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**UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF
DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS (UNODA)**

**FACILITATING THE NON-PROLIFERATION
OF FOREIGN MILITARY BASES IN SYRIA**

CAN BARAN





Basic Overview of the Issue

A country's autonomy is directly affected by the amount of foreign intervention it receives. Syria is one of the countries with the most foreign bases for many reasons. The Arab Spring movements in the Middle East and North Africa resulted in an ongoing civil war in the region, especially as the Assad regime of 50 years violently crushed the peaceful pro-democratic protests. Due to this civil war that has been going on for more than a decade, many relevant foreign stakeholders and Member States took part in the war as a result of their interests.

Because of many moving parts and a very interesting dynamic between all parties involved, one front's allies conflict on other fronts. Hence, To maintain their presence, many foreign Member States have numerous military bases

within the region. In this sense, the number of bases decides the foreign intervention of Syria. In 2024, there was a slight dip in the amount of bases, from 830 to 801. However, since the Assad regime came to an end in December of 2024, with the collapse of the autocratic government, the issue has become more prevalent, as an increase of bases is expected in the region amidst uncertainty and the lack of a government.

The United States of America (USA), Russia, Turkey, and Iran have many foreign military bases in many regions of Syria. It is crucial to find creative and long-lasting solutions against the proliferation of foreign bases, as Syria's autonomy is threatened and the corrupt institutions in Syria are unable to effectively solve the issue when foreign intervention in the region is as high as it is.

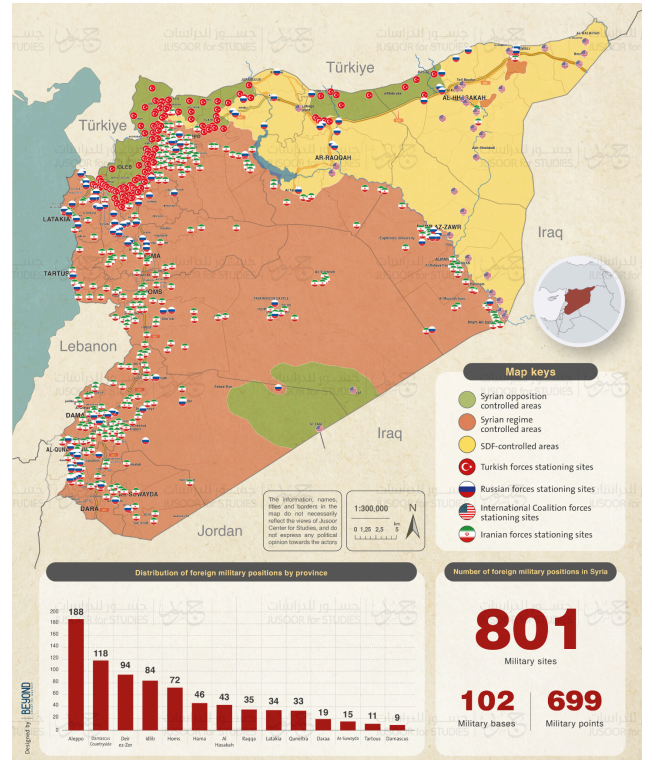


Figure 1: Map of Foreign Military Forces in Syria, Mid-2024 (BEYOND)



Explanation of Important Terms

Civil War

“Civil war, a violent conflict between a state and one or more organized non-state actors in the state’s territory. Civil wars are thus distinguished from interstate conflicts (in which states fight other states), violent conflicts or riots not involving states (sometimes labeled intercommunal conflicts), and state repression against individuals who cannot be considered an organized or cohesive group, including genocides, and similar violence by non-state actors, such as terrorism or violent crime. (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica)” Syria has been in an ongoing civil war since 2011.

