



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on October 1, 2012

Sec. Clinton Pledges Additional \$45 Million in Aid to Syrian Rebels

At a meeting of the [“Friends of Syria”](#) held Friday, September, 28 at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City, U.S. [Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced](#) that the United States would send \$45 million in aid to Syrian opposition groups.

Friends of Syria is a [“collection of 70 governments committed to deposing”](#) Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

According to Clinton, \$30 million is earmarked “to help get food, water, blankets, and critical medical services to people suffering under the relentless assaults,” while the remaining \$15 million in additional funds is to be spent on “1,100 sets of communications equipment, including satellite-linked computers, telephones, and cameras, as well as training for more than 1,000 activists, students, and independent journalists.”

Beyond financial support, Clinton reminded the pro-Syrian opposition organizations represented at the meeting that the United States was committed to overcoming the “repeated blocking” of the UN Security Council and to persist in “ratcheting up pressure on the Assad regime and deepening its isolation.”

With only one vote on the Security Council, the United States is unable to simply impose its will with regard to military intervention. As [the Wall Street Journal explains](#), “Though a majority of world leaders have called for U.N. action to halt the bloodshed, the Security Council has remained disunited on Syria as Russia and China vetoed three resolutions criticizing Damascus, one of which threatened sanctions.”

Perhaps as an end-run around Russian and Chinese impediments to toppling the government of President Bashar al-Assad, Clinton called on “governments, private financial institutions, and businesses” to cut that government off “from assets and income that fund its war machines.”

It is the American war machine, however, that is being primed and prepared for entry into another conflict in the Middle East. In fact, all the fingers priming that pump seem to continuously point to Iran as the next theatre of operations for the U.S. armed forces. Regarding Iran’s alleged relationship with the Syrian government, Clinton said:

The regime’s most important lifeline is Iran. Last week, a senior Iranian official publicly acknowledged that members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps are operating inside Syria. There is no longer any doubt that Tehran will do whatever it takes to protect its proxy and crony in Damascus. Iran will do everything it can to evade international sanctions. For example, last year





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Turkish inspectors found a shipment of assault rifles, machine guns, and mortar shells labeled as “auto spare parts” aboard an Iranian airliner bound for Syria.

[The New American has chronicled](#) the crescendo of the chorus of congressmen calling for the deployment of American troops into Iran to prevent that nation from developing nuclear weapons and increasing the seriousness of its threat to the safety of Israel.

Apart from the alleged influence of Iran, Clinton warned that the hand of Hezbollah was stirring the pot in Syria as well: “Our government also continues to expand sanctions against individuals and entities who help the regime procure weapons and communications equipment used in waging its war. Our most recent measures target Hezbollah leaders, an arms company in Belarus that is supplying fuses for aerial bombs used against civilians, and senior figures in Syria’s military,” Clinton said.

While Secretary Clinton points to the participation of “known terrorists” with the Assad government, she made no mention of another influence in the region that is consistently ignored by the Obama administration.

During [an interview with Fox 19 reporter Ben Swann](#), President Obama admitted that al-Qaeda operatives were filling senior leadership positions within the Free Syrian Army — the largest group trying to topple the Assad regime.

In the interview, Swann asked President Obama why, if al-Qaeda is our sworn enemy and an “ongoing threat to the national security of the United States,” is his administration sending millions of dollars to the Syrian rebel armies when so many of their leaders are known al-Qaeda operatives.

“Syria’s a tough situation,” the president answered. He explained that he is committed to “a broad foreign policy” that will only provide “non-lethal assistance” to Syrian opposition forces without a “jump right in to a civil war.”

Again, his answer does not explain the hypocrisy regarding his purported goal of eliminating al-Qaeda and their associates.

Think of it this way: In World War II the United States was not bombing the armies of the Third Reich occupying France while simultaneously sending Hitler money and supplies to help him conquer Russia. But that is precisely the baffling policy of the government of the United States as pertains to al-Qaeda throughout this now 11-year-long “War on Terror.”

This inexplicable contradiction is hardly an example of the “common sense, practical” foreign policy touted by the president in his interview with Swann.

In a story documenting the predominance of al-Qaeda within the ranks of the Syrian opposition, [The New American’s Alex Newman writes](#):

Current al-Qaeda boss Ayman al-Zawahiri [released a video](#) over the weekend [calling on Muslims](#) around the world to join Syrian rebels in overthrowing the brutal Assad government, saying the heavily armed insurgents could not depend on the West for assistance. The Obama administration and a coalition of Western leaders, meanwhile, have been [demanding](#) that other governments support the uprising in Syria as well.

Much of the international press has portrayed the Syrian conflict so far as a largely peaceful “pro-democracy” protest movement that is being brutally quashed by a bloody tyrant. And indeed, thousands have already been killed on both sides, according to United Nations estimates.



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Despite the misleading media portrayal, however, analysts have [been aware](#) of the overwhelming role played by Islamic extremists in the Syrian regime-change operation almost since it began. Open support from the head of al-Qaeda only served to further confirm what was already widely known by governments and experts on the situation.

Given the preponderance of the evidence of not only al-Qaeda's significant role in the leadership of the anti-Assad army, but of our own government's acknowledgment of the same, one wonders why the indefinite detention provisions of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) have not been triggered.

As *The New American* has chronicled since it was first proposed, the NDAA purportedly authorizes the president of the United States to deploy the armed forces to apprehend and indefinitely detain anyone suspected of providing support to terrorists. [Section 1021 of the NDAA reads in relevant part:](#)

Congress affirms that the authority of the President to use all necessary and appropriate force pursuant to the Authorization for Use of Military Force (Public Law 107-40; 50 U.S.C.1541 note) includes the authority for the Armed Forces of the United States to detain covered persons (as defined in subsection (b)) pending disposition under the law of war.

A covered person under this section is as follows:

A person who was a part of or substantially supported al-Qaeda, the Taliban, or associated forces that are engaged in hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners, including any person who has committed a belligerent act or has directly supported such hostilities in aid of such enemy forces.

And, finally:

Detention under the law of war without trial until the end of the hostilities authorized by the Authorization for Use of Military Force.

A plain reading of Section 1021 reveals, then, that anyone who is found to have "substantially supported" al-Qaeda or associated forces can be detained by the military until the end of the War on Terror.

The relevant question, then, is whether the fact that the U.S. Secretary of State's admission that the United States has sent "more than \$130 million" to the Syrian opposition forces can be interpreted as anything other than the substantial support of al-Qaeda or associated forces.

The fact that neither Secretary Clinton nor President Obama has been detained for approving the sending of such substantial sums to armed groups known to be infiltrated by al-Qaeda and other suspected terrorist forces supports an assumption that the law against supporting terrorists applies to the ruled, not to the rulers.

A test of this claim would be the reaction of the Obama administration to an American citizen's wiring of \$130 million to the Free Syrian Army or to any other group working to unseat the Assad government.

Photo of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton: AP Images



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