

Chapter IV

The Factors of United States of America Policy Differences Over Libya and Syria

This chapter, explains about the perspective of the United States of America in promoting resolution in Syria and Libya to the United Nation. How statesman discussion of the United States of America could come to a decision is explained in the section of this chapter. Additionally, it will discuss about the air military capabilities owned by Libya and Syria.

A. United States of America's Perspective on Libya

For years, the relationship between Libya and the United States of America have been filled with hatred and recriminations until today. The United States of America would have a vested interest for countries rich in oil. However, the United States of America has its own perspective on Libya, especially during the leadership of Muammar Gaddafi in which the United States of America finally decided to send troops to overthrow the authoritarian leader.

1. United States of America Defined Libya as The Enemy

After thirty years of relationship full of tension and resentment, United States of America relations with Libya after Muammar Gaddafi gradually improved over choosing a new more pragmatic path in Libyan foreign policy toward the United States of America. In 2005, several U.S.A. oil companies had resumed operations in Libya after the U.S. embargo imposed on Libya in 1986.

A year later, or more precisely on 15 May 2006, the United States of America officially announced the return of diplomatic relations with Libya. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice said that the decision was taken after Libya showed that they also fought against terrorism. The United States of America also removed Libya from the list of state sponsoring terrorism. Besides, Rice also said that the good intentions of leaving the Libyan WMD program was also influential in the decision of the United States of America to restore diplomatic relations.⁵¹

But the United States of America rejected the notion that the return of diplomatic relations between Libya and the United States of America is due to the oil factor. Through the Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, David Welch said that Libya remains an unsafe place to do business.⁵²

In 2008, Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice visited Libya for the first time. The visit was considered as a most historic visit in the relationship between the United States of America and Libya. On that occasion, Rice also briefly mentioned that there

⁵¹ "US to Restore Diplomatic Relations to Libya" retrieved from http://articles.cnn.com/2006-05-15/us.1/muammar.gaddafi.libya.american.terrorism.list?_s=PM:US on February 19, 2012 at

was no eternal enemies of the United States of America. Rice's speech was then considered as a signal that Libya was no longer referred to as that a country that became enemies for the United States of America.⁵³

Still, there has been no restoration of full diplomatic relations conducted by both countries. Restoration of full diplomatic relations will be made when each country assigns an ambassador in its respective countries. These two countries only provided a liaison officer for each others.

The relations between the United States of America and Libya have not been fully repaired. Sorrow over the tragedy of the people of the United States of America Lockerbie in Scotland still made an impression. Resentment is still felt and demanding justice even if Muammar Gaddafi has given compensation and hands over al-Megrahi, the bomber of Pan Am flight that killed 270 people. Strong reaction came from the United States of America when in 2009, the Scottish court of Al-Megrahi released him from prison on humanity grounds for the cancer suffered by Al-Megrahi. Megrahi came back to Libya and was greeted as a hero and then met Muammar Gaddafi. Four United States of America Senators then wrote a letter to Obama Administration in July 2010 to conduct an investigation into the possibility of conspiracy.⁵⁴

U.S.A. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton also said that the liberation of Al-Megrahi was wrong. Al-Megrahi's return is very special for the people of Libya. Muammar Gaddafi even lent his private jet to pick up al-Megrahi in Glasgow. The

⁵³ "Gadafy gets his reward with historic Rice visit" retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/sep/06/libya.usa> on February 19, 2012 at 23.06 LT

⁵⁴ "Libya: Background and U.S. Relations" retrieved from

people were partying in Tripoli Libya after the prisoner landed in Libyan capital.

Libyans also refer to this as a victory over the western world.

Public demand for the United States of America to re-convict Al-Megrahi and bring the terrorist to the United States of America continued to come from the United States of America. Meanwhile, Al-Megrahi being greeted like a hero in Tripoli increasingly made cuts and re-created the heat in the relation between United States of America and Libya. The White House as well as families of the victims who were mostly from the United States of America later described the decision as a mistake. White House spokesman, Robert Gibbs called the welcome Al-Megrahi too excessive and disgusting. Gibbs also said that the United States of America has expressed his disappointment at the Government of Libya for the welcome. The Greeting for Al-Megrahi is considered to seriously hurt the families of victims who are mostly from the United States of America.⁵⁵

United States of America not improved the status of its Liaison Office in Tripoli to Embassy. Until the end of the rebellion that broke out in February 2011, the Embassy of the United States of America was not yet available in the capital of Libya. The opening of an embassy would ensure the firmness of a full diplomatic relationship. But the United States of America had not yet realized it. The attitude of the United States of America certainly still indicates that Libya is still a threat and may be an enemy of the United States of America and its interests.

