



Security Council

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Letter dated 13 December 2019 from the Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

We have the honour to forward to you a joint statement by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey on the international meeting on Syria in the Astana Format, held in Nur-Sultan on 10 and 11 December 2019 (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Majid Takht **Ravanchi**
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran

(Signed) Vassily **Nebenzia**
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation

(Signed) Feridun H. **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative of Turkey



Annex to the letter dated 13 December 2019 from the Permanent Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English and Russian]

Joint statement by Iran, Russia and Turkey on the international meeting on Syria in the Astana format, held in Nur-Sultan on 10 and 11 December 2019

The Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey as guarantors of the Astana format:

1. *Reaffirmed* their strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic as well as to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and highlighted that these principles should be universally respected and complied with;
2. *Rejected* in this regard all attempts to create new realities on the ground, including illegitimate self-rule initiatives, under the pretext of combating terrorism, and expressed their determination to stand against separatist agendas aimed at undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria as well as threatening the national security of neighboring countries;
3. *Expressed* their opposition to the illegal seizure and transfer of oil revenues that should belong to the Syrian Arab Republic;
4. *Condemned* the continuing Israel's military attacks in Syria in violation of the international law and international humanitarian law and undermining the sovereignty of Syria and neighboring countries as well as endangering the stability and security in the region;
5. *Discussed* the situation in the north-east of Syria and agreed that long-term security and stability in this region can only be achieved on the basis of preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. Welcomed in this regard signing of the Memorandum of 22 October 2019 on stabilization in the north-east of Syria and reaffirmed the importance of the Adana agreement of 1998;
6. *Reviewed* in detail the situation in the Idlib de-escalation area and highlighted the necessity to establish calm on the ground by fully implementing all agreements on Idlib, first and foremost the *Memorandum of 17 September 2018*. Expressed serious concern with the increased presence and terrorist activity of "Hayat Tahrir al-Sham" and other affiliated terrorist groups as designated by the UN Security Council that pose threat to civilians inside and outside the de-escalation area. Reaffirmed in this regard the determination to continue cooperation in order to ultimately eliminate DAESH/ISIL, Al-Nusra Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaeda or DAESH/ISIL, and other terrorist groups, as designated by the UN Security Council. While deploring civilian casualties, they agreed to undertake concrete measures, based on the previous agreements, to ensure the protection of the civilian population in accordance with the international humanitarian law as well as the safety and security of the military personnel of the guarantors present within and outside the Idlib de-escalation area;
7. *Expressed* their conviction that there could be no military solution to the Syrian conflict and reaffirmed their commitment to advance viable and lasting Syrian-led and Syrian-owned, UN-facilitated political process in line with the UN Security Council resolution 2254;

8. *Emphasized* in this regard the importance of the formation and convening of the Constitutional Committee in Geneva on 30 October 2019 as a result of the decisive contribution of the Astana guarantors and the implementation of the decisions of the Syrian National Dialogue Congress in Sochi. Expressed the readiness to support the work of the committee through continuous interaction with its members and the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria Geir O. Pedersen, as facilitator, in order to ensure its sustainable and effective work. Expressed the conviction that the committee in its work should be governed by a sense of compromise and constructive engagement without foreign interference and externally imposed timelines aimed at reaching general agreement of its members;

9. *Reaffirmed* their determination to continue operations on mutual release of detainees/abductees within the framework of the respective Working Group of the Astana format. Underscored that the Working Group was a unique mechanism, that had proved to be effective and necessary for building confidence between the Syrian parties, and agreed to take measures to continue its work;

10. *Emphasized* the need to increase humanitarian assistance to all Syrians throughout the country without discrimination, politicization and preconditions. In order to support the improvement of the humanitarian situation in Syria and the progress in the process of the political settlement, called upon the international community, the United Nations and its humanitarian agencies, to enhance the assistance to Syria, inter alia by developing early recovery projects, including the restoration of basic infrastructure assets-water and power supply facilities, schools and hospitals as well as the humanitarian mine action in accordance with the international humanitarian law;

11. *Highlighted* the need to facilitate safe and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their original places of residence in Syria, ensuring their right to return and right to be supported. In this regard they called upon the international community to provide appropriate contributions and reaffirmed their readiness to continue interaction with all relevant parties, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other specialized international agencies. Agreed to further discuss the realization of their initiatives to organize international conferences on the humanitarian assistance to Syria and the return of Syrian refugees;

12. *Took note* with appreciation of the constructive engagement of the delegations of Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon as observers of the Astana format and highlighted the important role these countries play in the efforts to bring peace and stability in Syria;

13. *Expressed* their sincere gratitude to the Kazakh authorities for hosting in Nur-Sultan the 14th International Meeting on Syria in the Astana format;

14. *Decided* to hold the next International Meeting on Syria in the Astana format in Nur-Sultan in March 2020.