Military Base

A military base means “a facility for the storage of military equipment and the training of soldiers. (Collins Dictionary)”

Alawite

“Alawite, any member of a minority esoteric sect of Islam living chiefly in Syria. The Assad family that ruled Syria from 1971 to 2024 are Alawites and made the community politically dominant there, although the state and its policies are largely secular. (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica)”

Arab Spring

“Arab Spring is a wave of pro-democracy protests and uprisings that took place in the Middle East and North Africa beginning in 2010 and 2011, challenging some of the region’s entrenched authoritarian regimes. (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica)”

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

NPT is an international treaty, whose main goal is to reduce and prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, and relevant technology. Currently, 191 Member States have signed this treaty. It is by far, the most ratified, nuclear arms treaty among the Member States, and all 5 nuclear-weapon States have signed it (United Nations Office of Disarmament).

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

WMD defines a group of weapons that intend to harm a large group of individuals. It can be but not limited to nuclear, radiological, chemical, and biological (US Department of Homeland Security). Many consider using any Weapon of Mass



Destruction to be a definite war crime. As in most cases, it causes major casualties and collateral damage.

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

“The Convention aims to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction by prohibiting the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer or use of chemical weapons by States Parties. States Parties, in turn, must take the steps necessary to enforce that prohibition in respect of persons (natural or legal) within their jurisdiction (OPCW).” It is similar to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but is for chemical weapons. It is also widely recognized, with 193 parties involved.

Proliferation Security Initiative(PSI)

“Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) is a global framework of states that commit to disrupt transfers of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems, and related items to and from states and non-state actors of proliferation concern. Not a formal organization, PSI states cooperate to prevent proliferation and strengthen national capacities for action. (Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation)”

Proxy War

“A military conflict in which one or more third parties directly or indirectly support one or more state or non-state combatants to influence the conflict’s outcome and thereby to advance their strategic interests or to undermine those of their opponents. Third parties in a proxy war do not participate in the actual fighting to any significant extent, if at all. (Baugh)”

Detailed Background of the Issue

The proliferation of foreign military bases in Syria is a hot topic that affects the nation's sovereignty and stability. Numerous foreign powers actively participated in military operations on Syrian territory, paralleling the situation of the Syrian state in the 20th century. In both cases, the state's autonomy is declining, and contemporary powerhouse nations are key players in the situation.

Historical Context

Pre-Assad Syria, 1920-1970

The current status quo of the presence of foreign powers cannot be examined



in a vacuum, as those powers have been a fundamental force in the sociopolitics of Syria and the military base situation. After the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire after WWI, the League of Nations allowed France to mandate over Syria and Lebanon in 1920, and formally rule over them in 1923. Political repression, economic exploitation, and cultural imposition soared over the French Mandate period. Several Uprisings occurred and were brutally suppressed by the French forces. The Syrian reaction against French colonialism reached its peak in the Great Syrian Revolt of 1925-1927, an important episode of anti-colonial resistance that was brutally suppressed. This mandate institutionalized foreign hegemony and provoked deep-seated distrust of external powers.



Figure 2: Al-Sham square in the early fifties near al-Abbasiya building and Sheikh Muhyiddin Tram (Emad al-Armashi)

From when Syria gained independence in 1946 until 1954, state agencies were particularly weak within a process of successive political turmoils. Syria's geographical position at the center of three continents, bordering on Israel and hydrocarbon-bearing territories, made it yet another hotspot of the Cold War internationally. In the meantime, the influence of the Soviets was enhancing: Syria sought a

counterbalance against the encroachment of the West in attachment to the USSR while struggling against the global spread of U.S.-controlled military bases.

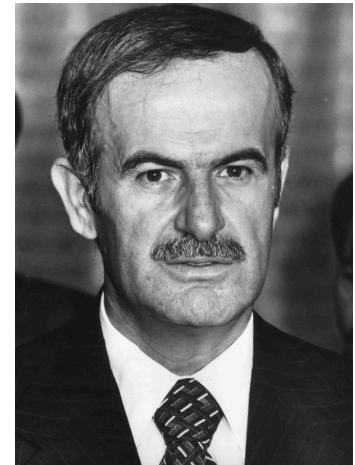
Ba'ath Party gained control over Syria in 1963, and spread its Arab Nationalism, socialism, and resistance to foreign intervention. This allowed the nation to be ultimately relevant in the Cold War discussions. At the time, in comparison to neighboring states such as Turkey and Jordan, Syria showed an effort to counter the proliferation of military bases from NATO/NATO-aligned States.

