The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Says West Must Cooperate With Syria Over Islamic State

By Gabrielle Tetrault-Farber

October 29, 2014



Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov accused the United States of hindering the global fight against the Islamic State by refusing to cooperate with the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad, state news agency RIA Novosti reported Wednesday.

"We are once again running up against the position of our Western colleagues, who do not want to cooperate with Assad's regime for their own reasons — because they consider the regime illegitimate," RIA Novosti quoted Gatilov as saying. "Without this cooperation, it is difficult to expect an effective result [in the fight against the Islamic State.]"

Gatilov added that Russia had warned the West from the outbreak of civil conflict in Syria that there was a risk that it would result in the rise of terrorism there, but the West "didn't really listen, because their goal is and was to overthrow Assad's regime."

He also said that the Syrian government had claimed the Islamic State obtained chemical weapons, and that while Russia had no "concrete evidence" of this, it could not be ruled out, RIA reported.

Gatilov took another jab at the West, saying that any intervention against the Islamic State on Syrian territory without consent from Damascus would be a violation of the country's "sovereignty and territorial integrity," RIA reported.

The deputy foreign minister reiterated, however, that Moscow was committed to supporting the efforts of the United Nations' special envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, in resuming dialogue on the country's stabilization.

He also said Russia would continue to support the idea that the international community conduct brainstorming sessions on methods to combat terrorism, a notion Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov raised at the UN General Assembly in September. This exchange of ideas would help decision-makers get to the root causes of terrorism, and not simply react to its manifestations, RIA cited the deputy foreign minister as saying.

Contact the author at g.tetraultfarber@imedia.ru

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/10/29/russia-says-west-must-cooperate-with-syria-over-islamic-state-a40901