⁵⁵ "AS berangkat Khadafy bebaskan Al-Megrahi" retrieved from <http://sabili.co.id/internasional/as-berang->

Towards the outbreak of war in Libya in February 2011, the politicians, governments, and United States of America senator showed their criticism to the government of Libya. Politicians publicly urged the United States of America to ask Muammar Gaddafi to immediately resign and stop attacking civilians. Hillary Clinton continued the statement from President Obama that said Gaddafi had to go down and offered the option to exile after his fall. Meanwhile in Washington, two United States of America Senators stated that they supported the opposition parties to withdraw Gaddafi in Libya. The senators also said that they were ready to support the government of the United States of America for arming the rebels and supporting U.S. military operations to safeguard the air of rebellion.⁵⁶ Colonel David Lapan reported that carriers and U.S.A. warships had surrounded the Libyan territorial waters in the Mediterranean sea. Lapan also stated that the United States of America had deployed their troops to be ready to battle Gaddafi.⁵⁷

In March 2011, the United States of America fought against Libya. Libyan government considered the United States of America as an enemy that must be combated. The United States of America then supported to overthrow Muammar Gaddafi by providing military support for rebels in Libya. The United States of America, as an enemy to Libya, then chose to participate in the operation of No Fly Zone in the area of Libya to assist and protect the rebels.

The United States of America had considered Libya as its enemy. Some events in the past had become important points of the United States of America statesmen

when describing Libya as a sponsor state of terrorism against their opponent. For example Libya had attacked the United States of America directly when the Pan Am's plane blew up. Pan Am-owned by U.S.A. companies. Although the U.S.A. later had attempted normalization, especially when Muammar Gaddafi began to soften and open up to the United States of America and the West, the United States of America still keeps an eye on Libya.

2. United States of America's Perspective on War in Libya*

As mentioned by Jack C. and Roy Olton Plano, National Interest is about the Self Preservation, Independence, Military Security, Territorial Integrity, and Economic Welfare.⁵⁸ The fifth element is a very important element for all the statesmen when they try to formulate a decision, including when deciding to send troops.

So it is for the United States of America statesman when he decided to send troops to enforce the No Flying Zone in Libya. The United States of America would have its own interests over Libya. Economy became the main interest in the era of this modern world. The main economic commodity at this time is oil. Oil has become the most important production factor in the world. Oil production can be a component of every industry that requires energy to operate industrial machinery. Oil can also be a component that would require the distribution of fuel for vehicles that send the results of the production of economic activity. Oil consumption is also the subject of the whole world.

Countries in the Middle East are regions rich in oil content. Saudi Arabia is a country with the highest oil reserves in the world. Similarly, Libya, oil became the most important material. In fact, oil has transformed Libya from a very poor country into a developed country and has a very high income. Libya's oil production reached 160 billion tons in 1970.⁵⁹ Libya's oil wealth is tempting for United States of America and the Western world to explore.

In 2004, Libyan crude oil production increased more rapidly, up to 519 billion barrels. Of course, the United States of America as a country that requires energy in very large amount is really tempted to master the Libyan oil.

U.S.A. dependence on oil energy sources is due to its industrial activities. U.S.A. dependence on oil creates a superpower state seeking to control the oil fields around the world. Industrial countries still overwhelmingly dominate world oil consumption. United States of America became the country with the highest oil consumption in the world. The following table shows the top oil consumer state in the world:⁶⁰

Table 1

⁵⁹ Ibid, Page 90

Table 4.1

Top World Oil Consumers 2006

Rank	State	Consumption (on thousand Barrels per day)
1	United States of America	20.687
2	China	7.201
3	Japan	5.159
4	Russia	2.811
5	Germany	2.665
6	India	2.572
7	Canada	2.264
8	Brazil	2.217
9	Korea Republic	2.174
10	Saudi Arabia	2.139

Source : U.S Energy Information Administration (EIA)

It is clear how the United States of America became a highly consumptive uses of oil in the world, very different from other nations. The need for oil as primary energy makes the United States of America through the leadership of George W. Bush since early 2000 put it on the global political priority of the United States of America. Vice President Dick Cheney in a speech in mid-2001 stated that in 25 years in the future

... is a priority in the trade policy of the United States of

America foreign policy.⁶¹ Oil and Gas needs in the United States of America to some extent are related to the position of the United States of America as a country that continues to enhance its military capabilities. Therefore, energy need such as of the main fuel oil makes the United States of America Military highly consumptive.

