

Terms of Reference for the Joint Implementation Group

These terms of reference describe organization, functions, and procedures for the Joint Implementation Group (JIG.)

The purpose of the JIG is to enable expanded coordination between the United States and the Russian Federation beyond the established safety of flight procedures. The participants, through the JIG, are to work together to defeat Jabhat al Nusra and Daesh within the context of strengthening the Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) and supporting the political transition process outlined in UNSCR 2254. The United States and the Russian Federation, hereafter referred to as "the participants", intend to act in accordance with these terms of reference. Unless otherwise stated, the participants will conduct their efforts through the JIG.

The participants are to implement the provisions of the "Approach for Practical Russian-American Efforts against Daesh and Jabhat al Nusra and Strengthening the Cessation of Hostilities."

The participants are to conduct all efforts consistent with the intent to take all reasonable measures to eliminate non-combatant casualties.

The participants also commit to all efforts, including operations subject to cooperation or otherwise addressed by these terms of reference, occurring in compliance with international humanitarian law and the terms of the CoH.

1. **JIG Location, Organization and Composition**

a. **Location.** The JIG is to be located in the vicinity of Amman, Jordan.

Participants intend to negotiate their own support requirements with the host nation.

b. **Organization.** The participants intend to maintain separate, national headquarters in which they will install systems to exchange information with their respective headquarters responsible for tactical actions against Nusra and Daesh. The participants, through the JIG, intend to establish a coordination center at which they are to exchange intelligence and operational information.

d. **Composition.** Participants intend to staff the JIG in numbers sufficient to accomplish the JIG's functions. The participants intend to match, as practicable, the ranks of their counterparts.

i. **Staffing.** The participants intend to staff the JIG with subject matter experts and professionals with expertise in intelligence, targeting and air operations. Intelligence expertise includes knowledge of the disposition, operations, and tactics of the relevant armed actors in Syria. Targeting expertise requires familiarity with national procedures to choose, confirm and prosecute deliberate targets.

ii. **Language and Translation.** The participants intend to provide information to the JIG in their native language. Participants are responsible for translating material received. Participants intend to staff the JIG with a sufficient number of bilingual personnel familiar with military

intelligence and operational terminology, in order to enable the real-time translation of conversations and documents.

iii. **Senior National Representative.** The participants intend to provide the JIG with senior national representatives -- Colonels (O-6) or civilian employees of the equivalent ranks -- with the authority to transmit, on behalf of their respective operational commanders, their participants' national decisions or positions.

iv. **Intelligence Personnel.** The participants intend to staff the JIG with intelligence personnel who can exchange information and resolve differences between how the participants represent information -grid reference systems, place names and other such technical details. Intelligence personnel are to include subject matter experts Nusra and Daesh in Syria. The participants, through the JIG, should develop mutually acceptable formats for information to be exchanged.

v. **Operations Representatives.** The participants intend to staff the JIG with operations representatives with expertise in national procedures for strike planning, targeting, weaponeering, operational law and other functions. Operations representatives are to resolve differences in how the parties present information. The participants, through the JIG should develop mutually acceptable formats for how information is exchanged.

vi. **Support Personnel.** The participants may staff the JIG with personnel, as required, to manage logistics, force protection, communications and other requirements.

2. **JIG Role in Military Operations.** The participants, through the JIG, should enable coordination between the participants for military operations against Nusra. Participants, through the JIG, may work to maximize independent, but synchronized, efforts against Daesh in Syria. Coordination should begin with information exchange on both Nusra and Daesh. If national authorities determine that integrated operations against deliberate targets is in the interest of both participants, the participants should coordinate procedures to permit integrated operations.

a. **Nusra Targeting.** The participants will commit to supporting deliberate targeting of Nusra. Once senior representatives to the JIG decide that information exchange has produced commonly understood information, the participants, through the JIG, intend to begin coordinating the targeting of Nusra. The participants are to develop target packages for Nusra targets under their national targeting processes. The participants, through the JIG, should coordinate on targets that have been developed. Once a decision has been reached on targets, the participants should coordinate the participants' proposals on how these targets are to be addressed. Initial efforts against mutually-decided-upon targets will be deconflicted by geography or time. With the exception of imminent threats to the participants where prior agreement on a target is infeasible, the participants will only take action against Nusra targets that are agreed to in advance, pursuant to procedures developed by the JIG and deconflicted through existing channels.

i. **Targeting.** The participants are to select and prioritize targets, as outlined in previous paragraph, at their respective operational headquarters. The participants are to manage the exchange of information between targeting organizations.

