Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

# Foreign Secretary welcomes declaration by Syrian National Coalition

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The Foreign Secretary, William Hague, was in Istanbul on 20 April for the latest in a series of meetings between the international community and the Syrian opposition. The Foreign Secretary joined ten Foreign Ministers from the core group of Friends of Syria countries and members of the Syrian National Coalition for discussions which focused on strengthening their cooperation as part of efforts to end the violence and make progress towards a political transition in Syria.

Speaking in Istanbul after the meeting, the Foreign Secretary said :

“What we have arrived at in the meeting today is an agreement, a declaration by the National Coalition that is in effect their compact with the international community. It is in the clearest language they have ever used: their commitment to a free and democratic Syria that is equal for all citizens, to condemn extremism themselves, to be clear about their responsibilities on chemical weapons in a future Syria and a strong commitment to work with the international community. These things are very important for many countries to be able to expand the assistance they give to the opposition in the coming weeks and months. All the 11 countries involved will now intensify their coordination to ensure all support will go through the Syrian National Coalition.

“The United Nations Security Council has failed in its responsibilities and, of course, many countries on the Security Council, like the UK, have tried to exercise those responsibilities. We have tried for a long time to pass resolutions that would require the implementation of the Geneva Communiqué and provide the political change Syrians so desperately deserve. But this has not been allowed to happen and we are now handling an increasingly grave situation on the ground.”

Further information

The Final Communiqué made by countries present

Turkish press release on the FoS ministerial meeting

The Syrian National Coalition’s declaration

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