

US & Saudi Arabia say it's necessary to maintain Syria whole & united – White House

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The Syrian conflict must be solved through political means with the country's unity and territorial integrity maintained, the US and Saudi Arabia has said in a joint statement released by the White House on Tuesday.

Washington and Riyadh *"emphasized the importance of reaching a permanent solution to the conflict in Syria based on the Geneva declaration and Security Council resolution 2254, in order to maintain the unity and integrity of Syrian territory,"* the statement read.

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The announcement, which summed up the discussions of US President Donald Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia last weekend, said that after the end of hostilities, Syria must become *"a country that represents the entire spectrum of the Syrian community and free from sectarian discrimination."*

The Geneva II Communique (2014) and UNSC resolution 2254 (2015) envisages a roadmap for

a political solution of the Syrian conflict, urging a ceasefire, transitional government and free elections in the country.

Saudi Arabia has also backed *“President Trump’s decision to launch missiles at Shayrat Airbase”* Tuesday's statement said further.

The US President ordered a barrage of Tomahawk missiles fired at Syria’s Shayrat airbase in response to an alleged chemical attack in the town of Khan Shaykhun in the country’s Idlib province on April 4. Washington immediately labeled Bashar Assad’s government as the perpetrators of the attack despite Russia calling for an impartial investigation and Syria denying the charge.

*“The two sides emphasized the importance that the Syrian regime adhere to the 2013 agreement to eliminate its entire stockpile of chemical weapons,”* the statement read.

During Trump’s visit to the Gulf kingdom, the US President and King Salman *“agreed to boost cooperation in order to to eliminate Daesh, al-Qaeda, and other terrorist organizations,”* the statement also said.

*“The two leaders also reaffirmed their commitment to curb the flow of foreign fighters and cutting off funding supplies for terrorist organizations.”*

Saudi Arabia had previously been blamed for backing extremists in Syria, with Hillary Clinton’s leaked emails saying the Saudis are *“providing clandestine financial and logistic support to ISIL and other radical Sunni groups.”*

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The US has provided weapons to the so-called *“moderate”* rebels fighting the Syrian government with the arms often ending up in the hands of Islamic State or the al-Qaeda offshoot, Jabhat al-Nusra.

Washington and Riyadh also supported the Iraqi government’s efforts to tackle the Islamic State (IS, Daesh, formerly ISIS/ISIL) terrorist group while underlining the importance of *“preserving the unity and integrity of Iraqi territory.”*

Trump and the Saudi monarch then turned on Iran, saying they need to *“contain Iran’s malign interference in the internal affairs of other states, instigation of sectarian strife, support of terrorism and armed proxies, and efforts to destabilize the countries in the region.”*

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They also said *“the nuclear agreement with Iran (signed under the Obama administration) needs to be re-examined in some of its clauses,”* the statement read.

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