

Syrian Coalition Welcomes Engel-Royce No-fly Zone Measure Added to the Annual US Defense Authorization Bill

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Press Release
Syrian Coalition
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The Syrian Coalition welcomes the amendment to the US annual defense bill put forward in the House Foreign Affairs Committee by Representatives Eliot L. Engel and Ed Royce regarding a legislation that would require the Department of Defense to “consider the feasibility of imposing a no-fly zone in Syria.” The House passed the bill on May 15.

Although it is still in preliminary stages, the move is important as it shows a sense of urgency growing in Washington circles to find an effective way to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people, and ultimately help bring about a political settlement to the conflict.

A no-fly zone in the north of Syria is vital to protecting the lives of civilians on whom regime helicopters are dropping scores of barrel bombs on a daily basis; curbing Assad’s ability to carry out chlorine attacks; allowing refugees in neighbouring countries to be able to come back to take part in the process of governance and stopping Assad’s systematic destruction of infrastructure across Syria.

A no-fly zone will also be of great significance to the success of the train-and-equip program as it will allow those trained under the programme to stage operations against ISIS, other extremists in Syria and eventually the Assad regime, as a White House fact sheet outlining the Administration’s strategy to counter ISIS maintained in September 2014: “The President is also calling on Congress to provide additional authorities and resources to train and equip Syrian opposition fighters ... so they can defend themselves and their neighborhoods against ISIL incursions and ultimately push back on ISIL forces and the Assad regime.”