

Ceasefire Between Russia-Backed Syrian Army, Opposition Imminent – Kerry

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Smoke rises after what activists said was an airstrike by forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar Assad in the northwestern city of Ariha, in Idlib province, Syria.

A ceasefire between the Russia-backed Syrian army and opposition groups could be just weeks away from reality, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said, international media reported Tuesday.

Speaking at the residence of the U.S. ambassador to France, Kerry said that a truce would “exponentially help” to combat the Islamic State (IS) terrorist group, as well as end the Syrian conflict which has gone on for over four years, The Associated Press reported Tuesday.

“That's a gigantic step,” Kerry said. “We're weeks away conceivably from the possibility of a big transition for Syria, and I don't think people necessarily notice that. But that's the reality.”

Russia is ready to cooperate with Syrian armed opposition groups in fighting IS, Russian President Vladimir Putin said at a press conference following the G20 summit, the TASS news

agency reported Monday.

Some Russian analysts, however, have expressed skepticism about the prospective anti-IS coalition.

“Don't hold your breath: Russia-U.S. anti-terror alliance is not in the making,” Dmitry Trenin, a former colonel in the Russian army and director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, said on Twitter on Wednesday. “Coordination will be limited, and cooperation highly competitive,” he said.

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