UN: Syria: Things are moving, says Terzi. Annan visiting Moscow and Beijing

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“Things are moving” for Syria at the United Nations, declared Foreign Minister Giulio Terzi. The Minister is taking part in the EU Foreign Ministers’ Council meeting in Brussels, which has led to a decision to impose new sanctions that strike to the very heart of Syrian President Bashar Assad’s family. He was referring to the statement by the President of the UN Security Council, which he views as “a politically significant step”. According to Terzi, it shows that “the international community is united on the need for a humanitarian ceasefire and for humanitarian corridors to bring relief to the Syrian people, who are living in conditions of great suffering. It is united, too, on the need to kickstart a political process that could lead to a solution to the crisis”, explained the Minister.

“The situation has certainly moved forward, but we need to obtain a Security Council resolution in coming weeks. Now it’s the turn of the Arab League and the Friends of Syria meeting” on 1 April 2012.

In the meantime, the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva has approved a resolution condemning the human rights violations. Further developments are also emerging from the mission of UN and Arab League Special Envoy, Kofi Annan, who will be visiting Moscow and Beijing.

The resolution approved by the Human Rights Council, and promoted by the European Union, condemned the growing, widespread, systematic and serious human rights violations perpetrated by the Syrian authorities. Russia, China and Cuba voted against. The resolution also renewed the mandate of the international commission of inquiry on Syria, whose task is to investigate such violations. It condemns, among other things, the violent repression of the rebellion in Syria, the arbitrary executions, torture, and the excessive use of force.

Turning to Annan’s new mission to Moscow, the UN and Arab League Special Envoy will meet the Russian Foreign Minister and President. The schedule for his meetings in Beijing has not yet been finalised. The mission of experts sent recently by Annan to Damascus has returned after 3 days of “intense discussions” with the Syrian authorities. The talks focused on the “urgent steps” to be taken “to apply Annan’s proposals to bring an end to the killings, provide humanitarian assistance and begin a political process in Syria”.

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