

III. Statement of Russian federation on Syrian conflict

Russian federation welcomes the current developments in Forum for 21st century (Forum). The willingness of negotiating sites to solve Syrian crisis is unique and unprecedented considering past developments in international relations which were marked by indecisive actions or unilateral solutions from major actors. Current negotiating process shows us that international community can unite in order to solve a major crisis and Forum can provide ground for an agreement which will be favorable to all sites concerned, putting Syrian population in foreground.

Hereby we would like to thank Forum for considering opinions provided in our statements for further negotiations and we would also like to express gratitude to our negotiating partners for provision of their own views on discussed topic. It is our strong belief that only sharing of exact views on Syrian crisis will lead to its resolution.

Response of Russian federation to the 3rd draft of Forum for 21 century is as follows:

1. Russian federation endorses willingness of negotiating parties to find a peaceful solution for this conflict. It is the only way in which this conflict can be resolved without breaching international law.
2. Regarding rightfulness of Syrian government in these negotiations – we strongly believe that government which was elected in legitimate elections held in year 2012 should be part of negotiating process. Its legitimacy to represent views of Syrian population should not be questioned any further. Although current conflict started with an uprising which was suppressed by military forces but it was further inflated out of proportion by foreign extremist forces.
Therefore conflict can be described as war between government and rebels whose majority form extremists in pursuit of fulfilling their own goals inconsistent with needs of members of uprising in years 2011 – 2012. Thus in our view current government of Syria represents majority of population and should be invited to negotiations without any preconditions.

3. Considering composition of representatives of Syrian opposition. We emphasize that any opposition groups which promote division, annexation or creation of new state on current Syrian territory should not be invited to negotiations. The parties whose goal is further development of Syria in its current boundaries and in respect to its cultural and religious specifications should elect their common representatives who will reflect their position on Syrian conflict. Considering differences among opposition groups we suggest that representatives approved by majority of opposition should suffice for purposes of peaceful resolution of Syrian conflict.
4. Regarding framework for negotiations. The immediate cessation of all violence should be granted. Syrian people should have the opportunity to independently and democratically choose their own future. Russian federation strongly believes that major reforms should take place in Syria. These reforms should be supplementing the already accepted reforms of constitution and should be in accordance with Syrian cultural and religious specifications. Furthermore the free elections should take place. The election process should be under international control to secure its rightfulness.
5. We call upon Forum countries to abide by international law and not to supply conflict sides with weapons. Although weapons embargo is not a solution to the conflict, as its complete fulfillment cannot be granted, in long run decline in weapon supplies can prove vital for peaceful resolution of the conflict.
6. As noted above, Syrian opposition is a fragmented entity. Therefore in case of negotiating ceasefire, an immediate countrywide cancelation of armed conflict is not possible. We propose regionally, carefully prepared ceasefires plan which upon its completion will reveal parties that are not willing to resolve conflict peacefully. Method of suppression rests upon forces that are located in nearby regions or it will be decided by the government which will come from elections.
7. Considering elections. Only opposition parties that were present on negotiations with government should be allowed to participate in elections. That way no extremist opinions and beliefs will be presented during election process and its outcome will be more predictable.

8. Material and humanitarian aid should be provided to Syrian population. Successful implementation of regional ceasefire strategy should grant stable environment for secure delivery of aid. Deliveries shall continue also after the elections to ensure stable recovery from armed conflict.

9. We express our belief that both government and opposition are set to resolve conflict immediately. Should election process be in accordance with international standards, we fully encourage international community to support the will of Syrian people and protect its fulfillment.

Russian federation would like to express its commitment to resolve Syrian conflict and further proclaim its confidence in Forums' ability to solve this issue.