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Packer Collegiate Institute
Role: Syrian Government

Economic Reconstruction

Prior to the current turmoil in Syria, the economy was centralized, socialistic, and boasted growth and relative stability based on a diverse GDP. Syria had a young and eager workforce, with unemployment at under 8%, and most people were employed in the general service sector. Syria's oil and agricultural sectors made up around 25 percent of the economy each, with retail following at around 20 percent and tourism at about 10 percent. When the country disintegrated into chaos, the $\frac{1}{6}$ budget deficit the country was running turned around and swallowed the rapidly shrinking GDP; as a result the currency quickly inflated and exports plummeted. The Syrian pound is down over 80 percent from its pre-war value, the export rate has dropped to $\frac{1}{6}$ of its prior number in many sectors (including petroleum and mining), and the population has decreased to $\frac{3}{4}$ of its former numbers. These statistics are especially problematic, but essentially regime issues, because the central bank is state run as are most economic affairs. With war raging, there has been no manufacturing in our country; we have to buy all of our weapons and equipment from abroad, countering any hope for a war boom.

To rebuild this languishing economy and bring Syria back to its former glory (alhayat suria lifatrat tawila), we, The Assad Regime, are proposing a distinct plan to regain financial stability through government investment in housing, public transport, and other reconstruction as well as government support for the petroleum, agricultural, and tourism industries. To fund these projects, the best motto is "build now and pay later," using loans from Russia and Eastern European countries as well as Iran, all of whom support the Assad Regime. While we would love to spend the IMF's and other US dominated financial aid services' money, the relationship between the regime and these powers has heavily deteriorated after unfounded allegations of chemical weapons usage and other atrocities. The first step in this plan will be state sponsored agriculture and infrastructure, as these are needed to bring back basic life necessities to the Syrian people, and following quickly after will be the petroleum industry to bring large profits back to the government.

Social Reconstruction

In past civil wars, conflict has been followed by a period of social reconstruction in which the population achieves a level of tolerance and peaceful co-existence. Social reconstruction attempts to create social cohesion through acceptance of a national identity that transcends individual, sectarian, and communal differences. In the past, nations have had periods of reconstruction directly following a civil war. For example, the period of reconstruction after the American civil war played a key role in encouraging prosperity and peace. Failure to reconstruct out tattered nation would result in the possibility of greater, problems to arise.

Prior to the crisis, Syria was a calm, economically stable, culturally rich, and beautiful country. Mosques were a safe haven for people who practiced religion and the market place was the hub of all activity. Market places are usually in the center of cities where shops, religious institutions, and trading takes place which ultimately brings the community closer.

Nevertheless, society was extremely divided with different classes generally refraining from socializing with each other. There were some racist undertones as well, seeing that lighter skinned people obtained higher positions and darker skinned people held lower positions. Citizens did have outlined rights but they were limited. People had the freedom to choose a career with limitations based on gender, class, family etc. Expectations for married women's duties differed between town and country with wivies in rural areas helped with field work in addition to maintaining the household.

Before the conflict, the Syrian people did not have the rights that they wanted and deserved. Ever since the rule of Hafez Al-Assad, the father of the current leader Bashar, Syrians have been subject to human rights abuses. The Al-Assad family in power ran an oppressive regime and was responsible for much violence. They are part of the Alawite minority in Syria and have been trying to suppress the majority of the population, Sunni Muslims. Hafez was able to build up a Syrian military, with the help of the Soviet government, to suppress the masses. Syrians had hoped that when Bashar came into power in 2000, their rights would be improved. However Bashar has proven to be just as oppressive a leader as his father. As peaceful protesters began demanding the release of political dissidents in 2011, they were met with torture and violence by the Syrian government. Another example of the oppression faced by the Syrian people is the regime's lack of respect for property rights. The official laws in Syria provide for criminal proceedings for corruption and preserve property rights with licenses and authorizations. However, the courts are being manipulated for the benefit of the President.

