

Joint Statement by the Syrian Coalition and the Free Syrian Army on the UN Initiative to Evacuate a Limited Number of the Wounded and Sick from the Besieged Eastern Aleppo

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Press Statement

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The Syrian Coalition and the Free Syrian Army

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The Syrian National Coalition and the Free Syrian Army reaffirm their support for any serious initiative aimed at lifting the sieges; allowing the delivery of humanitarian aid to the besieged areas, including Aleppo; the evacuation of the wounded and sick; the full implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2254 (2015) and other relevant resolutions; and the provision of assistance in this regard.

The initiative put forward by the United Nations does not include any provision dealing with the delivery of humanitarian aid and is focused on the evacuation of a limited number of the most critically wounded. Meanwhile, the Russian invaders and the Assad regime have put increased pressure on the residents of eastern Aleppo through military operations and security measures to force them to leave their homes along with the rebel fighters. Therefore, the UN initiative is flawed, and instead of preventing forced displacement, it plays into the Assad regime's plans to empty Aleppo of its indigenous population.

The initiative was made whilst mass forced displacement operations are being carried out by the Assad regime in the Damascus suburbs of Moadamiya, Qudsaya, and Alhama in a repeat of the Daraya scenario. All this has taken place amid complete silence by the United Nations which has so far failed to act in line with its responsibility to protect civilians.

Moreover, the UN initiative does not offer any guarantees for the safety of the wounded or their carers, thus putting them at the risk of being arrested or killed by the Assad regime.

We in the Syrian Coalition and the Free Syrian Army find it surprising how the United Nations has become a tool in the hands of Russia which uses it to serve its plans. The UN continues to ignore Russia's crimes and its violations of international law. We, therefore, believe that it is time that the United Nations made a thorough and real reconsideration of its positions and performance on Syria after the election of a new secretary-general.

The UN has been treating the executioner and the victim as equals, and its positions on Syria has helped the Assad regime and the Iranian-backed terrorist militia to execute their plans and provided a cover for Russia's war crimes for which there has been so far no condemnation.

The UN has a responsibility of to stop the serious military escalation by Russia in Aleppo as well as other parts of Syria and its use of internationally banned weapons, including bunker-buster bombs, napalm, incendiary bombs, and chemical weapons. Crimes of genocide and war crimes against Syrian women and children must no longer be tolerated and its perpetrators must be punished.