

US Coalition Attack on Syrian Military Forces Near Al-Tanf and the “Summit” in Riyadh

Statement by the Syria Solidarity Movement

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Global Research, May 30, 2017

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Terrorism](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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*The Syria Solidarity Movement® (SSM) condemns the US-led Coalition attack last week on Syrian military forces **inside of Syria** near the town of al-Tanf. The Syrian forces were on a mission to dislodge terrorist mercenaries from a nearby position and to help secure Syria's borders with Iraq and Jordan. This direct attack on Syrian forces marks a further escalation of hostilities by the USA and its Coalition partners against the legitimate government of Syria. The attack was clearly illegal under international law because neither the USA nor its Coalition partners have the permission of the Syrian government either to enter or to overfly the sovereign state of Syria.*

The Coalition attack puts into stark relief the fraudulent nature of the US claim that it is involved in Syria (and Iraq) in order to fight terrorism. Nothing could be further from the truth: various arms of the US and Coalition governments have openly admitted funding, recruiting for, arming, and inserting terrorist proxy armies inside of Syria since 2011. The practical effect of the attack last week near al-Tanf was to protect some of these terrorist proxies from being wiped out by Syrian military forces.

The USA has been trying to destabilize and overthrow the Syrian Arab Republic for various political and economic reasons since the establishment of that state in 1963. Since the “Arab Spring” of 2011, the USA, its NATO partners, various Arab monarchs, and neighbouring countries (such as Turkey and Jordan) have been conducting an attempted regime change operation in Syria. Fortunately for the Syrian people, Syria was able to call upon its allies such as Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah, for assistance to liberate whole sections of its territory from occupation by the western proxy armies, composed mostly of foreign terrorist mercenaries. In late 2016, Syrian and allied forces liberated Aleppo, the largest and principal commercial city of Syria and thus foiled western plans for regime change in that country.

Since the liberation of Aleppo, US policy planners have resorted to John Kerry's (Obama's former Secretary of State) infamous “Plan B” for the partition of Syria. The USA built at least two illegal air bases in eastern Syria and recruited Kurdish and other mercenaries to try to drive ISIS out of the area. In doing so, the USA and its Coalition partners have expressed absolutely no intention of returning the territories taken from ISIS to the government of Syria.



Armed men in uniform, identified by the Syrian Democratic Forces as the US Special Operations Forces, ride in the back of a pickup truck in the village of Fatisah in the northern Syrian province of Raqqa on May 25, 2016 (Photo: Getty Images / AFP / Delil Souleiman)

Instead, the USA, with the special help of the State of Israel, has been nurturing the creation of a Kurdish separatist state, "Rojava", in northeastern Syria in just the same way that it created a separatist Kurdish state in Northern Iraq. Neither the USA nor Israel gives a whit for the national rights of the Kurdish people and even less for the Arabs and ethnic minorities who are ethnically-cleansed by Kurdish paramilitaries as they advance under US protection in eastern Syria.

The reason, then, for the US attack on Syrian forces last week near al-Tanf was to deny access by the legitimate government of Syria to the eastern part of its sovereign territory and to prevent it from securing its borders with Iraq and Jordan.

Furthermore, the recent attendance by US President Trump at a meeting of US client states hosted in Riyadh by the king of Saudi Arabia indicates that the USA is intending further to ratchet up tensions in the Middle East. First, Trump authorized enormous new arms sales to Saudi Arabia and then further widened the Sunni-Shia divide in the Middle East by aiming the hostility of the Riyadh "summit" at countries where Shia Islam is a political force, such as Iran, Lebanon and Yemen.

The Syria Solidarity Movement considers these US and Coalition foreign policies to be reckless and belligerent. They could easily lead to a wider regional war or even a third world war.

The SSM calls on the people of all countries of the world to make their voices for peace heard by their government officials and in social media, calling for a political, rather than a military, solution to the crisis in Syria under the existing and on-going auspices of the United Nations. We urge the people of the countries belonging to the US-led Coalition to demand their governments bring home all their troops and military equipment from Syria and to stop aiding and abetting the terrorist proxy armies of Al Qaeda and ISIS in Syria and Iraq. Furthermore, these government should be encouraged to end their illegal economic sanctions against Syria (which punish ordinary civilians), re-establish normal diplomatic relations with Damascus, contribute to the reconstruction of the devastated civilian infrastructure of Syria, and help repatriate Syrian refugees and internally-displaced persons to their proper homes.

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