

The US Deep State: Sabotaging Putin-Trump Ceasefire Agreement in Syria

The meeting between Trump and Putin at the G20 in Hamburg injects new hope into the complicated relationship between the United States and Russia. Only time can confirm whether there is any basis for this hope.

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The most eagerly anticipated meeting of the year, that between Putin and Trump, lasted far more than the scheduled 20 minutes, extending past two hours. This is not too much of a surprise given the points of friction that needed to be discussed, the many outstanding issues in international relations, and the fact that this was the first official meeting between the two world leaders. The results achieved exceeded initial ambitions, and the personal chemistry between Putin and Trump seems to have been sufficient to reach an important agreement in Syria as well as to conduct discussions surrounding cyber security. Trump even asked Putin about the alleged Russian hacking in the US presidential election as a way of appeasing detractors back home.

The statements of both presidents following their meeting underlined their positive intentions. Putin called Trump a very different person from the one portrayed in the media, mentioning that he was reflective and very attentive to details. Trump, for his part, praised the meeting with Putin, stating the importance of dialogue between nuclear-armed superpowers.

The most important agreement concerned a ceasefire in southern Syria along the border with Israel and Jordan. This is a very active area of fighting, and so the ceasefire obviates the possibility of dangerous confrontations between the United States and Russia, as well as between Syria and Israel, which could escalate out of control as seen when the US Air Force shot down a Syrian Su-22 jet as well an Iranian drone. Israel, from its position in the occupied Golan Heights, has repeatedly struck the Syrian Arab Army (SAA), in a desperate effort to halt its gains against al Qaeda and Daesh terrorists.



In their first meeting, within less than two hours, Putin and Trump came to an agreement on potentially the most volatile situation in the region, saving hundreds of civilian lives in the process. The agreement on Syria now has to run the gauntlet of the deep state and all the other interests arrayed against Trump. Just four days following a similar agreement reached in 2016 between Obama and Putin, everything was upended by the US Air Force bombing and killing nearly a hundred soldiers of the Syrian Arab Army in Deir ez-Zor, shredding the ceasefire agreement that had just been reached.

Trump is dealing with the same occult forces that sabotaged Obama's ceasefire agreement. It is impossible to know how much strategic support the US deep state has for the ceasefire decision. Ever since the SAA reached the Iraqi border north of al-Tanf, the space available for the US and her allies to maneuver has been dramatically diminished. With al-Tanf isolated, Washington's ceasefire does not change or shift the already heavily altered balance of power in that area of Syria. For all these reasons, the ceasefire does not appear to be a concession by either party but merely a commonsense move to lessen the possibility of a direct confrontation between super-powers.

The military apparatus seems to be focused on the situation in northern Syria, with Raqqa and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) being the central pivot for the US to reach Deir ez-Zor and its associated oilfields. The US State Department, as well as the US military wing involved in Syria, hope to balkanize Syria, dismembering it in different regions and putting Raqqa under the control of a puppet authority in Damascus. However, such American hopes of imposing a Brennan-style governorate as in Iraq is forlorn, as Damascus is the only authority recognized on Syrian territory, and once Raqqa is filled with returning Syrian citizens, such American plans will fall apart.

Moreover, the Baghdad authorities have already made clear on two occasions how reluctant they are to support Americans in their military operations. In the case of Mosul, they reiterated that the US deployment and involvement be minimal, while the Iraqi authorities have already announced that they want to place under their full control their border with Syria, in effect hobbling Washington's plan to leave chaos and instability along the borders of the two countries. The US deep state finds in chaos the ideal way to channel conflict and foment instability. One of the most important objectives of the Syrian and Iraqi armies is therefore to isolate the borders and control the flow of human traffic from one country to the other, nixing in the process what has hitherto been a strategic advantage for Daesh and other terrorist organizations, where they have been free to cross borders with weapons and whatever else they please.

Trump and all the actors involved in this negotiation are finally able to make an agreement between Moscow and Washington stand. Unlike with previous agreements, the US in Syria is now in a worse situation than it was 12 months ago, having failed to achieve many of its strategic objectives. Cooperation with Turkey in northern Syria was wrecked following the liberation of Aleppo and the clear US support for the Kurds (SDF). Similarly, areas of deconfliction in Syria agreed to in Astana (between Iran, Russia and Turkey) have stopped the gains of terrorists in many active areas of the conflict, leading to zero chances of occupying more towns. Such efforts have been important bargaining chips during the various peace negotiations.

The crux of this strategy seems to be a focus on the only possible solution that meets the interests of the deep state's military wing, related to the original plan to dismantle Syria once the removal of Assad failed. From a certain point of view, it may make sense to focus on the situation in the north of the country in Raqqa, the only area where the US still has some influence. This may be the contorted vision drawn up by contending factions of American deep state. Certainly from the point of view of Moscow, the strategy in Syria is a mix of diplomatic solutions, seeking to reach multiple ceasefire agreements with major players like Turkey and the United States, but never setting aside the war effort carried out by Russia, Iran and Syria.

The agreement between Putin and Trump will firstly benefit Syrian civilians as well as widening the opportunity for the SAA to liberate more towns and villages from the grip of terrorism. It is a long-awaited agreement and solution that is now met by the predominant wing of the US deep state. In the event of a failure of the agreement, Trump will be obligated to point out to the world the subversion of the Washington establishment and its deep state, which works to frustrate his agenda and replace it with its own terrible policies.

Moscow's confidence in deriving concrete benefits from this deal increases hour by hour, thanks to the truce continuing to hold. From the Russian point of view, any military sabotage would once again lay American intentions bare, regardless of Trump's subsequent moves. However, one thing that is certain is that in the case of sabotage, Trump will be faced with having to make a definitive choice. Either he will surrender to the deep state, returning the situation back to a state of hyper-conflict with a nuclear superpower; or he will confront and overcome the deep state, thereby enabling him to implement his electoral promises.

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