Syria – Terzi to the Lower House: no to military intervention, peaceful solution

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In Syria, “the conditions do not exist for a military intervention, what is needed is a peaceful solution”, Minister Giulio Terzi asserted, in a report on recent political developments in the Mediterranean to the joint Upper and Lower House foreign committees, held at the seat of the Lower House. Terzi then announced that he would be in Tunisia on 24 February attending a meeting of the “Friends of the Syrian People”. “The meeting”, he explained, “will serve to coordinate international initiatives for putting an end to this massacre”. “We are urging the Russians to take a constructive position”, the minister added, after Moscow’s veto of a UN Security Council resolution condemning the repression in Syria. “We have the political and moral duty to defend the rights of Syrian civilians”, he concluded.

As for relations with the new Libya, Terzi underscored that “we are on the right road to putting bilateral collaboration back on track”, as witnessed by the Tripoli Declaration Premier Mario Monti signed on his recent visit to Libya – “the first bilateral with a foreign country”. Terzi acknowledged that “the reconstruction phase in Libya contains unknowns and uncertainties”, and went on to urge a “prudent attitude” and the avoidance of “paternalistic or overeager attitudes that would be counter-productive”.

The Mediterranean is one of Italy’s foreign policy priorities, and for that reason the 5+5 Dialogue, scheduled to meet in Rome on 20 February, will have a “concrete and operational nature” regarding the topics on the agenda (regional security, migration flows, energy, environmental protection and development), Terzi explained. He added that on the same afternoon there would be a meeting of the FOROMED with Egypt, Greece and Turkey, in which the Arab League and Union for the Mediterranean secretariats would take part.

Among the countries along the southern Mediterranean shores, Terzi pointed out, “We have noted a strong demand for Italy, for our country’s presence: this is a need expressed by political and economic forces alike, because we are seen as a country capable of better focusing the European Union’s attention on this common home that is the Mediterranean”. Facilitating the transition under way in the countries of the Arab Spring, Terzi stressed, “calls for rapid intervention with concrete aid and long-term strategies”.

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