Hafez al-Assad Regime, 1970-2000

The Assad family seized power first in 1970, through a comparatively peaceful



act of possession of power, called the Corrective Movement. From then, the authoritarian regime strengthened and gained further agency with strict policies against any opposition. The Alawite minority had an amount of agency not very proportional to their population, in contrast to the impoverished Sunni majority. The Assad family is infamously Alawite and fills all positions of power with Alawite individuals. Most of the strategic interests of Assad were made pretty explicit during the 1973 October War fought together with Egypt, which consolidated his image as a champion of Arab nationalism and resistance to Israel. Meanwhile, the alliance with the Soviet Union had solidified further, and Moscow provided military and economic aid so essential that it set Syria on a strategic higher ground.



*Figure 3: Hafez al-Assad, 1980
(Encyclopedia Britannica)*

The presence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics allowed for more military facilities. This regional ambition of Assad was even more underlined with the intervention of Syria in the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990), although this was at an immense economic and political cost for Assad. When Assad died in 2000, Syria had emerged as a regional actor under an authoritarian regime, marked by economic stagnation with persistent reliance on foreign alliances that sometimes facilitated the entrenchment of military forces from abroad.

Bashar al-Assad Regime Until the Civil War, 2000-2011

The succession of Bashar al-Assad in 2000 introduced a brief, hopeful perception, in the form of a "Damascus Spring" of possible liberal reform; it soon retreated to more familiar authoritarian standards with stifled dissent and state-centralized governance. Bashar's period furthered economic liberalization, entrenching socio-economic inequalities and corruption that promoted broad discontent, especially among the large youth of Syria. Further changes in geopolitical alignments in the years succeeding the 9/11 attacks continued to reshape the status of Syria within the region. The U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 further destabilized this already turbulent region, fully embroidering extremist



insurgencies, and drawing foreign actors into Syria in the name of counterterrorism. The opposition of Syria to the Iraq War finally consolidated its axis with Iran and Hezbollah as part of the broader approach of allying itself with regional players to create a counterbalance to the influence of the West to avoid the expansion of the U.S.-engineered military presence in the Middle East. These events coincided with the mushrooming of military bases worldwide and, as such, entangled Syria in the cobweb of power plays that resulted from the said interventions.

Arab Spring and Civil War, 2011-2024

The events of the 2011 Arab Spring generated a transformative crisis in Syria. Peaceful demonstrations to demand political reform were received with disproportionate violence. The situation rapidly escalated into an armed rebellion. The growth of an FSA alongside extremist forces like Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIL entrenched this conflict because the country has broken down into spheres of influence.

The resulting power vacuum thus invited the involvement of foreign actors with divergent interests. Starting with supporting moderate opposition groups, the US later shifted its strategic focus toward combat against ISIL by establishing military bases in northeastern Syria in concert with Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. It was the intervention by Russia in 2015, with heavy bombardment from the skies, that saved the Bashar Assad regime and secured important strategic assets such as the Russian naval facility in Tartus and the Hmeimim airbase, further strengthening its influence and normalizing the violation of norms about the non-proliferation of foreign bases.

Meanwhile, Iran and Hezbollah bestowed upon the Assad regime extensive military and financial help, relying on proxy forces and establishing bases across Syrian territory. The interventions in this already externally intervened region have been increased by a few cross-border operations, as well as military outpost construction, carried out by Turkey, which is afraid of Kurdish Autonomy. Following the territorial defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq and Levantine (ISIL) in 2019, Syria remained divided along many lines of control with a proliferation of foreign military bases: the United States maintained several bases in northeast Syria to counter the possible resurgence of ISIL and further supported its Kurdish



allies. It had thus managed to cement military infrastructure in both Tartus and Hmeimim by then, and Turkey was entrenching through its buffer zones designed to hold off Kurdish militancy. Iran and Hezbollah are also further entrenched through strategic bases and a network of proxies.

