

# Signs of Political Solution in Syria

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**Authors**

Rudaw RC

Hussein Omer-

### Syrian Affairs Expert |

In the past few months and days, three new initiatives have appeared on the Syrian scene, which at least suggesting pioneers of a political solution that the two main international parties involved in the Syrian crisis, America and Russia, are working to develop it. These signs are evident in the developments and the recent Russian-Turkish agreement on Idlib (March 5, 2020), the Russian pro-Kremlin research and media agencies public campaign against the administration of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, and finally, US-European efforts to rearrange the political, administrative and military structures in the areas of self-rule administration in general and in the Kurdish part in particular.

### Idlib file

The recent battle of Idlib and military progress achieved by the Syrian forces with their allies in the province and in the southern and western countryside of the city of Aleppo, halt of Russian air and field military support, and the Russian tendency to stop fighting and Syrian army progress and to conclude an agreement with Turkey (that took place on March 5, 2020), all this showed the size of the American role in controlling the course of developments in that region, as well as the US-Russian understanding about it. Which the American-Russian-Israeli tripartite security summit has become a strategic base of understanding on Syria. The summit took place in Jerusalem on June 24-25, 2019 that brought together Israeli National Security Adviser Meir Ben-Shabbat and the US National Security Adviser (At the time) John Bolton and his Russian counterpart Nikolai Patrushev, who discussed the political future of Syria free of foreign forces according to UN Security Council Resolution (2254) of December 18, 2015. The Russian Foreign Ministry had anticipated the summit by stating that its goal was a settlement in Syria and the Middle East. It seems that the US-Russian understanding regarding Idlib is based on preventing the Syrian government from achieving a decisive victory over Turkey's allies in the region and abandoning Turkish presence and influence, thus presenting a strength card to Iran in Syria. Instead, the joint US-Russian pressure on Turkey to either end (or dissolve) Jabhat al-Nusra Front to end the embarrassment caused by the existence of this terrorist-classified organization in accordance with a Security Council Resolution (May 31, 2013) And then wait until the realization of what can be called a trade-off between the Turkish and Iranian existences, and their parallel exit from Syria, within the framework of a political solution that main actors America and Russia, and behind them, Israel will play a key role.

### Russian campaign against Assad

The research and media institutions, polling centers and Russian news agencies especially since the signing of the Russian-American agreement have launched seemingly organized campaign against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad personally and his rule. Most of these institutions are close to the Kremlin, including the Russian Federal News Agency, owned by Russian billionaire Yevgeny Prigozhin, who is close to Russian President Putin, among Russian decision-making channels he was given the title of "Kremlin Chef" in reference to his great role in Russian decision-making. In mid-April, this agency described Assad as weak and unable to control the country's situation. Opinion polls conducted by Russian centers also showed that Assad will not gain the confidence of the majority of Syrians if he is running for the upcoming presidential elections. This Russian campaign against Assad personally may go beyond the dimensions of pressure on him to show more flexibility in responding to Russian proposals and away from Iran, the goal in depth is to remove Assad during the transitional period that America and Russia as part of the political solution agreed on.

Therefore assigning Major General Ali Mamlouk, head of the National Security Office, as Syrian Vice President for Security Affairs, as leaked was under Russian pressure, and is a step in this direction, placing him at the forefront of the transitional

phase. And Gen.Mamlouk had strong rumors in 2015 about his attempt to stage a coup against Assad, according to some leaked information he led the recent security meetings with Turkey, and he also visited Egypt in public and Saudi Arabia secretly. This is a meeting point between the international actors active in the Syrian crisis.

### **Efforts for Kurdish unity in Syria**

Recently, the American and European efforts have increased for unity between the Kurdish parties in Syria. Over the past week, William Roebuck, the US envoy to Northeast Russia, expanded his circle of meetings with the Kurdish parties, within two days he met with twenty-two Kurdish parties, in addition to the ongoing meetings with the Democratic Union Party and the Kurdish National Council, which succeeded in holding direct meetings between them and they agreed meetings to be kept secret until a serious breakthrough was achieved, which has not been achieved yet. Because the meetings did not exceed expressing confidence to initiate talks and some general political stances on which the Kurdish parties do not differ greatly, while the two most difficult files, the administration and the military side, were not discussed, and they are the most complex files due to the difference between them between the democratic union party, which controls the self-rule administration and calls on the Kurdish National Council to join it, and the national council (KNC) calls for the formation of a new administration, while the military file appears not to be discussed with Roebuck, but rather with other American circles. Sensitivity of (military file) exceeds the ability of Kurdish parties in Qamishlo and Hasakeh to take a decision on it.

In his meetings with the Kurdish parties, Roebuck has informed them that the political solution in Syria is approaching, hence the importance of Kurdish unity, so that the Kurdish allies can include them in a unified front and unify their position and vision in the endeavors of the political solution.

Amid of these unrelenting American endeavors in which America makes more pressure on the Kurdish parties, France returns, after more than a year after its initiative with the Kurdish parties, to its endeavors to bring the Kurdish parties closer, a French delegation is scheduled to meet with Kurdish parties in western Kurdistan (Rojava) on Monday 4 May 2020.