

Why the US wants to terminate its mission in Syria

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Several international media outlets, citing *Foreign Policy magazine*, write that the White House and the Pentagon no longer consider it appropriate to extend American contingent's mission in Syria. It is about at least 900 American troops who, in collaboration with the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) – opposition to the Assad government – are allegedly fighting ISIS in this Arab republic.

Official Damascus holds the opposite opinion on this issue, believing that the American contingent in Syria was stationed on illegal grounds, and its goal was not to fight Islamists, but to support the separatist movements tearing this country apart, as well as the stolen hydrocarbon resources, which remained out of Damascus control after the events of 2011. Back in the summer of 2022, the Syrian Foreign Ministry sent letters to the UN Secretary General in which it estimated the damage to the Syrian economy due to “oil theft by the Americans” at \$107.1 billion.

Following this logic, Washington now believes that the threats to its contingent in Syria outweigh the profitability of illegal transactions with Syrian oil. In fact, recent developments in the region have shown that US bases in Syria and neighboring Iraq are vulnerable to precision strikes by the IRGC and Iranian proxy groups in the region. The logistics of their ground and air supply through the territories of Iraq and Jordan are also under threat, given the outbreak of hostilities on the Syrian-Jordanian border due to drug trafficking routes passing there, as well as the intensification of Iraqi Shiite formations collaborating with Hezbollah.

In such circumstances, extending the Syrian mission really becomes a headache for the United States.

American analysts are aware of this, however, on the other hand, they are wondering: how reasonable is it to evacuate troops on the eve of the US presidential elections, and whether the premature termination of the mission will lead to results similar to the Afghan scenario, which was dubbed by the world media the “*shameful escape of the United States*”. In addition, *Foreign Policy* considers it necessary to warn that the withdrawal of American forces could contribute to the revival and strengthening of ISIS in the region.

However, it is precisely this very remark of an authoritative publication, one of the founders of which was the famous Samuel Huntington, which prompts reflection on other possible motives of Washington strategists. Let us recall that in 2014, Washington claimed that the Iraqi authorities asked it to attack the positions of *Islamic State (IS)* militants in Syria. This was stated in a letter from the US Permanent Representative to the UN, Samantha Power, to the organization's Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. Now, taking into account the discourse being introduced about the possibility of withdrawing US forces from Iraq, one gets the impression that the main result of the evacuation of the Syrian contingent will be the restoration of ISIS, “*focused*” on the destruction of the so-called “*Shiite Crescent*” that threatens Israel and US interests in Western Asia.