

# Syrian Coalition Calls For a No Fly Zone to Protect Idlib From Assad's Barrel Bombs

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Following the defeat of Assad regime forces in Idlib by rebel groups, including units affiliated to the Free Syrian Army, the Syrian National Coalition's representative to the Benelux and EU, Mouaffaq Nyrabia, said:

“Our primary concern now is the plight of civilians in Idlib who are already being subjected to indiscriminate retaliatory barrel bomb attacks by the Assad regime. This even includes reports of new chemical weapons attacks by the regime. Syrian Civil Defence groups are actively working on the ground to ensure civilians are evacuated from areas targeted by the regime. But the bravery of these individuals is not a sustainable solution. The regime has already shown in Homs that if it loses territory, it will respond by inflicting total destruction. The international community must not allow Idlib to suffer the same fate as Homs at the hands of Assad's airforce.”

“The Syrian National Coalition calls for the establishment of a no-fly zone in northern Syria, including over Idlib. Without it, the territory may quickly fall back into the hands of the regime or ISIL. A no-fly zone will protect civilians on the ground from Assad's aerial attacks, enable safer access for humanitarian aid and create the space needed to establish moderate governance and basic services. We are encouraging the hand over to moderate civilian governance structures by armed groups in Idlib. But without a no-fly zone, any strategy to bring relative stability, governance, aid and services to Idlib will fail.”