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Syria's post-mortem: Terror, occupation, and Palestine

The NATO-Israeli cabal cheering on Damascus's fall will get more than they bargained for. Power struggles and infighting among extremist militias and civil society, each backed by different regional and foreign actors who want a piece of the pie.

The short headline defining the abrupt, swift end of Syria as we knew it would be: Eretz Israel meets new-Ottomanism. The subtitle? A win-win for the west, and a lethal blow against the Axis of Resistance.

But to quote still-pervasive American pop culture, perhaps [the owls are not what they seem](#).

Let's start with former Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's surrender. Qatari diplomats, off the record, maintain that Assad tried to negotiate a transfer of power with the armed opposition that had launched a major military offensive in the days prior, starting with Aleppo, then swiftly headed southward toward Hama, Homs, aiming for Damascus. That's what was discussed in detail between Russia, Iran, and Turkiye behind closed doors in Doha this past weekend, during the last sigh of the moribund "Astana process" to demilitarize Syria.

The transfer of power negotiation failed. Hence, Assad was offered asylum by Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow. That explains why both Iran and Russia instantly changed the terminology while still in Doha, and began to refer to the “legitimate opposition” in a bid to distinguish non-militant reformists from the armed extremists cutting a swathe across the state.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov – his body language telling everything about his anger – literally said, “Assad must negotiate with the legitimate opposition, which is on the UN list.”

Very important: Lavrov did not mean Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the Salafi-jihadi, or Rent-a-Jihadi mob financed by the Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MIT) with weapons funded by Qatar, and fully supported by NATO and Tel Aviv.

What happened after the funeral in Doha was quite murky, suggesting a western intel remote-controlled coup, developing as fast as lightning, complete with reports of domestic betrayals. The original Astana idea was to keep Damascus safe and to have Ankara manage HTS. Yet Assad had already committed a serious strategic blunder, believing in lofty promises by NATO messaged through his newfound Arab leader friends in the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

To his own astonishment, according to Syrian and regional officials, Assad finally realized how fragile his own position was, having turned down military assistance from his stalwart regional allies, Iran and Hezbollah, believing that his new Arab allies might keep him safe.

The Syrian Arab Army (SAA) was in shambles after 13 years of war and ruthless US sanctions. Logistics were prey to deplorable corruption. The rot was systemic. But importantly, while many were prepared to fight the foreign-backed terror groups once again, insiders say Assad never fully deployed his army to counterattack the onslaught.

Tehran and Moscow tried everything – up to the last minute. In fact, Assad was already in deep trouble since his visit to Moscow on 29 November that reaped no tangible results. The Damascus establishment thus regarded Russia’s insistence that Assad must abandon his previous red lines on negotiating a political settlement as a de facto signal pointing to the end.

Turkiye: ‘we have nothing to do with it’

Apart from doing nothing to prevent the increasing atrophy and collapse of the SAA, Assad did nothing to rein in Israel, which has been bombing Syria non-stop for years.

Until the very last moment, Tehran was willing to help: two brigades were ready to get into Syria, but it would take at least two weeks to deploy them.

The *Fars News Agency* explained the mechanism in detail – from the Syrian leadership's inexorable lack of motivation to fight the terror brigades to Assad ignoring serious warnings from Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei since June, all the way to two months ago, with other Iranian officials warning that HTS and its foreign backers were preparing a blitzkrieg. According to the Iranians:

“After Aleppo fell, it became clear that Assad had no real intentions of staying in power, so we started to engage in diplomatic talks with the opposition, and arranged the safe exit of our troops from Syria. If the SAA does not fight, neither will we risk our soldiers' lives. Russia and the UAE had managed to convince him to step down, so there was nothing we could do.”

There's no Russian confirmation that they convinced Assad to step down: one just needs to interpret that failed meeting in Moscow on 29 November. Yet, significantly, there is confirmation, before that, about Turkiye knowing everything about the HTS offensive as far back as six months ago.