Vice President Dick Cheney and then formed a National Energy Policy Development Group. The report submitted by Dick Cheney shows that up to year 2020 U.S.A. oil consumption will increase by 6 million barrels per day. Meanwhile the oil fields in the United States of America are decreasing by 1.5 million barrels per day. To meet the needs of oil in the United States of America, it is necessary to import 7.5 million barrels of oil per day which represents about 70% of total U.S. oil needs.

United States of America clearly in desperate need of oil energy. On the other side, United States of America oil reserves would not be sufficient to meet all those needs. For this reason, the United States of America constantly try to approach the Middle Eastern countries, including Libya for oil. Libya has been recorded as the ninth-largest oil reserve in the world. That's why the United States of America does politics of oil and continue to approach the oil-rich countries, including Libya.

Secretary of State Rice also stated unequivocally that the United States of America does require Libya as a partner to share the oil. Rice also said that oil companies and the United States of America indeed have much to say to the

⁶¹ "Online NewsHour: Newsmaker: Vice President Dick Cheney" retrieved from [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/11/11 Cheney.html#links_dec01/cheney_7_18.html](#) on January 23, 2012 at 15:48

cannot rely upon it as the supplier of crude oil. Libya therefore used as an alternative for oil supply. The United States of America put a real interest in the state of which 90% of its territory consists of desert.

United States of America suffered losses when President Ronald Reagan embargoed Libya. As a result of the stretchable relations between the two countries, ExxonMobil closed down in 1982. Consequently, five other U.S.A. oil companies close their business in Libya in 1986.

The United States of America oil demand continued to increase with declining oil inventories, This forced the United States of America to replace the oil companies in Libya when Gaddafi began showing in good faith to improve relations between the two countries.

The return of U.S. oil companies in Libya is characterized by Occidental Petroleum Corp. reopened on July 1, 2005, which was then followed by a Chevron-Texaco in the same year. The second oil company returning to Libya had brought positive impacts on the government of the United States of America on the Foreign Exchange which reached U.S. \$ 500 million per year from the management of oil since 2005.⁶⁴

The entry of two U.S. oil companies were then followed by other companies that also had to explore oil in the ground of Libya Jamahiriyah. However, not only the

⁶⁴ "Keuntungan Bagi Amerika Serikat" retrieved from <http://www.voanews.com/indonesia/archive/2007-09/2007-09-15-voa8.cfm?CFID=133190031&CFTOKEN=21021105&jessoid=66301b062cccd363fc776b242745341c687d> on January 24, 2012 at 14.06 LT

companies that existed prior to termination returned. In addition to Chevron-Texas mentioned earlier, the Houston oil company also followed ExxonMobil, Amerada Hess Corp., Conoco Philips, Grace Petroleum, Marathon Oil Corp. and Occidental Petroleum Corp., which had more experience in exploring oil in Libya.

United States of America supports all oil companies to operate in Libya. With many U.S.A. oil companies operating in Libya, economic prosperity in the United States of America will increase. Additionally, the easier way is also the United States of America dominate the world by military force and their gigantic industry.

Interests of the United States of America in Libya cannot be separated from economic interests. The United States of America wanted to control the oil fields in Libya to ensure the energy security within due to the energy crisis that began slow endanger the United States of America. Oil had become an expensive item in the modern era. Oil did not only play the role as economic goods. More than that, the oil also plays a role in socio-political circumstances.

Libya is not the largest oil producing country. However, oil reserves existing in Libyan soil that make a lot of countries tempted to get Libyan oil fields for exploration. United States of America is one of them. With the U.S.A. ambition for world domination, oil is an energy source that becomes main item and the priority of the U.S. government.

Libya also incidentally required the United States of America to be the main

difficulties to sell its crude oil. Libya was ostracized by the international world. And incidentally, the United States of America required Libya to give a way for the United States of America to re-enter Libya. Any mutually beneficial cooperation for both sides was created to advance the economic welfare of each country.

When there was a motion of Anti-Gaddafi in Libya, the United States of America then maneuvered to send troops and to secure its interests on Oil in Libya. Unlike 1980s when the United States of America withdrew all its companies in Libya and Libya became embargoed country, the need for greater oil made the United States of America decided to protect its interests in Libya.