Before the conflict, government spending on education and health systems were minimal, but the two institutions seemed to have been working to some extent. In 2009, it was reported that 5.9% of Syria's GDP was dedicated to education, and 2.9% went to health care. The Syrian government played a central role in the administration, planning and supervision of education. In 2014, approximately 2,553,000 students enrolled in basic education, and 2,875,000 enrolled in secondary education. Pre-primary education was offered to students between 3 and 5, and most schools were privately owned and operated. Secondary education was offered as 3 year general secondary schools or 3 year technical schools. Before the conflict, basic education enrollment was close to 93 percent. After the war, an estimated 2 million Syrian children were out of school in Syria, and roughly 5,000 schools could not be used because they had either been destroyed or damaged by the war. By 2015, 450,000 university age Syrians had become refugees.

Health was also greatly underfunded, but health indicators had been improving consistently over the three decades before the war according to data from the [Syrian Ministry of Health](#). [Life expectancy](#) at birth had increased from 56 years in 1970 to 73.1 years in 2009; [infant mortality](#) dropped from 132 per 1000 live births in 1970 to 17.9 per 1000 in 2009; under-five mortality dropped significantly from 164 to 21.4 per 1000 live births; and [maternal mortality](#) fell from 482 per 100,000 live births in 1970 to 52 in 2009.

Strategic Security

A ceasefire is undoubtedly important for the Syrian Government and the people of its country. While a ceasefire would give time for the rebels to regroup and prepare for more strategic attacks against the Syrian regime, The Syrian Government believes that a ceasefire is essential to defeating ISIS. The ceasefire would be negotiated mainly by Russia who would be supporting the best interest of the Syrian government. The Syrian Government believes

that the terms of the ceasefire must include a clause that states the United States and Saudi Arabia must discontinue their military support of the rebels, however they may continue to provide medical and other (non-militaristic) support to war-torn cities.

In addition to this, there must be no use of military support of any kind targeting the opposition, there must be no military incursions into enemy-occupied territory, and the Rebel Forces must discontinue their occupation of Aleppo. This ceasefire includes the countries supporting the Rebels, such as the United States and Saudi Arabia, and the countries supporting the Syrian Government, such as Russia and Iran. Thus, the Syrian Government must work together to continue to target ISIS, anti-Assad forces and other terrorist groups in the region. We are the only group that could possibly secure peace and sanctity within the nation, a task that no other outside foreign entity could ever accomplish. Finally, failure to comply with this ceasefire will result in a heavy military response from the Syrian Government and its allies.

The Syrian Government needs to control its own airspace. This is essential to prevent foreign planes from conducting attacks. With control of its airspace, the Syrian Government, with the aid of foreign allies, will conduct airstrikes on foreign fighter strongholds. It is essential that the Syrian Government get weapons and ammunition from our allies, such as Russia and Iran. To improve the quality of our air force, the Syrian Government would recruit young men and send them to Russia to be trained.

While it is important to control the airspace, it is also very important to control the ground war. First our government would have to control enemy controlled oil fields, and sell that oil to western countries to get large sums of money. The government would use the oil money to pay more soldiers and acquire more weapons. The Syrian Government would recapture Aleppo and then use it as a stronghold. After the Syrian Government has established a military capital, we will send out convoys and begin getting rid of the foreign groups in our country.

The first step to secure the border is to possess sufficient armaments and exercise sufficient military force to intimidate Islamic Extremists and other radical Muslims. Islamic terrorists continue to make securing the border impossible. Destroying them has to be a top priority. The Syrian government needs more support from the U.S. and other countries to help defeat them including airstrikes.

In addition, Syria needs to stop people from leaving the country. If people continue to leave the country, then there is really no point in securing the border. The Syrian Government needs countries such as Spain and Germany to send those people back. This population will be used to strengthen our army. The Syrian government has no way to patrol and protect the people in Syria without an army. Thus, with a stronger army more Syrians will stay in the country. Also the army would allow the Syrian government to eliminate those terrorists in our own. Syria needs help and aid from countries like Russia or the U.S. Lastly, other countries need to respect Syria's borders. If countries just continue to invade and bombard Syria, then the borders are constantly being violated. Countries need to notify Syria when they enter the country and need to be required permission in order to enter.

