

Syrian Coalition Support Efforts to Alleviate Suffering of the Syrian People & Stop Bombing & Destruction

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Syrian Coalition

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In response to the latest push for reaching a truce in Syria, the Syrian Coalition emphasizes that any international efforts aimed at alleviating the suffering of the Syrian people; stopping the bombardment, killing and destruction by the Russian and the regime air force as well as the Iranian militias; and the introduction of humanitarian aid to the besieged areas is a step in the right direction. The Syrian Coalition stresses it will react positively to such efforts as long as they are in line with UN Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2254 which called for an immediate halt to the targeting of civilians and medical and service facilities.

The Syrian Coalition stresses that an unimpeded introduction of food and medical aid to the besieged cities and neighborhoods, most importantly to Aleppo, Alwaer, Moadamiya, Madaya and eastern Ghouta should be a prelude to the full lifting of the sieges as these sieges amount to war crimes and violate the international humanitarian law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Observing the truce requires immediate, full cessation of the coercive tactics and threats made by the Assad regime and its allies to force residents of the besieged areas out of their homes. It also requires that sponsors of the agreement and the United Nations provide clear guarantees to put an end to these tactics; to allow the return of refugees and the displaced people to their homes; and to stop the confiscation of land and the looting of civilians' property by regime forces as has been the case in occupied Daraya.

To ensure success of the CoH agreement, the Syrian Coalition stresses the need to establish clear mechanisms to monitor and document any and all violations of CoH. Such mechanisms should be put in place by neutral sides that do not include Russia whose bombings campaign in Syria deprives it of any credibility. Russia has consistently denied its forces have been targeting civilians in Syria despite the fact that civilians account for nearly 90% of the victims of the Russian bombing campaign.

The Syrian Coalition strongly believes that the absence of clear, specific punitive measures in case of violation of the CoH or the hindrance of the delivery of aid will encourage the Assad regime and its allied militias to commit more violations, thus

risking to undermine the latest efforts in a repeat of the collapse of the February 2016 CoH when Russia shielded the regime from any punitive action.

The Free Syrian Army and rebel groups, that announced they would react positively to the CoH, have the right to defend the Syrian people against all land and aerial attacks, attempts to seize new territory, attempts to impose blockades; and forcing civilians in the besieged areas out of their homes. The FSA and rebel groups will view such acts as hostile and as violations of the CoH requiring a response by the Free Syrian Army.

The Syrian Coalition and the Free Syrian Army reaffirms rejection of terrorism in all its forms. We call for designating the foreign militias brought by the Assad regime, including the Iranian Revolutionary Guard as well as the militias of Hezbollah, Abu Alfadl Alabbas, Fatimiyoun, Zainabiyoun and Nujabaa as terrorist organizations. These militias have committed war crimes and crimes against humanitarian against Syrian civilians. No political or legal cover should be provided to those militias, nor should be any form of support or cooperation with them.

Since 2013, the Free Syrian Army and rebel groups have been combatting the extremists of ISIS who pose a serious threat to Syria, the region, and beyond. It is a well-established fact that ISIS has received direct and indirect support from the Assad regime. Defeating this extremist group, therefore, requires freeing Syria from tyranny and dictatorship by toppling the Assad regime whose policies nurture terrorism and extremism.

We renew our firm commitment to the fight against terrorism in all its forms and against the Assad regime, the main sponsor of terrorism and its root cause. We also reaffirm commitment to oust foreign terrorist militiamen of whom increasing numbers have been sent to Syria by Iran in the recent weeks. Moreover, we reaffirm commitment to continue the fight against ISIS and not to allow Syria to be a conduit for cross-border terrorism by groups whose objectives conflict with the goals of the Syrian people and their revolution.

The Syrian Coalition emphasizes it will seek to make the CoH a success. The Free Syrian Army and rebel groups pledge they will provide full protection for civilians from any attacks by Russia, Iran and the Assad regime.