

Statement by the HR/VP Federica Mogherini on the Conference of the Syrian Opposition in Riyadh

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The Syrian opposition meeting in Riyadh on 22-24 November agreed a joint declaration creating a united inclusive opposition delegation for the UN-led intra-Syrian talks. This represents an important milestone for the process to move into real negotiations between the two parties. We send our congratulations to Nasr Hariri, the new General Coordinator and Head of the Negotiating Team. Saudi Arabia's successful efforts in hosting the conference have been instrumental.

The opposition now has a unified delegation willing to negotiate without preconditions on the agenda set by the UN. The strengthening of women's participation in the opposition delegation is a critical step. This, together with the statement of the three Astana guarantors in Sochi, allows us to now look forward to the next round in Geneva with the strong hope that the way is now paved for concrete decisions between the Syrian parties including on transitional governance, a constitutional process and UN-supervised free and fair elections. In this context, the EU reaffirms the primacy of the UN-led Geneva process, and its readiness to support it not only from a political and diplomatic point of view but also with all the economic and humanitarian work developed under the Brussels process.

In Syria, the fighting is not over. The humanitarian situation is deteriorating. Attacks on civilians, as seen recently in Atareb and Eastern Ghouta have to stop. Obstacles to humanitarian access across Syria have to be removed. We count on the active support of the ceasefire guarantors Russia, Iran, and Turkey, to facilitate access to and from the de-escalation areas.

Languages:

Français