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Syria Welcomes Call to Destroy Chemical Weapons

By Jason Ditz

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When Secretary of State John Kerry proposed that Syria could avoid getting attacked by surrendering full control of its chemical weapons arsenal by the end of the week, it was one of those statements the administration meant to be rejected.

The State Department has even said as much since, dubbing it a “rhetorical argument” after Russia and Syria embraced the proposal, and now suggesting “skepticism” at the plan.

The plan, as laid out by Kerry and later by Russian officials, would see Syria place its arsenal under international control with an eye toward its eventual dismantling. The Russian government has offered to send personnel to Syria to help with the process.

The problem with this whole plan remains, as ever, the Obama Administration, which says that just because Syria gave in to a publicly made demand is no reason President Obama should have to stop threatening to attack them.

The administration has a history of making empty offers then retracting them, including a demand to give UN inspectors access to the Jobar Incident site in Syria followed by angry condemnation when they were given that access, and a demand that the UN withdraw those inspectors. The biggest one, apart from today’s proposal, still remains the Iran third-party enrichment offer, however.

In 2010, the US proposed a deal whereby Iran would send much of its low-enriched uranium abroad to produce fuel for its medical reactor. The Iranian government accepted the deal after

negotiations with Turkey, and not only did the US renege on the proposal, but angrily condemned Turkey for getting the proposal accepted.