

# Syria's conflict is not as simple as we are told

## Description

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However, western mass media assume a notably partial position in favour of the US' led group, basing their statements on dubious sources. They don't have correspondents on the field and, most of the times, the same is true for the international agencies from where they take the information.

It is relevant to recall two important resignations of journalists because of this partiality. Both having happened in qatari tv channel Al Jazeera. Ali Hashem, war correspondent in Lybia, and Ghassan Bin Jeddo, former director of Beirut's Al Jazeera office.

According to Phyllis Bennis, from the progressist American Institute of Policy Studies, Qatar and Saudi Arabia are providing Syria's opposition with weapons which come from the US. Their country's interests in the conflict could explain Al Jazeera's pro-western view.

The general western narrative states that in Syria, as in Lybia before, there is an oppressed people which defends itself violently against an illegitimate and criminal government, aiming at changing it with a democratic regime. A regime that would be accepted by the vast majority of Syria's society, and which could deal with internal divisions in a peaceful way.

There is, nonetheless, consciously marginalized information which arises, at the very least, some important doubts to this version.

## Opposition are the good guys

In western media narrative opposition appears as good or less bad if compared to the government. However, we don't have strong evidence in this sense. According to a UN report from August 15th, both sides in the conflict have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity. But US Congress is perfectly aware of this, for its Congressional Research Service stated on a report dated on July 19th that "accounts of human rights abuses by both sides persist".

Recently the Press Emblem Campaign (PEC) warned that Government and opposition had killed already 25 journalists. It was rebel forces that, accidentally according to themselves, attacked the UN observers hotel. Three days later, those observers began to leave the country, before their mission was officially finished. As it will be explained later, it seems they were doing a good job.

## Which opposition?

The Syrian opposition doesn't exist as a group. They are many and quite different groups. In fact, Charlie Glass, who is a former ABC News correspondent in Syria and chief Middle East correspondent, asserted recently "there is a non-violent, peaceful opposition [...] [and] you have the free Syrian army, you have Al Qaeda-supported militias, you have militias, 70 or more [...]. If people wanted to support an opposition in Syria it probably should have been those non-violent people who were willing to demonstrate in the streets".

## Diplomatic means are not working

According to annalists like Phyllis Bennis, efforts carried out following Kofi Annan's Syrian peace plan frame were, slowly, resulting. Town by town, UN's team, led by norwegian General Robert Mood, was achieving local ceasefires.

In a country as divided as Syria, probably this micro-strategy is the only one that can success.

Our side is concerned about Human Rights and Al Qaeda

From White House, western governments and mass media point of view these are the main concerns of our countries in Syria's conflict.

It is surprising the hard US' struggle for Human Rights out of their borders. A country which is well known and documented that uses torture, violating internal and international legislation, against their own or others' citizens, with impunity. A country which, partially because of that, boycotts one of the most important achievements in the history of International Law: the International Criminal Court.

It is not perfectly clear the way the opposition considers Al Qaeda. Abu Ammar, rebel commander in Aleppo, said to journalist Nino Blinac, from AFP, literally: ""We don't want Al-Qaeda here, but if nobody else helps us, we will make an alliance with them", adding "and you can bet if Al-Qaeda comes here, they will brainwash the people. If Al-Qaeda enters Aleppo, the city will become their base within three months".

So, at the very least, some opposition does not see Al Qaeda the same way the US and most of countries in the world do.

The July 19th report from the US Congressional Research Service goes even further when it states that "U.S. Intelligence officers are helping to coordinate the delivery of lethal aid to elements of the armed Syrian opposition not affiliated with terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda". Which means that they assume that part of the opposition is affiliated with Al Qaeda. Moreover, they seem to admit more terrorist groups are linked to the opposition.

Where is Bahrain?

The narrative our mass media defend in Syria could be better used in what is going on in Bahrain. However, this case, where US interests are very different, media coverage is overtly deficient, if not completely ignored.

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