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## Russia unable to stop USA from attacking Syria

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The situation around the likelihood of attacks on Syria by Western countries remains the main topic for the foreign media. Most of them believe the war is inevitable and bring a variety of arguments in favor of the war. This is understandable because the point of view of their own governments is closer to them than the true state of affairs. Western journalists do not believe in Russia's ability to prevent the war.

American *Foreign Policy* recognizes the fact that the attacks on Syria look very doubtful from the point of view of the law. "U.S. spy services still have not acquired the evidence traditionally considered to be the gold standard in chemical weapons cases.... That's the kind of proof that America and its allies processed from earlier, small-scale attacks that the White House described in equivocal tones, and declined to muster a military response to in retaliation." However, the author of the article believes that the attacks on Syria are avoidable. "The official White House line is that the president is still considering his options for Syria. But all of Washington is talking about a punitive strike on the Assad government in terms of when, not if. Even some congressional doves have said they're now at least open to the possibility of U.S. airstrikes in Syria. Images of dead children, neatly stacked in rows, have a way of changing minds," noted the author.

U.S. magazine *The National Interest* published an article about the relations between the U.S. and Russia in light of the differences in their approaches to the events in Syria. The newspaper wrote that the U.S. decided to blame the government of Bashar al-Assad, while Russia was going to wait until the completion of the UN inspection. Russia has already made it clear that it held the opposition responsible for the use of chemical weapons, the newspaper continued.

At the same time, American journalists believe that Russia secretly welcomes such US behavior. *The National Interest* explains its position by saying that after the attack on Syria, the Americans will have to address issues not only with the Syrian leadership but also with Iran. This is not an easy task, and thus the U.S. will not have time to resist Russia's attempts to integrate the post-Soviet space.

British *The Guardian* made an attempt to anticipate the reaction of the Syrian authorities to the attacks by Western allies. The newspaper suggested that the Syrian authorities have already formed a squadron of suicide pilot bombers. In addition, all ground units are in full combat readiness. It is likely that thousands of militias who might not have shown loyalty to Assad under different circumstances would go against foreign aggressors.

The French *Le Figaro* said that the French leadership has done and is doing everything to ensure that attacks on Syria take place. The United States, Britain and France are the backbone of the coalition that Paris would like to see expanding, the paper wrote. The authors continued that the legitimacy of the reaction force was above the law that simply cannot be achieved in view of the blocked decision-making process at the UN.

The newspaper also believes that Russia would not take any effective measures that can stop the West. According to the newspaper, from Russian statements that caution about military intervention it can be concluded that Moscow does not intend to take action. This in turn highlights the feasibility of limited western operations in response to the use of chemical weapons that Russia also cannot justify, *Le Figaro* wrote.

The French *State.fr* explores the point of view of Israel that has refused to participate in the war against the current Syrian government. According to *State.fr*, the Israelis do not imagine the clear outlines of this operation that may ultimately strengthen the position of Israel. Israel should have no complaints about the regime of Hafez and Bashar Al-Assad that is maintaining a cold peace. Since 1973, no single shot has been made on the Syrian border, stated the article. In addition, there are two reasons that explain the caution or even suspicion of the Israelis. First of all, the results of previous experiments in Iraq and Libya have shown that the new regimes in fact proved to be even worse than the old ones. At the moment it is impossible to predict what the new power in the country will be in the case of the overthrow of the Bashar al-Assad's regime.

Israel cannot allow a formation of an Islamists' nest a hundred kilometers from its border, the publication stressed.

The Italian newspaper *Il Foglio* also noted Russia's restrained behavior. It wrote that Moscow resorted to statements appropriate for such situations, but did not draw a red line. In the language of Kremlin diplomacy it means the green light for an American attack, the newspaper stated. According to the paper, Russia understands that the international repercussions of the use of chemical weapons are too strong, and the operation of the Western countries will be limited.

Allowing the West to "punish" the Assad clan does not mean giving up its interests in Syria. Russia will ensure that the invasion of Syria is not a repetition of the operation in Libya. Possible responses could include a boycott of the UN ban on the transfer of funds through its territory to the forces of NATO in Afghanistan, termination of economic agreements, and strengthening of the relations with Iran and China in anti-American direction, the Italian journalists believe.

The situation in Syria and around it is actively discussed by the neighboring Turkey whose Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu stated his willingness to participate in the bombing, even if it means bypassing the UN Security Council. Commenting on this possibility, the newspaper *Hürriyet* was skeptical. According to its journalists, there will be no strikes without UN sanctions. In addition, President Barack Obama is acting very hesitantly.

Turkish *Zaman* agrees with its compatriots and colleagues in the fact that Obama is behaving very hesitantly. However, the paper has a different opinion about the possibility and accuracy of strikes. The journalists remembered that the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999 and before that, bombing of the Bosnian and Croatian Serbs, were also held without a UN mandate. If the U.S. decides to bomb Syria, it will, and will not ask anyone.

Combat actions by the Western coalition against Syria (albeit limited) seem like a foregone conclusion to the majority of Western journalists. They did not bother trying to legally justify the attack. Neither Russia nor the United Nations nor anyone else can prevent the implementation of such intentions by the United States and its allies.