

A Speech by President of the Syrian Coalition, Ahmad Jarba, at the Arab League Ministerial Meeting – March 9, 2014

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March 10, 2014

Syrian National Coalition
Presidential Office
Cairo, Egypt
March 10, 2014

Your Excellencies,
The bloodshed in Syria continues.

Words can no more express the ugliness of the crimes committed against our people on a daily basis in Syria. Statements of denunciation and condemnation can no more alleviate the tragic suffering caused by the murderer of the century, who continues to enjoy political and military support – including weapons and mercenaries – from his regional and international paymasters.

Your Excellencies,
It is time for action. What is happening in Syria is dreadful carnage; it is full-scale invasion. To remain silent is shameful, but words alone are not enough.

Your Excellencies,
We have overcome huge obstacles, and went to Geneva with international guarantees and the support of Arab countries and our steadfast people. You have all seen what the Assad regime has done on the ground. You have all seen how the regime's behavior during the negotiation process eliminated every possibility of a successful Geneva II.

Your Excellencies,
We agreed to negotiate while barrel bombs were falling like rain on our cities. The number of people killed every day continued to rise. The number of mercenaries arriving in Syria during Geneva II continued to increase; Hezbollah fighters, Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, and mercenaries from Iraq were pouring into Syria.

While fighting a political and media war against the falling regime in Geneva, Assad, backed by Hezbollah fighters, was waging his own war on the people of Qalamoun shelling the town of Yabroud on all four sides. Yabroud, still under heavy bombardment, is under invasion motivated by sick sectarian hatred and venomous terrorist mullahs, threatening the security of the Arab world and the whole world. In Syria we face state terrorism from the Islamic Republic of Iran, its Revolutionary Guard Corps and the Lebanese Hezbollah militias.

Your Excellencies,

How long will we continue to merely use rhetoric and hide behind walls of blame and grievance? The Arab world has no more room for more arrows to be fired around. There were those who used to say: "Today it is Lebanon, tomorrow it will be another country." No one believed that at the time, but today it is Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and the rest of the Arab countries. Do you still have doubts about this?

We renew our call to you today to designate Hezbollah, with all its branches, fascists. The Abu al Fadel al Abbas and other Iraqi militias, the Islamic State in Iraq and al Sham (ISIS) should be labeled terrorist organizations. We call on you to acknowledge the invasion of an Arab country, a member of the Arab League, by those organizations, and act accordingly.

We also call on you to support us and to ask the international community to fulfill the promise of providing us with advanced weapons as soon as possible.

Your Excellencies,

We cannot, and indeed nor can the Arab peoples, understand any further hesitation. Had any action been made in Lebanon, we would not have seen the same problem happening in Syria. We have to prove we are strong and we can protect ourselves against this evil.

The Syrian people have seen evil. Hezbollah has received their divine order to support Assad and are attacking the same homes and defenceless people who opened their doors wide to Hezbollah refugees during the July War in Lebanon.

Your Excellencies,

It has been extremely difficult for us, but today there must be action. After the setback in Geneva II, and the shameful invasion of Yabroud, and other towns before it, there is no place for diplomacy or political solutions. The regime's only response to all the positive gestures we have made in Geneva was to reject the political solution; to fire tank shells, and to drop more barrel bombs on innocent civilians. We have to make a similar response if we are ever going to make one, or else it will be the end of joint Arab action. The only language they understand is the language of force, and we cannot repel them except by force. We must show determination, strength, and resilience. This is the least we can do.

Your Excellencies,

I know that there are those among you who support the Assad's terrorist ruling regime, and I know there are those who want to avoid more bloodshed. I only ask the majority of you to make a decision. Those who want to avoid more bloodshed can remain silent, and those who support the murderer should check their conscience. A majority decision, but not necessarily a consensus decision, should be made to repel the aggression on us all starting from Syria, because if we do not take action now, tomorrow there will be other Arab countries facing the same fate as Syria.

Finally, I should not forget to extend our gratitude to the peoples and governments hosting Syrian refugees and meeting their needs. More support is needed to those countries. However, it is vital to remember that if we do not act immediately the crisis will only get worse.