

U.S. President Praises Congressional Backing for Syria Plan



Washington, September 19 (RHC)-- U.S. President Barack Obama has hailed Congress for approving his plan to arm and train what he called 'moderate' opposition militants fighting against the Syrian government. "The strong, bipartisan support in Congress for this new training effort shows the world that Americans are united in confronting the threat," Obama said at the White House. Obama's comments came minutes after the U.S. Senate approved the so-called "train-and-equip" plan, a day after it was passed by the House of Representatives.

The Pentagon plans to train and arm 5,000 militants in Syria as part of the Obama administration's long-term strategy to confront ISIL whose militants have seized a third of both Iraq and Syria, and beheaded two U.S. journalists and one British citizen.

Obama had requested \$500 million from Congress to train and equip the militants fighting both the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and ISIL militants. On Thursday, he again said that the U.S. will not start another ground war in Iraq or Syria.

The United States has deployed some 1,600 troops to Iraq to bolster security for American diplomats and provide advice to Iraqi government forces fighting the militants. The U.S. calls them 'military advisors,' but according to American defense officials, the troops are comprised of Marines and special operations forces from the U.S. Central Command region.

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