

## The Syrian Crisis, How it Reflects on the Nations Involved, and Recovery Processes

Syria's civil war is not just one of internal conflict. As the war continues, more powers are fighting, by supporting various groups. Each power claims to help Syria, while harming its infrastructure, its civilians, and its food security. This paper hopes to highlight how foreign policy affects food security, stability, and habitability of a country. It also aims to give an overall resolution plan, and encourage the use of non-destructive efforts in aiding countries. This paper aims to encourage the continuous use of peaceful resolutions to issues faced in the world, throughout learning the harm caused by various techniques and policies, made with the intent of helping foreign nations and their people.

### About Syria

Syria is a Western Asian country, without a centrally recognized government. The current ruling parties are the ASSAD(the largest ruling body), the SDF, as well as Turkish backed militias, and extremist groups. The ASSAD government and the SDF are separated by the Euphrates river. The country is still joined by one economy though. The GDP of Syria is 16.6 billion dollars, and the average monthly salary is just 40 dollars a month. 60% of the Syrian population is food insecure. This number continues to grow as conflict continues in the country.

### Sweden

This paper will bring Sweden up as a gold standard for food insecurity. The country that has been at peace for **NUMBER** years has some of the best possible numbers. Sweden has 2.5% food insecure people within it. The country's GDP is 537 billion dollars, and the average income is 4700 USD a month. The country has done an excellent job in mitigating poverty and food security. Each and every country should strive towards these numbers.

### Russia and Syria.

Though specific policies and operations done by Russia in Syria are difficult to locate, the general mission of Russia in Syria can be deduced. Russia has been an active participant in the Syrian crisis since 2012. In the beginning they stayed absolutely neutral and opposed any regulation or intervention that could be considered something that affects the civil war from outside the country. They vetoed numerous peace plans that insisted on outside intervention.

In 2015 they seemed to have a massive and fast policy change. Russia launched an air raid very suddenly into the heart of Syria, allowing the unstable ASSAD government to keep fighting for an indefinite amount of time with minimal support from Russia herself.

Through their participation, Russia has slowed peace immensely and cost thousands of human lives. With the claim of wanting to allow the Syrian people to make their own choice. While admitting that the government they were supporting was not making necessary changes. The Syrian crisis may have ended in 2013, and again in 2015, if Russia had not intervened. This has caused an ongoing conflict that contains military operations, the destruction of infrastructure, and the deaths of civilians. While blocking necessary aid.

### Operation Inherent resolve

Military operations by the US in Syria, with the intent of countering ISIS operations. The operation has cost 13.6 million dollars a day. The operation has led to 11,235 airstrikes in Syria territory.

This operation has had a major effect on the country. Any military operation in a country can lead to food insecurity. The destruction of infrastructure, farm fields becoming war zones, and civilian casualties. The threat of a drone strike is constant for civilians, for good reason. OIR has conducted 11,235 airstrikes in Syria territory. According to the New York Times, one of those airstrikes killed 60 civilians. After the strike there were efforts to hide what had happened to the general public. Strikes like this decrease public trust in foreign governments, and cause general civilian panic and fear.

### **The Caesar act.**

The Caesar Act was a series of sanctions placed on the ASSAD government after atrocities persecuted by that government came to light. The Act targets 39 individuals and allows for further sanctions of any government who assists that ASSAD regime. The idea behind the sanction was to remove power from the ASSAD government.

Though sanctions can be a useful tool, when a power is backed by another power, that government will suffer less than the people. The idea behind the Caesar Act was not to attack the country as a whole but to protect the civil rights of the civilians. The largest effects of the sanction on Syria seem to be a crippled economy and a frozen conflict. The

Proponents of the Caesar Act argue that the law is specifically created to protect civilians better. The act very specifically does not target food or medical supplies intended for medical use. It is also created to be worded clearly for precise interpretation.

The act overall is not inherently good or bad for the country, but it does represent a longer-term, low risk and slow solution to the conflict in Syria. It does not preclude further conflict, and takes no steps towards peace. The act has inflicted some harm toward civilians, and has not had the impact one would hope to see. However it is still doing some good, limiting the ability of the ASSAD regime, despite its backers. As well as being overall versatile enough to stay a constant erosion, despite an ever complicated and changing world.

### **Operation Euphrates Shield**

Operation Euphrates shield was the first military operation into Syria. The goal was to remove terrorist organizations from towns on the Syrian Turkish border. The forces being removed happen to be United States allies in the fight against ISIS and the ASAD government. One source says that the operation killed 492 civilians via air raids and long-range artillery.

