



## RESEARCH PAPER

# The Global Rivalry in Syria and the Security Dilemma in the Middle East

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## ABSTRACT

This research examines the impact of significant global actors on the conflict's progress, emphasizing the roles of pivotal countries like Iran, Turkey, the United States, and Russia, including regional non-state actors in shaping Syria's path to instability, through research analysis of the complex elements and history of international competition in the Levant, highlighting how outside engagement has progressively transformed and extended Syria via an assessment of projection and diplomatic efforts. Due to its strategic position, rich resources, and cultural importance, Syria has drawn foreign involvement for centuries. It also evaluates the continuous influence of foreign powers on Syria's political situation. Simultaneously, China's economic efforts pose difficulties for U.S. interests. Using a qualitative method, the study explores the reasons, tactics, and results of foreign involvement in Syria from the perspective of offensive realism. The results demonstrate how these interventions have altered regional power dynamics and intensified the ongoing crisis, particularly following the downfall of Assad's regime. The research concludes by examining the effects of global rivalry on the region, as well as potential routes to lasting peace in Syria and why the arena will remain open for the influential players.

**KEYWORDS** Iran, Levant, Syria, Global rivalry, U.S., China

## Introduction

Due to its strategic location at the intersection of Europe, Asia, and Africa, the Levant region (modern-day Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, and Palestine) has long been a focal point of political strife and foreign interference. For this reason, due to its cultural and historical relevance, it has been a target for empires and kingdoms looking to spread their reach. Syria has become a battleground for opposing foreign countries, all pursuing their own geopolitical, economic, and ideological goals (Zulfqar, 2018). Therefore, external involvement has been a distinguishing characteristic of Syrian politics and society for over a century, significantly influencing the country's growth and present issues. Syria, specifically, has been pivotal in this geopolitical context (Trejo, 2021).

The Syrian Civil War, which began in 2011 during the Arab Spring movements, swiftly transformed into a complex conflict with various local, regional, and international participants. Originally ignited by internal protests against Bashar al-Assad's authoritarian regime, the conflict rapidly escalated into a lengthy war that involved international powers and local players, all chasing their strategic objectives

(Yaseen, et. al., 2018; Nuruzzaman, 2015). So, how have foreign interventions affected Syria's social cohesion, stability, and sovereignty? The United States, Russia, Iran, Turkey, and other local actors have all participated in Syria to differing extents, motivated by their national interests rather than solely humanitarian issues (Muzaffar, et. al., 2017). Чернов et al., 2024). However, international interventions have significantly influenced the trajectory of the conflict, frequently intensifying violence and extending the anguish of the Syrian population.

The United States initially backed moderate opposition factions but later redirected its efforts to fight the ISIS Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, creating partnerships with Kurdish forces, which subsequently put a strain on its ties with Turkey (Sever, 2020). On the contrary, in 2015, Russia, a crucial supporter of the Assad regime, launched a large-scale military intervention in the war, seeking to establish its strategic presence in the area and counter Western influence. Iran, utilizing its IRGC Revolutionary Guard Corps and allied groups like Hezbollah, has offered significant military and financial assistance to Assad until the regime changes, considering Syria as an essential element in its regional axis of resistance (Khan et. al., 2019; Juneau, 2020).

Additionally, China has elevated its diplomatic and economic involvement, establishing itself as a possible mediator in post-war rebuilding initiatives. Hence, the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked the beginning of a new period of U.S. supremacy in the Middle East, in which Beijing intended to challenge the unipolarity of the U.S (Muzaffar & Khan, 2016; Chakrabarti, 2019).

Tackling the underlying causes of the conflict and promoting lasting peace necessitates a thorough and inclusive strategy that emphasizes the needs and desires of the Syrian population above the geopolitical motivations of foreign powers.

### **Historical Context**

Interventions by foreign powers in the Levant date back to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire following World War I, and the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement, a covert treaty between Britain and France, exemplified the colonial desires of European nations in the area. The accord partitioned the Ottoman lands into spheres of influence, creating arbitrary boundaries that disregarded the area's ethnic, religious, and tribal contexts. France took control of Syria and Lebanon, while Britain managed Palestine, Transjordan, and Iraq. This colonial division planted the roots of sectarian and ethnic divisions, as the newly formed states lacked unified national identities (Yaseen, et. al., 2019; Kitching, 2016). In Syria, French governance intensified conflicts among Sunni Muslims, Alawites, Christians, and various minority groups, as the colonial authorities used a "divide and conquer" approach to assert dominance while, the impact of these colonial policies still plagues the Levant, as the imposed borders and sectarian splits have escalated conflicts and unrest (Naor, 2017).

