



# The Chinese position on the Syrian crisis 2011

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## ABSTRACT

The onset of the Syrian crisis coincided with a change in American focus from the Middle East to the Pacific Ocean, creating a regional void that drove some regional governments to fill it. It also provided Russia with an opportunity to return to the scene of political developments in the Middle East. This tendency is congruent with the goal of China, which views American tendencies a direct danger to its security. As a result, China is attempting to play a significant international role commensurate with its expanding economic and military might. As a result, Syria has become the pivot of Chinese strategy, as well as the country's nearly exclusive means of attaining its objectives in the area. Based on that foundation, China's viewpoint on the Syrian problem is established in light of America's engagement in Syria. The role highlights China's interactions with the area, as well as the appraisal of its performance within the context of international balances and alliances, making the Chinese visible.

### Keywords:

China, Syria, crisis, position

### Introduction:

The Syrian Civil War is one of the most important events in the Middle East, which had an impact on the political, economic and social situation in Syria. The Syrian crisis also had a significant impact on the regional level, represented by the entry of the regional player into this equation to achieve its own goals or at the international level, represented by the active Chinese role in the Syrian crisis. The Syrian file has become a closed file in terms of the possibility of entering new parties to solve the crisis. The solution of the crisis in Syria is governed by international and regional consensus in order to reach a solution that satisfies all parties to the conflict in the country.

There is a change in the attitude of the United States towards the ruling regime in Syria, but there are political and strategic reasons related to China's desire to send a message to the United States confirming China's ability to

expand and fill the vacuum that the United States may leave in the Middle East. This position supports China's strategic relations with Iran, which has the upper hand in Syria and Iraq, which is one of the main players in the Syrian crisis.

China's intervention in the Syrian crisis and its submission of political initiatives to achieve a peaceful solution to the crisis does not mean that the Chinese government is convinced that these initiatives constitute an entrance for China to become a key party in the Syrian file, as much as China wanted to convey a message of condemnation to the United States of America regarding the removal of the name of the Turkestan Islamic party from the list of terrorism and the exploitation of the Uighur file to weaken China. China also wanted to show Russia and the United States that it is a player with all the possibilities that could change the situation in the region if it is ignored or its security interests are harmed.

### **First Axis :The strategic importance of the Middle East**

China has a strategic weight at the regional and international levels, which has placed it in an important international position, and thanks to the human, economic and military resources, China has been able to be an active player in the international arena, as it has become a place in the international political system, which is witnessing competition due to political and economic transformations and changes in addition to the repercussions of international changes (1).

The Chinese economy is the main engine of Asian growth in addition to its human strength and vast territory, which enables it to invest all its available capabilities, which contributes to the crystallization of its international position, and the events of the eleventh of September are a prominent turning point in shaping the future of the international political system (2).

China regards the Middle East as a region of economic and strategic importance and Chinese activity in the region has nothing to do with US political initiatives because Beijing is primarily focused on the continuation of its energy supply in addition to its desire to rebalance its domestic and foreign policy. China views energy security to the United States positively; because the United States is an essential guarantor of security in the Middle East through its large military presence, which helps stability, and then economic development through the uninterrupted flow of oil to China( (3). China considers the United States to be an essential guarantor of security in the Middle East through its large military presence, which helps stability, and thus economic development through the uninterrupted flow of oil to China.

As for China's security interests, it views the United States negatively because of the military presence of the United States and its alliances that threaten China's security in East Asia. Therefore, China has relied on a cautious strategy in its dealings with the Middle East region, striving to protect its growing interests in the region by avoiding taking sides in disputes and conflicts in the Middle East, while maintaining its trade, diplomatic and security

relationship with the countries of the region, which has become a top priority for Beijing in the post-Cold War era (4). China has also adopted a cautious approach to the Middle East.