In addition, the war against Gaddafi would make the United States of America reach the target of its interest in the National Security. Libya in the past was known as a state that became the sponsor of terrorism. Meanwhile, the United States of America is currently in a state of war against terrorism. Thus, the war against Gaddafi may be regarded as a war against terrorism, although Libya had long expressed its support for the U.S.A. war on terror. However, Gaddafi's decision to release Al-Megrahi from prison in Scotland because he was sick, made the United States of America think that the decision could be a blunder for Libya, and that he treated a terrorist as a hero.

3. United States of America's Persepective on Libya's Air Forces Capability

Libya is a country that has the largest air force in North Africa. Libyan Air Force

and includes a number of Russian and French aircraft, military helicopters, and surface

to-air missiles. Libya continued to develop its military capabilities since the power of the state was owned by Muammar Gaddafi.

Libya's military air force includes:⁶⁵

a. Surfaces-to-Air Missiles

Surface-to-air missiles is a cruise missile fired from land to air to attack other aircrafts or cruise missiles in the air. This weapon is one of the most effective weapons for the protection of land from the air attack from the enemy.

b. Tupolev 22 (Tu-22)

Tupolev 22 is a Russian-made military aircraft that can be used as a reconnaissance and bomber aircraft. The aircraft was used by several air forces, such as the Air Force of the Soviet Union, Russia, Iraq, and Ukraine. This plane was no longer used by the Russian military, and was found only in museums, but the Libyan Air Force were still using this as its military vehicle. Gaddafi had used aircraft in some Libyan military operations in Africa, in Chad as an example.

c. Mig-21

Mig-21 is one type of Soviet-made aircraft. Thousands of this aircraft has been made by the Soviets for the benefit of the Soviet military during the cold war. But like the Tupolev 22, Mig-21 had also been retired in their native country. Hence, this made it difficult for Libya to get spare parts.

⁶⁵ "The Libyan No Fly Zone" retrieved from

d. Mig-25

MiG-25 is also a variant of the old Soviet-made aircraft. This aircraft has an amazing ability in terms of speed. Mig-25 aircraft can reach the speed of 3500 km / hour. Although old and already difficult to look for the spare-parts, Libya was still operating 60 MiG-25 aircraft types.

e. Mirages F1

Mirages F1 aircraft was first used by the Libyan Air Force in the 1980s. Although the number of aircraft types owned by the Libyan Mirages are not many, this plane was the most modern aircraft owned by the Libyan air squadrons. The plane is made by the French Mirages. Two planes were used by the military official who fled Libya to Malta before the civil war occurred in Libya.

f. Helicopters Mi 24,25,45

Mi24,25, 35 is the kind of Soviet-made helicopter. The helicopter was first introduced in the 1970s. In many conflicts around the world, helicopters are widely used. This helicopter has the ability as a striker, as well as transportation for military forces. Gaddafi's type of helicopter was used to attack the rebels. Gaddafi had about 30 for this type of helicopter. However, this helicopter is very easily destroyed by ground units when it is on land.

Although the air force has an old-age aircraft, some aircrafts are still in

In the middle, fighter-bombers (ground attack), fighter-interceptor, reconnaissance, transport, training, and helicopter squadrons. Fighter-interceptor aircraft, medium bombers, and reconnaissance squadrons were located at the base along the coast of Libya and along its border with Egypt.

The embargo had indeed troubled the Libyan Air Force. Some of the aircrafts were damaged beyond repair as a result of the outage spare part. Yet, the Libyan air force was the strongest in the North African region. The fact certainly threatened the anti-Gaddafi and civilians in Libya.

Even so, the ability of the Libyan Air Force remained a serious threat. It was also recognized by the head of the U.S. Marines, James. F. Amos.⁶⁶ Amos said that the helicopter Libya became the most dangerous threat. Helicopters would be more difficult to target if the international community set up a no-fly zone. Such a zone would be enforced by typical fighter jets whose speed and altitude make it difficult, to target helicopters, which move low and slow. The ability to fly low and the pilot's ability to avoid radar will certainly make it difficult for helicopters manned by Coalition forces. Moreover, Libya had enormous power in the form of helicopters.

