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Syria Rebels Attracting Young Foreign Islamists

By Jason Ditz

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Once the domain primarily of military defectors subsidized by Western nations, the Syrian rebellion is now overwhelmingly being fought by foreigners, as the idea of a sectarian conflict introduces a new generation of Islamists to the idea of jihad.

Analysts say that Syria is attracting foreign Islamist fighters on a level that even the US occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan never did, likening it to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in its creation of a “fighter glut.”

Fighters from virtually everywhere have flocked to Syria. Large numbers came from places like Libya and Egypt, of course, but Islamists from across Europe and the US have also been reported.

That’s a long-term problem for the whole world, as the fighters develop ties with the al-Qaeda leadership and adopt their ideology, they will eventually move on, and have the passports to get in virtually anywhere to carry out attacks.