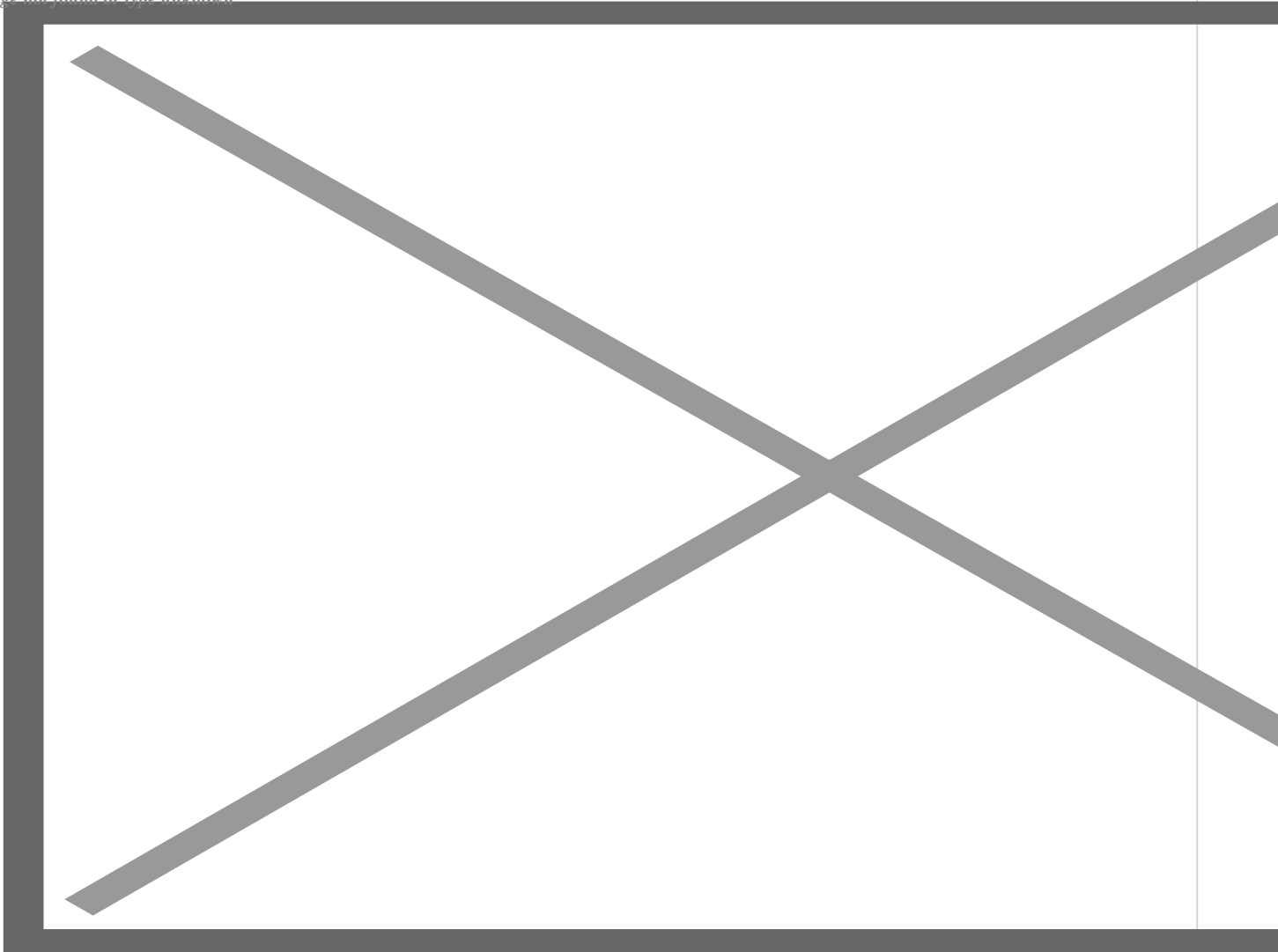


# *Syrian foreign minister says U.S. must end illegal occupation*

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**Syrian Foreign and Expatriates Minister Faisal Mikdad (R) and the UN special envoy for Syria, Geir Pedersen, meet in Damascus on September 11, 2021. (Photo by SANA)**

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Damascus, September 12 (RHC)--- Syrian Foreign and Expatriates Minister Faisal Mikdad says Damascus opposes any foreign interference in its domestic affairs, urging the United States and Turkey to end their occupation of the Arab country's territories and their violations of its sovereignty.

Mikdad made the remarks in a meeting with the UN special envoy for Syria, Geir Pedersen, and his accompanying delegation in Damascus on Saturday as the two sides discussed the latest international developments and their repercussions on the situation in the region, official news agency SANA reported.

The Syrian minister said unilateral coercive economic measures imposed by the United States and Western countries on the Syrian people, particularly on the health sector during the coronavirus pandemic, have made it more difficult for the country to battle the deadly disease.

Over the past years, the United States has been maintaining an illegal military presence on Syrian soil, collaborating with anti-Damascus militants and stealing the country's crude oil resources. It has also slapped rounds of crippling sanctions on Syria, which has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011.

Parts of the restrictive measures have been imposed under the so-called Caesar Act, an American piece of legislation that alleges to support the Syrian people by protecting them against the Syrian administration's way of governance.

The bans target almost all Syrian economic and trade activities, as well as the country's government officials. President Bashar al-Assad says the aggression forces have imposed an economic blockade on Syria after their failure in the military and security arenas, emphasizing that the country's people will be able to overcome this stage and achieve the final victory.

President Assad says Syrian people will be able to achieve the final victory in the face of the aggression forces' economic blockade on Syria. In a meeting with the secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command (PFLP—GC), Talal Naji, in Damascus on September 4, Assad added that the aggression forces' economic blockade against the Syrian people aims to strike the popular structure that has withstood throughout the global war on Syria.

Elsewhere in the meeting, Mikdad said all countries should adhere to the international law and the Charter of the United Nations in their international relations and avoid interfering in each others' domestic affairs or trying to impose foreign agendas against the interest and determination of other nations.

He also expressed his country's satisfaction with the solutions reached in Syria's southwestern province of Dara'a and the start of returning the normal life to Dara'a al-Balad neighborhood, saying Damascus has been keen on dealing with the situation there through flexible dialogue and not confrontations that harm the innocent people and the infrastructure and has succeeded in doing so.

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