Ankara's version is predictably murky: HTS told them about it, and asked them not to intervene. Additionally, the Turkish Foreign Ministry spun that President-Caliph Recep Tayyip Erdogan tried to warn Assad (no word from Damascus on that). Ankara, on the record, via Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, firmly denies orchestrating or approving the Rent-a-Jihadi offensive. They may regret this yet, with everyone from Washington to Tel Aviv jumping in to take credit for the fall of Damascus.

Only the NATO propaganda machine believes this version – as HTS has been for years completely supported not only by Turkiye, but also, covertly, by Israel, which was outed for [paying salaries](#) to the extremists during the Syrian war, and famously [helped](#) rehabilitate [Al-Qaeda](#) fighters injured in battle.

All that leads to the predominant scenario of a carefully calculated CIA/MI6/Mossad controlled demolition, complete with a non-stop weaponizing flow, Ukrainian training of *takfiris* on the use of FPV kamikaze drones, and Samsonites full of cash bribing high-ranking Syrian officials.

New Great Game reloaded

The Syrian collapse may be a classic case of “extending Russia” – and also Iran, when it comes to the all-crucial land bridge that connects it with its allies in the Mediterranean (the Lebanese and Palestinian resistance movements). Not to mention sending a message to China, which, for all its lofty “community of a shared future” rhetoric, had done absolutely nothing to help in the reconstruction of Syria.

On the geo-energy level, now there are no more obstacles to the resolution of an epic Pipelineistan saga – and one of the key reasons for the war on Syria, [as I analyzed it nine years ago](#): building the Qatar–Turkiye gas pipeline through Syrian territory to provide Europe with an alternative to Russian gas. Assad had rejected that project, after which Doha helped fund the Syrian war to depose him.

There's no evidence that key Persian Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia and UAE will gleefully accept Qatar's geoeconomic stardom if the pipeline is built. For starters, it needs to run through Saudi territory, and Riyadh may no longer be open to that.

This burning question connects to a pile-up of other questions, including, with the Syrian gateway all but gone: how will Hezbollah receive weapons supplies in the future, and how will the Arab world react to Turkiye trying to go full Neo-Ottoman?

Then there's the thorny case of BRICS partner-state Turkiye directly clashing with top BRICS members Russia, China, and Iran. Ankara's new turn may even end up causing it to be rejected by BRICS, and not granted a favorable trade status by China.

While a case can certainly be made that losing Syria may be devastating for Russia and the Global Majority, hold those horses - for now. In the event of losing the port of Tartous that the USSR-Russia has run since 1971, alongside the Hmeimim air base – and thus being ousted from the Eastern Mediterranean – Moscow would have replacing options, with different degrees of feasibility.

We have Algeria (a BRICS partner), Egypt (a BRICS member), and Libya. Even the Persian Gulf: that, incidentally, could become part of the Russia–Iran comprehensive strategic partnership, to be officially signed on 25 January in Moscow by Putin and his Iranian counterpart President Masoud Pezeshkian.

It's extremely naïve to assume that Moscow was caught by surprise by the staging of an alleged Kursk 2.0. As if all Russian intel assets – bases, satellites, ground intel - would not have scrutinized a bunch of Salafi-Jihadis for months assembling an army of tens of thousands in Greater Idlib, complete with a tank division.

So it's quite plausible that what's being played is classic Russia, combined with Persian guile. It didn't take long for Tehran and Moscow to do the math on what they would lose – especially in terms of human resources – by falling into the trap of supporting an already enfeebled Assad in yet another bloody, protracted ground war. Still, Tehran offered military support, and Moscow, air support, and negotiations scenarios till the very end.

Now, the whole Syrian tragedy – including a possible Caliphate of all-Sham led by reformed, minority-hugging jihadist Abu Mohammad al-Julani – falls into the full managing responsibility of the NATO/Tel Aviv/Ankara combo.