Cross Border Issues

The aftermath of the Arab Spring has brought many issues to Syria. The vacuum left by American forces after coming out of Iraq has allowed invasion and revolt in the country, leaving it divided and unstable. Some of the oldest cities on earth have been ravaged by bombs, their populations dwindling each day as thousands try to flee across the borders, first to Europe and then who knows where. Syria's main borders, those it shares with Turkey and

Iraq, are both controlled by anti-government forces: the rebel group Free Syrian Army holds many Turkish-controlled towns, and Daesh has possessed much of the border with Iraq, but for a section in the north held by Kurds, since 2014. Historically, Syria has had an open door policy, allowing those seeking refuge to find safety in our country. Since the advent of our civil war, however, we have not been able to provide this aid and instead our own citizens rely on other nations.

In 2014, roughly 100,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were encamped just over the border, on the Syrian side. The majority of IDPs were distributed in roughly 25 makeshift camps in the rebel held territories of north-western Syria. Established to provide temporary shelter to families and civilians fleeing the conflict, these camps have become semi-permanent fixtures along the Turkish-Syrian border. But interviews revealed that many had been denied entry into Turkey due to their lack of documentation or to lack of space in Turkish-run camps. In essence, they are stranded on the Syrian side of the border.

Despite a large number of people in need of life-saving humanitarian assistance, in the past the Syrian government took little measures to assist its people. The Assad regime had denied the UN and humanitarian relief organizations widespread access to the country. Unfortunately, non-governmental organizations, such as the World Health Organization, and international aid groups which do in fact provide humanitarian relief were not able to make its way to Syria due to the extremely disputed borders.

Prior to the war Syria suffered from water pollution and still does; the water and sanitation crisis has threatened many lives. In addition to that we also have issues with deforestation, overgrazing, and an inadequate supply of potable water as well as a lack of arable land. Though Syria is a decently large country, much of it is desert and essentially uninhabitable. Compared to the Pacific Northwest state of Washington, it is about the same size, but with three times the population and much less livable land. Russia's involvement in and around Aleppo, involving harmful chemicals, has only compounded existing environmental and public health risks.

Governance

The main actors within Syria who are taking part in the current conflict include the Kurds, the Syrian rebels, ISIS, and our own government forces. The outside powers that are also fighting within Syria include Russia, the United States, various European countries, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia. All these different governments and nations are seeking some goal or outcome that will benefit either one of these country's national interests. For example, the main goal for the United States right now would be the eradication of ISIS from both Syria and Iraq.

With all these various countries involved in the conflict, the main countries that Syria has contact with include Russia, the rebel groups in Syria, and ISIS. First, we have a conflict with ISIS because ISIS is residing in our own country fighting to create their desired Islamic state in both Syria and our bordering country, Iraq. This unfortunate connection with the infamous terrorist group has created much more unwanted turmoil within our country and has also brought many more nations into the conflict. We also have a connection with Russia who is helping in our fight against ISIS, who are currently the ultimate threat to the sovereignty of our nation. Russia has been extremely helpful in this fight and has participated in a cooperative air campaign against ISIS.

However, our position puts us at odds with the United States, who has been supporting the rebel-terrorist groups who are threatening to destroy the only entity holding together Syria, the government. For this reason, we do not have any substantive connection

with the United States other than the fact that they, like us, want to destroy ISIS. We also do have some connection with the Kurdish fighting forces who are illegitimately claiming that a portion of the sovereign nation of Syria is theirs for the taking. Their stance towards the government therefore puts us at a standstill, however, we have been cooperating slightly with that faction.

It seems that after this horrendous conflict is over that Syria will need a new constitution to ensure that this type of event will never happen again. We need to make sure that a strong leader can have significant power in order to reduce the casualties and deaths from a civil war such as this. With a new constitution we could rework some of the mistakes that had been made earlier and also further create a greater sense of law and order in our country. Law and order is something that is essential to this nation's survival and without it, without a new constitution that could ensure that, we are afraid for the future.

The government that we have currently have can be described as a unitary republic with a semi-presidential system. We continue to advocate for this type of government, but obviously in times of crisis the main goal as of now is to advocate for the defeat of both the rebel groups and ISIS. However, we also strongly believe that Syrian people deserve the right to have authority over the government, and ultimately they choose who the president is. We have a republic that gives freedom and we most certainly advocate for this government.

