Foreign Minister Baerbock prior to her departure for Turkey

2024-12-20

Foreign Minister

Annalena Baerbock

issued the following statement today (20 December) prior to her departure for Turkey:

All eyes are on Syria right now. After seemingly endless years of brutal civil war, there is finally hope once again for a future in which the people in Syria, women and men of all ethnic and religious backgrounds, can live together in security.

While thousands are dancing in the streets of Damascus, Aleppo and Homs after the mass murderer Assad fled the country, the people of Kobane are holding their breath again after having heaved an initial sigh of relief. They fear fresh violence. This also shows that peace has far from been won. The future of Syria still hangs by a thread.

The people there have experienced unbelievable suffering – not only at the hands of the Assad regime, but also at the hands of IS terrorists and other perpetrators of violence. If Syria wants to find peace, there must now be an intra-Syrian dialogue process that involves all major groups in society. With our eight-point plan, we are reaching out to Syria in order to support such a responsible policy in the interest of all Syrians.

In Syria, standing up for our values goes hand in hand with pursuing our own foreign policy interests. After all, the civil war has shown in a terrible way that the destabilisation of Syria leads to the destabilisation of an entire region – with impacts felt all the way to Europe. For that reason alone, we have to care about what happens next in Syria.

If Syria is to be rebuilt, if people are to return, no one must have to live in fear of being persecuted. This ought to be also in the interest of the Turkish Government since more than three million Syrian refugees live in Turkey.

I’m travelling to Turkey today because we can only do our part to help stabilise Syria together as an international community, and we must all pull in the same direction to this end. Syria must neither become a plaything of foreign powers nor an experiment of radical forces.

Those who want to bring about peace in the region must not undermine Syria’s territorial integrity.

Furthermore, we will, of course, also talk about peace in Europe as well as about other security policy issues.

Background information:

Foreign Minister Baerbock will be accompanied on her trip by Minister of State

Tobias Lindner

, Federal Foreign Office Special Coordinator for Syria.

Overview "Newsroom"

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