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## Putin: Syria's Assad Ready for 'Snap Elections,' Power-Sharing

By Jason Ditz  
September 4, 2015



Russia's efforts to secure some sort of unity government in Syria, encompassing both the Assad government and the more palatable rebel factions to fight jointly against ISIS appear to have borne fruit today, as President Putin announced that Assad is on board with the idea.

Putin says Assad is ready for “snap elections” for parliament and a power-sharing deal with the (rebel) opposition parties if it means unifying against the extremist groups. Putin also confirmed ongoing talks with the US and other international communities to approve it.

The real challenge, however, will be getting the Syrian rebels themselves on board. So far that’s been a non-starter, as they haven’t even gotten them to agree to talk to the Assad government, let alone countenance some serious power-sharing agreement.

The rebel groups have maintained Assad can’t be part of any “unity” government, which of course defeats the purpose, because neither side is strong enough to seriously challenge ISIS on their own.

Russia has been determined to keep Assad in power from the start, ensuring they keep their lone Mediterranean naval base, but as the war turns worse has urged Assad to give up some power to unify with the more palatable forces.