

## Combating Terrorism and Alleviating Human Suffering in Syria

[Andrew J. Tabler](#)

**Transition 2017: Policy Notes for the Trump Administration**

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### ***Syria Paper Explains How to Fight Terror, Stop Refugee Flow...***

In this new Transition 2017 paper, Institute expert Andrew J. Tabler argues that Syria remains de facto partitioned, making the establishment of safe zones in non-Assad-controlled areas the Trump administration's most expedient course of action. Moreover, it would further Washington's cause to drive a wedge into the country's Russia-Iran alliance, and both isolate and pressure the Assad regime.

If Washington's objectives in Syria are to defeat U.S.-designated terrorist groups and stem the outflow of refugees, President Bashar al-Assad is under no circumstances the right person to entrust with these missions. Simply in practical terms, he lacks the manpower to retake and hold the two-thirds of Syrian territory outside his control any time soon, despite having sufficient support from Russia and Iran to maintain control in large parts of the country. But more important, Assad is an avowed adversary of the West, undeserving of its cooperation.

## THE AUTHOR

[ANDREW J. TABLER](#) is the Martin J. Gross Fellow in the Program on Arab Politics at The Washington Institute, where he focuses on Syria and U.S. policy in the Levant. He was cofounder and editor-in-chief of *Syria Today*, Syria's first private-sector English-language magazine, and has served as a consultant on U.S.-Syria relations for the International Crisis Group and as a fellow of the Institute of Current World Affairs. His analysis is published widely in premier media outlets, including the *New York Times*, *International Herald Tribune*, *Newsweek*, *Foreign Policy*, and *Foreign Affairs*.