

Fresh hopes as ceasefire is agreed in Syria

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There is a fresh but tentative hope for a cessation of hostilities in Syria. The United States, Russia and Syria have signed an agreement to

collectively target the group known as ISIS. Their joint declaration will come into effect on Monday. There is mixed reaction around the world to the latest initiative due to the failures of previous attempts at halting the fighting over the past few years. Even with the new 10-day truce being literally hours away, the bombs continued to rain down in areas around the capital Damascus. Syrian government air strikes on ISIS-held areas reportedly killed at least 82 people over the weekend. At least 45 people died in strikes on Aleppo.

Most of the major players in the Syrian conflict responded positively to the new ceasefire, despite the strained relations between Russia and the USA. An American official said: "This remains...the most promising way that we see in front of us to try to get this horrible situation to a better place." US Secretary of State John Kerry said: "It is an opportunity and not more than that until it becomes a reality." Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the US and Russia had agreed on zones in which joint "strikes against terrorists" would be conducted. Turkey and the European Union welcomed it but warned that further action was needed. There has been no official reaction from Iran.

Sources: *BBC.com / AlJazeera.com / npr.org*

Writing

There will never be an end to war because humans love fighting. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

fresh / tentative / hope / agreement / reaction / fighting / truce / air strikes / capital / major players / conflict / ceasefire / promising / opportunity / reality / terrorists / Iran

True / False

- a) People are totally convinced the new ceasefire will work. T / F
- b) The ceasefire started at the weekend. T / F
- c) The ceasefire is just for 10 days. T / F
- d) The fighting killed at least 55 people in Aleppo at the weekend. T / F
- e) Most countries involved in the conflict were negative about the truce. T / F
- f) An American official called the conflict a terrible situation. T / F
- g) Russia's foreign minister agreed on more strikes against ISIS. T / F
- h) Iran has not yet commented on the ceasefire. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 1. tentative | a. deal |
| 2. hostilities | b. tense |
| 3. agreement | c. chance |
| 4. initiative | d. cautious |
| 5. rain down | e. carried out |
| 6. responded | f. fighting |
| 7. strained | g. response |
| 8. opportunity | h. fall |
| 9. conducted | i. reacted |
| 10. reaction | j. plan |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about the fighting in Syria?
- b) How did the war in Syria start?
- c) What do you think of the new ceasefire?
- d) Why do ceasefires often not last?
- e) What will all the sides do during the ceasefire?
- f) Who will eventually win in Syria?
- g) What advice do you have for the Syrian people?
- h) What do you think Syria will be like in 10 years from now?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. hope for a cessation | a. rain down |
| 2. collectively target the | b. declaration |
| 3. joint | c. action was needed |
| 4. There is mixed | d. players in the Syrian conflict |
| 5. bombs continued to | e. reaction around the world |
| 6. Most of the major | f. of hostilities in Syria |
| 7. responded positively | g. relations |
| 8. despite the strained | h. would be conducted |
| 9. joint strikes against terrorists | i. group known as ISIS |
| 10. further | j. to the new ceasefire |

Discussion – Student B

- Should America do more to end the war?
- What is the danger of America and Russia sending troops to Syria?
- What do you know about Syria's President Assad?
- What dangers does Syria present to the rest of the world?
- Who are the terrorists in Syria and what do they want?
- What does Iran think of the situation in Syria?
- How can Iran help end the hostilities?
- What questions would you like to ask the leaders?

Spelling

- a fresh but tveiatent hope
- a cessation of sotihitsei in Syria
- tlevoecyclil target the group
- Their joint rlnadateoi will come into effect
- the latest ittieiavin
- being eryalitll hours away
- responded sioyvipetl
- the new esefaecir
- this lierebrt situation
- until it becomes a terlaiy
- strikes against tsisretorr
- There has been no fiaflico reaction

Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. f	3. a	4. j	5. h
6. i	7. b	8. c	9. e	10. g

Role Play

Role A – A new leader

You think a new leader is what the Syrian people need most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as helpful. Also, tell the others which is the least helpful of these (and why): international aid, asylum in Europe or secure borders.

Role B – International aid

You think international aid is what the Syrian people need most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as helpful. Also, tell the others which is the least helpful of these (and why): a new leader, asylum in Europe or secure borders.

Role C – Asylum in Europe

You think asylum in Europe is what the Syrian people need most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as helpful. Also, tell the others which is the least helpful of these (and why): international aid, a new leader or secure borders.

Role D – Secure borders

You think secure borders is what the Syrian people need most. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as helpful. Also, tell the others which is the least helpful of these (and why): international aid, asylum in Europe or a new leader.

Speaking – Syria

Rank these with your partner. Put the things most likely to help Syrians at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| • an effective ceasefire | • wi-fi |
| • international talks | • asylum in Europe |
| • US-Russian intervention | • a new leader |
| • international aid | • secure borders |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.