During the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union aimed to extend their influence in the Middle East, frequently via proxy wars and partnerships with local entities. Syria, guided by the Ba'ath Party, allied with the Soviet Union, obtained military and economic aid in return for strategic collaboration. This alignment was motivated by Syria's opposition to Israel, which is supported by the West, and its aim to balance U.S. influence in the area. The Cold War period also saw the emergence of pan-Arab nationalism, represented by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, which aimed to

unify Arab nations against Western imperialism and the expansion of Israel. Nonetheless, the unsuccessful pan-Arab initiatives, like the United Arab Republic (a brief union of Egypt and Syria from 1958 to 1961), deepened regional divisions and solidified authoritarian governments (Little, 1990).

Afterwards, the culmination of the USSR's 1991 and Gulf War, in which a coalition led by the U.S. removed Iraqi troops from Kuwait, showcased America's readiness to use military force to safeguard its interests in the area. Nonetheless, the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the following destabilization of the nation had extensive repercussions for the Levant. The overthrow of Saddam Hussein's government produced a power vacuum that strengthened Iran and sectarian militias, altering the regional balance of power. In Syria, Bashar al-Assad, who took over from his father in 2000, aimed to manage the evolving geopolitical circumstances by preserving ties with Iran and Russia while cautiously interacting with the West (Yaseen, et. al., 2023; Siklawi, 2022).

Moreover, which the consequences of external interventions impact both regional and global security? emphasizing the increased likelihood of direct clashes between major powers and the difficulties in attaining lasting peace in an area marked by fierce power rivalry. At last, from the historical trajectories, offensive realism emphasizes the importance of a more sophisticated and collaborative strategy for international relations, one that values stability and human security above the relentless chase for power.

## **Literature Review**

The global rivalry in Syria and the security dilemma in the Middle East is referred to a complicated geo-political debate. This topic requires a conscientious and mindful analysis because of its various features, as this discussion revolves around the powerful role of external powers like Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey were disillusioned in a spiral of insecurity (Jervis, 2013). In 2015, Russia's military intervention complicated the conflict as Russia preserved its naval facility at Tartus, combating extremism, demonstrating its great power status, and proving itself a mandatory actor in Middle Eastern security. Whereas the Western powers assumed Russia's increasing sway as erode their strategic standing (Charap et al., 2019). The U.S. policies were shaped to counter Iranian influence, to limit Russian gains, and to safeguard against extended regional collapse (Karakoç, 2013). Iran saw Syria as the key to its "strategic depth" policy. The security concerns of Iran derive from the fear of being encircled by US allies, with the possibility of losing its engagement with Hezbollah in Lebanon. As a result, it gave Tehran a powerful motive to pour resources into retaining the Assad regime in power (Mason, 2021). The preliminary support of Turkey for opposition forces led to a military incursion suppressing Kurdish regional ambitions. Turkey faced heightened security anxieties from US support for YPG, viewed as existential, while managing delicate ties with Russia and Iran (Erkmen & Erendor, 2024).

Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and other Gulf States pursued rival agendas in Syria by backing different opposition groups financially and militarily, mirroring that regional rivalry with Iran. This competition fueled fragmentation among opposition factions (Berti & Guzansky, 2014). European States' policies were shaped by extremist violence and the displacement crisis as millions of Syrians sought asylum overseas (Orchard et al., 2014). Global rivalry plays out in Syria's rebuilding, as great powers seek to exert influence over Syria's future (Mohamed Buheji & Aamir Hasan, 2025).

Scholars and academicians have been arguing about power maximizing in the Levant region, where Syria was the prime object of influence. Still, there is no clear consensus on the consent of future dimensions. Hence, the research seeks to combine analysis with the post-Assad regime and future aspects of Syria's power vacuum, including recommendations for the prevention of future vulnerabilities.

