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## Is ceasefire of Syria a gateway to peace deal?

By KAWAKAMI Takashi

Seven-day ceasefire in Syria came into effect since September 12th. US Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov finally reached this agreement after days of negotiation. The United Nations will deliver humanitarian aid in the midst of this ceasefire. 40 trucks carrying relief supplies have already waited eagerly for entering Syria queueing up at the border between Turkey and Syria. The east Aleppo controlled by rebels is its destination and they say that at least 250,000 local citizens are in the severe humanitarian crisis such as famine.

The previous ceasefire agreement broke down and fell apart before we knew it. Skirmish happened at the ceasefire agreement this time as well and exposed its fragility. However, the full of the eerily silence wrapped Syria is not what it was. We will get to know after seven-day ceasefire agreement whether it is the quietness before the storm or the gateway for peace.

The complexity of civil war of Syria is rooted from various militant groups being in disorder. It is said that Al-Nusra and IS linked to Al-Qaeda are targeted of attack at the ceasefire agreement this time. America put a pressure on antigovernment groups to make them clarify they have supported whether they have link to and on separating from the linked part. Al-Nusra has shown their iron hand that they changed their organization name right away against the American policy.

These militant groups have received a boost from neighboring countries such as Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Qatar. On the other hand, Assad regime has been supported by Iraqi and Lebanese Hezbollah. If full-scale ceasefire is required, they need to reach an agreement with these neighboring countries as well. Should this ceasefire hold for seven days, it gives us the hope for the end of Syrian civil war. However, it is said that increasing tension and frustration for both sides on the front might be a trigger for explosive situation. What should we do for the world so that Syria can be merged into one country after five-year hatred? Secretary of State John Kerry will continue to fight.

**(This is an English translation of the article written by Prof. KAWAKAMI Takashi, Professor of Takushoku University, which originally appeared on the e-forum “Hyakka-Somei (Hundred Ducks in Full Voice)” of CEAC on September 23, 2016.)**