

# *Trump approves \$4.5 million in aid to White Helmets in Syria*

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Washington, October 23 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump has authorized \$4.5 million in aid to the so-called Syrian Civil Defense (SCD), aka "White Helmets," calling their work "important and highly valued."

The group's critics note its terrorist ties, pointing to areas in Syria where terrorists planned assaults, made drones and filmed fake chemical attack videos.

Washington pledged \$5 million in aid to the group at a conference back in March. Last May, the Trump administration had announced it would stop funding the White Helmets, only to backtrack a month later and send the group another \$6.8 million. And now, another 4.5 million dollars has been earmarked for the group.

The group's name is highly misleading, as the White Helmets have operated solely in areas controlled by anti-government militants, such as the Al-Qaeda affiliate Al-Nusra Front, now called HTS. The actual Syrian civil defense is part of the government, and has been subjected to U.S. sanctions as such.

Still, the U.S. continues to encourage "allies and partners" to join in its support of the White Helmets, and "efforts to protect civilians, religious and ethnic minorities, and other innocent victims of the Syrian conflict," according to the White House.

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