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- Rebuilding Shattered Aleppo will take billions- and peace (Interview with ESCWA Deputy Executive Secretary Abdallah Al Dardari and reporting on Sketch for Syria)

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2. The New York Times: Rebuilding Shattered Aleppo will Take Billions- And Peace
3. The Washington Post: Rebuilding Shattered Aleppo will Take Billions- And Peace
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5. The Daily Star: In war-ravaged Aleppo, few answers on how to rebuild Syria’s second city
6. NP Telegraph: Rebuilding Shattered Aleppo will Take Billions- And Peace
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Rebuilding shattered Aleppo will take billions - and peace

WORLD (HTTP://WWW.MYMCURRAY.COM/CATEGORY/WORLD/)

by BASSEM MURGE AND SARAH EL DEEB, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Posted Feb 2, 2017 8:43 am MST Last Updated Feb 2, 2017 at 2:20 pm MST

In this Friday, Jan. 20, 2017 photo, mounds of rubble remain from what used to be high rise apartment buildings in the once rebel-held Ansari neighborhood of eastern Aleppo, Syria. Aleppo, Syria's largest city, was widely brought to ruin by years of war, and now with Russia and Turkey leading peace efforts, international officials say it is time to start talking about rebuilding Aleppo and other cities. But there are few answers on how to do it, with the world reluctant to donate the billions needed and a political settlement in the war still uncertain and far off. [AP Photo/Hassan Ammar]

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But hopes for rebuilding collide with daunting realities.

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There is the question of how to discuss reconstruction while the war still rages. Much depends on the shape of any eventual political settlement ending the conflict. Rebuilding without a deal may only entrench demographic changes caused by the war — which have run along sectarian lines.

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“I remember people were telling us, ‘Are you mad? You start planning for rebuilding now?’ And my reaction was, ‘It is already too late,’” said Abdullah Al Dardari, deputy executive secretary for the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for West Asia.

“One day soon, hopefully, when there is a peace agreement of some sort and we need to deliver to the people of Syria on basic services and housing and schooling and all this, you will see how much time we really needed for planning.”

The EU move may in part be aimed at gaining a voice in Syria — and a carrot of reconstruction aid to dangle before Assad — at a time when Moscow dominates the political process. Russia’s warplanes helped Assad’s forces recapture east Aleppo, the government’s greatest victory of the war, and now Russia along with opposition-backer Turkey is pushing to jumpstart negotiations.

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The government says its priority is to rebuild infrastructure with a goal of reviving Aleppo's industries and businesses, said Abdul-Qadder Azzouz, an economy professor at Damascus University. That alone could cost an estimated half billion dollars, he said.

At the top of the list is getting the city's airport working again as well as water and power facilities. Authorities may try to quickly rehabilitate the east's Sheikh Najjar industrial zone, Azzouz said.

The most pressing challenge is to bring home the people of Aleppo and other cities, said Ali-Hakam Shaar, a 30-year-old Aleppan who fled soon after the war began to avoid the draft and now lives in Budapest. That is unlikely to happen without a peace deal.

"Any rushed reconstruction is dangerous and is likely to cut out the owners or the ex-residents as well," said Shaar, who is a member of the "Aleppo Project," a team documenting the city's recent history.

International officials are informally discussing whether to pursue country-by-country reconstruction or a regional Marshall Plan-type project.

But the money being discussed currently is "small, incremental," suitable for some stabilization projects but not reconstruction on a scale "that is going to bring 12 million displaced people back to their homes," said a Syrian urban planner who is aware of the discussions. He spoke about the behind-the-scenes talks on condition of anonymity.

Officials in Russia — in the midst of a two-year recession — have not commented on rebuilding. Moscow may instead encourage companies and other entities to lend support. Russia's province of Chechnya said it will help restore Aleppo's Umayyad Mosque.