⁶⁶ "Libyan Helicopter Forces are Greatest Threat; US Marine Chief Said" retrieved from http://articles.cnn.com/2011-03-08/politics/senate.hearing.libya_1_helicopters-fighter-jets-

B. United States of America's Perspective on Syria

Syria is one of the countries in the Middle East region. The location of the country is adjacent to areas of conflict in the Middle East region. Syria is a country that has the ambition to always be involved in any Middle East peace process. In addition, Syria has also been critical to Israel, which of course is a friend of the United States of America.

1. United States of America Defined Syria in the middle of enemy or friend

Tensions between the United States of America and Syria continue. Triggering tensions between the two countries are issues concerning Iraq and Lebanon. On February 2005, the Government of the United States of America Ambassador to Syria was pulled out of Damascus. This step was taken after the murder of the former President of Lebanon, Rafiq Hariri on February 14, 2005. Foreign ministers of the United States of America, Condoleezza Rice then pointed that Syria was behind the murder.⁶⁷ Secretary of State Rice argued with the fact that the Syrian forces were in Lebanon, Syria intervened in Lebanon, and acts of terrorism that had been blamed on Syria in the Lebanon because the government of the United States of America believed that Syria was behind the murder.

Ambassador Margaret Scobey was then withdrawn from Damascus, and the U.S.A. embassy in Syria was shut down. In addition, President Bush also demanded that

⁶⁷ "Syria's Roles in Middle East" retrieved from [http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,1111111111,0000000.html](#) on February 5, 2012 at 15:23

President Bashar al-Assad to immediately withdraw 15 000 Syrian troops in Lebanon.

President Bashar Al-Assad denied Syrian involvement in Hariri assassination in

Lebanon. But then Bashar al-Assad still withdraw the remaining 15 000 Syrian troops

from Lebanese territory. Relations the United States of America and Syria the days of

the Bush administration is really terrible.

In the reign of Obama, the tense relations between the two countries try to be

appeased by the first black president in the United States of America. Obama was more

cautious on the government of President Bashar Al-Assad. Effort to ease tensions

between the United States of America and Syria was indicated by the Obama

administration to replace the Ambassador in Damascus. Robert Ford was appointed as

U.S. Ambassador to Syria's first time since 2005.

On the other hand the Obama administration still considers Syria a threat to the

interests of the United States of America. Syria remained in the sanctions of the United

States of America. The United States of America had clearly continued to support

Israel's position in the conflict in the Middle East. To that end, the United States of

America continued to pressure Bashar Al-Assad to immediately end support for Hamas

and Hezbollah in the path of Gaza, Palestine.

On the other hand, Damascus also responded to Obama's bid carefully. Bashar

al-Assad government understands that the United States of America continue in their

effort to force Syria to withdraw and keep its distance from Iran. In addition, the

United States of America also called on Syria to stop supporting Hamas and Hezbollah fighters in Palestine, which attacked Israel.⁶⁸

The fluctuating relationship between the Government of Syria and the United States of America had lasted very long. Feelings of mutual animosity and hatred between the two countries have made every step taken by the two countries was based on the attitude of extreme caution. Even so, the United States of America have never been loudly calling Syria as their enemy. Syria is also considered as not attacking directly against the interests of the United States of America. In fact, several times Syria sided with the United States of America, as in the case of plane hijacking in 1986, and support for Syria in the United States of America in the Gulf War in 1990 against Iraq.

However, despite the recall of the ambassador, the United States of America did not directly refer to Syria as an enemy. Syria is considered to have a great role in the Middle East if the United States of America were able to make them as partners. The closeness of the relationship between Syria and Iran and the United States of America felt the need for Syria to give support Ahmadinejad regime in Iran.

2. United States of America's Perspective on War in Syria

As mentioned earlier about national interests, oil has become a very big importance for every country in the world. The role of oil as economic factors include the Production, Distribution and Consumption. The fact is that many countries throughout the world look for oil, and so does the United States of America.

Syria is a country in the Middle East region. Countries in the Middle East have long been known as the producers of crude oil. Similarly, Syria also one of the oil-producing countries. Moreover, Syria is quite dependent on the country's oil production.

