

A Syria Plan That Shares the Burden -- and Gives the U.S. Leverage

by [Dennis Ross \(/experts/dennis-ross\)](#)

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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A safe haven along Syria's border with Turkey could involve several partners and send a clear message to Russia and Iran.

President Obama has been consistent on Syria. Even when I was in the administration, the president made clear that he did not want to get dragged into the conflict there. The legacy of Iraq weighed heavily on him. He was elected to get us out of Middle East wars, not into them. He was not going to get involved in "someone else's civil war."

But what if that civil war produced a humanitarian catastrophe? What if it created a massive refugee crisis? What if it threatened to destabilize neighboring states? What if it gave rise to a group like the Islamic State? These questions were not considered because the fear of being dragged into a quagmire was so great. The costs of action always determined the administration's approach, not the costs of inaction...

[Read the full article on the *Washington Post* website. \(https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-syria-plan-that-uses-us-leverage/2015/10/09/04d3ce50-6b93-11e5-aa5b-f78a98956699_story.html\)](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-syria-plan-that-uses-us-leverage/2015/10/09/04d3ce50-6b93-11e5-aa5b-f78a98956699_story.html) ❖

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