China's interests in the Middle East are the sustainability of energy supplies and security and the strengthening of its external relationship, which is one of the most important pillars of internal stability to strengthen China's position as a superpower to indirectly counterbalance the influence of the United States in the Region.<sup>5</sup> China's increasing economic growth has made it one of the largest importers of oil from the Middle East (5).

From the above, we note that China's interest in the Middle East and its economic dependence on it since the nineties has witnessed a clear and rapid increase. Beijing's political and economic interests, energy sources and security in the Middle East are constantly expanding.

Following the demonstrations in some Arab countries known as the Arab Spring revolutions, Chinese leaders are concerned about them, as these revolutions renewed the fears of the Chinese government of political unrest within the central region of China, which is dominated by the ethnic majority of the Han, and although China has become a global power, it is still a regional power with To intervene in the Syrian crisis as an international force that can play a pivotal role to reach a political settlement and a peaceful solution to the crisis (6).

It seems that the events of the eleventh of September have changed the features of the international political system that prompted the United States of America to use different political methods to combat terrorism, and those events directed the world's attention towards multipolarity due to the strong presence of international actors and the emergence of an alliance of Great Powers That Changed the features of the dominance of the one pole.

### **Second axis: the Syrian crisis**

Syria gained independence in 1946 after years of French occupation, where the democratic

rule was established, but ended with a military coup and the support of the United States in 1949 followed by two coups in the same year, 1954 Syria witnessed a popular uprising against military rule in the country, and in 1961 a central presidential government was formed in Syria, which lasted until 1963 for the country since that time until he died in 2000 (7).

After the death of Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, Article 83 of the Syrian constitution was amended, lowering the age of candidacy for presidential elections from 40 to 34 years so that Bashar al-Assad could run for President. Bashar al-Assad became president of Syria. there were signs of hope for democratic reforms in the country during the years 2000 to 2001, but the Syrian people did not see any reforms promised by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad (8).

Socio-economic cooperation increased significantly when Hafez al-Assad implemented a free-market policy in his final years of rule, and accelerated after the arrival of the son to the presidency, with a focus on the services sector, which benefited the minority population with ties or links to the Syrian government. the country also faced a high unemployment rate among young people, which increased discontent against the government, especially in the poor neighborhoods of the country (9).

In addition, the issue of human rights in Syria has long been the subject of fierce debate and criticism by international organizations, as freedom of expression, association and Assembly have been tightly controlled by the Syrian government, the country has been under emergency rule since 1963, the relevant authorities have stifled human rights activists and others critical of the Syrian government, ethnic minorities have faced discrimination in the public sector and many Syrian Kurds have been denied access to Syrian freedom since 1962 (10).

China considers the Middle East region in general and Syria, in particular, to be of economic, strategic, and security importance to it. the history of Sino-Syrian relations dates back hundreds of years, where Syria formed

the trade route linking the Arab region with China, which was known in ancient times as the Silk Road. since the establishment of the people's Republic of China, China has been interested in developing its relations with Syria, as it considered it the weakest point of Western influence in the Middle East and the line of defense of China's interests in Central Asia and the Caucasus (11)

Since the end of the Cold War, the role of China to play the role of superpowers, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the United States of America as the sole power in the international arena, has become clear, therefore, China has developed general frameworks in which to reveal its options in its foreign policy to deal with the countries of the world that are accustomed to political flexibility to achieve China's national interests, which is one of the pillars of Chinese political thought (12).

The course of China's strategy is characterized by a change in its foreign policy, especially towards the Middle East, based on regional and international changes, where China moved in building its Foreign Relations from relying on the Soviet Union as a strategic partner to self-reliance, where China began since 1975 to open up to the countries of the world, especially the oil-producing countries on which China relies for industrial development in the country (13).

The conflict and tension between China and the United States increased, especially after the end of the Cold War, after which the United States realized that the rise of China threatens its vital interests and national security, in return, China rejected the hegemony of one pole and called for a multi-polar world, and since gaining its independence, China supported the struggle of peoples in their struggle against Western powers, China supported the liberation movements in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa to achieve independence (14).