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El Deeb reported from Beirut. Andrea Rosa in Beirut, Hassan Ammar in Aleppo and Albert Aji in Damascus, Syria, contributed to this report.
In Syria’s ravaged Aleppo, few answers on how to rebuild
Alles has been scarred beyond recognition. Weeks after fighting stopped, a pall of dust covers its eastern districts, where streets are lined with buildings smashed to metal and brick rubble in scenes reminiscent of cities devastated in World War II.

The destruction is the worst wreaked on any city in Syria’s six-year war. No one has any quick answers on how to rebuild Aleppo, Syria’s largest city, much less the rest of a country that has seen appalling desolation.

Costs for reconstruction in Aleppo, once Syria’s economic hub, could run in the tens of billions of dollars, far beyond the country’s capabilities. Western nations are unlikely to give funds to the government of President Bashar Assad, which remains under U.S., European, and Arab sanctions that bar aid. Even Assad’s allies, Russia and Iran, which are bankrolling his rule, show little enthusiasm to shoulder rebuilding costs.

And there is the question of how to discuss reconstruction while the war still rages. Much depends on the shape of any eventual political settlement ending the war. Rebuilding without a deal may only entrench demographic changes caused by the war — which have run along sectarian lines. The fear among some is that Assad’s government will rebuild opposition areas like east Aleppo for its supporters and do little to draw back millions of refugees, most from parts of the country that joined the rebellion.

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“Many times every time I come to the market and see the destruction. I cry every day but there is nothing I can do,” said Abdul-Qader Issa, owner of a shoe shop. Inside his shop, three cylinders — perhaps homemade bombs — nearly blocked the door.

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Credit: Associated Press (AP) | Photo Credit: (AP)

About the Author

New Delhi Times Bureau

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Rebuilding shattered Aleppo will take billions - and peace

By BASSEM MROUE and SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press • Published: February 2, 2017 2:40 PM CDT • Updated: February 2, 2017 2:40 PM CDT

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There is the question of how to discuss reconstruction while the war still rages. Much depends on the shape of any eventual political settlement ending the conflict. Rebuilding without a deal may only entrench demographic changes caused by the war — which have run along sectarian lines.
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Bassem Mroue And Sarah El Deeb, The Associated Press

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TOPICS:
International (/international)
Rebuilding shattered Aleppo will take billions - and peace

By BASSEM MROUE and SARAH EL DEEB, Associated Press
Feb 2, 2017 2:40 PM CST

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In Syria's ravaged Aleppo, few answers on how to rebuild

By BASSEM MROUE and SARAH EL DEEB Associated Press 18 hrs ago

Hassan Ammar

In this Jan. 21, 2017 photo, Syrians walk amid the destruction, in the Old City of Aleppo, Syria. Aleppo, Syria's largest city, was widely brought to ruin by years of war, and now with Russia and Turkey leading peace efforts, international officials say it is time to start talking about rebuilding Aleppo and other cities. But there are few answers on how to do it, with the world reluctant to donate the billions needed and a political settlement in the war still uncertain and far off. (AP Photo/Hassan Ammar)

ALEPPO, Syria (AP) — Aleppo has been scarred beyond recognition: Weeks after fighting stopped, a pall of dust covers its eastern districts, where streets are lined for blocks with buildings smashed to metal and brick rubble in scenes reminiscent of cities devastated in World War II.

The destruction is the worst wreaked on any city in Syria's six-year war. No one has any quick answers on how to rebuild Aleppo, Syria's largest city, much less the rest of a country that has seen appalling desolation.

Costs for reconstruction in Aleppo, once Syria's economic hub, could run in the tens of billions of dollars, far beyond the country's capabilities. Western nations are unlikely to give funds to the government of President Bashar Assad, which remains under U.S., European, and Arab sanctions that bar aid. Even Assad's allies, Russia and Iran, which are bankrolling his rule, show little enthusiasm to shoulder rebuilding costs.

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Rebuilding shattered Aleppo will take billions - and peace
Bassem Mroue and Sarah El Deeb, Associated Press  Updated 4:06 pm, Thursday, February 2, 2017

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But hopes for rebuilding collide with daunting realities.

