

On Latest Political Developments & Ceasefire Agreement in Southern Syria

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July 14, 2017

Press Release
Political Committee
Syrian Coalition
July 13, 2017

After studying the ceasefire agreement which was announced in southern Syria on July 7, the Syrian Coalition announces the following:

1. There is no substitute for a comprehensive political solution in accordance with the international resolutions on Syria, especially the Geneva Communiqué of 2012. The Coalition reaffirms commitment to a political solution and its willingness to assume its responsibilities in this regard. The Coalition believes that it is futile to continue with partial solutions reached outside the framework of the United Nations and its resolutions on Syria. It is unacceptable that the Syrian people and their legitimate representatives have been excluded from the framework of the agreements and negotiations that affect the sovereignty of Syria and its future.

2. The Syrian people and their revolution against the murderous, terrorist regime have been the most affected by terrorism and the various terrorist organizations. The Free Syrian Army and other rebel groups have stood up to ISIS and other extremist groups as well as to the Assad regime and the sectarian militias it has brought to Syria. They have made tremendous sacrifices in these ongoing battles.

The Coalition underscores that the war on ISIS and Al-Qaeda as well as the elimination of the various forms of extremism and terrorism in Syria and the region is a strategic goal for the Syrian people. Defeating terror, however, cannot be achieved without addressing the root causes of terrorism; chiefly among them is the overthrow of the despotic corrupt regime and reaching a political solution that meets the demands of the Syrian people for freedom and the establishment of a pluralistic democratic system of rule in Syria.

The fight against terrorism must be carried out in parallel with the implementation of international resolutions to bring about a political solution which is still being rejected by the tyrannical regime. The fight against terrorism must be a complementary part of the political solution.

3. The latest developments in our country have signaled a significant change in the positions of the countries claiming to be friends of the Syrian people in terms of their vision for the essence of the political solution and its timeframe. These developments

have also signaled a change in these countries' positions towards the head of the regime and its pillars in a clear attempt to rehabilitate the regime under the slogan of the fight against terrorism.

4. Any agreement that leads to ending the violence and the killings against the Syrian people and the destruction their homeland is a positive step. However, this step must cover all Syrian territory and must be reinforced by strict monitoring mechanism and accountability for violations. This step must also ensure that sieges on the Syrian cities and towns are lifted; UN aid convoys are granted entry; all detainees are released; the fate of the missing persons is revealed; all foreign militias and troops are withdrawn from Syrian territory; and the displaced persons and refugees are allowed to return to their homes. This step is in no way separable from the comprehensive political solution, nor is it independent of it.

5. We are deeply concerned and have reservations about the ceasefire agreement reached in the south whose sponsors justify it by saying that it was reached away from the presence of Iran as a guarantor party.

The agreement risks:

1. creating a rift between the liberated areas in the north and south. The agreement has already separated the FSA groups in the south from those in the north.
2. establishing a track other than the Geneva process and the sponsorship of the United Nations.
3. consolidating the various areas of influence in our country; paving the way for the establishment of unacceptable entities that threaten the territorial integrity of Syria and risk imposing a fait accompli.
4. This agreement, along with other similar agreements, should lay the ground for reaching a comprehensive political solution. The United States and Russia, the sponsors of the political process, need to agree not only on such a limited agreement, but also to reach a political solution in accordance with international resolutions, force the murderous Assad regime to abide by these resolutions and put an end to the tragedy of the Syrian people through the bringing about of a political transition to new system of rule. This system of rule must be based on the establishment of a democratic civil state that ensures equality for all Syrians on the basis of citizenship and on a modern constitution drafted by the Syrians themselves and approved through a referendum.

6. The Coalition does not accept to be excluded from the agreements being reached on Syria as well as from playing a role in the administration of the areas that are being liberated from terrorist groups. The Coalition and its institutions stress that they are the only party authorized and capable to take on the task of the administration of the areas being liberated from terrorist groups as well as to provide services and preserve state institutions. It is time to restore our national decision and to actively participate in whatever is related to the determination of the fate of our country.

May our wounded recover, our detainees be free, and our fallen heroes rest in peace.

May the Syrian people and their revolution emerge victorious.