Status of Foreign Military Presence beyond December 2024

The collapse of the Assad regime in December 2024 altered the foreign military situation completely. Many improvements and circumstances deteriorated rapidly, with the foreign bases and military activities still growing, while many international actors aimed to expand their influence even more over the power vacuum left by the fall of the regime. Following the news, many updates have occurred within a region in a short period.

Increased Number of Foreign Military Bases

Since the fall of the Assad regime, the number of foreign military bases in the country has increased, as expected. The number was close to 801 (BEYOND) at the end of 2024, after a slight reduction in comparison to the previous years. With the fall of the regime, it is expected that foreign powers would reassess their military strategy in Syria with possible expansion in the country to ensure strategic advantage. With the continuing instability, countries like the United States, Russia, Turkey, and Iran will establish or consolidate bases to ensure the protection of their interests. As the newly established government favors Turkey, it is expected that Turkish bases will increase in the region.

Impact on Local Factions

This changed dynamic has brought to the fore various local factions that hitherto had been at the periphery under the Assad regime. Factions like Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, which have gained great territorial control, are now in a position to reach out for support or recognition from foreign powers. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) is led mostly by the Kurds and keeps receiving U.S. support, while the Turkish-backed groups, like the Syrian National Army (TSNA), have been conducting active operations against Kurdish forces. Such fragmentation only confuses the picture because some of those different factions might either ally or oppose the foreign powers as the allegiances would shift in this or that direction.



Humanitarian Concerns

It was at this juncture that military intervention in Syria aggravated things further to the dismal state of the humanitarian condition. With different factions fighting each other, besides the presence of foreign military contingents, a continuous flow of Syrians was displaced from their homeland and contributed further in internally displaced waves that were sending ripples and increasingly spiraling refugees heading out to seek safety within regional borders and beyond. The result is the displacement that disrupts family and community structures, placing undue pressure on host countries and humanitarian resources.

This is further complicated by the myriad of armed groups and foreign militaries operating in the theatre. Countless times, humanitarian organizations have immense obstacles to reaching out to needy individuals on account of continued violence, blockades, or restrictions imposed by fighting parties. This in effect only limits the vital needs-food, water, shelter, and basic medical care-to whom these mean much, while making hundreds of thousands of other civilians live in deplorable conditions receiving little or no support whatsoever.

Besides this, years of war have wrought awful destruction in Syria's infrastructure: destroyed or grossly degraded roads, hospitals, schools, water systems, and power grids make the fulfillment of the basic needs impossible for most. This is long-term damage; infrastructure reconstruction is nearly impossible during active conflict, and at times communities remain for decades without such services.

In the face of this fact, access to health services has been terribly insufficient, contributing to an acute public health crisis. Such are the most vulnerable populations that bear the major brunt: destruction of medical infrastructure, lack of skilled cadres, and easily preventable diseases afflicting children and the elderly suffering from chronic conditions. Continuous threats, displacement, and loss raise even more the already high level of suffering of the population, making, as is normally the case with this silent mental health crisis, all almost unmet.



Such humanitarian problems are in need of protection for civilians and a system to make sure safe corridors get opened for the delivery of aid. Any steps toward containment of violence, cease-fire, or diplomatic efforts become vital in creating an atmosphere where infrastructure rebuilding can be tried and internally displaced persons attended to, thereby stopping further suffering. Unless these issues are addressed forthwith, the humanitarian situation in Syria will continue to deteriorate, thus leaving indelible marks on the nation and its people.

Major Parties Involved

Syria

The involvement of Syria in the issue is obviously, extremely important. As a Member State, it is not only crippled by its ongoing civil war and newly overthrown autocracy but also losing its agency as the foreign intervention within the member State increases with the ever-rising tension.

