Our Strategy (L’Unità)

2015-12-08

Syria is today the “mother” of all Mideast crises, and is receiving priority attention from the international community.

Its dramatic humanitarian consequences and impact on the refugee phenomenon are there for all to see.

The International Syria Support Group that has met twice in Vienna, and of which Italy is a member, has launched an important political process in the quest for a diplomatic settlement of that crisis.

Seated for the first time at the same table were Iran and Saudi Arabia.

For the first time, there was a glimmer of light in the direction of a political transition leading to Assad’s exit from the scenario without the creation of a dangerous power vacuum.

Italy has followed this line for some time now.

Let us be clear: the road is still a long, narrow and uphill one, but a common direction exists.

In order to strengthen that glimmer is it essential that the momentum of Vienna be maintained.

I discussed this yesterday with United Nations Special Envoy for Syria Staffan De Mistura during his visit to Italy.

We agreed on the need to launch negotiations between the Syrian regime and the various opposition groups as soon as possible and, at the same time, to establish a ceasefire.

The contribution of the United States, Russia and regional powers, beginning with Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey is going to be crucial to achieving that goal.

We have high expectations, in particular, for the meetings to be held in the coming days in Riyadh aimed at identifying which representatives of the opposition might take part in the talks with the Syrian regime.

Laying the groundwork for launching a resolution to the Syrian crisis is a critical component to the broader task of combatting Daesh, and I would like to point out that Italy remains one of

the anti-Daesh coalition’s most politically and militarily committed countries.

Proof of this lies, not least, in the decision to hold the next meeting of the “small group”, which outlines the coalition’s strategies, in Rome in late-January 2016.

Discussions on that occasion will include how to strengthen counter-jihadist operations while keeping in mind the lessons we have learned over the years in the Middle East: i.e. that military intervention, even when it is necessary, will never resolve the problem if it is not part of a long-term political strategy.

Source : https://www.esteri.it/en/sala_stampa/archivionotizie/interviste/2015/12/la-nostra-strategia-l-unita/