

'Never mind the US, Russia's the one losing patience over Syria ceasefire chaos' - Chief of Staff

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The Russian military says Washington still won't provide a list of groups it considers terrorist, allowing jihadists to regroup and escape Russian-led air raids on their positions, the head of the Russian General Staff said.

Valery Gerasimov's statement comes in response to one from US Secretary of State John Kerry last week, in which he said Washington is running out of patience regarding truce violations in Syria. The ceasefire brokered by Russia and the United States in February doesn't include Al-Nusra Front and Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL) positions, as well as other formations considered to be terrorists by the United Nations Security Council.

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*"Russia needs to understand that our patience is not infinite. In fact, it is very limited with whether or not Assad is going to be held accountable," Kerry said last Wednesday. "It is very clear that the cessation of hostilities is frayed and at risk, and that it is critical for a genuine cessation to be put in place."*

In response to Kerry's statement, the head of the Russian General Staff warned it is, in fact, Russia that is growing impatient with the US over Washington's refusal to cooperate.

*"If anyone's patience on Syria is waning, it is ours, not the United States. We are in full compliance with our obligations to maintain the ceasefire and ensure national reconciliation in Syria. The American side always has problems with the 'opposition under its control'," Gerasimov said.*

*"Our US partners are still undecided where there are opposition forces and where there are 'turncoats' from international terrorist organizations."*

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Russia has for months been urging Washington to produce a shared map of the positions of fighting forces to avoid incidents and prevent targeting those groups fighting IS and Jibhat Al Nusra in Syria. The US hasn't shared those coordinates.

*"As a result, terrorists in Syria are actively regrouping and tensions are soaring again. It cannot continue this way indefinitely," Gerasimov said, adding that the Russian Defense Ministry has supplied the US with a list of its terrorist targets for three months.*

Gerasimov went on to blame the US for double standards concerning what constitutes ceasefire violations.

*"In their opinion missile bombardments of Syrian government troops and communities by militants should be considered by all as 'insignificant violations' of the ceasefire. But any proportionate response to the militants by the Syrian military are at once declared as disproportionate strikes on the opposition," Gerasimov said.*

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