It seems that the Chinese position after the end of the Cold War was characterized by the rejection of the hegemony imposed by the one-pole represented by the United States of America, where China openly declared its

rejection of the American intervention in the Middle East represented by the Arab division over the 1991 Gulf War, as China opposed the Iraqi attack on Kuwait and rejected the resort of the United States to the use of military force to resolve the Iraqi-Kuwaiti crisis.

In the mid-nineties, China supplied Syria with weapons and military equipment, bypassing the decision to ban the sale of weapons imposed by the United States on some Arab countries, including Syria, and this military deal contributed to strengthening relations and military cooperation between the two countries; therefore, Syria turned to strengthen its relations with China and in all fields after being accused by Western countries of sponsoring terrorism (15)

In 2002, the objectives of the Syrian policy met with Chinese efforts to increase economic activity in the Middle East region, especially after the Syrian government wanted to make Syria a base for gas transportation and a free trade zone connecting East and West. in the strategy of the Syrian government, China saw a project to revive the Silk Road, which could contribute to the construction of a new economic development zone in western China to serve as a route linking Asia and the Indian Ocean east to the Arab region west, thus forming the longest economic corridor in the world. 16 the Syrian government considered it to be one of the most important economic corridors in the world (16).

The volume of trade exchange between Syria and China amounted to 1.48 billion dollar in addition to 1.82 billion in Chinese engineering contracts in Syria and 4.82 billion in financial transfers of Chinese workers working in Chinese companies in Syria AND 16.8 billion in the form of Chinese forms directly in the country, China ranks first for Syria's trading partners with up to 6.9% local to Syria (17).

By strengthening its relations with Syria, China aims to take the position of the United States, which appears to be disturbed by China's policy in the Middle East, which hinders American efforts to end international crises, as the United States believes that China's role is dangerous to the global economy, which

negatively affects the interests of the United States of America (18).

Others argue that Chinese investments in Syria are often linked to China's acquisition of borrowed state resources, and therefore that country falls under Chinese domination and China may use these assumptions to achieve political purposes that serve China's economic interests. Syria is considered an important corridor for China and is part of the six corridors that make up the Link-Belt project, which has special importance for Iran, which connects to China via land through Iraq and Syria until it reaches the Mediterranean Sea (19).

It seems that China's support and economic assistance to Syria have not been achieved on the ground, because China's assistance to Syria is not comparable to Western assistance given to it. After all, Syria's importance to China is more political than economic.

The Syrian crisis began in 2011 when Syrian cities witnessed demonstrations demanding the release of freedoms and the release of political prisoners from government prisons. overtime, the demands gradually increased until the demands reached the removal of the Syrian President from power. overtime, these demonstrations evolved into open sit-ins in various Syrian cities. however, these peaceful demonstrations were suppressed by government forces. on the other hand, government agencies confirmed that the intervention of their forces was to confront armed gangs in Syrian cities (20). The Syrian government authorities have been able to intervene.

Over time, the defections began to increase in the Syrian army and at the beginning of August 2011, the Free Syrian army was announced, as the military confrontations began on a small and limited scale between the Syrian army and the opposition forces until they gradually expanded to direct battles between the two parties. by the beginning of 2012, heavy weapons were used in the conflict in Syria, artillery and armored vehicles were used and many Syrian cities were bombed, and helicopters were used in the Syrian conflict (21).

The incident in the Syrian city of Daraa raised tensions after several children wrote anti-regime slogans on the walls of the school, leading to the arrest of 16 children, accompanied by Great popular discontent (22). Syrian activists and opposition groups began calling for mass demonstrations across the country, influenced by the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions that succeeded in overthrowing the political regimes that ruled both countries.

