Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

The Friends of Syria today expressed their support once again

2014-09-24

I've just chaired a meeting of the Friends of Syria alongside the US Secretary of State, the French, German, Saudi and Turkish Foreign Ministers.

Over fifty countries and international organizations were represented from across the world united in our resolve to address the appalling situation in Syria and our revulsion of the atrocities committed both by ISIL and the Assad regime.

Tackling ISIL requires a multi-faceted approach. It will need to combine the tough military response we have seen in the past few days with an intelligent and nuanced political strategy degrading ISIL's access to funds, fighters and resources. That response needs to address ISIL both in Syria and Iraq.

In Iraq we're collectively building international support for al-Abadi's government, which is committed to political reform and to representing all of Iraq's communities.

And in Syria too, negotiated political transition will be key. Assad cannot be a credible partner for us. He is unable to unite Syrians, unable to defeat ISIL and unable to win broad, international backing. He is responsible for ISIL's rise. Assad is a cause, not a cure, of ISIL.

The President of Syria National Coalition, Dr Hadi al Bahra, addressed the meeting and explained the situation on the ground in Syria and set out his vision for a future, pluralistic Syrian politics rejecting sectarianism and disunity.

We reaffirmed, as Friends of Syria, our strong support for that vision. Many countries committed additional resources. I announced that the UK would be increasing our commitment to £46 million, delivering practical support to opposition governance in areas that the moderate opposition controls and to bolster regional resilience to extremism.

The Friends of Syria today expressed their support once again for the vision of a Syria free of tyranny and terrorism, enjoying democracy, pluralism and human rights under the rule of law and again today, we've made our commitment to work with the moderate opposition, led by the Syrian National Coalition, to turn that vision into a reality for all of the people of Syria.

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-friends-of-syria-today-expressed-their-support-once-again