent on ridding themselves of the Kurdish threat. Hopefully the on-going talks between Turkey and Syria with the participation

of Russia will lead to a resolution of that issue so that Syria can, with the help of its allies, finally take action against the invading US forces.

All the while the US and its NATO allies along with their puppets in Kiev rant on about “Russian war crimes” in Ukraine and call for international tribunals.

Yet it is they who should face trial and punishment for the war crimes committed by them over the years, including the nuclear attacks on Japan in 1945 for which the Americans have never been brought to account, a crime which, as President Biden said on January 13, in a surreal meeting with the Japanese Prime Minister, referring to the the use of nuclear weapons, is “a crime against all humanity.”

The world will not forget Hiroshima and Nagasaki, even if the Japanese government pretends to, nor the American and allied crimes and the millions of dead in Korea, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, and all the other crimes, too many to list here, that they have committed around the world to support their interests.

Who will try them? Who will bring them to justice? Only the future can provide the concrete answer, but the reckoning is coming, of that we can be sure.

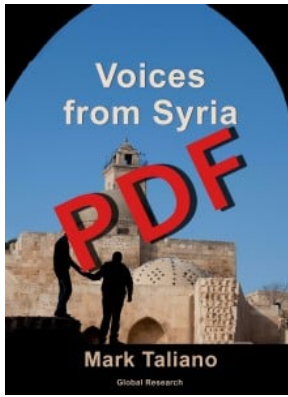
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