

Foreign Minister Steinmeier on the meeting of the International Syria Support Group

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22.09.2016 - Press release 

Außenminister Frank-Walter Steinmeier sagte in der Nacht zum 23.09. (Ortszeit) in New York zur Lage in Syrien:

Foreign Minister Steinmeier issued the following statement in New York during the night of 23 September (local time) on the situation in Syria:

We are currently experiencing very difficult moments here in New York. The dramatic debates we held today reflect the situation in Syria. After the bombardment of the humanitarian aid convoy, we have hit a low. What a few days ago was achieved through painstaking efforts by the United States and Russian foreign ministers – agreement on the road to a cease-fire – is currently in danger of being destroyed by the bomb attacks of the Syrian army.

Today, we looked for ways to revive the agreed cease-fire, to at least give it a chance.

So far, our efforts have not been successful, at least not completely successful. However, today, there was widespread agreement at the negotiation table with respect to our proposal for a temporary suspension of all military flights over Syria, as a condition for reinstatement of the cease-fire. We must now see if the coming hours and days bring progress. Today, at least, we have not reached any final agreement. Some foreign ministers still need to discuss this matter with their capitals. On the other side, it is our clear expectation that all opposition groups must credibly distance themselves from the radical groups, such as ISIS and al-Nusra.

Today's discussion was very open and very controversial. However, in the end, it was characterised by our joint desire to not leave Syria in the lurch in this serious situation. We all feel that, during the week of the General Assembly, we have an obligation to do everything within our power to help calm the situation, reduce violence, and reinstate the cease-fire.

We did not yet succeed in doing this today. I hope that the messages we may receive tonight or tomorrow from the capitals, especially from Washington and Moscow, will bring progress.

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