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Russian Foreign Ministry To Welcome Obama Offensive on al-Nusra – If It's True

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Russia's Foreign Ministry says that it would welcome U.S. President Barack Obama's decision to kill the leaders of the al-Qaeda-linked al-Nusra Front in Syria – provided that reports of the order are true.

"In foreign policy and diplomacy, it is accepted practice to respond to official information," Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told journalists. "So far, we have seen no such thing."

The Washington Post reported on Nov. 10 that Obama had instructed the Pentagon to find and eliminate al-Nusra's leaders. Ryabkov played down the claims, telling journalists that the newspaper had not always "distinguished itself with especially accurate information."

Al-Nusra has been among the most successful groups fighting the Kremlin-backed government of Syrian President Bashar Assad. The group's extremist views and ties to al-Qaeda have still caused problems for the United States with some officials telling the Washington Post that the White House could no longer tolerate "a deal with the devil."

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On the eve of Obama's supposed announcement, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova criticized U.S. policy in Syria during an interview with Chinese Radio International, the RIA Novosti news agency reported.

"Terrorism is like a snake," she said. "Turn your back and it will bite you. You cannot play with it."

The al-Nusra Front, al-Qaeda and the Islamic State are all terrorist organizations banned in Russia.

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