Before this conflict, our military and the government were very closely intertwined with each other. Our president, Bashar-al-Assad, is the main commander and overall chief of the entire army, as well as the significant intelligence agencies in Syria. This close connection between the military and the civilian government has benefitted Syria very well by reducing conflict and establishing a sense of security in the nation. Unfortunately, during the conflict a strain between the government and the military has erupted. This has meant that the government has lost partial control of some of the military as the civil war erupted. But with all these setbacks, including major losses to the army, we have been able to retain a strong, firm grip over essential cities that are key to the success of Syria.

To end this awful conflict once and for all we seek the help from certain third parties. As stated many other times, ISIS is the main threat to sovereignty of Syria, and we must cooperate with other countries, including Russia, Iran, United States, Turkey, and other European countries. This will take up the bulk of the fighting and with the correct aid from these countries it is possible to achieve our goal. However, to help resettle the government and reorganize Syria, our own government is the most significant and important entity in ensuring this. With help from some other friendly countries as well, we will once again be able to restore law and order to a country that desperately needs it. Russia, with its massive air power and capabilities can help us to defeat the rebel-terrorist groups who have gripped parts of Syria for too long.

Local Security

Before the Syrian civil war, local security never posed a big problem because we knew what was best for our civilians and brought prosperity to Syria. However, once extremist rebels started to cause chaos in the country, a war broke out. These rebels are an unsatisfied group of minorities who seek trouble and revenge instead of being grateful for the safety the Syrian Government provides. The rebels are misguided and create unnecessary violence that has caused this war. They are partially to blame for the immense casualties along with ISIS. The government is not afraid to fight for the values that this country holds dear. In December of 2014, the government successfully recruited 6,000 members and in

just a mere three years 150,000 soldiers are on the battlefield fighting for the Syrian government.

Before the Syrian conflict developed into the current situation, the Assad administration ruled all of Syria, providing local security. The Assad family has been in power since 1970, but recently lost control of much of the country in the conflict. It is hard to accurately pinpoint who is providing the local security in each region, since control changes from day to day. The group that is in control of each area does not necessarily provide its civilians security. Each group, including the Syrian Army, Rebels, ISIS, and the Kurds, has different methods of managing their territory. Aleppo is currently being held by the Syrian army and Kurdish forces. Our government strives to provide protection for those living under its territories, as long as they are backing us. The control of each region is subject to change depending on the battles fought.

Since the uprising in 2011 and the ultimate development of the current conflict, terrorist groups have damaged Syria's critical resources. Around high conflict zones, the government has seen ISIS and other terrorist groups burning oil rigs to create smoke to block the view of airstrike drones. Other oil resources controlled by ISIS have turned into commercial developments. Journalists estimate that each ISIS controlled rig produces "30,000 to 40,000 barrels" and sells them at 30-40\$ per barrel.

Before the war, the military had 2 million small arms in its possession. Syria's civilians had about 700,000 firearms, which is 3.9 guns for every 100 civilians. The firearms provided to the rebels have been supplied mainly by Qatar, while other weapons have been supplied by Russia. The local security in Syria today is a bit lacking. Although the areas that the government controls are relatively safe, the areas that are controlled by rebels and ISIS means that much of the Middle East is in danger. The Syrian government is somewhat aligned with the Kurds, and some of their territory is more stable.

Committee on Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation

The Syrian State was not in any way responsible for the Syrian civil war that was the result of terrorist rebels attempting to wrestle away power from the legitimate leader, President Bashar al Assad. Six years ago the government arrested several minors for illegally painting unlawful and destructive terrorist propaganda on a school wall in Deraa. These rightful arrests triggered a gratuitous reaction from a minority of the Syrian citizens, with some people taking to the streets to violently protest the government.

In order to quell the violence and chaos from the protesters, the Syrian State had no choice but to open fire on these extremist protesters in an effort to protect the rest of the Syrian population. Unfortunately, these actions taken by the government merely angered the terrorist protesters even more and incited more violence, leading the country to descend into civil war as terrorist groups such as the so called "Free Syrian Army" waged an unjust war against the Syrian State. All actions taken by the state were with the sole intention of restoring order and peace. The only way to do so was by silencing the rebel criminals.

