**The Syria Crisis and the Global Players**

Watch *Background on Syria Crisis: The Global Players*, from Syria Deeply, and answer the questions below. <https://prezi.com/j_2_-ew2zwis/the-syria-crisis-the-global-players/>

Comprehension Questions

1. The current crisis in Syria began as a part of the “wave of revolutions that shook the Middle East as uprisings known as the Arab Spring.” According to the video, what were the Syrian people protesting?
2. What happened when the people began to protest in Syria?
3. Why haven’t world powers found a way to stop the ongoing violence in Syria?
4. Who are the five permanent members of the UN Security Council?
5. Which countries are supporting Bashar al Assad?
6. What Middle Eastern country is supporting the Assad regime?
7. According to the video, why are these countries supporting Assad?
8. Which countries are opposing the current government and supporting the rebels?
9. What have these countries done to support the government?
10. According to the video, why does Syria matter to the US?
11. What Middle Eastern countries are supporting the US?
12. How are these Middle Eastern countries helping the Syrian rebel forces?
13. What are some of the countries to which Syrian refugees are fleeing?

Discussion Questions

1. As the video said, protests and revolutions have taken place across the Middle East, with vastly different outcomes. Why do you think the protests in Syria became so violent?
2. The video says that “the world hasn’t found a way to stop” the violence in Syria. Do you think the world has a responsibility to stop the violence? Why/not?
3. The video says that “with a world of countries pumping guns and money into each side, it’s turned Syria into a battle zone.” How might countries be able to help Syria without escalating war and violence?
4. The video explains that the major world powers split on the issue of Syria. Imagine that you are a policy analyst for the UN, what recommendations would you make? How might you advise the major world powers to act?
5. What do you think it’s like to be living in Syria right now?
6. What do you think it’s like to be a Syrian refugee living in a refugee camp?

Additional information

History of the Crisis:

* *Interactive Timeline*, Syria Deeply. <http://beta.syriadeeply.org/conflict-timeline/#.UZFKaaKNqxp>
* *Syria Protests: What You Need to Know*, a video by the BBC. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15844631>
* *Guide: The Syria Crisis*, the BBC. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13855203>
* *Syria--Uprising and Civil War*, the New York Times. <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/syria/index.html>

Refugees:

* Syrian Refugees: A Snapshot of the Crisis, <http://syrianrefugees.eu/?page_id=87>
* The Impact of Syrian Refugees on Turkey and Jordan, by Chatham House, http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/twt/archive/view/186289
* Stories from NPR:
  + *Places Transformed: Syrian Refugees overwhelm Camps,* <http://www.npr.org/2013/05/04/181053781/a-place-transformed-the-birth-of-a-jordanian-refugee-camp>
  + *Sea of Syrian Refugees Threatens to Overload Jordan,* <http://www.npr.org/2013/05/02/180595881/sea-of-syrian-refugees-threatens-to-overload-jordan>
  + *The Stream of Syrian Refugees Strains Lebanon,* <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/03/19/174766831/the-stream-of-syrian-refugees-strains-lebanon>

Personal Stories:

* *One Day in Syria,* a video by the BBC. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00kxdwk>
* Conversation Series from Syria Deeply
  + *An Artist in Damascus, part I and II.* http://beta.syriadeeply.org/2012/11/conversations-an-artist-in-damascus-part-1, [http://beta.syriadeeply.org/2012/11/conversations-an-artist-in-damascus-part-2](http://beta.syriadeeply.org/2012/11/conversations-an-artist-in-damascus-part-2/#.UZFMXKKNqxo)
  + *A Frustrated Assad Supporter,* [http://beta.syriadeeply.org/2012/12/conversations-frustrated-assad-supporter](http://beta.syriadeeply.org/2012/12/conversations-frustrated-assad-supporter/#.UZFJvaKNqxo)
  + *A Teacher in Aleppo,* <http://beta.syriadeeply.org/2012/12/conversations-a-christian-in-aleppo/#.UZFNFaKNqxo>
  + *Scene from a Checkpoint*: [http://beta.syriadeeply.org/2012/12/conversations-a-day-at-the-checkpoint](http://beta.syriadeeply.org/2012/12/conversations-a-day-at-the-checkpoint/#.UZFJxaKNqxo)
  + *Life in Homs, Struggling Schools*: [http://beta.syriadeeply.org/2012/12/conversations-life-homs-struggling-schools/](http://beta.syriadeeply.org/2012/12/conversations-life-homs-struggling-schools/#.UZFNFqKNqxo)

Comprehension Questions and Answers

1. The current crisis in Syria began as a part of the “wave of revolutions that shook the Middle East as uprisings known as the Arab Spring.” According to the video, what were the Syrian people protesting?

*“Syria stood up to challenge its four decade dictatorship, first with peaceful protests, which then sparked a violent crackdown by the government, plunging the country into civil war.”*

1. What happened when the people began to protest in Syria?

*The protests began peacefully, “which then sparked a violent crackdown by the government, plunging the country into civil war”*

1. Why haven’t world powers found a way to stop the ongoing violence in Syria?

*“Because world powers, the five permanent members of the UN security council, are split over what to do with Syria and its president, Bashar al Assad”*

1. Who are the five permanent members of the UN Security Council?

*Russia, China, USA, Britain, France*

1. Which countries are supporting Bashar al Assad?

*Russia and China*

1. What Middle Eastern country is supporting the Assad regime?

*Iran*

1. According to the video, why are these countries supporting Assad?

*“because they’ve been strategic allies for years and because democracy in Syria is seen as a threat to their own governments at home”*

1. Which countries are opposing the current government and supporting the rebels?

*USA, Britain, and France*

1. What have these countries done to support the government?

*“Sent support to the rebel fighters”*

1. According to the video, why does Syria matter to the US?

*“In part because its revolution is calling for freedom and democracy and because the war has become a humanitarian and human rights crisis and because Syria’s conflict could destabilize the whole Middle East, a region that contains most of the words oil that’s key to the US and global economy.*

1. What Middle Eastern countries are supporting the US?

*Saudi, Qatar, Turkey*

1. How are these Middle Eastern countries helping the Syrian rebel forces?

*Sending weapons and helping rebels set up operations*

1. What are some of the countries to which Syrian refugees are fleeing?

*Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan,*