Syrian Government(Assad)

The newly overthrown government had been ruled for the last 50 years by the Assad Family. Even though most of the population is Sunni, the ruling class of Syria has historically been Shia. This obsolete representation led to the conflict. The Assad government had always depended on extreme measures to crush any opposition to hold power, including the widespread force against civilians and the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The government portrayed itself as a staple against terrorism and foreign meddling, whilst representing opponents as being extremist groups linked to foreign powers. There are currently around 800 foreign military sites, with most supporting the Syrian Government. It was mostly supported by

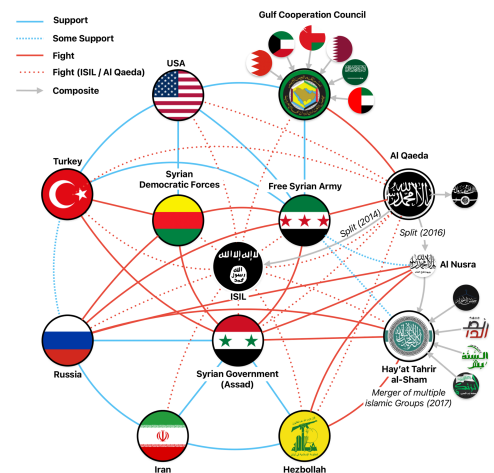


Image 4: All Relevant Stakeholders in the Syrian Civil War, December 2024 (Wikipedia)



Russia and Iran.

Hay' at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)

HTS is the Islamist faction in Syria and operates from the Idlib province. It is composed of many affiliates of al-Qaeda, a Sunni Islamist jihadist militant organization. Recently, in coalition with like-minded groups, HTS gained major territories. Recently, HTS toppled the Assad regime, and an interim government led by HTS members is in charge.

Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)

SDF is a predominantly Kurdish-led coalition controlling most of northeastern Syria as it is backed by the US, to counter ISIL remnants.

Free Syrian Army(FSA) & Turkish-backed Syrian National Army (TSNA)

The Free Syrian Army(FSA) used to be a coalition of defectors from the Syrian military and civilian volunteers who were committed to overthrowing the Assad Regime.

Though it started with peaceful protests, due to the continuous increase in the level of aggression from both sides, the inner conflict within Syria can be classified as a Civil War. The successor of the FSA, the TSNA, has a fragmented guerilla approach to the war. It aims to create a buffer zone on the Turkish-Syria border with the aid of Turkey.

United States

As one of the most powerful Member States of the United Nations, US involvement is relevant to the issue. It keeps a couple thousand troops deployed in Syria, mostly in the territories captured by the SDF. There are many US bases within the region, and some are multi-purposed. For example, there are known US bases used to train Syrian opposition groups. Even though the Assad regime considers the US illegal and asks for the withdrawal of any troops, the US justifies its presence on the doctrine of defense against terrorist threats globally. Since US operations are generally coordinated with Kurdish forces within the region, the Turkish-American allyship has been strained.

Iran

Iran maintains a formidable military deployment in Syria with direct involvement and proxy forces such as Hezbollah, to protect the Assad regime. The presence of Iran in Syria creates a land corridor between Tehran and Beirut, expanding the State's regional influence. Iran's current place after the Assad regime's downfall is unknown, except for the fact that



Iranian officials claimed that “the Syrian people should decide the future of their country without foreign interference.” (Mahdi)

Russia

The Russian Federation has two major bases in Syria. Both are Russia’s main logistical centers in its operations. The Russian forces play a fundamental role in the Assad regime, supporting its battle to reconquer much of the country. It is clear in hindsight that for the last decade, the main reason for the way the Syrian Government didn’t cease to exist was the major support of Russia. Similar to Iran, Russia’s stance on the issue is not clear after the fall of the Assad regime. The former Syrian Government has legitimized Russia’s bases, and the Kremlin condemns the US for illegally violating the sovereignty of Syria.