It is the role of a government to protect its people. Therefore, it is necessary for a government to maintain its power and leadership so that the country will continue to have stability and prosper. When rebels attempt to seize control from the government there is no other option but to subdue the rebels, using any means necessary. In the Syrian State's defense against rebel terrorists, some Syrian citizens' lives were taken. However, the end justifies the means because it is necessary for the security and strength of the nation that the Assad government remains in control.

The Free Syrian Army claims that its goal is to bring freedom and peace to the Syrian people. However, its actions indicate otherwise. Recently, the terrorist group robbed Aleppo citizens of much-needed wheat reserves and sold them to private Turkish grain traders. It has expropriated the stock of pharmaceuticals and then coercively resold them back to their original owners. The group has ransacked and destroyed schools, compromising the education of Syria's youth. They have also targeted the infrastructure of the country by disabling power plants, which has caused great damage for the Syrian people.

The group is also responsible for malicious war crimes against the military and the Syrian people. Such crimes include rape, murder, abduction, taking of hostages, usage of child soldiers, torture, discriminatory attacks against minority religious groups, and using chlorine gas in civilian neighborhoods. Additionally, the group has been accused of using civilian suffering, such as blocking access to food, water, medicine, and shelter, as a war tactic.

Lastly, because of the instability created in the nation, other militant terrorist groups such as the Islamic State have been able to flourish as well. Because the Syrian State was forced to dedicate resources such as soldiers and weapons in the fight against the Free Syrian Army, power vacuums were created throughout large parts of the country. ISIS has been able to grow and thrive because of this, creating more danger and vulnerability throughout the country.

Had the rebel terrorists not waged war against the Syrian State, hundreds of thousands of Syrians would not have lost their lives and the country would not be in a state of disrepair. The FSA declares that it is fighting for the well being of the Syrian people. Yet destroying the lives of hundred of thousands in order to gain political power for the leaders in a coup against the legitimate President Assad is not only treason, but also terrorism.

These terrorists must be held accountable for their actions. The leaders of this failed coup will be executed along with all else who don't pledge their full support and obedience to the rightful leadership of President Bashar al Assad. Any person who in any way violates the law of the country by acting out against the government will be punished severely. Additionally, countries such as the United States of America, who choose to hinder the stability of the country with their support for the terrorists, will face consequences in terms of the relationship between the two countries.

South Africa used a process called truth and reconciliation to help unify the country after racial conflicts between the white supremacist government and the native africans. The truth and reconciliation commission in South Africa was a commission that required citizens to hear the stories and experiences of the victims that suffered under the Apartheid regime. People who confessed their crimes were granted amnesty by the government.

In Chile, dictator Augusto Pinochet threw more than 130,000 people in prison because of their political views, and consistently tortured his enemies. After his control over Chile came to a close, he was granted amnesty. The Syrian government wouldn't be able to be granted amnesty at this time because of the prominence of rebel groups.

During the Nüremberg trials (1945-1946), Nazi officials were prosecuted and tried as war criminals. They were charged with the following; crimes against peace, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. At the end of the trials, multiple Nazi officials were various lengths of imprisonment, some were even sentenced to death.

In South Africa, truth and reconciliation had a positive effect on the unity of the country, though at the moment, it is an unrealistic option for Syria. If it is possible, the Syrian Government will do their best to prosecute rebel leaders. The terrorists must be held accountable for their actions if there is hope for bringing justice to Syria.

Prior to the current Syrian conflict, Syria was very diverse. Although predominantly Sunni Muslim, the country also had various ethnic groups such as Kurds, Christians and other Muslims. Minority communities were entitled to their own laws based on their religion and were given freedom to practice their religion with respect. The Syrian Government did not discriminate against minority groups, which is why Syria used to be a place of refuge for various minorities. Although the country is mostly Sunni, there is tension between the Sunnis and the Shi'i. This conflict has heavily contributed to Syria's instability. The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) also identified that, "escalating violence and humanitarian crisis impacts members of all religious communities, including their religious freedom". Recently Christians have been included in this conflict because they are targeted by ISIS, which is most hostile toward the Shi'i Muslims.