

Video: President Al-Assad Interview: The West and Israel are Supporting the Terrorists

Stopping Outside Support to Terrorists and Reconciliation Among Syrians are Means to Restore Security to Syria

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President Bashar al-Assad affirmed that the objective of the American and western allegations about chemical weapons is to support terrorists in Syria.

President al-Assad added in an interview given to Venezuelan Telesur TV that the solution in Syria should be through stopping outside support to the terrorists and reconciliation among the Syrians.

Following is the full text of the interview.

Journalist: Mr. President, thank you for receiving us.

President Assad: I welcome you and teleSUR TV in Syria. You are welcome.

Question 1: Let's start directly with the latest developments. Russia has warned that there might be other alleged chemical attacks. What are the precautionary measures that Syria has taken in order to prevent that?

President Assad: First of all, terrorists have used chemical materials more than once in the past several years and in more than one region throughout Syria. We have asked the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to send specialized missions to investigate what happened. And every time, the United States obstructed these investigations or prevented sending such missions in order to carry out such investigations. This is what happened last week when we called for investigations over the alleged use of chemical weapons in the town of Khan Sheikhoun. The United States and its allies prevented OPCW from taking that decision. As far as we are concerned, we still insist on an investigation, and we and our Russian and Iranian allies are trying to persuade OPCW to send a team to investigate what happened, because if it doesn't, the United States might repeat the same charade by fabricating the use of false chemical weapons in another place in Syria in order to justify military intervention in support of the terrorists. On the other hand, we continue to fight the terrorists, because we know that the objective of all these American and Western allegations concerning chemical weapons is to support terrorists in Syria. That's why we will continue to fight these terrorists.

Question 2: But the Pentagon says that Syria has chemical weapons. Is it true that Syria has kept one percent of the weapons it has committed itself to hand over and destroy four years

ago?

President Assad: You and I remember well what happened in 2003, when Colin Powell showed the world in the United Nations what he claimed to be the evidence which proves that President Saddam Hussein possessed chemical, nuclear, and other weapons. However, when the American forces invaded Iraq, it was proven that all he said was a lie. Powell himself admitted that the American intelligence agencies deceived him with that false evidence. That wasn't the first nor will it be the last time. This means that if you want to be a politician in the United States, you have to be a genuine liar. This is what characterizes American politicians: they lie on a daily basis, and say something and do something different. That's why we shouldn't believe what the



Pentagon, or any other American institution says, because they say things which serve their policies, not things which reflect reality and the facts on the ground.

Question 3: What is the objective behind Syria's desire to acquire the latest generation of anti-missile systems from Russia?

President Assad: We are already in a state of war with Israel; and Israel has been committing aggressions on the Arab states surrounding it since its creation in 1948. So, it's natural that we should have such systems. However, the terrorists, acting on Israeli, American, Turkish, Qatari, and Saudi instructions have destroyed some of these systems. And it is natural for us to negotiate with the Russians now with a view to strengthening these systems, whether to face any Israeli threats from the air or the threats of American missiles. That has become a real possibility after the recent American aggression on al-Shairat airbase in Syria.

Question 4: What is the role that Israel, in particular, has played in this war against Syria? We know that Israeli attacks against the positions of the Syrian Arab Army have continued in recent weeks.

President Assad: It is playing this role in different forms; first, by direct aggression, particularly by using warplanes, artillery, or missiles against Syrian Army positions. Second, it is supporting terrorists in two ways: first by providing direct support in the form of weapons, and second by providing logistic support, i.e. allowing them to conduct military exercises in the areas it controls. It also provides them with medical assistance in its hospitals. These are not mere claims or assumptions. They are facts, verified and published on the internet which you can easily access as proven evidence of the Israeli role in support of the terrorists in Syria.

Question 5: How do you assess the current policy of Donald Trump in the world, and in Syria in particular?

