

## Motion on the Syrian Civil War

### Submitted by Manchester Left Unity

The popular movement that sought to remove Bashar Al-Assad and the Ba'athist regime began in March 2011 and has, because of the regime's violence, turned into a bloody civil war with international and regional powers aiding in the destruction of Syria. The left and the trade union movement in Britain has a long tradition of supporting those fighting oppression from tyrannical regimes, reactionary movements and the imperialist powers.

Left Unity conference notes:

1. The civil war has so far claimed the lives of over 140,000<sup>1</sup> people and displaced nearly 2.5 million<sup>2</sup>. The steady stream of arms and training to both sides<sup>34</sup> coupled with the diplomatic deadlock is ensuring the conflict grinds on with catastrophic consequences for the people of Syria and its infrastructure.
2. The terror of the regime against democratic and other opposition forces must not be understated with around 50,000 held in detention as well as mass executions<sup>5</sup>. The bombing of civilian areas under the control of opposition forces is commonplace reducing large parts of cities such as Homs, Aleppo and Deir el-Zour to rubble.
3. The crimes committed by the opposition, especially by the Islamist forces<sup>67</sup> has helped push the civil war down a sectarian route along religious and ethnic lines<sup>8</sup>. As the war has dragged on the popular movement has become increasingly fragmented with the Islamist forces, organised in Al-Nusra and Liwa Al-Tahwid, ascending to be the spear tip of the opposition forces.
4. The urgent need for aid and support for refugees and those trapped by the fighting and recognise the efforts of many UK activists to get more aid to Syria and the refugee camps.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/15/us-syria-crisis-toll-idUSBREA1E0HS20140215>

<sup>2</sup> <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.timesofisrael.com/saudis-reportedly-to-arm-syrian-rebels-with-advanced-weaponry/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-10-31/russia-increases-syria-arms-while-joining-push-for-talks.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/21/syrian-detainee-execution-evidence-aid-agencies>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/12/12/us-syria-crisis-adra-idUSBRE9BB0PM20131212>

<sup>7</sup> <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/10/11/human-rights-watchsyrianrebelgroupsguiltyofwarcrimes.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.opendemocracy.net/rozh-ahmad/mass-slaughter-of-civilian-kurds-in-syria-ignites-heavy-clashes-and-mass-exodus>

Left Unity resolves to:

1. Oppose all foreign intervention in the Syrian civil war and campaign against the sales of arms and training by regional and world powers which is only fueling the slaughter.
2. Support the democratic and working class organisations fighting the Ba'athist regime, the reactionaries within the opposition and opposing intervention from regional and world powers.
3. Support efforts to send grassroots aid to Syria whilst campaigning for aid organisations and the government to do more such as welcoming Syrian refugees fleeing the war.
4. Support the right of national self-determination for the Kurdish population within Syria and their right to defend their communities from government and opposition forces.