After that, dozens of people marched in a demonstration from the Umayyad Mosque after noon prayers and marched through the Hamidiya market and the adjacent area of Harika, chanting slogans demanding freedom, but this demonstration was quickly dispersed by force and many protesters were arrested. The city of Daraa also witnessed mass demonstrations that later spread throughout Syria to include many Syrian cities and towns, where the protesters in Daraa managed to bring down the statue of former Syrian President Hafez al-Assad. The city witnessed confrontations with security forces, which used modern weapons to disperse the protests (23). Following these developments in Syria, the Syrian President delivered his first speech since the start of the protests in the country and talked about some reforms that he announced to be implemented soon to satisfy the protesters. Among the reforms was the issuance of a government decree requiring the Syrian service to grant citizenship to Kurdish citizens in Syria who have been deprived of it for decades. He also ordered the release of detainees arrested during the protests in the country. He also announced the lifting of the state of emergency, which lasted for 48 years, since 1963. He also announced the dissolution of the Supreme State Security court in the country to contain the popular protests in the country (24) he also announced the dissolution of the Supreme State Security court in the country.

Despite this, the protests continued in the Syrian city of Daraa, where the Syrian army forces invaded the city of Daraa to participate in the security forces in suppressing the protest movement in Syrian cities. After the invasion of

the city of Daraa, the Syrian army forces surrounded the coastal city of Baniyas and made random arrests in the streets of the city. Arrests continued in Baniyas for weeks, during which nearly 500 residents of the city were arrested (25).

Assi Square in Hama and Freedom Square in Maaret al-Numan witnessed a large demonstration that included about 50,000 demonstrators demanding the overthrow of the ruling regime in the country. These demonstrations were one of the largest demonstrations witnessed in Syria since the start of the popular protests. However, the security forces were able to dismantle the demonstrations by force after opening fire on the demonstrators. The army also stormed many Syrian cities that witnessed similar protests, and this led to huge mass displacements towards Turkey until the number of Syrian refugees reached about 17,000 thousand displaced according to official Turkish statistics (26).

As a result of the developments in the Syrian arena, the so-called Syrian National Salvation conference, a conference aimed at forming a government for the Syrian opposition, is supposed to be a conference at home in the capital Damascus and a conference abroad in the city of Istanbul, with the participation of 400 opponents of the Syrian government, which was working to contain and end these demonstrations in the country (27).

As a result, there began an unprecedented escalation in the level of international pressure on the Syrian government. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain announced the withdrawal of their ambassadors from Syria. The Saudi King also called on the Syrian President to initiate political reforms in the country, which some considered to be interference in the internal affairs of Syria. The Arab League also called for an end to the violence in the country. The United Nations also withdrew many of its staff in Syria and the United States restricted the movement of Syrian diplomats there. The United States, Britain, France, and the European Union announced that the Syrian President had lost

legitimacy and had to step down from power (28).

The UN human rights mission went to Homs city to assess the humanitarian situation and to investigate the facts. After the arrival of the International Mission, people gathered in the center of the city to receive the mission to clarify the facts. However, as soon as the mission left, arrests were made among the crowds. Government authorities then asked the mission to leave the city for security reasons. The president of the UN Human Rights Council announced that the death toll in Syria reached 2,600 since the protests began in 2011. Members of the International Commission of Inquiry on events in Syria were appointed to investigate human rights violations. 29 The UN Human Rights Council announced that the death toll in Syria had reached 2,600 since the start of the protests in 2011 (29).

In October 2011, the Syrian opposition at home and abroad was able to unite together, announcing the establishment of the Syrian National Council, after disagreements and arguments that lasted for months before this announcement, and during this month began a move in the UN Security Council, as Britain, France, Germany and Portugal tried to move to put forward a draft condemning the Syrian government and the Syrian President for suppressing protests and demanding respect for human rights and the start of immediate political reforms (30).

The Syrian government agreed without reservations on the second of November 2011 to the plan drawn up by the League of Arab states to withdraw the Syrian army from cities, release political prisoners and hold talks with the Syrian opposition within 15 days maximum, but this plan was not implemented; therefore, the Arab League adopted a decision by an overwhelming majority to suspend Syria's membership of the league and give it a three-day deadline to sign the protocol to send Arab observers to it, which aroused great indignation on the part of the Syrian government (31).

