

At End of Consultative Meeting: Raqqa Should Be Administered By Its Local Citizens

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At the invitation of the Syrian Coalition, a consultative meeting was held in the Turkish city of Gaziantep in the period 9-10 December 2017. Around 30 representatives representing a broad array of civic bodies in Raqqa province participated in the meeting which was held in the headquarters of the Syrian Interim Government (SIG). Participants also included President of the Syrian Coalition Riad Seif, SIG's Head Jawad Abu Hatab, and members of the Coalition's political committee.

Participants discussed items on the agenda of the meeting, which focused on the current situation of Raqqa province, especially the situation of the displaced people in the IDPs camp. They also discussed the aftermath of the deadly military campaign on Raqqa and its impact on people of the province as well as attempts to impose a de facto situation on the ground. Next on the agenda of the meeting was the presence of large numbers of victims under the rubble of bombed buildings, the dangers of landmines and UXO that kill or maim many people on a daily basis, and the absence of essential services.

The meeting also focused on the possible means to ensure that the people of Raqqa are adequately represented and allowed to manage their own affairs.

Participants agreed to:

1. call a general conference within two weeks bringing together people of Raqqa with adequate, balanced representation to discuss the situation on the ground in the province and the means that enable people of Raqqa to manage their own affairs.
2. emphasize the unity of the province and its people as part of a unified Syria.
3. set up a preparatory committee to prepare for the convening of the conference; to send out invitations without exclusion or marginalization, and draw up the agenda for the general conference.

Salute to the people of Raqqa and their sacrifices.

May our wounded recover, our detainees be free, and our fallen heroes rest in peace.