

UN Sponsored Intrigues at the Syria Peace Talks. Ban Ki-moon Dirty Tricks

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“The idea of Montreux” – the idea of engaging in a peace process and national dialogue in Syria under international mediation – died before it could be born. A nasty intrigue, involving the UN Secretary-General and the employment of such petty chicaneries as delaying the airplane carrying the Syrian delegation in Athens – all this provides reason to believe that the anti-Syrian coalition does not want a dialogue. They want a war. And the key point for the biggest players in that coalition – the US, France, and Saudi Arabia – is the absolute necessity for Russia and Iran to be excluded as co-sponsors of the peace process in the region.

The scenario for the Geneva II conference, or rather, the scenario for the failure of this conference, was penned in Washington. Ban Ki-moon did no more than obediently fulfill his role as the head of an organization that depends on the US for 22% of its budget. The UN Secretary-General’s actions were a wonderful example of the success of the American policy to turn the UN into a “puppet organization” that is obedient to the will of its primary financial backer.

Stories in the Western media – alleging that Ban Ki-moon’s decision to revoke Tehran’s invitation was made “under pressure from the Syrian opposition” and that the opposition “pressured the UN” with an ultimatum giving the Secretary-General six hours to cancel the invitation to Tehran – are all a blatant lie. But then again, all the intrigue surrounding Geneva II is suffused with lies. The official spokesperson for the Secretary-General, Martin Nesirky, has said that the decision to invite Iran to Montreux was not made in haste and that it was offered only after lengthy consultations with US officials.

“I know for a fact this could not have been a surprise to US authorities. It was not hasty, and they were fully aware of the timing of the announcement.”

What’s more, according to this same Martin Nesirky, consultations were held last weekend, and for a few days or weeks prior, with both the American and the Russian side regarding Iran’s participation in the conference.

However, even without these candid confessions it is perfectly clear that the “ultimatum” from the Syrian opposition had nothing to do with it. First of all, last Saturday at the meeting of the General Assembly of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and

Opposition Forces in Istanbul, 58 of the 73 members in the governing council voted to take part in the Geneva II conference, all the while fully aware that Iran had already been invited to participate. And second, who are these people that they can dictate their terms to the UN? The sheer puppets of the West whose job is to read aloud the lines their scriptwriters have composed for them. This is why it is more important to understand what motivated the scriptwriters in Washington than it is to hold serious discussions about the “representatives of the Syrian opposition” who are present at the conference although they enjoy the support of no one.

The White House Scriptwriters



In regard to Iran’s participation in the conference, Washington’s maneuvers were as contorted and muddled as usual. Secretary of State Kerry insisted that Tehran’s participation could play a constructive role in the peace dialog, but then he began to put forward preconditions, claiming Tehran needed to first “publicly accept the Geneva communique,” a reference to the final communique of the Action Group for Syria, adopted on June 30, 2012 and to which Russia and the US contributed.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov fittingly reminded his American counterpart that “if the same criterion, namely the requirement to publicly and independently state, ‘I fully share the goals of the Geneva communique,’ were applied to other invitees, I, for example, am far from certain I would be able to do it.” And indeed, the situation in June 2012 was entirely different from that of today. In 2012 it was still possible to talk about an internal conflict within Syria, although a foreign presence, fanning the flames of war from without, could clearly be seen even then. There is no civil war in Syria today! There is external intervention being waged by the hands of “jihadists” and Sunni radicals, and there is the aggression of a “terrorist international” that relies on local collaborators to oppose a sovereign state.

It would be too simple to accuse Washington of “political myopia” or to say, as many experts do, that “the situation within the Syrian opposition is complicated” and that Washington has not “determined whom it will support.” But that would be a lie. The Obama administration has consistently pursued and continues to pursue the overthrow of Bashar al-Assad. His removal from power and the seizure of Damascus by forces that are friendly toward the West (or its strategic ally Riyadh) is a key point of US policy on the “Syrian issue.” And the rotation of the secretary of state, with John Kerry relieving Hillary Clinton, has had absolutely no effect on this policy.

Syria is the cornerstone of Washington’s Middle East policy today. The fairy tales about the American plans to “pull out” of the Middle East were either naive or simply dishonest. One does not abandon something like an “investment” of eight trillion dollars, which is what has been poured just into monarchies in the Middle East since 1976, especially because of such a mere trifle as the lack of competence of the current occupant of the White House. The American military-industrial complex and the financial elite are largely controlled by the price for oil, for containing the Persian Gulf and the Suez Canal, and for the security of “America’s sacred cows” – Israel and the Gulf monarchies. And no one in Washington is about to toss aside the hard-won fruits of decades.

