SIRIA – Political solution to halt escalation, says Bonino

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The path must be undertaken toward a political solution in Syria to avoid the risk of the conflict spreading across the region and the proliferation of weapons. On this Minister Emma Bonino and Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Ze'ev Elkin agreed today in a meeting at the foreign ministry in Rome mainly focused on the Middle East dossier and bilateral relations.

Syria, full support for U.S.-Russia attempts to set up a Geneva II

With regard to Syria, the head of Italian diplomacy confirmed Italy's strong support for Washington and Moscow's efforts to convene an international conference that would bring all the parties concerned to the negotiating table. This would be a first step toward the political settlement that Italy has always supported that would stem the violence, thus avoiding the further suffering of the civilian population and preventing the conflict from spreading throughout the region. The absence of such as solution, the two agreed, would risk seriously exacerbating the existing humanitarian crisis and the danger of weapons proliferation in the area.

Meeting with Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister: excellent bilateral relations

Minister Bonino and Deputy Minister Elkin discussed the very positive trend in the bilateral partnership, not least in view of the next intergovernmental summit to be held this year in Italy. They noted with satisfaction that relations were exceptional at all levels: political, economic (Italy is Israel's 4th largest supplier and 9th among buyers in the world), cultural (the two ministers congratulated each other on the launch of the Italy-Israel Foundation for Culture and the Arts), as well as in science and technology, pointing out collaboration in the civilian use of space. This framework, they agreed, is certain to benefit from both the joint declaration of October 2012 on start-ups and the Science and Technology Industrial Cooperation Accord, which will encourage transfers of technology, innovation and business and investment opportunities in high-tech sectors.

Minister Bonino and Deputy Minister Elkin then discussed Israel's participation in the 2015 Milan EXPO – to be enriched by a significant female contribution – which will also enhance Israel's recognized excellence in many sectors.

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