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Syrians Raise Questions over US-led Airstrikes in Syria

The Syrians in the UK are calling for answers regarding the US-led airstrikes inside Syria targeting ISIS and Syrian rebel groups.

While we in no way condone ISIS or its actions inside Syria, we have been told for over three years that the UN Security Council's deadlock has been preventing coercive action from being employed against the Assad regime. Given that this has not changed, we would like to ask the obvious question: What makes the recent airstrikes against ISIS lawful or legitimate?

By attacking ISIS but refraining from taking action against Assad and his forces, the US and its participating allies are sending a strong message that they condone the mass atrocities committed by this regime. The selectivity of the international community's actions has essentially translated into a green light for Assad to continue massacring the Syrian people. We are also concerned with reports of civilian casualties as a result of these strikes and stress that the protection of civilians remains our top priority.

We recall that the actions of the Assad regime have resulted in far greater destruction and human loss than those of any other group operating inside Syria. The regime continues to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity, employing chemical weapons in and indiscriminately shelling civilian-populated areas. Additionally, the regime has invited terrorist militias from Iran, Lebanon, and Iraq to wreak further havoc upon civilians, and has furthermore been directly responsible for creating the conditions whereby extremist organisations such as ISIS have found fertile ground in Syria.

We express our conviction that Assad remains the primary obstacle to peace and security in Syria and the wider region. Any measures short of securing his removal will not contribute to the alleviation of the Syrian crisis.

Signatories:

- Rethink Rebuild Society
- Syrian Association of Yorkshire
- Syrian Parliamentary Affairs Group
- Syrian Revolution Committee in Newcastle
- Scotland4Syria
- British Solidarity for Syria

