

SOLIDARITY

Syria: Chronicle of an intervention (long) foretold

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To be clear: we are completely and unambiguously against any military intervention by the United States and its allies against Syria. For the past 20 years we have been at the forefront in denouncing these kind of interventions; from Iraq to the former Yugoslavia; from Afghanistan to Somalia; from Libya to Mali and many others. We mobilized against them and, in particular, denounced and opposed the political, military and financial contributions of our governments to such actions.

It may seem pointless to remember it, but it is not: in the first place because it is good to remind ourselves and the people who listen to us; and, secondly, because there are others who can not claim such consistency (such as those parts of the "radical left" who give support to centre-left governments involved in Nato military missions....).

The last few days appear to have paved the way for a possible escalation of direct military intervention against Syria and the probable bombing of that country, by the U.S.A. and its allies.

The terrible attack with chemical weapons in Ghouta area of Damascus seems to represent for international diplomacy and the hypocritical Western governments an event which they can not be seen not to deal with and to which they need to "respond" in some way.

Of course we cannot really know for sure who is responsible for the use of gas against the Syrian people - but in the end this tragedy does not fundamentally change what happens in that country (and the criminal responsibility of Assad and the Ba'ath regime, not only for the last two years of repression and massacres), although it could lead to an escalation of the ongoing war. We have seen too many lies and propaganda hoaxes to trust to Kerry, Cameron and their friends. At the same time we smile with disgust at the fake innocence of those who would want us to believe the revelations of the Assad regime which immediately found an empty barrel of chemical weapons in tunnels supposedly dug by the rebels. As if this too were not propaganda with an equal lack of credibility.

Although direct US intervention might now start, it is clear that such an outcome has not been actively pursued by the Obama administration which continues to have reservations and which stills ends contradictory signals to the Assad regime and its allies.

Obama continues to talk about the "need for a consensus of the international community," but this is a meaningless phrase in the mouths of those who see themselves as the legitimate moral and political representative of this fictitious "community".

At the same time Obama is looking for clear signals from Russia and China, as to what they might do in the event of military intervention, with an expectation that they might simply present formal

protests with no major disruption of diplomatic relations, as has already occurred several times in the past few years, whilst continuing to provide weapons and technical support to the Syrian regime.

Despite the lack of desire to embark on an adventure with unseen short or long-term consequences, the U.S. and its allies may end up opting for a limited intervention like the bombing of Somalia and Uganda but on a larger scale, rather than a mission like the one in Kosovo.

Such an intervention would worsen the tragic situation in Syria, for several reasons.

Firstly, as always happens, despite claims of surgical strikes, military action will bring new grief to the Syrian people they are claiming to liberate. As happens on a daily basis in Afghanistan and as happened in Iraq, Kosovo, Libya, etc. thousands of refugees will be forced to flee from the bombed areas.

Secondly, although causing damage to the military forces of the regime, the intervention would not be able to completely destroy them (which they do not want to do anyway) and they would still receive supplies and support from Russia and Iran.

Thirdly, the regime may consolidate its position and base of support both within Syria and amongst its allies.

Fourthly, there will definitely be a resurgence of armed conflicts -- even between the various elements of the opposition, as different groups seek to secure a better position in the aftermath of the military intervention and finally, there is greater risk of regional contagion, which would extend directly to Lebanon and then to other regions, perhaps to Egypt.

For all these reasons we are against military intervention in Syria, directed by those who present themselves, without legitimate claim, to be the world's policeman.

When saying that we are against foreign intervention in Syria, we must also remember that this is already in progress, by different entities. Whilst the various Syrian opposition groups are supported by Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey and the NATO countries themselves, Assad's regime has enjoyed substantial support from Russia and Iran, as well as direct military assistance from Hezbollah militia, proving decisive for the regime in a number of important battles.

These different agendas have, on one hand, allowed the Assad regime to continue to survive and continue to kill, destroy, imprison its opponents and, on the other, they have in some way "killed" the Syrian revolution, allowing better equipped minority groups to have hegemony on the field, diminishing the role not only of the secular and democratic forces, but also, in many cases, the local committees of the revolution itself, whilst causing tensions with the Kurdish people and their parties.

The current situation of stalemate, with the regime unable to return to a situation prior to March 2011 and the opposition parties unable to win militarily - benefits all these actors who can continue to manage their political-strategic games against the Syrian population.

Honestly we cannot not really place any trust in a non-military intervention by an "international community" that cannot even organize effective humanitarian aid that at least protects refugees and children through a "peaceful invasion" of unarmed forces that support and help the population.

We do not accept any political or diplomatic solution which sacrifices the symbol - Bashar - but puts in his place another figurehead to guarantee regional stability and support for Israel and the United States.

For this reason we do not make calls for “dialogue” or for international conferences which, today, would be convened by the very states who share the main responsibility for the destruction of Syria.

Declaring ourselves today strongly against any form of military intervention, however limited or targeted, by the United States and its allies, we nevertheless maintain a clear, sincere and strong denunciation of the crimes of the regime and we support the aims of the Syrian revolution.

In Italy this means we stand side by side with the Syrians who fight against such crimes and demonstrate for freedom and dignity in Syria. We know that many of them do approve a possible U.S. intervention and sincerely think it will bring a respite to the suffering of the Syrian population, but, as we said, we do not agree with this belief. In any case there are political reasons that make any global intervention dangerous and problematic for all Syrians.

We hope that many will stand up, in Italy and Europe, opposing a new western war in the Middle East but also refusing to be silent in the face of the crimes of the Assad regime. That is why we must build initiatives to support the Syrian people and the democratic revolutionary opposition forces and not simply abandon them.

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P.S.

* Italian original Cronaco di un intervento molto annunciato:

<http://ilmegafonoquotidiano.it/news/cronaca-di-un-intervento-molto-annunciato>

* Translation International Viewpoint. <http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/>