

# Clarification of Remarks by Syrian Coalition's Vice-president on Objective of FSA and Rebel Groups Participation in Astana Meeting

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Press Statement  
Syrian Coalition  
Media Office  
January 23, 2017

In response to some media outlets misquoting the remarks made by Vice-president of the Syrian Coalition Abdul Ahad Steifo on Saturday about the objective behind the participation of the FSA and rebel groups in the Astana meeting due to be held on January 23, the Syrian Coalition stresses the following:

The remarks made by Vice-president Abdul Ahad Steifo were basically meant to suggest that the formation of a delegation by the FSA and rebel groups to participate in the upcoming Astana meeting is a step that could promote cooperation and coordination among these groups. This move is also expected to lay the foundation of a clear strategy and promote unity among these groups.

Steifo's remarks about the formation of a national army were meant to suggest that this army would be formed by the FSA and rebel groups only. The move aims to reorganize the FSA and rebel groups and set up a unified strategy as well as incorporate competent army officers defecting into a national army excluding regime forces.

The establishment of a joint military council in Syria is linked exclusively to the transitional phase and the establishment of a transitional governing body with full powers in which Bashar al-Assad will have no role in line with the Geneva Communiqué of 2012 and relevant international resolutions.

Finally, Steifo's remarks came to support the Astana meeting, especially with regard to the meeting contributing to the consolidation of the ceasefire; forcing regime forces and their allied militias to commit to the agreement; preventing further violations of the truce; and the immediate implementation of articles 12, 13, and 14 of the UN Security Council resolution 2254, which are related solely to humanitarian issues and are crucial to the creation of the appropriate environment for the resumption of negotiations in Geneva.