President Assad: The American President has no policies. There are policies drawn by the American institutions which control the American regime which are the intelligence agencies, the Pentagon, the big arms and oil companies, and financial institutions, in addition to some other lobbies which influence American decision-making. The American President merely implements these policies, and the evidence is that when Trump tried to move on a different track, during and after his election campaign, he couldn't. He came under a ferocious attack. As we have seen in the past few week, he changed his rhetoric completely and subjected himself to the terms of the deep American state, or the deep American regime. That's why it is unrealistic and a complete waste of time to make an assessment of the American President's foreign policy, for he might say something; but he ultimately does what these institutions dictate to him. This is not new. This has been ongoing American policy for decades.

Question 6: The American administration has opened a new front now with North Korea. Is it possible that this will affect the current American approach towards Syria?



President Assad: No, the United States always seeks to control all the states of the world without exception. It does not accept allies, regardless of whether they are developed states as those in the Western bloc, or other states of the world. Every state should be an American satellite. That is why what is happening to Syria, to Korea, to Iran, to Russia, and maybe to Venezuela now, aims at re-imposing American hegemony on the world, because they believe that this hegemony is under threat now, which consequently threatens the interests of American economic and political elites.

Question 7: Russia's role in the Syrian conflict is very clear; but what is the role of China, this other great global power?

President Assad: There is great cooperation with Russia and China in terms of political action or political positions. Viewpoints are similar, and there is cooperation in the Security Council. As you know, the United States and its allies have tried several times to use the Security Council in order to legitimize the role of the terrorists in Syria and to legitimize their role in the illegitimate and aggressive intervention in Syria. That's why Russia and China stood together, and China's role, with the Russian role, was essential in this regard.

Moreover, some of the terrorists are Chinese nationals who came to Syria through Turkey. They pose a threat to us in Syria, but they pose an equal threat to China. China is aware of the fact that terrorism in any place in the world moves to any other place; and consequently, whether these terrorists are of Chinese or any other nationality, they might return to China and strike there as they have done in Europe, in Russia, and in Syria. We are now cooperating with China on security issues.

Question 8: Western and American media talk now about moderate terrorists and extremist

terrorists. In reality, is there a difference between the two groups?

President Assad: For them, a moderate terrorist is that who carries out acts of beheading and slaughter but without carrying al-Qaeda flag, or without saying "Allah Akbar," while an extremist terrorist is that who carries the flag and says Allah Akbar when carrying out acts of beheading and slaughter. This is the only difference. For the United States, all those who serve its political agenda against other states are classified as moderate opposition and not as extremist and terrorist, even if they commit the worst acts of terrorism. They are freedom fighters and not fighters in the cause of destruction and sabotage.

Question 9: There have been six years of war in Syria. What is Syria's position now, particularly in the absence of statistics about human losses?

President Assad: The most painful loss in any war is human loss, the suffering which is inflicted any family when it loses one of its members; for the whole family is scarred for life. This is the natural feeling in a region like ours, where family ties are very strong. Nothing compensates that loss, and nothing exceeds the pain it causes. There are of course huge economic and infrastructure losses, but this infrastructure has been built for a little over 50 years by Syrian hands, not foreign hands. And we have the capacity to rebuild this infrastructure. The same goes for the economy, for the Syrian economy is based on Syrian capabilities first and foremost; and our economic ties with the West have always been limited. When the war is over, it will all be rebuilt. We do not have a problem with that. It is true that it takes time, but it is not impossible. So, the greatest and most painful loss for Syria is the human loss.

Question 10: Of the 86 states constituting the alliance waging war on Syria, are there any that would take part in the process of reconstruction?

President Assad: No, of course not. First of all, they do not want to rebuild Syria, but some companies in those countries, if they see that the wheel of the economy and rebuilding has started to turn, and since they are opportunists, they are certainly prepared to come and have a share of rebuilding Syria in order to make money. The Syrian people will certainly not accept this. All the states which stood against the Syrian people and took part in the destruction and sabotage will never take part in rebuilding Syria. That is final.

