



### How YOU Can Help The People Of Syria ?

Please refer to the following for more information on the Syrian Humanitarian Aid Appeal:

- **Simply Islam**  
<http://www.simplyislam.com.sg/main/aid-to-syrian-refugees/>
- **Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Foundation**  
<http://www.rlafoundation.org.sg/>
- **Badan Agama & Pelajaran Radin Mas (B.A.P.A.)**  
(Religious & Educational League of Radin Mas)  
<http://www.bapa.org.sg/Syrian-Humanitarian-Appeal.html>

### Some Muslims have linked the war in Syria to the signs of the end of the world. Is this true?

Some individuals are easily swayed by the narrative of performing armed jihad in Syria. These individuals were influenced and swayed by the "doomsday narrative" that the conflict in Syria is a prelude to the anticipated *Yaumul Qiyamah* (End of Time). These are rumours and speculation that are unfounded. No one knows when is the End of Time or when is the Last Hour. These are matters that reside within the knowledge of the Almighty. Beware of those who spread such messages.

### What can Singaporean Muslims do to support the innocent and suffering Muslims in Syria?

Muslims in Singapore can show sympathy and support to the Muslims in Syria through a variety of means which include:

- Offering financial assistance through trusted organisations that channel aid to humanitarian missions to Syria. (see next column);
- Offering prayers of peace for the suffering Muslims and for the restoration of peace.

Apart from offering financial assistance and prayers, Singaporean Muslims are advised to:

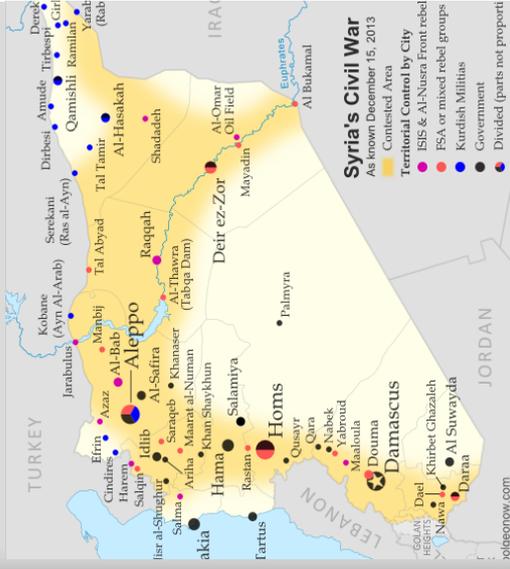
- Understand the context and reality of the conflict in Syria;
- Be discerning of information they receive from the media and Internet;
- Seek legitimate Islamic sources and religious guidance from MUIS, RRG and accredited asatizah in Singapore.

The public are welcome to seek clarification and understanding on the Syrian conflict and other matters related to religious extremism from the Religious Rehabilitation Group Resource and Counselling Centre located at Khadijah Mosque Auditorium Building, 583 Geylang Road Singapore 389522. They can also visit the official website of RRG at [www.rrg.sg](http://www.rrg.sg) and visit the Facebook page of RRG at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Religious-Rehabilitation-Group-RRG/218225878199660>



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# THE SYRIAN CONFLICT



Source: <http://www.polgeonow.com/>

# The Syrian Conflict

## An overview

The conflict began as another 'Arab Spring' uprising against President Assad's rule. Since then, it has mushroomed into a brutal proxy war that has drawn in regional and world powers. The Alawite-led government of President Assad is reported to have the support of Iran and Russia while the Sunni-dominated opposition is said to have the support of Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and other Arab states along with the US, UK and France. Armed groups and rebel forces in Syria include Lebanon's Shia Islamist Hezbollah movement and al-Qaeda-linked terrorist groups, supporting opposing sides and contributing to the steady rise of sectarianism in Syria, which has now spread to Iraq as well.

Meanwhile, Muslims from many parts of the world are also joining the armed groups and rebel forces in Syria, most of them drawn and moved by the horrific images of the conflict, stories about alleged atrocities committed by government forces, and the perceived lack of support from Western and Arab countries.

## The Syrian Conflict and Extremism

The involvement of Muslims from other countries in the Syrian conflict merits some attention. While not everyone who has travelled to Syria is involved in terrorism after returning to their home countries, it would be erroneous to conclude that individuals who have trained and fought in Syria pose no potential security threat.

Numerous studies show that individuals with foreign training and fighting experience have featured prominently in home-based terrorist plots. In fact, we have already seen terrorist plots in the UK and France, and an attack in Belgium, that were perpetrated by returnees of the Syrian conflict.

Those who actively participate in armed conflict or assist in the planning and facilitation of such activities can become radicalised and acquire new skills - including the ability to mount an attack on local soil, radicalise others and impart knowledge and skills gained offshore.

Furthermore, the relationships they have forged with other foreign fighters can lead to the establishment of terrorist networks which will pose a significant national security risk should these individuals decide to pursue a violent agenda at home. As such, the Syrian crisis has presented a complex set of national security challenges that threaten the peace that we enjoy today.

### Is fighting in Syria an act of *jihad*?

The conflict in Syria has led to confusion about the obligation of jihad among many Muslims. Many Muslims are being misled into thinking that fighting in Syria is an act of jihad. This is not true.

The Syrian conflict is a sectarian war amongst Muslims in Syria. It is about political power and influence and determining who has control of land and resources. The conflict has nothing to do with Islam. It is not about defending the faith or the *ummah*. **SO, DO NOT BE MISLED.**

### Is it necessary for Singaporean Muslims to go to Syria and be involved in the conflict?

Singaporean Muslims should not be involved in any armed conflict in other countries including Syria because of the following reasons:

- It violates the laws of the country.
- It is not a religious obligation.
- It compromises the safety and security of those who travel to the conflict areas.
- There are other legal channels to assist the suffering Muslims.

### What do Muslim scholars say about fighting in Syria?

In Islam, there are two kinds of "*jihad*," which literally translates as "struggle" from Arabic. Scholars explained that the grand jihad is restraining oneself from sins, and

the minor jihad is the fight for righteousness and helping the subjects of injustice.

Many Muslim scholars have denounced the acts of violence in Syria and discouraged Muslims from being involved in the conflict. Even the scholars in Syria said that there is no need for foreign Muslims to join the cause in Syria. Sheikh Sariah al-Rifaie of Syria advised Muslims worldwide to negate their intention of doing jihad in Syria. The political international conflict in Syria does not qualify as "*jihad*." Tunisia's Mufti, Sheikh Othman Battikh, has described calls for jihad against the government in Syria a "huge mistake" that is not permitted under Islam. Sheikh Battikh stressed that those who went to fight in Syria under the banner of jihad were "fooled and have been brainwashed."

Dr Ali Gomaa, the former Grand Mufti of Egypt warned that the fighting in Syria is in no way an act of jihad. This is because indiscriminate killings and bloodshed that take place in Syria between the different Muslim groups is against the teachings of Islam.

Dr Mohamed Fatris Bakaram, the Mufti of Singapore warned that jihad could not be determined and declared by any individual or organization, but should be endorsed by the highest Islamic authority. He added that it is a big mistake for Singaporeans to help the Syrians through participating in the armed conflict in Syria.

Ustaz Ali Haji Mohamed, Co-Chairman of the Religious Rehabilitation Group said that participation in the Syrian conflict is neither a religious nor a national obligation. He added that Muslims in Singapore should remain calm and avoid from being involved in the conflict that would cause destruction and loss of lives.