

Thousands of Syrian Police who joined the Rebels are on U.S. Payroll

By [Global Research News](#)

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The United States has been paying thousands of Syrian police officers who deserted the regime of President Bashar Assad.

Officials said the administration of President Barack Obama has approved tens of millions of dollars to pay the salaries of police officers who joined the rebels. They said the officers were working to maintain order in rebel-controlled territory, mostly in northern Syria.



Syrian police armored vehicle in Homs. /AFP/Anwar Amro

“There are literally thousands of defected police inside of Syria,” Assistant Secretary of State Rick Barton said. “They are credible in their communities because they’ve defected.”

In an address to the Aspen Security Forum on July 19, Barton, responsible for State Department stabilization operations, did not say how many Syrian police deserters were on the U.S. payroll. He said the officers were receiving about \$150 per month, a significant salary in Syria.

The address marked a rare disclosure of direct U.S. aid to Sunni rebels in Syria. Congress has approved more than \$50 million for the Syrian opposition, much of which has not been spent.

Barton said the police officers remained in their communities despite their defection from the Assad regime. He said the U.S. stipend was meant to ensure that they stay on the job.

“We’d rather have a trained policeman who is trusted by the community than have to bring in a new crowd or bring in an international group that doesn’t know the place,” Barton said.

Barton said the rebel movement was awaiting a range of non-lethal U.S. equipment. He cited night vision systems and medical supplies.

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