

Headlines:

- **US resists participation in joint air strikes with Russia in Syria**
- **Taliban not Responding to Peace Talks**
- **Tunisia's Ennahda party openly calls for separation of religion and politics**

Details:

US resists participation in joint air strikes with Russia in Syria

The US is showing reluctance to participate with Russia in its proposal for joint airstrikes in Syria. Russia is proposing that the US-led coalition carry out joint airstrikes against Syrian groups that are not observing the ceasefire.

As broadcast on state television, Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu told a Defence Ministry meeting that the joint airstrikes should target convoys carrying weapons and ammunition crossing into Syria from Turkey. "We believe the adoption of these measures will allow a transition to a peaceful process to be achieved in the entire territory of Syria," he said. "Of course, these measures have been coordinated with the leadership of the Syrian Arab Republic."

The US is resisting the proposal. State Department spokesman John Kirby said, "There is no agreement to conduct joint air strikes with the Russians in Syria."

The naivety of the Russian leadership becomes apparent in these statements. America has a specific plan for Syria and is using Russia only as a tool in that plan. America will never consider Russia its partner in this. And nor will America spend its own resources when there are so many others willing to carry out America's plans.

Taliban not Responding to Peace Talks

Sartaj Azia, Pakistan's Advisor to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs, yesterday said that no positive response had been received from the Afghan Taliban for peace talks despite best efforts by Pakistan. He said the dream of regional connectivity was impossible without stability in Afghanistan.

Pakistan this week hosted the Quadrilateral Coordination Group over the Afghan peace process - comprising Pakistan, Afghanistan, the US and China - to revive peace talks with the Afghan Taliban and end the 15-year-long insurgency.

Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had visited Tajikistan the week before to attend a ceremony for the Central Asia South Asia (CASA)-1000 transmission line project from Central Asia to Pakistan passing through Afghanistan.

The Afghan mujahideen have a long history of cooperation with the Pakistan state, since their beginnings in the 1980s when the Pakistan military, backed by the US, had supported the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Union. America has used the Afghan mujahideen when they found this beneficial and they discarded them when their benefit changed. However, the Afghan mujahideen have developed greater awareness of the political realities of US control and have been resisting Pakistan's efforts to draw them into peace negotiations with the US-puppet government in Kabul.

Tunisia's Ennahda party openly calls for separation of religion and politics

Despite winning elections in the Arab Spring because of its Islamic identity the Ennahda party is turning itself into a secular nationalist party. Its leader, Rached Ghannouchi, told a rally yesterday that, "Ennahda has changed from an ideological movement engaged in a struggle for identity, to a protest movement against the authoritarian regime, and now to a national democratic party." He further said, "We must keep religion far from political struggles."

Ennahda is only the latest party to realise that Islam cannot be implemented using the Western systems of government that prevail in Muslim countries. There are only two choices for any Islamic movement: abandon these alien systems or abandon Islam. Unfortunately the leadership of Ennahda is joining a long list of predecessors that have preferred to abandon Islam.