

As War Goes On in Syria, World Should Provide Aid to Refugees

As they say on Broadway, "the show must go on." This seems to be the case in **Syria** as well as Broadway. As we approach the peace conference in Geneva opening next Wednesday, many people have high hopes for ending the brutal conflict that is now nearly three years old. More than 120,000 people have died thus far in the conflict, and insiders realize the chance at true peace from Geneva is slim to none.

As the conference fast approaches, both the Assad regime and the FSA are positioning themselves for the upper hand.

Syrian President **Bashar al-Assad** has mercilessly bombed civilian neighborhoods where allegedly Free Syrian Army fighters were hiding. His regime has dropped barrel bombs full of TNT, shrapnel and other evil devices on schools, hospitals and markets, killing thousands of civilians in an attempt to fill their community with fear and cause the FSA to retreat, forfeiting the hotly contested battleground of Aleppo.

The FSA has turned its guns on **Islamic extremists**, foreign fighters from al-Qaida, in an attempt to show the West they have taken a moderate political position. The FSA must gain the partnership of the West, which it has not had much of over the first three years of fighting.

But most insiders see no end in sight. With Russia staunchly supporting Assad, and America's weakening foreign policy under the current administration, it will be nearly impossible to negotiate any mutually beneficial terms for peace.

The FSA has demanded that Assad step down and a transitional government be inserted. Although Assad should be tried for war

crimes, Russia will not back his removal from power or his trail in an international tribunal.

Subsequently the FSA has not had strong internal leadership step up to create a legitimate transitional government. Without properly qualified statesmen, and unity within its ranks, how can they be expected to take over and rebuild a war torn Syria whose infrastructure and civilians have been shattered?

It is more likely that after the peace conference, the war will go on. Many believe Syria may break into several smaller countries as Assad and the FSA continue to pursue their stalemate, while further degrading the country's infrastructure and it's people.

Many have speculated that Assad may take a smaller, western region of Syria, where Russia can maintain its military ports, and where the Allowite communities are strongest. The Kurdish population will manage the Northeast in similar fashion as the Kurdish regional government manages Northern Iraq. Finally the FSA would take a swath of the central area, including some large cities, and oil producing areas. What remains to be debated is whether hardline **Islamists** would have access to creating a region for a highly conservative Islamic state.

As the war rages on, civilians continue to shoulder the brunt of a bloody vicious war with crimes that have not been seen since Hitler's genocide of the Jewish race in World War II, and a refugee crisis that exceeds Rwanda.

If the world cannot solve the issues of the war, it must embrace the needs of the **Syrian refugees** now living outside Syria and those displaced inside Syria. There are excellent organizations such as World Compassion working in refugee camps throughout the Middle East providing humanitarian relief, medical care and a new start on life.

It is unclear what will transpire in Geneva, but what is clear

is the need for the world to respond to Syrians who continue to suffer.

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