Turkey

Turkey set up several bases in its borders with Syria, to support TSNA, and secure its borders against Kurdish forces. Ankara’s stance is clear: The SDF is an extension of the PKK, a terrorist organization targeting Turkey. This legitimizes Turkey’s presence in the region according to the Erdogan government. Turkey’s operations generally aimed to create a buffer zone between Turkey and Syria, that will impede Kurdish autonomy. With TSNA, Turkey has carried out several cross-border operations and ultimately aims to connect these captured areas.

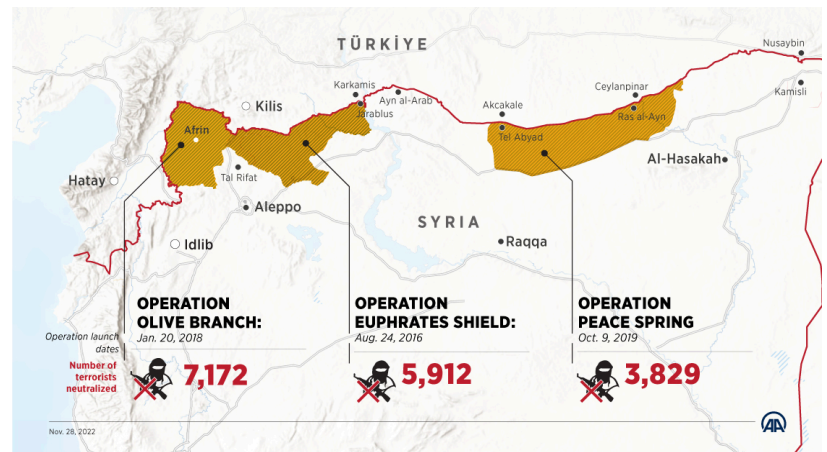


Figure 5: Map of Turkish-backed Operations in the Turkish-Syrian Border (AA)

Israel

Israel regularly conducts air raids against Iranian bases in Syria. Israel is quite ambiguous in its policies regarding Syria but openly acknowledges the need for targeting Iranian assets. The Israeli government supports anti-Assad factions indirectly, meaning it doesn’t send military aid, but rather aids through humanitarian means. Israel’s operations disrupt the communication between Hezbollah and Iran, through Syria and Lebanon.



Hezbollah

Hezbollah is a key ally of Iran within Syria and supports Assad forces by supplying them with Iran's weapons. It is an integral part of Iran's strategy in the region. The group has taken part in various conflicts within Syria, and this complicates US attempts at stabilization of Syria since the group is deemed a terrorist organization by most of the Western countries. Hezbollah's activities heighten the tension in Syria, rupturing the divides between the two factions of Islam represented in the region.

Al Qaeda

Al-Qaeda is a Sunni Islamist jihadist militant organization that has had considerable influence in the Syrian Civil War. With their more known affiliations now dispersed under the group Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, much of its structure remains powerful within some circles in Syria and will hold a strong ideological sway within Syria. From a broader perspective, Al-Qaeda operates a largely decentralized network where ideologies, along with any possible actions or missions, have always been overseen. Their activities have caused more fragmentation within the oppositionist forces and thus served as the reason for interventions by other states on the pretext of fighting terrorism. In the case of Syria, its presence was hugely diminished, while its influence has only now been firmly stamped into regional extremism.

