

## IRGC Qods Force Marches into Syria

*According to the Turkish newspaper, [Sabah](#), the commander of the Quds forces, Qassem Soleimani and 15,000 of his fighters have entered Syria with the mission of assisting in the suppression of the Syrian protestors. The Quds forces will act as a firewall for the Assad regime as the Syrian army is finding itself in a difficult situation where many officers are joining the opposition because they do not approve of the mass killings of the civilians, which so far has taken the lives of more than 5,000 people.*

*Other sources have indicated that Qassem Soleimani has a permanent presence in Syria's war room overseeing and managing the attacks on the opposition.*

*Khamenei has said that Syria is the red line, adding that the fall of Assad will not be tolerated. Qassem Soleimani is urging Assad to enforce a complete lockdown of information to the outside world and to use a vicious clampdown to put an end to the uprising before the West can possibly get involved militarily. (<http://pjmedia.com/tatler/2012/02/07/report-iran-quds-forces-march-into-syria/?singlepage=true>)*

*According to the Syrian official, Kassam Salimani, commander of the Quds Force, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard special forces unit, has arrived in Syria recently and has taken up a spot in the war room which manages army maneuvers against opposition forces.*

*The war room is also reportedly populated by Assad himself, as well as his brother Maher, brother-in-law Assaf Shaukat and cousin Rami Makhoul, with the Syrian chief of staff's authority reportedly restricted and divided up between other military commanders.*

*The Quds Force includes 15,000 elite soldiers who operated, among other locations, in Iraq during the war, and the specialty of which is engaging in unconventional warfare on foreign soil. Among other duties, the Quds Force is in charge of training and funding Hezbollah.*

*Salimani's presence in Syria serves as an indication of the kind of battle that Assad is planning against opposition forces, with the Syrian army reportedly planning to wage all out war against the rebel city of Homs. (<http://www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/report-top-iran-military-official-aiding-assad-s-crackdown-on-syria-opposition-1.411402>)*

Please read both articles for more important information.

**Analysis.** At this point the GCC insurgency to topple Assad has failed. I do not believe that the GCC is prepared to invade Syria and that is what must happen for Assad to be defeated. Turkey will not invade either. Beyond that, Russia is prepared to put troops into Damascus to defend Assad against regular outside forces. I believe Russia is prepared to use nuclear weapons if necessary to maintain Assad in control in Syria. While the People's Republic of China (PRC) cannot project power in any meaningful way to the Middle East, they can make life in the Pacific miserable.

Hafez Assad crushed Homs to stop the revolt against him. Son Bashar is evidently in the process of doing the same thing. The only reason I see that this revolt has lasted as long as it has is the level of outside support that wasn't there last time. The level of pro Assad outside support is also much greater than that enjoyed by Hafez.

This is also really bad for the GCC countries. They have been unable to covertly get rid of the threat on the western front. The Syrian Army is still almost totally intact. Not all of the divisions have been employed on rebellion suppression. Many of them have been detailed to guard the Syria-Jordan border against a possible invasion. That invasion was never coming but the defense against it kept possibly marginally loyal divisions away from the fight and the possibility of serious defections. These units

may not fight real hard to keep Assad in power but they will defend themselves and Syria.

How soon the Iranians may be ready to make mischief in the Persian Gulf will depend in part on how soon the Syrian Army is refit and ready to head south. Also, I believe, on how soon Iraqi units can be merged into a Shiite army.

The GCC may not have toppled Assad but they have possibly thrown off the Shiite timetable. King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia continues to confound the Shiites by waking up on a regular basis. This gives the GCC more time to prepare. As Shakespeare said, "Beware the Ides of March."