

Joint Statement by Iran, Russia and Turkey on the International Meeting on Syria in Astana, 14-15 May 2018

The Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey as guarantors of the observance of the ceasefire regime in the Syrian Arab Republic:

1. Reaffirmed their strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria. Highlighted that these principles should be universally respected and any action that might violate them and undermine achievements of the Astana format should be avoided.
2. Emphasized the importance of the implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of the de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic of 4 May 2017 and other agreements reached within the framework of the Astana format. Took stock of the developments of the situation on the ground a year after signing the Memorandum.
3. Underlined the key role that the de-escalation areas play in maintaining the ceasefire regime, reducing the level of violence and stabilizing the overall situation in Syria and highlighted that the creation of these areas is a temporary measure that under no circumstances undermines the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria.
4. Underscored the need to encourage efforts that help all Syrians to restore normal and peaceful life and to this end to ensure rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access, to deliver necessary medical aid and humanitarian assistance and to create conditions for safe and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their original places of residence as well as free movement of local population.
5. Reaffirmed their determination to fight terrorism in Syria in order to ultimately eliminate DAESH/ISIL, Nusra Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaeda or DAESH/ISIL as designated by the UN Security Council.
6. Welcomed the convening of the second meeting of the Working Group on the release of detainees/abductees and handover of the bodies as well as the identification of missing persons by three Guarantors' representatives with the participation of the UN and ICRC experts. Took note of the Working Group's progress report and reaffirmed the necessity to continue joint efforts aimed at building confidence between the conflicting parties in Syria. Agreed to hold the next meeting of the Working Group in Ankara in June 2018.
7. Guided by the provisions of the UN Security Council resolution 2254, reaffirmed their determination to continue joint efforts aimed at advancing the process of the political settlement, through facilitating the implementation of the recommendations of the Congress of the Syrian National Dialogue in Sochi. In this regard agreed to hold joint consultations of their high-level representatives with the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria as well as with Syrian parties in order to create conditions to facilitate the beginning of the Constitutional Committee's work in Geneva as soon as possible and to carry out such meetings on a regular basis.

8. Expressed their sincere gratitude to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, His Excellency Nursultan Nazarbayev and the Kazakh authorities for hosting in Astana the 9th high-level International Meeting on Syria.

9. Decided to hold the next high-level International Meeting on Syria in Sochi in July 2018.

Astana, 15 May 2018

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