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)

The ISIL emerged to dominate the Syrian Civil War and wanted to install its caliphate over the whole expanse of Iraq and Syria. Large swathes of eastern Syria fell at one time within its grasp under the prime of the ISIL regime, its virtual capital being Raqqa. Known for its brutality and overall abuse of human rights, the perpetrated acts of ISIL have wreaked havoc in the local communities, displaced millions of people, and engendered quite significant military interference on the international stage. The US-backed SDF is one of the regional players that have been very instrumental in destroying the territorial control of ISIL, but the group continues to undertake insurgent attacks. That has transformed into long-term instability in the region, becoming a pretext for foreign military bases and interventions.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

GCC members include Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, which all have involved themselves differently in the Syrian crisis. Though all



GCC countries show concern over Iran's influence in Syria, their strategies and alliances differ with respect to handling the crisis. For instance, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have given financial and material support to a variety of opposition groups, including most of the factions that make up the FSA and other Sunni Islamist forces, in efforts to counter both the Assad regime and Iran-aligned forces. For their part, some members of the GCC have relied more heavily on diplomatic responses, keeping neutrality. This is further interesting because the GCC collective intervention in the Syrian conflict draws attention to the wider regional tussle between Iran and Sunni Arab states, further complicating the prospects for resolution.

Chronology of Important Events

Date	<i>Description of Event</i>
March 17, 1971	Hafez al-Assad becomes the President of Syria.
March 12, 1980	The Muslim Brotherhood Uprising against the Assad Regime occurs.
February 2, 1982	The Syrian Government commits the Hama Massacre.
April 16, 1991	Syrian Troops enter Lebanon in the Lebanese Civil War.
September 10, 2000	Hafez al-Assad dies, being replaced by Bashar al-Assad.
March 15, 2011	Arab Spring Uprisings in Syria occur, starting the Syrian Civil War.
July 15, 2011	The Free Syrian Army is formed by the defectors from the Syrian military
February 5, 2012	The Battle for Homs begins.



November 15, 2014	Syrian Democratic Forces are formed.
April 14, 2018	The US, France, and the UK conducted airstrikes targeting Syria.
January 21, 2019	The US announces the withdrawal from Syria.
November 1, 2019	Turkey Launches Operation Peace Spring.
March 17, 2020	COVID-19 pandemic hits Syria.
December 25, 2020	Assad gets re-elected.
August 1, 2023	HTS gains control over Idlib Province.
December 3, 2024	The Assad regime collapses, and an interim HTS government is established.

Relevant International Documents

- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 1 July 1968
- Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, 10 April 1972
- Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, 3 September 1992
- Resolutions on Agenda Item 74 adopted by the General Assembly on Fifty-sixth Session, 24 December 2001 (**A/RES/56/24**)
- Resolution on Agenda Item 90 adopted by the General Assembly on Sixty-first Session, 6 December 2006 (**A/RES/61/70**)
- Resolution on Agenda Item 98 adopted by the General Assembly on Sixty-sixth Session, 2 December 2011 (**A/RES/66/33**)
- Resolution on Agenda Item 4 adopted by the General Assembly on Eighteenth Session,



discussing Human rights situations that require the Council's attention, 15 September 2011
(A/HRC/18/53)

- Resolution on Agenda Item 97 adopted by the General Assembly on Seventieth Session, 7 December 2015 **(A/RES/70/460)**

Past Attempts to Resolve the Issue

There are many attempts to solve the proliferation of foreign bases in Syria, and many more reasons why they failed. To develop effective and long-lasting solution alternatives, it is crucial to understand why these attempts failed.

One such effort is the Geneva Peace Talks, which began in 2012 and endeavored to reach a transnational government and to open up dialogue between the factions within Syria.

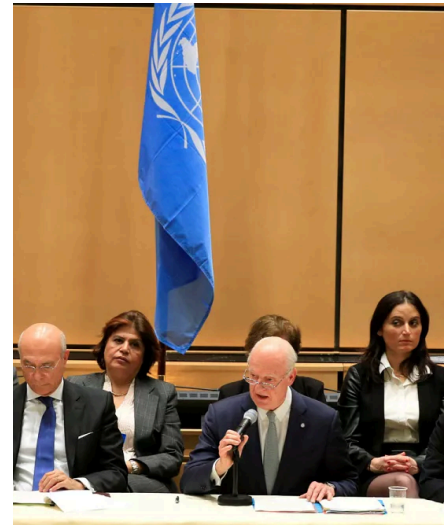


Image 6: Geneva Peace Talks (Euronews)

The initial optimism has been derailed as a result of entrenched distrust among stakeholders, conflicting agendas concerning Assad's fate, and the lack of a cohesive opposition against the regime that could be represented by one faction or group. Divided interests among foreign powers further complicated negotiations and allowed foreign military presence to persist, undermining any potential resolutions.