Without a comprehensive peace deal to Syria’s civil war, Western nations are unlikely to give funds to the government of President Bashar Assad, which remains under U.S., European, and Arab sanctions that bar aid. Even Assad’s allies, Russia and Iran, which are bankrolling his rule, show little enthusiasm to shoulder rebuilding costs.

There is the question of how to discuss reconstruction while the war still rages. Much depends on the shape of any eventual political settlement ending the conflict. Rebuilding without a deal may only entrench demographic changes caused by the war — which have run along sectarian lines.
The fear among some is that Assad’s government will rebuild opposition areas like east Aleppo for its supporters and do little to draw back millions of refugees, most from parts of the country that joined the rebellion.

Still, the European Union, where nearly 1 million Syrians are seeking asylum, says planning must start now. The questions surrounding Aleppo, where fighting ended last month with the government's capture of the entire city, point to the wider problems that will be faced in rebuilding the appalling destruction across Syria from its six-year civil war.

The EU wants to host a conference in the spring on the future of Syria with a focus on reconstruction, U.N. officials are scrambling to form a vision for a future Syria and find ways to tackle financing.

"I remember people were telling us, 'Are you mad? You start planning for rebuilding now?' And my reaction was, 'It is already too late,'" said Abdullah Al Dardari, deputy executive secretary for the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for West Asia.

"One day soon, hopefully, when there is a peace agreement of some sort and we need to deliver to the people of Syria on basic services and housing and schooling and all this, you will see how much time we really needed for planning."

The EU move may in part be aimed at gaining a voice in Syria — and a carrot of reconstruction aid to dangle before Assad — at a time when Moscow dominates the political process. Russia’s warplanes helped Assad’s forces recapture east Aleppo, the government’s greatest victory of the war, and now Russia along with opposition-backer Turkey is pushing to jumpstart negotiations.

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Rebuilding shattered Aleppo will take billions - and peace

By BASSEM MROUE and SARAH EL DEEB Associated Press | FEBRUARY 2, 2017 — 2:45PM

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In Syria's ravaged Aleppo, few answers on how to rebuild
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The destruction is the worst wreaked on any city in Syria's six-year war. No one has any quick answers on how to rebuild Aleppo, Syria's largest city, much less the rest of a country that has seen appalling desolation.

Costs for reconstruction in Aleppo, once Syria's economic hub, could run in the tens of billions of dollars, far beyond the country's capabilities. Western nations are unlikely to give funds to the government of President Bashar Assad, which remains under U.S., European, and Arab sanctions that bar aid. Even Assad's allies, Russia and Iran, which are bankrolling his rule, show little enthusiasm to shoulder rebuilding costs.

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Rebuilding shattered Aleppo will take billions — and peace

Associated Press
Thursday, February 2, 2017 10:26pm

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Rebuilding shattered Aleppo will take billions — and peace 02/02/17
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REBUILDING SHATTERED ALEPPO WILL TAKE BILLIONS - AND PEACE

AP

February 02, 2017 at 1:40 pm | By BASSEM MROUE and SARAH EL DEEB
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Published on February 2, 2017 11:31AM
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Associated Press

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Originally published February 1, 2017 at 10:26 pm Updated February 2, 2017 at 4:04 pm

1 of 13 In this Jan. 21, 2017 photo, Syrians walk amid the destruction, in the Old City of Aleppo, Syria. Aleppo, Syria’s largest city, was widely brought to ruin by years of war, and now with Russia and Turkey leading peace... (AP Photo/Hassan Ammar) More ▾
By BASSEM MROUE and SARAH EL DEEB

*The Associated Press*

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UPDATED: THURSDAY, FEB. 2, 2017, 9:13 P.M.
In this Jan. 20, 2017, photo, Syrian children remove rubble in the once rebel-held Bustan al-Qasr neighborhood in eastern Aleppo, Syria. (Hassan Ammar / AP)

By Bassem Mroue and Sarah El Deeb
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Tags: Aleppo, President Bashar Assad, Rebuilding, Syria’s largest city

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