### **Material and Methods**

Focusing on power dynamics in the Levant, this paper argues that external actors in the region are caught between power politics focused on zero-sum concepts and the political demands of the local population, through the prism of offensive realism while, this study also address the intricate interplays of foreign interventions in Syria for competing interests and their consequences for the Levant and the world at large by qualitative method.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This is opposed to the structure-dominance thought of structuralism, which focuses on the way which states create a system and create devices for their use, over time, influencing the mutual actions of the state, utilizing elements both external and internal to each specific system that falls into the governance of a specific formal and internal structural-governance article, and assisting clarifying the mutual governorship of its external, while the theory of offensive realism dictates that the basic nature of each one of the states arises from a rational main goal of gaining quantity of power, but however high as much as dominating a territory in a regional access, whilst leading a rationalist governance system amongst its leading set of governing devices (Snyder, 2014).

In addition, this method's primary emphasis is to demonstrate the agreement of the chaotic arrangement of the global framework pressures countries to consistently compete for authority. This theory in Syria highlights the detrimental consequences of these interventions on the perspective of the offensive realization that the foreign interventions in Syria result from the extra political great powers' quest to enlarge their realm and garner strategic gains that are key to retaining their dominance in the anarchic global system (Maklad, 2022). In contrast to defensive realism, which claims that states aim solely to preserve security, offensive realism asserts that states are naturally inclined to expand and pursue regional or global dominance whenever the opportunity arises. Such as Russia's ongoing military presence and enduring security pacts in Syria demonstrate its strategic goal to assert power in the Middle East and offset Western influence (Grafov, 2019). For example, Iran's deepened entrenchment in Syria through proxy militias and military infrastructure aligned with its broader regional strategy to assert dominance in the Middle East under the Assad regime. However, the U.S. first backed opposition factions to undermine the Assad government, allied with Iran and Russia, both considered challenges to U.S. influence in the Middle East. Subsequently, the U.S. redirected its attention to fighting ISIS, aiming not just to eradicate a terrorist menace but also to stop the organization from weakening the region and diminishing U.S. power. The creation of military bases in northeastern Syria further illustrates the U.S. plan to keep a presence in the area to resist Iranian and Russian growth (Dück et al., 2021). The Turkish actions in northern Syria correspond with offensive realism, as Ankara aims to enhance its power by limiting Kurdish independence and establishing its dominance in the area. Simultaneously, Turkey's neo-Ottoman aspirations fuel its aim to take a prominent position in the Levant, which further validates its interventions. The

involvement of global and regional powers in Syria has extended the conflict, worsened sectarian divisions, and led to significant humanitarian suffering, consequences that are foreseeable from an offensive realist viewpoint. Gulf nations have established an intricate network of partnerships and conflicts, with no one force capable of securing supremacy (Martin, 2023). This scenario highlights the difficulties of seeking dominance in a multipolar environment and the built-in dangers of aggressive approaches. Although offensive realism offers essential perspectives on the motivations and behaviors of states in the Syrian conflict, it falls short of capturing the complete intricacies of foreign interventions. At the same time, theory often neglects the influence of ideology, identity, and internal politics on state actions.

## **Results and Discussion**

The global rivalry in Syria can be viewed from the prism of involved actors and their objectives to secure in Syria in particular and the Middle East in general. and these are as follows:

### **Syrian conundrum**

The Syrian conflict stands as a clear illustration of the damaging effects of foreign interventions and the difficulties of establishing peace in a region characterized by conflicting interests and longstanding rivalries. However, the Syrian conflict, which originated in 2011 as a component of the Arab Spring protests, rapidly transformed into a complicated proxy war with various foreign participants, each motivated by different goals and strategic interests. Subsequently, through the role of the main players in Syria are the United States, Russia, Iran, Turkey, and Gulf nations like Saudi Arabia and Qatar, all of whom have intervened to promote their own geopolitical, ideological, and security goals because they have been devouring the motivations and tactics of these players is crucial for understanding the dynamics of the Syrian conflict and its wider repercussions for the Levant and beyond the region (Hetou, 2018). In the global arena in Syria, due to a power vacuum, every actor has followed its interests, frequently undermining stability and human security, resulting in a prolonged and destructive conflict.