The Syrian government agreed after a month and a half of deadlines and arguments to sign the Arab initiative, where the vanguard of the

mission arrived in the country and the total number of observers reached 200. Days before the end of the mandate of the Arab observers, the Arab League put forward a new initiative to resolve the Syrian crisis, which is the start of the opposition dialogue with the Syrian government to form a national government where the Syrian President hands over all his powers to his deputy in cooperation with this Houma to end the crisis in the country (32).

On the other hand, the United States and Western countries have imposed an embargo on Syria, but the embargo has not been applied to Syrian oil is complete, as there are still oil tankers belonging to the Indian and Iranian companies that transport Syrian oil through the Suez Canal after obtaining the approval of the Egyptian authorities to export Syrian oil (33).

In 2012, the international envoy to Syria Kofi Annan called on the five major countries in the UN Security Council, in addition to Kuwait, Qatar, Iraq, the European Union, the secretary-general of the United Nations, and the league of Arab states to convene an international conference in Geneva, Switzerland, with the aim of finding a solution to the Syrian crisis, ending the situation of violence and fighting and agreeing on the principles of a sound political transition of power led by Syria (34).

The work of the conference began on June 30, 2012, and it was agreed on the need to form a Syrian transitional government that includes elements of the current government and others from the opposition, and the meeting differed on the role of the Syrian President in the next stage, where the Russian Foreign Minister stated that the agreement does not provide for the departure of the Syrian President and the international envoy confirmed that the transitional government to be formed in Syria should be based on mutual consensus (35).

It seems that the Syrian crisis is the main field of regional and international conflict, the Syrian issue has turned over the past five years from a popular revolution demanding freedom and democracy to an armed resistance movement months after its launch into an arena of regional conflict and international interventions that have become inevitable.

**Third axis: the Chinese position**

In response to the Arab-European draft resolution that the Syrian President should step down from power, China resorted to the use of the veto power to object to that resolution, this promised a qualitative development not only in China's approach to dealing with the Middle East region rich in energy resources necessary for it but also in Beijing's view of its political and diplomatic role in the international arena. China also opposed any military intervention in Syria, even if it was to fight terrorist organizations (36).

China's position on the transformations and events witnessed in the Arab region following the emergence of the so-called Arab Spring revolutions emphasizes the need for Beijing to present itself as a new player in the Middle East in line with its growing interests, especially concerning oil and natural gas, and China's desire to play a global political and diplomatic role commensurate with China's economic and military capabilities following its international relations and alliances (37). China is committed to the development of a new role in the region.

During the revolutions in the Arab region, China rejected any external interference in the internal affairs of these countries to undermine the ruling regimes in the region, as is the case in Syria, considering that external intervention in Syria to change the regime thereby force has serious risks and repercussions for the Syrian people. China believes that the healthy Syrian revolution has turned into an armed conflict against the state. therefore, it considered the need to resolve the Syrian crisis through political dialogue between the conflicting parties and within the framework of the United Nations, stressing at the same time the need to respect the sovereignty and independence of Syria, preserve its territorial integrity and work to put an end to the situation of violence and fighting inside Syria (38). China believes that the Syrian crisis should be resolved through political dialogue between the conflicting parties and within the framework of the United Nations.

China does not trust Washington to overthrow the ruling regime in Syria, as the Western military intervention in Syria is only a prelude to Western control over it. China openly accuses Washington of seeking not only to impose its control over Syria but over most of the Middle East region. therefore, China has used its veto power to cancel the resolutions adopted by the United States in the United Nations Security Council aimed at undermining the Syrian regime. China justifies its position that those resolutions contradict the principle of respect for Syria's sovereignty and are explicit interference in its internal affairs (39). China has also used its veto power.

