



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on December 30, 2015

State Department Touts “Bringing Peace” to Syria Among 2015 Successes

U.S. State Department spokesman John Kirby recently announced what he said were some of the department’s major accomplishments in 2015. While many of the supposed achievements are highly questionable, one in particular raised eyebrows across the political spectrum: the claim that State Department officials were key in “bringing peace” to war-torn Syria.



“Although challenges remain, we have made positive strides over the last year,” Kirby insisted, “including in our fight against ISIL [also known as ISIS]. This forward progress will only continue as more countries pledge resources to the anti-ISIL effort and as citizens around the world increasingly reject ISIL’s misguided ideology.”

Though Secretary of State John Kerry (shown) has certainly been involved in Syrian “peace talks,” peace is nowhere in sight in the multi-sided civil war.

More than 250,000 people have already died in the four-year-long conflict, not counting those who lost their lives this year, for which figures are not yet available. More than 11 million refugees have fled the region, with many pouring into Europe, and creating a heated political issue in the United States as President Obama has declared that he would accept 10,000 more Syrian refugees in 2016.

In addition to the incredible assertion that the U.S. State Department is “bringing peace” to Syria, Kirby touted other alleged “achievements” that can also be challenged as either untrue or completely against the best interests of America: the reestablishment of normal diplomatic relations with Communist Cuba, “protecting” the Arctic, clinching the Iran nuclear agreement, stopping the Ebola outbreak, committing to UN development goals, securing a “free trade” deal, preserving ocean “health,” and reaching the climate agreement in Paris.

President Obama has a long history of odd statements and policies concerning Syria. In 2013 he called for military strikes in the country to bring down the regime of President Bashar al-Assad. In fact, he proclaimed a “red line” that would touch off a U.S. military response if crossed — that is, if Assad used chemical weapons. Though the president tagged Assad as responsible when chemical weapons were later used, many officials now say it seems clear that it was anti-Assad rebels who used the weapons.

Then, Obama protested that he was not the one who had set the red line, but that it was the result of international treaties. He asked for congressional authorization to attack Assad — at the same time claiming that he did not need authorization in order to act. He asserted, “As commander in chief, I always preserve the right and the responsibility to act on behalf of America’s national security.”



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Then-House Speaker John Boehner and then-House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, both Republicans, supported the use of military force against the Assad regime. Cantor argued that “any president” could set such a red line, based on “international norms.” Not surprisingly, warhawk Senator John McCain pushed for an even tougher U.S. response than what Obama was calling for.

Yet, Obama did not act.

Then, in 2014, Obama dismissed ISIS (or ISIL) as just the “JV [junior varsity] team” in comparison to al-Qaeda. Many of the president’s opponents charged at the time that his Syria policy was in fact arming the resistance to Assad, contributing directly to the growth of ISIS.

Then in 2015, just a few days before the Paris attacks in November, Obama boasted that the efforts of ISIS to increase its territory had been “contained.”

While Syria’s Bashar al-Assad is a certainly a dictator, he poses absolutely no threat to the United States. U.S. calls for his ouster have only added to the humanitarian crisis in that country. Many Americans will find the Syrian situation similar to the Carter administration’s undermining of the pro-American Shah of Iran in 1979, which subsequently brought the Ayatollah to power. Despite the Shah’s repressive policies, it would be difficult to argue that the Iranian people have more liberty now than they did under the Shah. In fact, the ouster of Iraq’s President Saddam Hussein by the Bush administration has led directly to the present turmoil in the Middle East. American intervention in Libya is also to blame for that benighted country’s present extremist regime. The historical record is clear: American intervention in the internal affairs of other countries leads to anything but “peace.”

Claiming that the U.S. State Department is bringing, or has brought, peace to Syria makes about as much sense as hawkish President Obama receiving the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize.

Photo: AP Images

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