### **The U.S Interests**

The United States has been significantly involved in the Syrian conflict, motivated by a mix of ideological, strategic, and security interests. At first, the U.S. backed opposition factions aiming to dismantle the Assad government, seeing the conflict as a chance to encourage democracy and combat authoritarianism in the Middle East. This assistance was a component of a wider U.S. plan to connect with the surge of pro-democracy efforts that surfaced during the Arab Spring. As the conflict intensified and extremist organizations such as ISIS rose to prominence, U.S. priorities transitioned to counterterrorism efforts. The coalition against ISIS, led by the U.S. and established in 2014, carried out significant airstrikes and offered military aid to Kurdish-led groups, especially the Syrian Democratic Forces, which were vital in overcoming ISIS. From the viewpoint of offensive realism, the intervention by the U.S. can be seen as a strategy to preserve its global supremacy and to counteract ascending powers such as Russia and Iran, which are viewed as challenges to U.S. authority in the Middle East (Parker, 2019). The creation of military bases in northeastern Syria additionally illustrates the U.S. approach of securing a presence in the area to oppose Iranian and Russian dominance. Nevertheless, the U.S. has been critiqued for its erratic policies and absence of a definitive

long-term strategy, which have led to the division of Syrian territory and the continuation of the conflict (Balanche, 2018).

### **Russia's Participation**

From an offensive realist viewpoint, Russia's involvement is motivated by the desire to enhance its relative influence and safeguard its status in a chaotic international environment. Russia's military efforts, which comprised airstrikes, ground forces, and diplomatic backing for the Assad government, have been crucial in allowing the regime to reestablish control over significant regions. Nonetheless, Russia's actions have further exacerbated the humanitarian crisis, with numerous reports of civilian deaths and the targeting of areas controlled by the opposition. Russia's involvement has bolstered its partnership with Iran, forming a formidable alliance that contests U.S. power in the area (Eriksen, 2017).

### **Iran and the Axis of Resistance**

Iran's involvement in the Syrian conflict is strongly linked to its geopolitical and ideological goals. As a nation predominantly comprising Shia Muslims, Iran has aimed to safeguard its Shia partners in Syria and widen its "Shia Crescent," a geopolitical corridor stretching from Tehran to Baghdad, Damascus, and Beirut. Iran backs the Assad regime to counter Sunni-led countries such as Saudi Arabia and to preserve its influence in the Levant (Sip, 2024). From the viewpoint of offensive realism, Iran's involvement is driven by the aim to enhance its regional influence and eradicate risks to its security. Iran has offered substantial military, financial, and logistical assistance to the Assad government, which comprises the deployment of IRGC Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps troops and the mobilization of Shia militias from the region, including Hezbollah from Lebanon therefore, Iran's actions have increased tensions with Gulf nations and the global community, making it more difficult to attain a peaceful solution to the conflict (Zafar & Iqra, 2025).

### **Neo-Ottoman Approach of Turkey**

Turkey perceives the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces as an existential danger because of their connections to the PKK, Kurdistan Workers' Party, which has conducted a decades-long rebellion against the Turkish government. From the standpoint of offensive realism, Turkey's actions are driven by the necessity to anticipate threats and enhance its influence in the region (Erdoğan, 2024). Turkey has initiated multiple military campaigns in northern Syria, such as Operation Euphrates Shield (2016-2017), Operation Olive Branch (2018), and Operation Peace Spring (2019), intending to limit Kurdish independence and create a buffer zone along its southern frontier. Turkey's actions have forced Kurdish communities to relocate and harmed its ties with NATO partners, especially the United States, which has backed the SDF in combating ISIS. So, beyond Turkey's security challenges, Turkey's actions are influenced by its neo-Ottoman desires, illustrating Turkey's historical and cultural ties to the Levant and its ambitions to play a leading part in the region (Khanum et al., 2024). Turkey has also contributed to Syria's make-up, and made attempts to diminish the influence of Assad regime and Kurdish forces in the war, which were against the Turkish influence (Kardaş, 2025).

### **Gulf and Saudi Arabian Position**

Gulf states seem to act out of a need to keep rising players in check while looking after their security, and I've noticed that this drive shapes much of their maneuvers. Take Saudi Arabia, for instance—it gets noticeably rattled by Iran's expansion in the Levant, which it sees as a pretty direct stab at its regional clout, so it's been known to dish out both cash and military backing to groups opposing Assad's rule. Conversely, Qatar has backed Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, highlighting its wider approach of advancing political Islam and opposing Saudi dominance. Whereas, the tension between Saudi Arabia and Qatar has added to the complexity of the conflict, as their conflicting goals have weakened attempts to establish a unified opposition stance (Hododi, 2024).

