Progress on recognition of Syrian opposition alliance, says Terzi

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The Italian Government could give its full recognition in a matter of hours to the coalition of Syrian opposition groups created in Doha some weeks ago. The statement was made by Foreign Minister Giulio Terzi on the eve of the meeting of the “Friends of the Syrian People” countries which will take place in Marrakesh, in Morocco, on Wednesday 12 December 2012.

Italy will be represented at the 4th meeting of the “Friends” by Margherita Boniver, Minister Terzi’s Special Envoy for Humanitarian Emergencies. Over 100 delegations from various countries and international organisations are expected at the meeting, as well as representative of the Coalition of Syrian Opposition Forces. The agenda for the meeting in Marrakesh, the first since Doha, will focus on the international community’s support for the coalition, which brings together the opponents of the Assad regime. The coalition will be represented in Marrakesh by its leader, Moaz Al Khatib, fresh from a meeting with the EU foreign ministers in Brussels on 10 December.

A united effort

The need for a “united effort” to find a political solution to the crisis, with Assad’s departure, was reiterated in Brussels yesterday by Foreign Minister Giulio Terzi. Minister Terzi also underscored that the opposition, which is determined to gradually establish governance in the new Syria, must be encouraged to pursue unity and inclusiveness among its members, and to converge towards a single agenda.

Dramatic humanitarian emergency

Boniver will be assisted at the meeting in Marrakesh by Minister Terzi’s Special Envoy for the Mediterranean and the Middle East, Maurizio Massari. She will address the dramatic humanitarian emergency that continues to affect the victims of the conflict.

The humanitarian repercussions of the crisis have grown to dramatic proportions. This is especially true for the weakest elements of the population, women and children, who are more exposed to further suffering with the arrival of winter. Minister Terzi has only recently decided to earmark €1.5 million, in addition to the €6 million already allocated in recent months, for a broad programme of initiatives by Italian Development Cooperation. The first

flight, with 13 tons of supplies for Syrian refugees in Jordan, was sent to Amman on Saturday 8 December.

The fifth meeting of the Friends of Syria, scheduled for the first quarter of 2013, will be hosted by Italy.

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