Another major move in terms of security concerns is the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). While the CWC was established to destroy chemical weapons worldwide and Syria joined the convention in 2013, there has been a very sporadic compliance. Reports of chemical weapon use by the Assad regime have continued, undermining the effectiveness of the convention. The failure to prosecute violators resulted in skepticism towards international legal frameworks that have been put in place to avoid such incidents.

The Proliferation Security Initiative was supposed to be an international activity aimed





at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. However, it has never been applied in Syria because it is not a formal organization with binding agreements. Since participation is voluntary, varying states have committed to the initiative, thus failing to deal

Image 7: Astana Peace process: 17th round of talks on Syria begin in Kazakhstan (Euronews)

comprehensively with the issue of foreign military involvement.

In comparison, the Astana Process proposed by Russia, Turkey, and Iran had the establishment of ceasefires and de-escalation zones in Syria. Although it has tended to reduce the scale of violence locally, it has fallen short in terms of holistic political solutions and addressing the core drivers of foreign intervention. Criticism has been lobbied against this process for being skewed against the main opposition groups and not representative of wider international participation. These reasons generally failed many other solution attempts similarly.

Solution Alternatives

Any solutions for the proliferation of foreign military bases in Syria will be holistic, based on the understanding of both local dynamics and international interests. The latter would require the strengthening of local structures of governance with a view to the restoration of their autonomy and lesser dependence on foreign military support. Legitimacy, and consequently cooperation from the locals, could thus be fostered by supporting the political processes that involve different factions.

Capacity building necessary at higher levels in Syria's governance capacity should now engage international actors; where much greater accountability and transparency are imperative. There's the immediate pleading restoration of diplomatic contact between the majors concerning sorting different facets of this Syrian conflict. Indeed, new efforts toward multilateral negotiations among all relevant parties, including both domestic factions and international actors, may create a framework for reductions in foreign military presence. Instead of the military way, there should be dialogue, compromising, and emphasis on common interests in diplomatic efforts.



CBMs can also play an indispensable role in decreasing tensions among contending parties. A number of the CBMs that could be pursued include ceasefires, humanitarian access agreements, and joint economic projects, which will help build confidence among the various factions and set the stage for dialogue. This may persuade hostile groups to engage constructively with each other rather than resort to arms or to appeal for foreign military intervention, persuasively demonstrating concrete dividends of cooperation.

The engagement of the regional powers in constructive dialogue will go a long way in addressing their concerns and keeping up the stability in Syria. Without the participation of countries like Turkey, Iran, and Russia, one cannot even think of the future political landscape of Syria. Their interests can be well recognized by the international community, while at the same time, reduced military presence needs to be advocated to reach a more stable environment that would discourage more foreign intervention.

Reinforcing international norms of state sovereignty and non-intervention is so crucial in trying to address the proliferation of foreign bases in Syria. Now is the time to call countries to task for this norm violation from the international community, while at the same moment making sure that countries do not breach but respect treaties in place, like the United Nations Charter. More ways to observe compliance could help deter such further violations of Syrian sovereignty.

Of course, there are quite a few practical ways of dealing with the spread of foreign military bases in Syria, considering that former ones have been inutile or practically null due to geopolitical impasses involved. It attaches a high premium on the establishment of local governance, diplomatic involvement, and confidence building with constructive engagements for regional players, and employs international norms as its *modus operandi* to make an outline whose eventual aim and end is only a Syria that foreign militaries would not stay in for maintaining stability.



Useful Links

- [Treaties Database | Unoda](#)
- [Syria | CIA Factbook](#)
- [Syrian Civil War | Syrian History | Britannica](#)



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