It seems that China viewed the revolutions in the Arab countries as mere disturbances due to internal social, economic, and ethnic factors, and not political reasons, and China rejects any external interference in the revolutions because it is considered interference in the internal affairs of those countries.

Therefore, China has worked to strengthen its economic, commercial, and diplomatic relations with Syria, which is accused by Western countries and the United States of violating human rights; therefore, like the United States, it uses economic sanctions as a pressure card against the Syrian regime to achieve its goals. without this paper and through Chinese support to Syria, the conflict will turn the country into an arena of Western conflict with China, leading to the complication of the Syrian crisis (40).

On the other hand, the Russians were looking to China to enter Syria to contribute to the solution of the Syrian crisis and participate in reconstruction due to the financing that China has, but China does not want to enter the Syrian market because of the US sanctions imposed on Syria, as China does not want those sanctions to affect its companies operating in Syria and the Chinese government believes that it does not seek economic gains in Syria as much as Beijing sees complementary to its policy to expand its economic and political influence in the region (41).

China is the attempts of the United States of America to destabilize the Arab region but comes to cut off oil revenues that reach Beijing,

especially since this came after the decline of American interest in the Middle East after the discovery of huge amounts of oil in Canada and Brazil and the development of many technologies to use alternative energy as Pro-Western, resulting in China losing an important ally in the Middle East (42).

International developments in the Middle East region, especially after the events of the eleventh of September 2011 and the subsequent developments represented by many popular revolutions witnessed by some Arab countries, led to the imposition of Chinese intervention in the equation of the conflict in the region. the collapse of the region's security has become a potential danger to Chinese national security and not only to China's economic interests. serious security shifts in the Middle East do not come out of American intervention in it (43).

From the above, we can understand China's conservative position towards the Middle East, which is to defend the policy of non-interference in the affairs of this region, and the emphasis of China's foreign policy to retreat from areas of sustainable conflicts and sharp rivalries and work to achieve the interest of Chinese society, in addition to the desire of the Chinese government to play a greater role as a superpower with influence and ability to participate in the outline of international relations and the world order.

China's position throughout the years of the Syrian crisis has been characterized by taking a position opposed to any interference in the internal affairs of Syria, as China opposed in the UN Security Council any resolution that may constitute a prelude to the overthrow of the regime in Syria. this stems from China's position rejecting any external interference imposed on any political regime of any country, as China has no political or military presence in Syria, not even at the economic level, and its presence and exercise of its role was very cautious (44). China has no political or military presence in Syria and has exercised its role with extreme caution.

China's move comes in line with foreign policy orientations that seek to present themselves as an alternative party to ensure security,

stability, and balance in the Middle East, especially since it has good relations in the region with Iran and the Arab Gulf states, and China calls on other parties to abandon the idea of regime change in Syria and put forward an initiative that carries outputs for a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis. that initiative included respecting Syria's sovereignty, the need for reconstruction, combating terrorist organizations listed in the UN Security Council and achieving a comprehensive political solution in Syria (45). China also called on the United Nations to implement a comprehensive political solution.

On the other hand, there was a welcome by the Syrian government for the Chinese initiative in solving the Syrian crisis, where the Syrian government expects China to enter strongly in the Syrian crisis through the interest of Beijing in proposing initiatives for a peaceful solution in Syria. this Chinese move will be followed by steps in the future on more than one level, as the Syrian government, which suffers from international isolation, is interested in consolidating its relations with the strong Chinese ally economically and militarily to match the Russian role in Syria (46).

China's core interests in Syria lie in its geographical position through which China can make Syria part of securing the transport route through Iraq and into Syria to the Mediterranean, and China may also plan to establish its port on the Syrian coast to serve its project aimed at controlling international shipping routes (47).

We note, however, that China's economic interests in Syria are limited to limited areas, namely the Belt and Road project, and thus limited cooperation between the two countries in this area. this is confirmed by the Syrian government that the Chinese side has proposed a series of projects that Chinese companies can implement within the framework of the initiative referred to earlier, such as the railway link between the port of Tartus and the Iraqi border and the deployment of a highway linking the south and north of the country, including electricity generation (48).

