

Foreign Minister Steinmeier following talks with the coordinator of the Syrian opposition

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Foreign Minister Steinmeier issued the following statement in Berlin on 13 January after his talks with the Coordinator of the High Committee of the Syrian opposition Riyad Hijab:

The peace talks between the Syrian opposition and the Syrian regime are to commence soon in Geneva. The fact that the opposition has agreed in Riyadh to a common platform for these negotiations beyond all ideological and ethic-religious divides is more than many would have thought possible. Despite this, the real work still remains to be done.

The long-awaited commencement of a political transition process must now finally succeed. We are giving ~~UN~~ ~~(United Nations)~~ Special Envoy de Mistura our utmost support in this regard – politically and financially, and also in terms of personnel with our best experts.

It is just as important, however, for there to finally be tangible improvements for civil society in Syria. We can no longer stand back and allow tens of thousands of people to be besieged and systematically starved as in Madaya. This is why we have insisted from the outset that unhindered humanitarian access be on the agenda of the talks in Vienna and New York. All parties have agreed to this, and this must now be implemented.

We must also take steps to avoid tensions between Riyadh and Tehran from escalating unchecked once again and destroying everything that we have achieved in the past months. I talked to my Saudi counterpart about this today, and this will also be the focus of my contacts and trips in the region in the near future.

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Keywords

Syrian Arab Republic →