Question 11: But how was life during these past six years in this besieged country?

President Assad: Life has certainly been tough to every Syrian citizen. The terrorists have destroyed the infrastructure. In certain areas, electricity is on for one or two hours, and there are areas in which there's no electricity at all. There are areas in which electricity has been cut off for more than two or three years. People don't know television, children do not go to school, there are no medical clinics or hospitals, and nobody treats the ill. They live a prehistoric existence thanks to the terrorists. There are areas which did not have water for



years, like what happened in Aleppo, which did not have water for many long years. Sometimes, they use polluted water for drinking, washing up, and other purposes. Life has been very tough.

Question 12: One of the main targets during these years has been the person of Bashar al-Assad. Have you ever felt fear during these years?

President Assad: When you are in the middle of the war, you do not feel fear. I believe this is something common to all people. But you have a general concern for the homeland; for what is the value of being safe, as an individual, as a citizen, while the country is under threat? You cannot feel safe. I believe that the feeling we have in Syria in general is concern for the future of Syria rather than personal fear. The evidence is that mortar shells fall anywhere, on any house; nevertheless, you see that life continues in Syria. The will to life is much stronger than personal fear. As a President, I take strength from the feelings of the general public, not from my personal feelings. I do not live in isolation from the others.

Question 13: Western media have been waging a media campaign against you. Am I sitting now with this devil portrayed by the media?

President Assad: Yes, from a Western perspective, you are now sitting with the devil. This is how they market it in the West. But this is always the case when a state, a government, or an individual do not subjugate themselves to their interests, and do not work for their interests against the interests of their people. These have been the Western colonial demands throughout history. They say that this evil person is killing the good people. Okay, if he is killing the good people, who have been supporting him for the past six years? Neither Russia, nor Iran, nor any friendly state can support an individual at the expense of the people. This is impossible. If he is killing the people, how come the people support him? This is the contradictory Western narrative; and that's why we shouldn't waste our time on Western narratives because they have been full of lies throughout history, and not something new.

Question 14: What can Syria, too, do in order to put an end to this war ahead of the sixth round of Geneva talks?

President Assad: We said that there are two axes: the first is fighting the terrorists; and this is not subject to any discussion, and we don't have any other choice in dealing with the terrorists except fighting them. The other axis, the political one, includes two points: first, dialogue with the different political forces over the future of Syria; and second: local reconciliations, in the sense that we negotiate with the terrorists in a certain village or city, depending on each case separately. The objective of this reconciliation is for them to lay



down their weapons and receive an amnesty from the state, and consequently return to their normal life. This approach has been implemented during the past three or four years, has succeeded, and is ongoing now. These are the axes which we can work on in order to find a solution to the Syrian crisis.

Question 15: From the perspective of a country in a state of war, how do you see the situation in Latin America, particularly in Venezuela, where a number of acts very similar to those which caused the conflict in Syria have emerged?

President Assad: Of course, they should be similar, because the party planning and implementing these acts is the same. It is the United States as a maestro and the Western states constituting the choir. Latin America in general, and Venezuela in particular, used to be the backyard of the United States for decades. Through that backyard, Western states, particularly North America, or the United States, used to secure their economic interests through the influence of the big companies in your countries. Military or political coups in Latin America during the 1960s and the 1970s aimed at perpetuating American hegemony over the interests of your people. But Latin America freed itself during the past twenty years and gained its independent decision-making. Governments started defending the interests of their peoples, which is unacceptable to the United States. That's why they are exploiting what's happening in the world, starting with the orange revolution in Ukraine up to the recent coup there a few years ago, and what is taking place in the Arab countries, in Libya, Syria, Yemen and others, in order to implement it in Latin America. They started in Venezuela with the objective of overthrowing the national government, and it will spread over to other Latin American countries.

Question 16: Some people, particularly ordinary citizens in Latin America, think that a scenario similar to what's happening in Syria could be repeated in Latin America. What do you think?