Tackling the underlying issues of the conflict and promoting lasting peace will necessitate a collaborative and inclusive strategy that emphasizes the needs and desires of the Syrian populace above the geopolitical interests of foreign entities.

### **The Impact of Sino-U.S. Tensions on Syria**

Syria is not a direct battlefield in the Sino-U.S. geopolitical competition, but the rivalry affects its conflict dynamics. The U.S. and China have strategic interests in the region, with the U.S. focused on counterterrorism and supporting Kurdish groups, while China takes a more cautious, economically driven approach linked to its Belt and Road Initiative. U.S. goals include countering terrorism and Iranian influence, though its erratic policies have contributed to ongoing conflict. Meanwhile, China aims to facilitate Syria's reconstruction, balancing risks amid the nation's instability (Houghton, 2024). However, the China to access the Middle East, China should engage in energy agreements concerning Iranian or Iraqi oil and gas pipelines that pass through Syria, the energy infrastructure of CPEC might indirectly facilitate these efforts (Batool & Muzaffar, 2024; Nawab, et. al., 2021). Therefore, China's cohesive BRI strategy, along with regional collaborations, may enhance economic and strategic connections between the two (Zafar et al., 2025). The US's traditional allies, such as Saudi Arabia and Israel, are wary of China's growing presence, fearing it could undermine their interests and US power. At the same time, China's economic role in Syria fosters collaboration with Iran and Russia. Its involvement in Syria's rebuilding efforts may grant China significant influence over the country's post-conflict political landscape, potentially reducing US dominance (Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP) & Jaber, 2025). Meanwhile, the US's ability to influence Syria's reconstruction is hindered by strained relations with regional partners and a focus on counterterrorism. Thus, China employs a more pragmatic, economically driven approach (Zhu, 2023).

### **Contemporary Dynamics: Regime Change in Syria**

The imagined situation of the Assad regime's conclusion in Syria presents a complicated and varied landscape, characterized by both chances for rebuilding and harmonizing, alongside substantial challenges arising from entrenched divides, power voids, and the persistent presence of foreign influences. The downfall of the Assad regime, following over fifty years of authoritarian governance, would signify a monumental change in Syria's political and social structure. Still, it could also trigger a sequence of developments that might lead to a new period of stability or drive the nation deeper into disorder.

## **Kurdish Question**

The immediate consequences of the regime's downfall involve a time of profound uncertainty as internal and external rival factions struggle for dominance over land, resources, and political authority, such as opposition, which consists of Kurdish-led forces, Islamist militias, and remnants of the regime's security forces, trying to exert their influence. On the other hand, foreign meddling tends to scatter Syria's power base in unpredictable ways. Russia, Iran, Turkey, and the United States all step in with their agendas, each trying to shape what comes after Assad in ways that serve them best, sometimes wondering if this cocktail of ambitions will only complicate an already messy scene (Yegen, 2023). While the newly transitional cabinet under the president has dismissed Kurdish requests for federalism or self-governing authority (Qereman, 2025).

In the meantime, opposition factions, many of which have been diminished by prolonged internal disputes and outside interference, would find it challenging to offer a united alternative to the government, heightening fears of possible renewed conflict and unrest (Karlsson, 2025).

## **Humanitarian Crisis**

In North and East Syria, a prominent aspect of the Syrian conflict will continue to be a significant issue in the post-Assad period. Millions of Syrians are still displaced, both within the country and overseas, facing bleak chances of returning because of extensive devastation to homes, infrastructure, and means of living. The regime's end might open possibilities for refugees and IDPs, internally displaced persons, to return, though this would necessitate substantial international assistance and coordination to tackle the security, legal, and logistical issues present. Rebuilding Syria's ravaged cities and towns will be an enormous undertaking, necessitating billions of dollars in financial support and a unified effort from the global community (Seven, 2025b). Nevertheless, the participation of outside entities in reconstruction activities may also create friction, as nations like Russia, Iran, and Turkey aim to utilize their financial contributions to gain lasting power in Syria. The involvement of Western nations and global organizations would be essential to guarantee that rebuilding initiatives are clear, inclusive, and centered on the requirements of the Syrian populace instead of the geopolitical agendas of foreign players. The humanitarian crisis also possesses a generational aspect, as a whole generation of Syrians has matured amidst the conflict, facing restricted access to education, healthcare, and economic prospects. Meeting the needs of this generation is crucial for interrupting the cycle of violence and establishing lasting peace (Seven, 2025a).

