

Response to the “Working groups” Proposed By UN Envoy Staffan De Mistura

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During its 25th meeting, the Syrian Coalition’s General Assembly discussed the four “Working groups” proposed by the United Nations envoy Staffan de Mistura. The discussion, which also included the ideas, mechanisms and proposals of the plan, was based on the reports and recommendations submitted by the political committee and the joint statement with rebel factions.

The General Assembly emphasizes the following points:

1. The political settlement in Syria must adhere to Geneva I Communiqué of June 30, 2012 provisions, the UN Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2118, and to the outcome of the Geneva II Conference. The formation of a full transitional governing body with executive powers without Assad and his inner circle must remain the essence of the political settlement and its starting point.
2. Since the cessation of the Geneva II conference in February 2014, the UN mediation efforts were not built on clear foundations ensuring a peaceful transition of power and establishing a transitional governing body. These efforts ended with partial solutions such as a temporary cease-fire and holding consultative meetings without stopping the Assad regime’s bombing of Syrian cities with missiles and barrel bombs.
3. The “Working groups” proposal-as a consultative effort-walks out on the foundations of the political settlement process and ignores its reference as was defined by the UN Security Council. It also subjects issues such as stopping the killing, releasing detainees, lifting the siege and the introducing relief aid to loose negotiation processes. These issues are non-negotiable as the Assad regime has already agreed to the Geneva I Communiqué.
4. The core of the settlement process, represented by the formation of a transitional governing body, was sidelined in the “Working group” proposed in a way that empties negotiations of their content and bypasses the UN Security Council resolutions on Syria, in particular resolution 2118.

5. While the Russian aggression on Syria represents a violation of international law, it is aimed at propping a murderous Assad that commits war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. It also reflects Russia shirking its responsibilities as a permanent member of the Security Council and sponsor party of the Geneva I Communique and the Geneva II Conference as well as undermines chances of reaching a political settlement.

The Syrian people, who are countering the despotic regime for the fifth consecutive year, consider countering the Russian and Iranian invasion a top priority ahead of all other efforts. They hold Russia primarily responsible for creating a tense atmosphere, derailing the settlement process, and impeding the political process. Accordingly, the Syrian Coalition's General Assembly has decided not to participate in the consultative "Working groups." It considers that the commitment to the Geneva I Communique and the UN Security Council resolutions as well as stopping the Russian aggression on Syria a basis for resuming the negotiation process.

The General Assembly reaffirms its commitment to a political solution which guarantees ridding Syria of the tyrannical regime that conspires with the invaders and surrendered the country's assets and the establishment of an independent free state that ensures justice, equality and a decent life for all its citizens.