

Are US Special Forces in Syria Working with Opposition Groups Linked to ISIS and Al Qaeda?

Russia Wants More Details about US Deployment in Syria

By [Press TV](#)

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Russia says it wants detailed information about a new US plan to send 250 special forces to Syria, including the precise purpose of their deployment.

"We would like to comprehend what this is all about; whether this is a one-time action, who these people are and where they will be stationed," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in Moscow.

"What they are dispatched there for and whether this is part of a program or a plan," she added.

Zakharova also said the UK is indirectly supporting Daesh by failing to close down funding channels for the terrorists.

The remarks came two days after US President Barack Obama announced that an additional 250 special troops will be sent to Syria in the coming weeks.

The deployment will be the biggest expansion of US ground forces in Syria since the beginning of the foreign-backed militancy in the Arab country in 2011.

Washington has already deployed dozens of special forces to eastern Syria in what it claims is an effort to shore up local militant groups against Daesh terrorists.

Russia has been carrying out an aerial campaign against terrorist groups in Syria since September 2015 at the request of the Syrian government. US activities, however, have not been authorized by or coordinated with Damascus.



Image: Russian Ambassador to the United Nations Vitaly Churkin

UN blacklisting of militants

In New York, Russia asked the UN to blacklist a major Syrian militant group, which has been present at UN-brokered Syria peace talks in Geneva.

Russia's Ambassador to the UN Vitaly Churkin said he asked the UN to add Jaysh al-Islam and Ahrar al-Sham to a blacklist that includes Daesh and al-Qaeda.

Churkin said the two groups are “closely linked to terrorist organizations” in Syria, primarily Daesh and al-Qaeda. The groups exchange “financial, material, technical and military support” with the terrorist groups, he said.

Churkin submitted the request to the UN Security Council’s Counter-Terrorism Committee.

Mohammed Alloush, a key figure in Jaysh al-Islam, was the chief negotiator of the opposition group High Negotiations Committee (HNC) — which is backed by Saudi Arabia — at peace talks in Geneva.

The latest round of the talks, which began on April 13, was brought to a halt as the HNC walked out of the negotiations on April 19 and militants declared a new war in Syria.

Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011.

UN special envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura estimates that over 400,000 people have been killed in the conflict, which has furthermore displaced over half of Syria’s pre-war population of about 23 million.

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