## **Regional and Global Consequences**

The regional and international consequences of the fall of the Assad regime would be significant, altering the geopolitical dynamics of the Middle East and further afield. The downfall of the regime would deal a serious setback to Iran, which has invested substantially in supporting the Assad regime as part of its plan to enhance its influence in the Levant and uphold its "Shia Crescent." Losing Syria as a vital ally would diminish Iran's standing in the region and may trigger a realignment of alliances as various regional players, like Saudi Arabia and Israel, attempt to leverage the emerging geopolitical circumstances. Russia, for one, has long stuck by Assad, but now it faces quite a challenge keeping its influence afloat amidst a divided political maze. Over in northern Syria, Turkey, having set up a military foothold and lending its support to



various opposition groups, seems determined not only to block any budding Kurdish enclaves but also to strengthen its clout (Dabbagh, 2025). From the viewpoint of Turkey's role in the Syrian arena, having established a military presence in northern Syria and backed opposition factions, will be another crucial element in the post-Assad period, as it aims to inhibit the formation of a Kurdish statelet and reinforce its influence in the area (Kardaş et al., 2025). Meanwhile, the United States, even with a reduced military presence, plays a noticeable role by continuing its fight against ISIS and supporting Kurdish-led factions. When you step back and look at the picture as a whole, the mix of these foreign players, with their sometimes conflicting interests, creates a scenario where opportunities and setbacks jostle together, making the future of stability and reconciliation anything but straightforward (Bukhari, 2025).

### **Evaluation of External Interventions**

External interventions in Syria have significantly characterized the post-modern history of the region, profoundly influencing its political, social, and economic environment in both impactful and often harmful ways. Although supporters have defended these interventions as essential for fostering stability, combating terrorism, or safeguarding human rights, the reality of their effects has proven to be much more intricate and often counterproductive. Every intervention has been motivated by the strategic interests of the intervening nations, frequently at the cost of the Syrian populace (Mohamed Buheji & Aamir Hasan, 2025). The United States, for example, initially backed factions aiming to topple the Assad regime, presenting its involvement as part of a wider initiative to advance democracy in the Middle East. Nevertheless, this support frequently strengthened extremist groups and led to the division of the opposition, hindering attempts to establish a united and efficient resistance. A significant criticism of foreign interventions is their infringement on state sovereignty and international law. The concept of state sovereignty, embedded in the UN Charter, is a fundamental aspect of the international system, but it has consistently been weakened by foreign interventions in the Levant (Shamlol, 2025).

In Syria, the actions of foreign powers have frequently occurred without the Syrian government's consent or the UN Security Council's approval, prompting significant legal and ethical concerns. The airstrikes by the U.S.-led coalition on ISIS, for instance, were rationalized through the principles of self-defense and the duty to protect, yet they also included sending ground troops and setting up military bases in northeastern Syria without explicit agreement from the Assad government therefore, Turkey have faced criticism for being breaches of Syrian sovereignty and international law (Bukhari, 2025). These actions set dangerous precedents, undermine the principle of non-interference, and create a global atmosphere where powerful states believe they can interfere in weaker states to advance their interests. However, the loss of state sovereignty can also have lasting consequences for affected states because it reduces their legitimacy and weakens their ability to govern effectively, while the involvement of foreign powers has fragmented the territory and government power, creating multiple spheres of influence, each governed by different factions with conflicting interests. This makes it difficult to build a unified, effective state (Deshpande et al., 2024).

### **Roadmap to Tranquility & Security**

The following roadmap can be followed to ensure tranquility and peace in the Syria in particular and Middle East in general:

## **Political Change and Administration**

An important step in this process is to form an inclusive, representative, and legitimate transitional government recognized by all Syrians, which should include a broad range of participants, including the opposition, Kurdish-led groups, civil society organizations, and representatives of Syria's various ethnic and religious groups (Pinfold, 2025). The participation of these groups is essential to ensure that the transition process is seen as just and fair, rather than a continuation of the sectarian and authoritarian practices of the past. The transitional government must also work to restore vital services such as health, education, and infrastructure that have been destroyed by years of conflict while, this will require significant support from the international community in the form of financial aid and technical assistance to rebuild the Syrian economy and create the conditions for lasting stability in the region (Mihaylov, 2025).

