



SYRIAN OPPOSITION *and* UKRAINE

Abu Bakr, the leader of a team within a Syrian opposition group that has been in contact with Ukrainian military personnel specializing in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and their modifications, spoke to Clash Report.

FIRST STAGE:

“**TRY, TRY AGAIN**”

Abu Bakr stated that they had reached out to Ukrainian military intelligence and received a prototype of a bomb carrier mounted on commercial drones originally used for photography.

“They taught me and my team simple things we didn’t know about the drone and the bomb release mechanism,” Abu Bakr told.

Abu Bakr said that Ukrainian military intelligence personnel then assisted in the production process.

“They sent us the 3D printing files to make the bomb carrier, the tail, and the warhead. We were able to produce and print everything we needed, make the necessary modifications to the aircraft, and gain enough experience through experimentation to outfit the drones and obtain the necessary parts without outside help,” he added, noting that their work has evolved over time beyond commercial drones.

- Abu Bakr, drone operator of the Syrian opposition



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EXCHANGE *of* EXPERIENCE IN DRONE WARFARE

SECOND STAGE: “SIGNALLING’S ALL SET,”

Another drone unit operative, Abu Mazen, who also received from Ukrainian training, corroborated Abu Bakr’s story. **“Over time, we developed ourselves. We overcame problems by asking questions and learning. In particular, we received significant help from the Ukrainians on signal transmissions and targeting,”** Abu Mazen said.

While speaking to Clash Report, Abu Mazen kept his face covered and did not disclose his real name.



Abu Mazen said that they received help from the Ukrainians on the signal, and that progress on the signal expanded the scale of the operations. Abu Mazen stated that they use both workshops for larger and fixed-wing drones and 3D printers for more delicate works, and that they have developed further over time.

It has become easier to go deeper, to make more effective drones. We solved some technical problems by trial and error. Once the signalling was solved, we focused on solving the energy problem to increase both range and intensity. We had many alternatives and we implemented them.

- Abu Mazen, drone operator of the Syrian opposition

Neither Abu Mazen nor Abu Bakr denies contact with Ukrainians and technical assistance from Ukraine. However, both team leaders state that the Ukrainians have not gone beyond this.

THIRD STAGE: “EVERYTHING’S READY,”

In the last interview in mid-November, Abu Mazen responded to Clash Report’s question ‘So what is the situation, is everything available?’ by saying ‘Everything is ready’.

Clash Report conducted 5 interviews with Syrian opposition drone crews with and without Ukrainian assistance in September and November.