G8 Ministerial Meeting in London – Syria: maintain positive spirit of Rome, says Monti

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“The positive spirit of the meeting in Rome on 28 February must be maintained in order to foster the conditions for a timely political solution, with Assad’s exit from the scene and the launch of a transition toward democracy and the rule of law”. Prime Minister and interim Foreign Minister Mario Monti spoke at the conclusion of the G8 foreign ministers’ meeting in London, where the Syrian crisis was among the main agenda items.

Monti added that “it is important to support the unity and cohesion of the national coalition of opposition forces, the only legitimate representative of the Syrian people. We also support the efforts of UN and Arab League Special Envoy Brahimi”. The G8, he underscored, “continues to be a highly valid forum in which to confront such complex crises. We believe that Russia can and must play an active part in attempts to seek a political solution”.

North Korea: unacceptable provocations

“The Pyongyang regime’s provocative threats to employ force are unacceptable and must cease. Escalation is a threat to international stability and security. The G8 confirmed cohesion, firmness and unity of intent”. The conduct of Pyongyang, “in the absence of an adequate response from the international community, risks undermining the credibility of international non-proliferation legislation”.

Middle East: determination and concreteness for two-State goal

“Determination and concreteness are needed to achieve the goal of two States for two peoples, and Europe and Italy can play an important role in contributing to that achievement”. “Our vote in favour of a resolution recognizing Palestine as a non-member UN Observer State had the explicit intention of encouraging the pursuit of dialogue, the only path to a lasting solution to the conflict”.

Iran: concern over nuclear programme

“We continue to be seriously concerned over a possible military component to the Iranian nuclear programme and Teheran’s persistent refusal to cooperate with the international Atomic Energy Agency (AIEA). We regret the lack of any concrete results in discussions

betwen the 5+1 group and Iran in Almaty. What is needed is firmness and unity, and the G8 should be the first to display cohesion”.

Arab Spring: economic partnerships and political dialogue

“They represent a major opportunity for Italy”. “We are engaged in two directions: first, economic and commercial partnerships, since it is essential to create development and jobs, and to invest in education; the other direction is political dialogue with the new leadership, who need to be encouraged to operate in such a way that the new institutions represent all the ethnic, social and religious facets of their peoples”.

Marines: the principle of Italian jurisdiction

“I reiterated Italy’s unwavering position, particularly the expectation that the principle of Italian jurisdiction in the case is recognised, not least in the interests of international cooperation in general that include efforts at countering maritime piracy. I illustrated the Italian government’s commitment to dialogue with the Indian authorities, underscoring that, even if it is decided to act according to Indian jurisdiction, the proceedings must be fair and carried out as rapidly as possible. Finally, I expressed the hope in the European Union’s better defined role in international community efforts to combat piracy, whose effectiveness presupposes everyone’s compliance with international law”.

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