China's involvement in the Syrian crisis is due to security reasons, including China's fear of



Uighur fighters in Syria, which poses a potential threat to Chinese security if they return from Syria. In addition, the United States of America removed the Turkestan Islamic Party from the list of terrorism, which China considers an order directed against it by the United States, which always seeks to weaken China, and make the Xinjiang region, which is located in the far northwest of China, into a soft zone for the Chinese government. China also fears that the Turkestan Islamic Party and its fighters will be employed by the United States to carry out terrorist operations on Chinese territory (49). China also fears that the Turkestan Islamic Party and its fighters will be employed by the United States to carry out terrorist operations on Chinese territory.

It is unlikely that Russia and Iran will accept China's economic role in Syria despite the alliance relations between Russia, China and Iran, but they are fully aware that China's entry as a new player in Syria will deprive them of the gains they expect from the reconstruction process in the country (50).

For Iran, it seems less harmful because it has determined its interests to a large extent by imposing its control over areas of a strategic nature in eastern and southern Syria, objectives that are not primarily economic, but it seems different for Russia, which has become aware of the risk of Chinese expansion in Syria, which poses a threat to its security and economic interests and a key component of Russia's geopolitical dimension (51).

The Chinese move towards Syria prompted Russia and Iran to achieve more concessions from the Syrian government, so Russia sent a high-level delegation to Syria through which agreements were signed for economic and trade cooperation between the two countries, and an Iranian delegation arrived in Syria to discuss with the Syrian side the activation of prospects for economic cooperation between the two parties (52).

As for China, investing in Syria is an adventure for Chinese companies because of the devaluation of the local currency and because Syria is a fragile, insecure, and unstable land in addition to corruption and the absence of the issue. Therefore, Chinese companies with large

investments in international markets will not put themselves the subject of the issue, prosecution, and loss for the sake of small and unsecured profits in a country subject to Western sanctions against companies dealing with this country. In addition, Chinese companies are concerned about the expected recovery of their investments because they are aware of the inability of the Syrian government to repay loans obtained from its donors (53).

It seems that the Chinese intervention in the Syrian crisis has been characterized by caution throughout the years of the crisis and that China does not take any step towards the unknown without a study of what is happening in Syria and the developments on the political and economic level and the regional and international impact and the reflection on the general situation in the country.

China seeks through its position on the Syrian crisis under its foreign policy, especially concerning the Middle East region, to ensure its access to energy and increase its economic relations with the region, in addition to China's pursuit of cooperation in the management of international affairs. What China seeks concerning its energy and economic relations in the Middle East or concerning trends in the Arab region, such as the Syrian crisis, is to seek cooperation, negotiation, and resolution of conflicts in the region (54).

The reason for China's opposition to the use of military intervention in Syria is part of its traditional policy that dates back to its history because China has already suffered from foreign intervention in the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, not to mention the sanctions imposed on it by the United States of America for many years during the Cold War. Therefore, we believe that China is very cautious about the military intervention of any country in the world, including Syria, although the intervention targets the ruling regimes in the Middle East (55).

Therefore, we see that China has always resorted in the Security Council to veto any international resolution calling for military intervention in Syria, because it felt that NATO had abused the Security Council resolution to

fight one side in the war in Syria, and we note that there is discontent on the part of China with the US policy in the Middle East, which China promises is directed against it and it aims to prevent China from accessing energy sources to deepen China's belief in the US policy against them (56).

The Chinese position on the Syrian crisis has generated great sympathy from the Syrian people and the Syrian government, while others believe that the Chinese position in the Security Council prolongs the life of the ruling regime in Syria. In addition, we note that several Arab countries were opposed to any form of foreign intervention in Syria, and this created a kind of hesitation and division in Arab public opinion towards Syria (57).