President Assad: This is true. That's why I say since the party planning and implementing is the same, it's natural that the scenario is not only similar, but identical. Some local elements might be different. In Syria, they said in the beginning that there were peaceful demonstrations, but in fact, when these peaceful demonstrations did not spread wide enough, they implanted individuals who fired on both sides, on the police and the demonstrations, and there were casualties. They started to say that the state is killing the people, and this scenario is being repeated everywhere. The same scenario will be repeated in Venezuela. That's why the Venezuelan people have to be very careful. There is a difference between opposing the government and being against the homeland, a huge difference. On the other hand, no foreign state can be more concerned about Venezuela's interests than the Venezuelan people themselves. Do not believe the West, for it's not concerned either about human rights or about the interests of states. It is only concerned about the interests of part of the governing elites in its countries. And these governing elites are not necessarily politicians, they are economic companies too.

Question 17: I'm talking about Latin America, Venezuela, the Bolivarian Revolution which was your strong ally. How do you remember the late Hugo Chavez?

President Assad: President Chavez was a world-class distinguished personality. When we talk about Latin America, we immediately remember the late President Chavez and the late leader Fidel Castro, the leader of the Cuban Revolution. They are distinguished personalities who changed the face of Latin America. But of course the leader I knew personally and whom I met more than once and had a personal relationship with was President Chavez, when he visited us in Syria and I visited him in Venezuela. He visited us twice. When you meet him, you can tell that he is the son of the people. You do not feel that you are meeting a president or a politician, but a person who lived the suffering of his people. Everything he said, and every minute of his time, was about the details related to the people of his country. And when he talked with a head of another state, or an official from another state, he always thought of how to create common interests which reflect positively on his people. He was a real and strongly charismatic leader. And he was an extremely genuine person.

Question 18: They demonized Chavez before; and it is clear that it is Nicolas Maduro's turn now.

President Assad: Of course, as long as President Maduro is walking the same patriotic line, the line of Venezuela's independence, and acting in the best interest of his country's people, it is natural that he should be the first target of the United States. This is self-evident.

Question 19: How does Bashar al-Assad envision the end of the war?

President Assad: Today, foreign intervention in Syria aside, the problem is not complicated, for the majority of the Syrians are tired of the war and want a solution. They want to return to safety and stability. There is a dialogue between us as Syrians, there are meetings, and people live with each other, i.e. there is no real barrier. The problem now is that with every step we make towards a solution and regaining stability, the terrorist gangs receive more money and weapons in order to blow the situation up. That's why I can say that the solution should be stopping outside support to the terrorists. As far as we are concerned in Syria, reconciliation among all Syrians, and forgetting and forgiving all that happened in the past throughout this war, is the way to restore safety to Syria. Rest assured that Syria will be then much stronger than it was before the war.

Question 20: Are you prepared to have reconciliation with those who carried arms against the Syrian people?

President Assad: Of course, and this has actually happened in many and different places, and some of them have fought side by side with the Syrian Army, some fell martyrs, and some returned to their cities and live in the part under government control. We don't have a problem. Tolerance is essential to end any war. And we are proceeding on that track.

Question 21: Mr. President, what is your message to Latin America and the world?

President Assad: Keep your independence. We, in the Arab region, are celebrating independence in more than one country. But this independence used to mean, in a number of countries in the region, the mere evacuation of occupying forces. But real independence happens when you are in possession of your national decision-making. For us, Latin America was a model of independence, in the sense that occupiers were evacuated, in case there

were foreign forces, but at the same time there was national decision-making, openness, and democracy. You provided the world with an important model. So, keep it, because if the countries of the third and developing world wanted to develop, they should follow the model implemented in Latin America.

Journalist: Mr. President, thank you for giving teleSUR this interview, and thank you for your precious time and all the information that you have provided.

President Assad: Thank you for coming, and once again I welcome you in Damascus.

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