ii. **Actionable Targets.** The participants are to coordinate agreement on Nusra targets that have been deemed "actionable" through the participants' respective national processes. National headquarters are to provide information on actionable targets in a format to be developed and decided upon by the participants. Actionable targets are those that have been "vetted" - targets for which participants have accurate supporting intelligence. The participants may commit additional Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance resources to support vetting of potential targets consistent with their respective national priorities. The participants anticipate "validating" actionable targets under their respective national processes to ensure they meet the appropriate commander's guidance, and may be targeted consistent with international humanitarian law and applicable rules of engagement.

iii. **Target Development.** Only those targets that both participants agree are actionable will be further developed for strikes. The participants are to facilitate precision targeting by exchanging mensurated target locations. Actionable targets, as decided mutually by the participants, are to receive the same treatment as do other national targets - there is no presumption of priority simply because the participants mutually decided that a target is actionable.

b. Daesh Targeting: The participants may communicate targeting information for targets that permit independent, but synchronized, operations against Daesh in Syria. The participants are to select and prioritize targets at their respective operational headquarters. The participants are to manage the exchange of information between targeting organizations. Any decision to jointly validate and execute a Daesh target should be made pursuant to procedures developed by the JIG and deconflicted through existing channels. [Both participants reserve the right to conduct unilateral strikes against Daesh targets outside of designated areas].

c. **Operational Deconfliction and Coordination.** The JIG is a liaison body; it is to expose portions of a participant's targeting and airstrike planning functions to the other participant. The United States and Russia should inform one another through the JIG of final plans for operations against a mutually selected target no later than the day before execution. The JIG is to communicate assessments of national actions against Nusra and to the participants. The JIG may communicate assessments of national actions against Daesh in Syria to the participants.

- i. **Timelines.** The JIG is to operate on timelines that permit the participants to incorporate information developed by the JIG into their normal, national procedures.
- ii. **Strike Details.** The participants commit to developing a format for the information about intended operations to be exchanged, including the general time of the strike, the intended method of target attack, general force composition, routing of the strike and precise details of the target being struck. The participants commit to ensuring that the intended actions are deconflicted by time and/or geography. The participants commit to coordinating to ensure strike packages are not targeted by air defenses of either party or by those of the regime.
- iii. **Battle Damage Assessment.** Each participant intends to collect BDA on JIG-coordinated targets it strikes; participants may choose to expose the details of the BDA they collect. Either participant may collect BDA on targets the other participant strikes.
- iv. **Collateral Damage.** The participants intend to facilitate the consideration of any allegations that mutually-decided-upon strikes caused unacceptable collateral damage or loss of life, and explore additional measures to avoid such strikes in the future.
- v. **Coordination of Integrated Operations.** At some point, national authorities may authorize the participants to coordinate on integrated operations. Should such a decision be taken, the participants intend to host a conference of national representatives to develop procedures for integrated operations.

d. **Emergent Circumstances.**

- i. **Imminent Threats.** The participants can target imminent threats to their respective personnel if prior agreement on a target is infeasible. In addition, participants can target imminent threats against their respective nationals by named senior Shura council members of Nusra and active external plotters, as agreed by the United States and Russia.
- ii. **Other Circumstances.** The Syrian military can employ military action, including air activities, against the Nusra Front outside of designated areas if Nusra acquires territory there. Russia can use airpower in defense of Syrian government forces in the event of attack by Nusra from within a designated area, if agreed in advance with the United States. All actions should be consistent with the terms of the cessation of hostilities.
- iii. **Cessation of Hostilities Violations.** The participants may report information that could corroborate allegations of COH violations to the Geneva Cell.

3. **JIG Role in Monitoring the Grounding of Syrian Air Activities.** The participants intend to collect and report information on regime air activities in support of monitoring the grounding of Syrian aircraft in designated areas.

a. **Information to be Collected.** The JIG is to be provided advance notice of regime air operations that are permitted as exemptions to the grounding of Syrian military aircraft. The JIG is to maintain a current Syrian air order of battle; changes to the disposition of regime aircraft are to be reported daily. The participants should develop measures to help confirm the Syrian military's compliance with the grounding. The JIG is to report regime violations to the participants.

b. **Prohibited Activities and Exemptions.** The regime is prohibited from flying in designated areas; designated areas include areas of most concentrated Nusra presence, areas of significant Nusra presence, and areas where the opposition is dominant, with some possible Nusra presence. Exempted circumstances are:

- MEDEVAC
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Personnel recovery

c. **Advance Notice of Regime Air Operations.** The Russian Federation is to provide the JIG advance notice of all regime air operations. For exempted missions, the JIG is to be provided the general time of the Syrian mission, general force composition and details of the routing of the package no later than the day prior to execution. Routing for operations in areas under Daesh control from areas under regime control is to be provided to the JIG in advance of such operations taking place, no later than the day prior to execution

Approach for Practical Russian-American Cooperation against Daesh and Jabhat al Nusra and Strengthening the Cessation of Hostilities

The following is designed to allow Russia and the U.S. to intensify joint and mutual efforts to bring about the destruction of Nusra and Daesh in the context of a strengthened COH with all COH parties adhering to COH terms.