It is worth mentioning that China's relations with the countries of the Middle East have expanded beyond prominent political issues, we note that more than half of the oil exports to China and East Asia are exported from the Persian Gulf and some Arab countries; therefore, we see that these relations have become more diverse as well as strategic relations, especially in the field of energy, so it is unlikely that these relations will be affected by the current events in Syria (58).

The main problem facing China to maintain its influence in the Middle East is in the geographical distance from the region because China does not have any maritime presence in the Indian Ocean or the Arabian Sea and China is unlikely to exert its military influence in the Middle East, and the only option for China is to rely on its soft diplomacy or soft power to build its economic and political relations towards the region based on mutual respect in international relations (59).

It seems that China has been seeking to maintain the pillars in its foreign policy of the right of peoples to self-determination, non-interference in the internal affairs of states, and mutual respect in international relations between countries of the world, but due to regional and international changes, it has become difficult for China to maintain these pillars towards the conflicts in the Middle East. Therefore, China is trying to be an active partner in multilateral initiatives, and for China

to play a greater role, we note its participation in international patrols in the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea to combat piracy around Somalia. This cooperation shows that China is seeking cooperation with the United States, the European Union, and other countries of the world (60).

We note that the course of Sino-Syrian relations for the past fifty years has been solid relations based on mutual respect, the right of peoples to self-determination, the protection of their stability, economic and social prosperity, and the building of national institutions. During the Syrian crisis, there have been mutual visits between the two countries to consolidate relations in all fields and China's desire to achieve a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East (61).

China and Syria have strengthened bilateral ties and issues of mutual interest and consensus on issues of mutual interest. China stressed the depth of Sino-Syrian relations because the two countries share a long-standing friendship represented by the ancient Silk Road that linked the two countries. Official visits between the two countries continued to strengthen relations in various fields. Bilateral Sino-Syrian trade and economic cooperation have become fruitful. The Chinese government has also expressed its appreciation for the interest of the Syrian government in developing its relations with China (62). The Chinese government has also expressed its appreciation for the interest of the Syrian government in developing its relations with China.

The two countries stressed the need to expand the parliamentary, party, and non-governmental exchanges between them, to further consult and coordinate on important issues, and to seek new areas of cooperation between them such as oil, communications, agriculture, science, and technology while strengthening cooperation in the field of Infrastructure, Education, Culture, Tourism, and health, through which the two sides can strengthen friendship and cooperation between the two countries (63).

China has played an important role in preventing the partition of Syria and

preserving the unity and sovereignty of the Syrian territory. therefore, during the Syrian crisis, the Chinese position has been highly influential in the Syrian people through China's use of its veto several times to prevent the partition of the Syrian territory and any foreign interference. this position has left an impact on the Syrian government and encouraged it to develop its relations with the Chinese side in all political, economic, and military fields. 64 China has also adopted its veto power.

Finally, it can be said that the Chinese position on the Syrian crisis was balanced, stressing the need to preserve Syria's sovereignty and reject any external interference in its internal affairs and called for the need to adopt a political solution to the crisis. the Chinese position also satisfied the Syrian people, the Syrian government and even the opposition parties, which stood respectful towards Chinese diplomacy, which advocated and supported political initiatives held under the umbrella of the international community to resolve the Syrian crisis (64).

### Conclusion:

The civil war in Syria is a devastating war for infrastructure where it causes destruction and dismantling and destruction of human resources and causes shortages of health services and education and investment turns towards weapons, the war in Syria turned into sectarian conflicts that tore the social fabric of the country, destroyed national institutions and created conditions for local conflict in the country, The most likely scenario is the continuation of the armed conflict in the country even after the departure of the Syrian President because all the parties in the Syrian arena are determined to continue fighting to achieve their ends, and what began in Syria in the form of rebellion against the ruling authority has turned into a deliberate and systematic Positions adopted at the UN Security Council on the Syrian crisis

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