

# *U.S. Spends \$41 Million to Train 54 Militants in Syria*

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Washington, August 19 (RHC)-- The Pentagon's so-called train and equip program has produced just 54 "moderate" militants in Syria at a cost of \$41 million, according to a report.

The militants, who have been "painstakingly vetted" and "equipped with fancy new weapons," make up a group known as the New Syria Force, a key part of the U.S. campaign against Daesh (ISIL) terrorists, CNN reports.

A member of the group, which is fiercely opposed to the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, has appealed to the United States to speed up the training program.

"Nearly 17,000 Syrian men want to join, but the training is very slow," Abu Iskander said in an interview with CNN. "We need it to be faster -- 30 days instead of 45 days."

The report says that the U.S.-trained force, however, is far too small to worry the Takfiri terrorists. Another 70 militants are due to complete their courses soon, according to the report.

The Pentagon had initially announced that it intended to produce 5,400 militants a year as a proxy ground force to fight against both ISIL and the Assad government.

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