## **Global Assistance**

The involvement of international organizations such as the UN is essential for a post-Assad Syria to move toward peace and stability; therefore, the UN can play a key role in facilitating dialogue between the different factions, overseeing the implementation of transitional justice measures, and organizing international aid and reconstruction operations. However, the UN can help ensure that the transition process is inclusive and representative by providing technical assistance and support in drafting a new constitution and holding free and fair elections while, the effectiveness of the UN depends on the willingness of its member states to put aside geopolitical conflicts and focus on the needs of the Syrian people. The participation of regional entities, like the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, might also be significant in fostering regional backing for the transitional process and tackling the worries of surrounding nations, including Turkey, Iran, and Israel (Khan, 2025).

## **Security Reforms**

The unification of different armed factions into a cohesive national military is essential for stability. Firstly, the Syrian National Army (SNA) and Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), together with additional factions, need to be coordinated under civilian control to avert the revival of warlordism or factionalism. Reforms in the security sector must prioritize the professionalization of the military, the disarmament of militias, and the creation of transitional justice mechanisms to confront historical atrocities. Secondly, the curfew implemented in Homs and other actions underscore the necessity for prompt security stabilization while establishing a foundation for lasting peace (Sutisna & Muttaqin, 2025).

## **Economic Revival**

Years of warfare have ravaged Syria's economy, leading to extensive poverty, joblessness, and the destruction of infrastructure. Economic revival is essential for enduring stability. The interim government has begun implementing administrative changes to improve services and fight corruption. Raising salaries in the public sector and digitizing services are beneficial measures (Buheji & Hasan, 2025), but they need to be complemented by wider economic strategies that focus on creating jobs, investing in infrastructure, and aiding small businesses. Global assistance will be vital for rebuilding efforts; nevertheless, mechanisms for transparency and accountability are essential to guarantee the effective use of resources (Ezzeddin, 2025).

## **Conclusion**

Several important conclusions can be drawn from the study of foreign engagement in Syria for the quest of interest. The remnants of colonialism and the transformations in regional power after the Cold War have all played a role in the difficulties of attaining peace and stability in Syria. Furthermore, the participation of various foreign entities in the Syrian conflict has intensified its complexities and extended its length, resulting in catastrophic effects for the Syrian population. The conflict in Syria has exploded into a force to be reckoned with, partly because of its strategic location and regional importance. Since then, there have been multiple types of outsider interventions that have led to the prolongation and deepening of the conflict. While it is a major turning point, the overthrow of the Assad regime in 2024 does not mean that outsider interventions will stop. The United States Center for International and Comparative Policy Analysis, which depicts a long-term solution to Syria's problems, must tackle both the present humanitarian crisis and the underlying patterns of outsider intervention that have set the course for the country. It has instead set up new levels of international engagement dynamics, with different international powers rewriting their strategy according to newly erupted circumstances. As a result, millions of Syrians have been displaced as a result of these actions, and the humanitarian consequences remain dire. The participation of world and regional powers in the conflict has established new divisions and rivalries, as each player wants to promote its interests and limit the effects of its opponents. Whereas, in future studies, the emphasis should be on the possibility of how shifting global power dynamics might impact Syria's prospects for stability and reconstruction.

## **Recommendations**

- The dual standards of Western players and the policy of divide and rule are leading to a new Cold War in the Middle East. Therefore, the global players must understand the Middle East security dilemma from a regional lens and not a global rivalry.
- The Middle East must avoid playing the role of proxies to serve the vested interests of the global players. Independent decisions and active cooperation of all the regional states can avoid an emerging Cold War in the Middle East.
- Regional conflicts need a regional approach, and regional integration and inclusivity are required to consolidate the peace efforts in the Middle East.
- To consolidate the peace efforts in the Middle East, the OIC needs to play a pivotal role in bolstering regional peace through promoting the ideals, i.e., regional economic integration, peace dialogues, and cultural exchange without foreign involvement. This practice will engender tolerance and acceptance towards ethnic groups in the Middle East.

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