Inside assad’s syria

* Access to regime held syria severely restricted since civil war broke out
* Syria under economic sanctions
* Syrian regime controls only a thin strip of its former self
* About 7 million internally displaced civilians (still inside syria)
* Some rebel soldiers are defecting to the regime to combat ISIS
  + Assad grants amnesty to rebel fighters willing to defect back
* Iran and Russia allied with Assad
* Assad's statement
  + Willing to give up some areas to concentrate soldiers in others
  + “Hesitation = treason”
* Civil war began March 2011, when peaceful protesters were fired upon by government
  + A former state security member, present at the protest, says the protesters fired first
  + Homs was ground zero for the revolution
* Syrian regime trying to offset anti regime rhetoric with social media bragging and flaunts of luxury, including a new resort a few miles from ruined homs
* Tartus and Latakia, on the west coast and behind a nice buffer zone of regime territory, are relatively safe and very pro regime
  + >1m internal refugees
* Some people inside the regime looking for a peaceful political solution
* UN security council's paralysis on the issue is blamed as the cause for Syria's instability by many people
  + US backs rebels, Russia backs Assad
    - It appears that the US is fighting a proxy war with Russia over control of Syria