After the operation Turkey slowed aid access through micromanaging local Syrian councils. This is the normal stabilization process by which each newly demilitarized country must go through. These areas are wracked with strife for years to come.

### **Operation Olive Branch**

Operation Olive Branch was launched in 2018, and was an invasion into the Syrian Kurdish canton of Afrin. Turkey claimed that there had been more than 700 attacks from terrorists against Turkey. Thus the operation was a matter of self defense.

Between 395 and 510 civilians were killed in the offensive. The area invaded is still cut into factions and controlled by warlords today. The area is completely militarized and human rights violations are commonplace. In the Turkish areas of influence in Northern Syria, between January and September there were at least 116 civilians killed. Repeated attempts to resolve conflict in the area. The repercussions of the incident will be felt for years to come. The people in these areas have low access to aid, and are being oppressed and abused. The rampant use of military force in Syria continues to make civilians suffer.

Initially after the attacks displaced people began to return to their homes, though they stopped in 2019 because of the spread of rumors of human rights violations.

Some leaders of the area call Turkey to take on responsibility for the area, as the occupying military. Turkey refuses to take any such responsibility.

### **Operation Peace Spring.**

Operation Peace Spring was an office launched by the Turkish government, against the SDF in 2019. The operation caused 120 civilian casualties, and displaced 300 more in just 11 days. This was in an attempt to create a Turkish “safe zone” on the Syria Turkey border. This is a result of a ramping of anti-Syrian sentiment in Turkey. Amidst a rising economic crisis in 2019, and with more and more Syrian refugees crossing the border, some Turkish officials began vilifying the Syrian refugees. T

The Turkish government also tried to justify the attack, saying they believed the SDP was an extension of the PKK and organization deemed to be a terrorist organization by the Turkish government.

This is another military operation with devastating effects for hundreds of people. Every person who is displaced becomes another refugee that needs to be given a home, furthering the crisis in Syria. The operation also came with many bombings. Yet more infrastructure is being destroyed, more jobs are lost permanently. As operations like this continue, recovery from this conflict gets exponentially harder,

### **Aid Necessities in Syria.**

Syria does however have aid programs coming to it. The United States alone has provided 11 billion dollars to Syrian aid. It is not enough. The total aid going to Syria amounts to only 46% of the necessary funds to help everyone. As conflict continues that number continues to worsen. There are 14.6 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, and with a recent outbreak of violence at the front lines that number keeps getting higher. Rising food prices are not helping the situation.

### **Solutions.**

Before any meaningful solution can begin, all countries involved in the Syrian conflict must commit to a peace that can be sustained. Each country involved in this peace cannot have ulterior motives, and must give up any gain they receive from establishing peace. This conflict should be solved with the idea of human rights and good in the forefront.

Though that path is nearly impossible in the current political climate it is the most straightforward. Citizens of countries, if they are able, should hold their governments

accountable to the role they are playing in the ongoing conflict. Often in each military operation and act, the country executing said act clearly has other gains to be made. For example Russia and the US are supporting governments that match their own political systems closely. This does not lead to an equal peace, it is merely a continuation of ongoing conflict between two powers that have been at war since 1947.

The United Nations needs to be able to take more a mediation role in the conflict. Countries actively involved in a conflict, even tangentially, should not be able to veto a peace plan, when they themselves are not the pirates in active conflict.

Terrorism can no longer be a reason to go to war. The term terrorism was used to invade Syrian territory no less than 5 times. Each time the party that was invaded was a different party. More accountability should be had when a country invades another, and when that country removes its military. Sudden removal of a military can be as harmful to civilian populations as an invasion. It creates a power vacuum that most local governments cannot fill as they are weakened by the ongoing conflict.

Most importantly rebuilding must begin. Solid plans need to be created, and enforced by the United Nations, or another supervising body of the country's choice. The supervising party would ensure that funds would be used to:

Rebuild cultivable land. Cultivable land is often destroyed during conflicts, especially drawn out ones. It will take years and millions of dollars to rebuild land in Syria.

Fund Farmers. Farmers have been devastated in this conflict. Through loss of crop to military groups; land and equipment to bombs; and loss of life to the same; farmers though they are up in yield, are still below the prewar average crop production. This creates price hikes in food causing massive issues.

Rebuild infrastructure. Syrian infrastructure is outdated where it does exist. This should not be the case. 70% of its population lacks access to clean water. Roads and highways do not exist to transport existing food to where it needs to go. This will be a continuous problem for any new development in Syria.

Measures need to be taken to prevent another conflict like this. A method within the UN or another governing body, for a body of citizens to take action against its government should be in place. Rewards for following this group should be massive, and penalties for disobedience should be heavy sanctions.

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