In the context of the world, Syria's role as an oil producing country is not very significant. Syria produces only 400,000 barrels of oil per day since 2009.⁶⁹ A very small number when compared with Russia which is the world's largest oil producer with about 10 million barrels per day.⁷⁰ Syria exports about 95% of its oil production to some EU countries, such as French, Dutch, English, German, and Italian. In addition, some foreign companies owned by European Union countries also operate in Syria, such as Shell, and Total.⁷¹

United States of America takes nearly about 19 million barrels of oil per day for its energy needs. Meanwhile, the country's crude oil production is only about 9 million barrels per day⁷². The remainder of the required 10 million barrels the United States of America needs is obtained from other countries through exports and investments.⁷³

U.S. oil demand was expected to continue to increase from year to year. Like most major industrial countries, the United States of America also had a dependency on oil as the most important economic goods. Former Vice President Dick Cheney stated

⁶⁹ "Boikot Minyak Suriah Merugikan" retrieved from <http://internasional.kompas.com/read/2011/09/03/18321497/Boikot.Minyak.Suriah.Merugikan> on February 14, 2012 at 15.32 LT

⁷⁰ "Highest Oil Producing Country" retrieved from <http://www.therichest.org/business/highest-oil-producing-countries/> on February 14, 2012 at 1533 LT

⁷¹ Op.Cit, "Boikot Minyak Suriah Merugikan"

⁷² "World Crude Oil Consumption" retrieved from <http://www.indexmundi.com/energy.aspx> on February 14, 2012 at 15.41 LT

⁷³ Retrieved from <http://www.oil.com/countries/index.cfm?view=production> on February 14, 2012 at

that the United States of America had done the research and later reported that it was on its way to the energy crisis.

But despite other oil exporters to find an alternative, the U.S. statesman did not seem to look at the possibility of taking oil from Syria. Syria's oil production as much as 400,000 barrels per day just did not interest the United States of America to 'master' oil in Syria.

In addition, Syria has been known as one of the opponents of Israel. Syria supported Hamas and Hezbollah fighters in the West Bank and in Gaza. Israel is a country that is close to the United States of America. As mentioned earlier, Israel and Syria's relationship was never good. Both countries had even directly involved in the war on the Golan Heights.

3. United States of America's Perspective on Syrian Air Force Capability

Similar to the Libyan government, the Syrian Air Force also had the power which came mostly from the Soviet Union. Syria as a whole had about 548 fixed wing aircrafts. The planes were among others Mig-29, Su-27, Su-22, MiG-23MLD Flogger and MiG-23 BN, MiG-21, and 30 MiG-25.

The following will describe the profiles of several types of aircraft owned by Syria, including some fixed-wing aircrafts and rotary wings aircrafts:⁷⁴

⁷⁴ "Israel Syria Convert Military Balanced" retrieved from <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,142861,00.html> accessed on February 28, 2012 at

1. MiG-29

MiG 29 is a kind of Russian-made aircraft. The plane is made to offset the ability of the F-18 Hornets made by the United States of America. This aircraft is the kind of fighter aircraft capable of attacking targets in the air from the distance of up to 200 KM from any altitude flying. The aircraft was first made in the 1970s to defeat the F-15 aircraft belonging to the United States of America in the Cold War era. Many countries use this Russian-made technology. Syria also has an aircraft of this type. It is estimated that Syria has about 70 MiG 29 aircraft.

2. Su-24

Su-24 is Russia's Sukhoi aircraft made as a tactical bomber type. This aircraft can fly in any weather. In the 1980s, this aircraft was one of the most advanced bombers. The aircraft is also considered as the competitor of the F-111 made in the United States of America. Su-24 is one of the bombers capable of flying low and in supersonic speed. Syria has 20 Su-24s. As the bombers which have the ability to fly low, these aircrafts are feared by ground units.

3. MiG-25

MiG-25 is also a variant of the old Soviet-made aircraft. This aircraft has an amazing ability in terms of speed. Mig-25 aircraft can reach speeds of 3500 km / hour. Syrian Air Force has 30 of this MiG-25.

In addition to fixed-wing aircraft, Syria also has a rotary-wing aircrafts. Syrian air force helicopter also come mostly from the Soviet Union, among them are the Mi-25 and SA-3421. There are also the air defense system consisting of 4.000 manportable light surface-to-air missiles, SA-7s including. It has a number of vehicle-mounted, infrared systems That includes 20 SA-9s, 30 SA-13s, and 20 SA-11s. Syria's 14 radar guided SA-8 fire units are assigned to its Air Force as part of its Air Defense Command.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ "Israel and Syria: The Military Balances and Prospect of War" retrieved from [http://www.issuelibrary.org/issuelibrary/0370215_issuelibrary_israel_syria.pdf](#) on February 2012, at 16-40 IT