To this end, Russia and the U.S. reconfirm their commitment to intensifying support and assistance to regional allies to help them prevent the flow of fighters, weapons, or financial support to UN designated terrorist groups across the Syrian border.

Delineation of territories controlled by Daesh, Nusra, and moderate opposition forces remains a key priority. Nusra shall enjoy no safe haven anywhere within Syria.

Russia and the United States will also work in parallel to bring about the political transition process as outlined in UNSCR 2254.

Mechanisms:

- 1) Russia and the United States will intensify their efforts to ensure full compliance with the COH, including the suspension of all offensive ground and air operations against signatories to the COH and civilians in Syria.

- 2) In the context of a strengthened COH, which will have been restored with the target of reaching the level that had been achieved in late February and maintained for a period of at least 7 days, the United States and Russia will establish a Joint Implementation Group (JIG) comprised of subject matter experts on Syria and professionals with expertise on targeting. The JIG is to be established NLT [DATE] and located at [LOCATION].

- 3) The JIG is to take on the following tasks, in sequence:
 - a) Complete, to the extent possible, no later than five days after formation of the JIG, a common map of territories with high concentrations of Nusra formations, to include areas where Nusra formations are in close proximity to opposition formations, for precise target development.

 - b) Share intelligence and develop actionable targets for military action against Nusra, including, but not limited to, leadership targets, training camps, logistical depots, supply lines, and headquarters.

c) Designate a set of targets for airstrikes by the Russian Aerospace Forces and/or U.S. military forces related to Jabhat al-Nusra operations in designated areas. Designated areas include areas of most concentrated Nusra Front presence, areas of significant Nusra Front presence, and areas where the opposition is dominant, with some possible Nusra Front presence. Even prior to the establishment of the JIG, technical experts from the U.S. and Russia will plot the geo-coordinates of these designated areas.

d) Devise mechanisms to monitor and enforce the Syrian military's cessation of military air activity over the designated areas described in paragraph c, with appropriate non-combat exceptions to be decided.

d) Decide on a date, shortly after the initial set of targets is agreed, to simultaneously: 1) begin Russian and/or U.S. strikes against agreed Nusra targets, and 2) stop all Syrian military air activities – fixed and rotary wing – in agreed designated areas, with appropriate exceptions for non-combat purposes.

e) If Syrian military activity in conflict with paragraph 3.d or airstrikes in conflict with paragraph 5 occur, either participant may pull out of the JIG.

4) The process of target development through the JIG and airstrikes against Nusra targets by Russian Aerospace Forces and/or U.S. military forces will be ongoing and continuous. The JIG is to exchange information on the effects of targeting Nusra and the developing situation on the ground.

5) With the exception of imminent threats to the United States or Russia where prior agreement on a target is infeasible, Russia and the United States will only take action against Nusra targets that are agreed to in advance and pursuant to appropriate procedures through existing de-confliction channels.

6) The JIG will also work to maximize independent but synchronized efforts against Daesh.

7) All efforts outlined above will be conducted in a manner consistent with the Laws of Armed Conflict and full implementation of the cessation of hostilities.

8) Compliance with the CoH will be required for this understanding to remain in effect.

9) Modalities for the mechanism described above will be further developed in bilateral negotiations to be concluded as soon as possible given the urgency expressed by both Russia and the U.S.

10) The steps outlined above are intended as steps toward a more comprehensive understanding between the U.S. and Russia, with a target date of July 31, 2016, on three inter-related issues designed to produce a durable end of the conflict and the defeat of Daesh and Nusrah:

a) military and intelligence cooperation between Russia and the U.S. to defeat Daesh and Nusrah;

b) translation of the CoH into a durable, nationwide ceasefire, phased with steps on the political transition, inclusive of provisions on the disposition and separation of forces, control of heavy weapons, regulation of the flow of weapons into Syria, independent monitoring and verification, and enforcement; and

c) a framework on political transition in Syria consistent with UNSCR 2254, to include provisions on how and when a transitional government with full executive authority formed on the basis of mutual consent will be established, security and intelligence institutions will be reformed, and constitutional and electoral processes will be conducted.