Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

Foreign Secretary holds talks with Syrian opposition delegation

2013-04-10

A delegation from the Syrian National Coalition and the Interim Government held talks with Foreign Secretary William Hague today and yesterday. Coalition Vice-Presidents George Sabra and Suheir al-Atassi, Prime Minister Ghassan Hitto and Coalition Secretary-General Mustafa Sabbagh are also holding a range of talks with senior UK officials as part of their visit, and are meeting a number of international Foreign Ministers in the margins of G8 meetings.

Speaking about the discussions, Foreign Secretary William Hague said:

We held very productive talks covering all aspects of the Syrian crisis. I welcomed the considerable progress already made by the Syrian Coalition in forming an effective and representative Interim Government, and discussed how the UK could best support it. As the executive arm of the Syrian Coalition, the Interim Government will have a vital role to play in delivering governance, services and support to the Syrian people. We discussed what further assistance the UK could provide to save lives in Syria, and how we could work together to ensure this support was channelled most effectively.

Finally, I reiterated the UK’s commitment to a political settlement meeting the aspirations of the Syrian people.

Coalition Vice-Presidents George Sabra and Suheir al-Atassi said:

We updated the Foreign Secretary on the catastrophic conditions being endured in many parts of the country, and discussed plans for the Interim Government to provide support to the Syrian people on behalf of the Syrian Coalition as part of Prime Minister’s Hitto’s plan to have a government functioning inside the country. We expressed our gratitude for increased UK assistance - which is making a real difference on the ground - and discussed what additional assistance the Syrian Coalition and Interim Government most need to further help the Syrian people in their dire plight.

We discussed how Prime Minister Hitto’s Interim Government can most effectively work with the UK and the international community, and again underlined our commitment to combating extremism and upholding international law and human rights standards.

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