



Rede von Außenminister Steinmeier bei der Friedenskonferenz für Syrien in Montreux am 22. Januar 2014

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es gilt das gesprochene Wort
Mr. Secretary General, Minister Burkhalter, Secretary Kerry, Minister Lawrow, Dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,
This year, we commemorate the beginning of the First World War. We mourn the unnecessary death of millions of soldiers. We turn silent in the face of the tremendous suffering of millions of civilians. This great tragedy reminds us of the dramatic consequences when diplomacy fails. The war in Syria is already a humanitarian disaster. Over a hundred thousand people have been killed. Over 2.5 (two point five) million Syrians have fled their country. Over 6.5 (six point five) million are internally displaced. The suffering of the Syrian people needs to stop. War is always man-made. And it can only be stopped by man. Today's meeting can be an important step toward resolving this conflict. The attendance of so many Ministers is a sign of support for the Syrian people and of the will of the international community to back peace. I would like to thank the Secretary General as well as Secretary Kerry, Minister Lawrow and the Joint Special Envoy, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, for bringing us all together today. We must be clear: the primary responsibility for the disaster in Syria lies with the Syrian government. The Syrian regime has used brutal force against peaceful demonstrators. It has fuelled confessional hatred and extremism. It has targeted civilians with military weapons, including the use of chemical weapons on 21 August 2013. The ongoing violence has created spaces for terrorism which has become a serious problem in Syria. We commend the efforts of the Syrian opposition groups to fight groups linked to al-Qaida, such as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. We expect the government in Damascus to also take a strong stance against these groups. Today's conference builds on the Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012. Our joint goal is to negotiate a transitional governing body with full executive powers. This body should lead the transition towards a peaceful, pluralistic, democratic Syria, a Syria that meets the hopes of the Syrian people. While the negotiations are ongoing, we need to redouble our efforts to immediately alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people. Public support for the negotiation process can only be won if people can see improvements on the ground. We strongly encourage the parties to agree on local ceasefires, the exchange of prisoners, and the unimpeded humanitarian access to all places in Syria. The use of heavy weapons and the cynical "starve or surrender" strategy by the regime need to stop. All parties must strictly abide by the principles of international humanitarian law. The international community must be ready to support any agreement with prompt support for rehabilitation and reconstruction. Germany stands ready - as we have throughout the conflict - to help our Syrian friends wherever we can. But the conditions for effective aid can only be provided for by the parties themselves. Peace is never won easily. I call on the Syrian delegations to be courageous, ambitious and serious in their quest for peace. The delegation led by the Syrian National Coalition has already proven their courage by coming here today, against many odds and in the face of ongoing violence. I do hope that everybody will show the same sense of responsibility for the Syrian people. It lies in your hands to build a better future for Syria and to end the suffering of the Syrian people.
Auswärtiges Amt
Werderscher Markt 1
10117 Berlin
Deutschland
Telefon: 030 5000-2056
Telefax: 03018-17-3402
Mail: presse@dipl.de
URL: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de>

Pressekontakt

Auswärtiges Amt

10117 Berlin

auswaertiges-amt.de
presse@dipl.de

Firmenkontakt

Auswärtiges Amt

10117 Berlin

auswaertiges-amt.de
presse@dipl.de

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