



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on April 16, 2018

Haley: U.S. Troops Will Not Leave Syria Until We've Accomplished Three Goals

Last Month, President Trump said American soldiers would leave Syria "very soon." But based on what U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley (shown) just said, American soldiers could be in Syria indefinitely.



Speaking with Fox New host Chris Wallace on the Fox News Sunday aired on April 15, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said: "Yes, it is all of our goal to see American troops come home. *But we're not going to leave until we know we've accomplished those things.*" (Emphasis added.)

Haley's answer was in response to a question Wallace presented to her:

President Trump reportedly wanted to get all 2,000 U.S. troops out within 48 hours and had to be persuaded by folks at the Pentagon to keep them there for a couple of months which raises the question — what is our goal in Syria? And what is our strategy to get there?

Haley replied:

Well, I can tell you because I was in the National Security Council meetings with the president when it came to discussing Russia and he had three major goals that he wanted to accomplish.

He, one, wanted to make sure that chemicals — chemical weapons were not used or weapons of mass destruction were not used in any way that could harm American national interests. He wanted to make sure that we defeated ISIS completely and wholly, to make sure all of that threat was gone, because it is a threat to American national interests. And he wanted to make sure that we had good grounds to watch what Iran was doing and they weren't making a lot of aggressive headway in terms of that, because Iran is a national threat to American interests.

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Just a few days earlier, on March 29, President Trump surprised the nation by saying: "We'll be coming out of Syria ... very soon. Let the other people take care of it now. Very soon. Very soon, we're coming out."

While those who took Trump at his word may not have interpreted his promise to bring our troops home from Syria "very soon" as meaning "within 48 hours," as Wallace suggested — they might reasonably have taken them to mean within a few weeks or months. However, Haley's words to Chris Wallace indicate that they may be there indefinitely, since no one can predict when those three goals she cited will be accomplished.



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During the interview, Haley used a term that has become part of the history of the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. In a radio address made on March 22, 2003, then-President George W. Bush stated:

American and coalition forces have begun a concerted campaign against the regime of Saddam Hussein. In this war, our coalition is broad, more than 40 countries from across the globe. Our cause is just, the security of the nations we serve and the peace of the world. And our mission is clear, *to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction*, to end Saddam Hussein's support for terrorism, and to free the Iraqi people. [Emphasis added.]

As has since been established, no weapons of mass destruction were ever found in Iraq. NBC News in a 2015 report quoted the CIA's top weapons inspector Charles Duelfer, head of the Iraq Survey Group, as stating that no weapons of mass destruction (WMD) had been found. In an addendum to the final report he had issued in fall 2014, Duelfer said: "After more than 18 months, the WMD investigation and debriefing of the WMD-related detainees has been exhausted. As matters now stand, the WMD investigation has gone as far as feasible."

If the Bush administration would use nonexistent WMDs as a pretext for invading Iraq in 2003, it does not seem unreasonable to believe that the Trump administration would use similar false information as a pretext for the recent missile attacks against Syria and to keep U.S. troops stationed in that country indefinitely.

During an April 12 broadcast, Tucker Carlson of Fox News questioned the necessity and the wisdom of the United States taking military action against Syria that would take place the following evening, saying:

Tonight leaders on both sides of the aisle in Congress, in the media, in our intelligence services, and in virtually every over-funded think tank in Washington, have suddenly aligned tonight on a single point of agreement: America must go to war in Syria, immediately. Bashar al Assad cannot continue to lead that country, he must be overthrown!

Carlson questioned why he would use chemical weapons against civilians, observing:

Assad's forces had been winning the war in Syria. The administration just announced its plans to pull American troops out of Syria having vanquished ISIS. That's good news for Assad. About the only thing he could do to reverse it and to hurt himself would be to use poison gas against children.

Well he did it anyway, they tell us. He's that evil! Please keep in mind this is the same story they told us last April. Do you remember that it was almost exactly a year ago that the new administration announced it was no longer seeking to depose Assad from power? Regime change was no longer our policy."

Beyond the matter of whether the Assad government did or did not use chemical weapons against innocent people, there is a matter of even more importance for Americans. That is, how can any intervention in Syria be justified from a constitutional standpoint? Trump himself raised this point on August 29, 2013 when he questioned the Obama administration's bombing of Syria, asking: "What will we get for bombing Syria besides more debt and a possible long-term conflict? Obama needs Congressional approval."

Trump was correct back then, and if Obama needed congressional approval, so does Trump. In fact, a president requires more than congressional "approval" to wage war. He requires a congressional declaration of war.



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Photo of U.S. Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley: AP Images

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