They are simply not prepared to navigate the ultra-complex tribal, clannish, embedded in corruption Syrian matrix – not to mention the magma of 37 terror outfits only kept together, so far, by the tiny glue of ousting Assad. This volcano will certainly explode in their collective faces, potentially in the form of horrendous internal battles that may last at least a few years.

Syria's northeast and east are already, instantly, mired in total anarchy, with a multitude of local tribes bent on keeping their mafioso schemes at all costs, refusing to be controlled by a US-Kurd Rojava composite that is largely communist and secular. Some of these tribes are already getting cozy with the Turk-supported Salafi-jihadis. Other Arab tribes had this year [joined forces with Damascus](#) against both the extremists and Kurdish secessionists.

Western Syria may also be anarchy territory, as in Idlib: bloody rivalry between terror and bandit networks, between clans, tribes, ethnic groups, and religious groups regimented by Assad, the panorama even more complex than in Libya under former President Muammar al-Gaddafi.

As for the Head-Choppers' supply lines, they will inevitably be stretched – and then it will be easy to cut them off, not only by Iran, for instance, but also by the NATO wing via Turkiye/Israel when they turn against the Caliphate, as they invariably may if the latter's abuses become too media-apparent.

No one is able to foresee what will happen to the carcass of Assad-dynasty Syria. Millions of refugees may return, especially from Turkiye, which Washington has for years tried to prevent to protect its “Kurdification” project in the north - but at the same time, millions will flee, terrified by the prospect of a new Caliphate and a renewed civil war.

Is there a possible ray of light amongst such gloom? The leader of the transition government will be Mohammad al-Bashir, who was, until recently, the prime minister of the so-called Syrian Salvation Government (SSG) in HTS-ruled Idlib. An electrical engineer by training, Bashir added a further degree to his education in 2021: Sharia and law.

Losing Syria should not mean losing Palestine

The Global Majority may be mourning what, on the surface, looks like a nearly lethal blow against the Axis of Resistance. Yet there's no way Russia, Iran, Iraq – and even thunderously silent China – will let a NATO-Israel-Turkiye-backed Salafi-jihadi proxy army prevail. Unlike the collective west, they are smarter, tougher, infinitely more patient, and consider the

contours of the Big Picture ahead. It's too early; sooner or later they will start rollin' to prevent western-backed jihadism from spilling into Beijing, Tehran, and Moscow.

Russian foreign intel agency Sluzhba Vneshney Razvedki (SVR) now has to be monitoring 24/7 what will be the next destination of the large cross-Heartland Salafi-jihadi brigade in Syria, overwhelmingly Uzbeks, Uighurs, Tajiks, and a sprinkle of Chechens. There's no question they will be used to "extend" (US Think Tankland terminology) not only Central Asia but the Russian Federation. Meanwhile, Israel will be overstretched in the Golan. The Americans will temporarily feel safe and secure around the oil fields from which they will keep stealing Syrian oil. These are two ideal latitudes for the start of what would be the first concerted BRICS retaliation against those who are unleashing the First BRICS War.

Then there's the ultimate tragedy: Palestine. [A massive plot twist](#) took place right inside the venerable Umayyad mosque in Damascus. The NATO-Israeli-Turk Head-Chopping Army is now promising the Palestinians they are coming to liberate Gaza and Jerusalem.

Yet until this past Sunday, it was all "We love Israel." The MC of this PR op – designed to fool the Muslim world and the Global Majority - is none other than the Caliph of al-Sham himself, Julani.

As it stands, the new regime in Damascus will be, for all practical purposes, backed by those who support and engineer Eretz Israel and the genocide of Palestine. It's already out in the open, coming from Israeli cabinet officials themselves: Tel Aviv ideally would love to expel the population of Gaza and the West Bank to Syria, though Jordan is their preferred destination.

This is the battle to focus on from now on. The late Hezbollah secretary-general Hassan Nasrallah was adamant when he insisted on the deeper meaning of losing Syria: "Palestine would be lost." More than ever, it's up to a Global Resistance not to allow it.

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