

# Statement by Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle on the occasion of the Second Conference of the Friends of the Syrian people in Istanbul on 1 April 2012

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Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, I would like to thank Prime Minister Recep Erdogan, my dear colleague Ahmet Davutoglu and the Government of Turkey for hosting us today and for the excellent preparations.

Germany's policy on Syria is based on three priorities:

First, we must put an end to the brutal violence and the continuing bloodshed. Secondly, we are strongly committed to a political solution. We need to prevent this conflict from deepening and affecting the whole region. Thirdly, we support the people of Syria in their aspirations to achieve democracy, rule of law, pluralism and religious tolerance.

Last week, the Security Council endorsed the six-point-plan of Kofi Annan. Germany wholeheartedly supports Kofi Annan's mission. His plan should be implemented immediately, including an effective, ~~UN~~ (United Nations)-supervised cessation of armed violence.

The regime claims to have accepted this plan. But words are not enough: We must see deeds. We must maintain the political and economic pressure on the regime. The pressure has already had an effect. And we are willing to increase it further. It is my strong belief that it is for the Syrian people to decide their own future.

The “National Pact on the Future of Syria” presented today by the Syrian opposition is a milestone in this struggle for freedom. We expect the Syrian National Council to take steps to become more inclusive and effective. And we expect the Council to support fully Kofi Annan and his plan.

In Tunis, the Friends' Group endorsed the idea of a Working Group on Economic Recovery and Development. Together with the United Arab Emirates, Germany has taken this idea forward. We are pleased that today the mandate for the group has been endorsed.

The UAE and Germany are willing to continue their engagement as co-chairs. The International Community and the Syrian opposition must be ready for transition to begin. Given the dramatic situation on the ground, there is an urgent need for increased humanitarian assistance.

Today, I can announce that Germany is making available an additional 2.5 Mio. Euros. There is no time to waste. The International Community must stand united to end the violence and to support the political transition. We will stand by the people of Syria.

Thank you.

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## **Keywords**

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[Syrian Arab Republic](#) →