Joint Statement on the Occasion of the 12th Anniversary of the Syrian Uprising

2023-03-16

The following statement was released by France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America on the occasion of the 12-year anniversary of the Syrian uprising:

Today marks the beginning of the 13th year since the Syrian people peacefully rose up to demand their freedom and dignity, calling on the Assad regime to respect their inalienable rights and to stop human rights violations. Almost a quarter of a million Syrian civilians have been killed since then, the vast majority of them by the Assad regime, which met its people's demands with atrocities that continue today. The ongoing conflict has created a permissive environment for terrorists and drug traffickers to exploit, further threatening regional stability.

This year's anniversary comes on the heels of a series of devastating earthquakes that claimed the lives of nearly 10,000 Syrians inside the country and across the border in Turkey, many of whom sought refuge there after fleeing the Assad regime. In light of this catastrophe, we renew our call on all parties in Syria to observe their commitments under ceasefire agreements, work towards a sustained calm, permit unhindered humanitarian access and the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid through all modalities, including the continued authorization of the cross-border mechanism by the

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Security Council, and address the increasing need for assistance after over a decade of war and abuse. To respond to this humanitarian crisis, we have issued emergency exemptions to our sanctions policies which facilitate the delivery of legitimate humanitarian and disaster relief to earthquake affected areas, while preventing the Assad regime from benefiting from this assistance at the expense of the Syrian people.

As we focus on addressing the immediate humanitarian needs following the tragic earthquakes, we recall our joint goals to advance a

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-facilitated, Syrian-led political process in line with

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Security Council Resolution 2254 and to improve the situation on the ground for millions of Syrians in other ways, including the situation of internally displaced persons and refugees. We remain committed to supporting Syrian civil society and ending the human rights violations and abuses the Syrian people have suffered - from the Assad regime and others - long before the earthquakes struck. The international community must work together to hold the Assad regime and all perpetrators of abuses, violations, and atrocities accountable. We welcome ongoing efforts by national courts to investigate and prosecute crimes committed in Syria. Furthermore, we call on all parties to release and/or clarify the fate and whereabouts of over 155,000 persons who, to this day, remain unjustly detained or missing in Syria.

We are not normalizing relations with the Assad regime, nor are we funding reconstruction of the damage inflicted by the regime during the conflict or lifting sanctions. For the benefit of the Syrian people, we will not normalize until there is authentic and enduring progress towards a political solution. As we observe the 12th anniversary of the Assad regime’s initiation of this horrendous conflict, and as we confront conflict elsewhere around the world, the plight of the Syrian people must remain front and center. We continue to stand with the Syrian people and strongly support efforts to advance an enduring political solution, in line with

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Security Council Resolution 2254, that is grounded in justice and accountability and remains the only way to achieve the stable peace that Syrians need and deserve.

Overview "Newsroom"

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