Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

United Nations Security Council welcomes efforts to end violence in Syria

2016-12-31

On 31 December 2016 the United Nations Security Council voted in favour of resolution 2336. The UK's explanation of vote is below.

Mr President.

The United Kingdom supports all efforts to maintain a full, nationwide Cessation of Hostilities and an end to the bloodshed in Syria, for that reason we welcome the adoption of this resolution today.

In the coming days and weeks, the world will be watching to make sure that this ceasefire is upheld. We call on all parties to adhere to the terms of the ceasefire. Those with influence over the parties, in particular the Russian and Turkish guarantors, must use that influence to ensure that the ceasefire lasts. We are concerned about reports of violations on the ground. It is the essential first step required to create the conditions for a return to political negotiations, that we all agree is the only way to end this terrible conflict. To ensure that, confusion over the discrepancies between some of the key texts needs to be swiftly resolved.

As the failure of previous Cessations of Hostilities has shown, monitoring of the ceasefire will be crucial. The United Nations' role is essential. As guarantors of the agreement, Russia and Turkey must ensure that any monitoring measures are genuinely independent and closely coordinated with the United Nations and the International Syria Support Group's ceasefire task force.

Fundamental to the success of this ceasefire is implementation. Not just of this agreement and the resolution we have just voted on, but also of other resolutions adopted by this Council. Resolutions which, when they were agreed, gave us a sadly short-lived optimism that the suffering of the Syrian people would have some respite.

First and foremost, all sides must ensure unfettered humanitarian access across the country as required by resolution 2328, which we adopted earlier this month.

And secondly, the political talks in Astana must be in support of the UN-led political process under Special Envoy De Mistura. The United Kingdom will be a steadfast supporter of any

steps towards an inclusive political settlement which realises the aspiration for a peaceful Syria as set out in Resolution 2254 and the Geneva Communiqué.

Mr President, as we end 2016, we can all agree that it's time to end the bloodshed in Syria. This ceasefire is still very fresh and the situation on the ground will develop in the coming days and weeks. But if this ceasefire holds, then I sincerely hope that it can provide the foundation for a breakthrough in the wider political process and that 2017 turns out to be a far better year for the people of Syria than 2016 has been. Following a political transition all of us will need to support reconstruction

Thank you.

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/united-nations-security-council-welcomes-the-ceasefire-in-syria