Keeping Iran in check and expelling Russia from the East

It's another matter that the instruments of foreign policy are changing. Recognizing the very unpleasant fact that the Islamic Republic has not been suffocated by a noose of "crippling sanctions" and that the foreign policy proclaimed by the Russian president is based on traditional values, such as respect for sovereignty, consideration for national idiosyncrasies, and the unjustifiability of "exporting democracy," Washington has changed tactics. A "war by proxy" is being waged in Syria, in which the major role is being played by America's strategic partners, mainly Riyadh. Paris, which under President Hollande has lost its objective view of its own national interests and seems beguiled by a mirage-like vision of reviving France's protectorate in Africa and in some regions of the Middle East, intends to intervene more actively in the fight against Damascus. But this in no way signifies that Washington is less of a participant in the anti-Syrian coalition. The US set a strategic goal, first - to protect the anti-Syrian coalition and the terrorist gangs used by that group internationally, and second - to block any foreign political activity in the region of Tehran and Moscow.

In reality, since the end of 2012 and beginning of 2013 there has been a certain, if tacit, agreement regarding the joint efforts of Russia and the US to resolve the Syrian crisis. Russia accepted the task of both ensuring that Bashar al-Assad would be prepared for a dialog with the opposition, as well as working out a coordinated, constructive line with Tehran. Russia met its obligations 100%, which, incidentally, included Moscow's promotion of the principle of Iran's active participation in the Syrian settlement. Russia and Iran's mutual efforts regarding Syria have been a vivid example to Washington of the danger of such a strategic partnership. And so, under the guise of joint attempts to find a resolution, Washington has actually launched a special operation to remove Moscow, Tehran, and a number of other co-sponsors of the Syrian settlement.

An equally important role was assigned to Washington in accordance with the agreements that were reached. This consisted, first of all, of curbing external intervention by Turkey and Saudi Arabia, and second, of "pushing" the Syrian opposition into a dialog that was, for the most part, at the time financially dependent on the US and its allies. As a result, Washington has not met any of its commitments. What's more, in just one year the opposition has been transformed from a force that was entirely secular to one that is fundamentalist. To a great extent, the current conflicts within the opposition mean that the jihadists are establishing control over the channels through which funds and arms shipments flow, supplies which previously went to the "secular" opposition.

Clumsy stories about "sudden seizures" by the jihadists of weapons stockpiles and equipment are yet another lie in the "intrigue surrounding Montreux." No rational person would send a shipment without a guarantee that the goods would end up in the "right hands." And when one sends something with full confidence that the goods will be seized - that is called something else.

The lessons of Montreux.

What can we expect from the Montreux conference? Nothing good. Under the best scenario it will be a purely ceremonial event that will resolve nothing and do nothing to stanch the bloodshed in Syria. At worst, given the fact that the pro-American, aggressive, obedient majority will be assembled at the conference, the anti-Syrian coalition will be able to win recognition of the legitimacy of their aggression against Damascus.

It is no accident that Kerry has categorically stated, "For anyone seeking to rewrite this

history or to muddy the waters, let me state one more time what Geneva II is about. It is about establishing a process essential to the formation of a transitional governing body with full executive powers established by mutual consent.” There you have it – no end to the bloodshed, no peaceful dialog, no suspension of either external intervention or the arming of terrorists, only the overthrow of Assad!

And that leads to unambiguous, very reasonable conclusions that can be called “the lessons of Montreux.” First of all. Anyone who takes Washington’s declarations seriously about its readiness to “normalize” relations with Iran and loosen the regime of sanctions, thereby allowing Tehran to become one of the guarantors of stability in the Middle East – he urgently needs to rid himself of this illusion. Washington does not intend to “normalize” anything. The destruction of Syria is just one step in America’s long-term strategy to consolidate US hegemony in the Middle East, which will be based on Israel, the Gulf monarchies, and regimes loyal to the US in Cairo, and – so the White House is bargaining – in Baghdad. Once this strategy is in place, Tehran will be forced out of both the “Shi’ite Arc” as well as the region as a whole.

Second. America’s Middle East policy is focused on eradicating the regional presence of countries that the US views as competitors – Russia, Iran, and China. Actually, whether we want to admit it or not, Washington’s entire course of action against Syria is permeated with the idea of confrontation with Russia. The White House is now openly indifferent to the real threats posed by the destabilization of the region and the strengthening of the “jihadists” and their establishment of a “war-based economy” that transforms instability and drug trafficking into an essential source of income. “Assad is worse than al-Qaeda.” But he is not so terrible in and of himself, but because he is an ally of Iran and Russia. Thus, “Assad must go.”

Disagreements between Moscow and Washington regarding the conflict in Syria have yielded extremely serious and entirely unexpected consequences, although the mass media and political elite in the West have not wanted to make note of this. Vladimir Putin has managed to become the most successful politician in the world while President Barack Obama’s ratings have fallen in the same way that the Middle East’s level of confidence in America has declined. Some among the Western political elite have become fixated on the proposition that “the Russians are turning toward the Middle East,” and consequently, the West and its strategic partners in the Middle East have already labeled the not-yet-definitively-established “Moscow – Tehran – Beijing” axis as an enemy that may be fought using any means – from intrigue to outright provocation ...

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