

TWI Series on Syrian Safe Havens/Zones

[*Fabrice Balanche*](#), [*Lt Col John R. Barnett*](#), [*Anna Borshchevskaya*](#), [*Nicholas Burns*](#), [*Soner Cagaptay*](#), [*Michael Eisenstadt*](#), [*James F. Jeffrey*](#), [*Col. Nora Marcos*](#), [*Nadav Pollak*](#), [*David Schenker*](#), and [*Andrew J. Tabler*](#)

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Understand the policy implications of humanitarian safe havens, safe zones, buffers, or no-fly zones in Syria with these assessments of the who, what, where, why, and how of the various options.

[Intervention to Assist Fleeing Syrians: Who, What, Where, Why, and How](#)

[*Col. Nora Marcos*](#)

Establishing humanitarian corridors, safe havens, safe zones, or buffer or no-fly zones could turn the tide of Syria's humanitarian crisis, but it could also pose numerous complications and create second- and third-order effects for the region.

[Establishing and Securing Safe Zones in Syria: Historical Lessons](#)

[*John Barnett*](#) and [*Michael Eisenstadt*](#)

Experience in Iraq, Bosnia, and Libya shows that safe-zone operations require unambiguous legal authorities, clear political and military guidance, robust air and ground forces, and a viable plan for displaced persons and refugees.

[The Israeli Perspective on Safe Zones in Syria](#)

[*Nadav Pollak*](#)

Despite the potential benefits of a safe zone along the Jordan-Syria border, Russia's presence in the war would probably limit Israel's ability to openly support or contribute to such an initiative.

[A Safe Zone in Southern Syria](#)

[*David Schenker*](#) and [*Andrew J. Tabler*](#)

As the Assad coalition and the Islamic State turn their attention southward, Jordan and the thousands of displaced Syrians waiting outside its border face an increasingly perilous security situation.

[How to Prevent al-Qaeda from Seizing a Safe Zone in Northwestern Syria](#)

[*Fabrice Balanche*](#)

Strong ground support for moderate rebels would be needed to keep any buffer zone in the northwest from falling under the control of al-Qaeda's Syrian affiliate.

[Kerry Neither Rules Out nor Supports Safe Zone Concept](#)

[*James F. Jeffrey*](#)

The assertion that such an effort would require up to 30,000 U.S. troops, and that it could risk a direct confrontation with Russia, requires a much closer look.

[Two Potential Safe Zones in Northern Syria](#)

[*Fabrice Balanche*](#)

Both Idlib province and eastern Aleppo province have been relatively spared from the fighting, and their rural communities remain strong.

[The First Step Should Be to Create Buffer Zones in Syria](#)

[*Andrew J. Tabler*](#)

Any safe zones would need to be secured by the military forces of Syria's neighbors, such as Turkey and Jordan, as well as by U.S. air and ground support.

[Safety First in Syria](#)

[*Anna Borshchevskaya*](#)

However difficult it might be to implement safe zones after years of inaction, the humanitarian disaster will only grow without them, as will the threat to regional and European stability.

[A Turkish 'Secure Strip' in Syria: Domestic Concerns and Foreign Limitations](#)

[Soner Cagaptay](#) and [Cem Yolbulan](#)

Although Ankara has the necessary parliamentary authorization and professional military capacity to establish a safe zone, it would still need Western intelligence help, air support, and diplomatic backing to cover the operation and deter Russian retaliation.

[Legal Justifications for a Safe Zone in Syria](#)

[James F. Jeffrey](#)

UN Security Council Resolutions 2170, 2249, and 2254 offer ample grounds for establishing a zone to protect refugees and counter the Islamic State, but shaping the international diplomatic response would be paramount given the legal gray areas inherent in such action.

[Countering Russian and Assad Regime Responses to Safe Zones](#)

[Anna Borshchevskaya](#)

For such zones to succeed, they must be backed with militarily enforced no-fly zones and a persuasive response to Moscow's inevitable small-scale violations and disinformation campaign.

[The Diplomatic Case for America to Create a Safe Zone in Syria](#)

[Nicholas Burns](#) and [James F. Jeffrey](#)

The potential risks of inaction -- including thousands more civilians killed, millions more refugees, the spillover of fighting into Turkey, Jordan, and Israel, and a Russian-Iranian military victory -- greatly outweigh the dangers of moving forward.