

U.S., Russian Federation militaries to talk Wednesday on Syria air safety

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In the latest maneuver, the USA sent 50 tons of ammunition to rebels trying to topple President Bashar al-Assad and four decades of his family's rule. He said that the arms had been taken from stockpiles that had been intended for the "train and equip" program to field a militia force trained and armed by the United States military in Turkey and Jordan.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Tuesday his country's involvement in Syria is helping protect the world.

"We're not able to associate more broadly with Russia's approach in Syria, because it is wrongheaded and strategically shortsighted," he said. Yet American officials also believe that getting Assad out of Syria is a key precursor to defeating the Islamic State movement, which is driven in part by Sunni disaffection with the Alawite governing class. And the Russians are working to keep Assad in power. The responses were all over the map.

"If we don't have somebody there now that is beholden to the United States," he said, "then we're going to have nobody in that post Assad game".

Russia's objectives in Syria are very different from that of the U.S.-led coalition.

Carter's announcement comes the same day a Pentagon spokesman said USA and Russian aircraft came within 10 to 20 miles of each other Saturday while the two countries had their second round of talks on pilot safety.

"The European Union condemns the excessive, disproportionate and indiscriminate attacks that the Syrian regime continues to commit against its own people".

Assad's regime has been dropping leaflets from helicopters in Idlib province, telling residents to go to government checkpoints unarmed because their neighborhoods will be pummeled, an opposition group said. Is this one going to make a difference?

"When you get close to the Syrian army's checkpoints, be sure that you do not carry any kind of weapons, carry your personal identities and your necessary needs with you...."

Russian Federation has several reasons for remaining friends with Syria. Its only reliable naval port on the Mediterranean is there.

Russian Federation also does not consider regime change, wars and revolutions bring democracy and stability.

Brad Stapleton, a visiting research fellow in the Cato Institute, said carnage will probably ensue.

After the Central Intelligence Agency spent more than two years secretly working with Arab allies to arm, train and fund thousands of so-called moderate rebels to oppose Assad, American officials have watched in recent days as Russian bombs and missiles have targeted those groups. “As during the Cold War, United States and Russian arms supplies will simply fan the flames of conflict and beget more death and destruction”, one expert writes for CNN.