

**COMMUNIQUE BY THE FRIENDS OF THE SYRIAN PEOPLE
INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP ON SANCTIONS**

OTTAWA, CANADA, JUNE 25, 2013

1. The Friends of the Syrian People International Working Group on Sanctions ('the Group') held its seventh meeting in Ottawa, Canada on 25 June 2013, under the mandate given by the Ministerial meeting of the Friends of the Syrian People in Istanbul on 1 April 2012. The meeting was hosted by Canada and co-chaired by the Economic Recovery and Development Working Group. 42 countries, as well as the League of Arab States and the European External Action Service, were represented at the meeting. Also present was the National Coalition of the Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces. The participating nations underscored the international community's continued determination to ensure coordination and effective implementation of sanctions against the Assad regime in Syria in order to exert strong pressure on the Syrian regime and limit that regime's ability to continue using violence against its own people and, ultimately, to help enable a democratic transition.

2. The Group is committed to the sovereignty, independence, national unity, and territorial integrity of Syria. The Group reaffirmed its unwavering support for the rightful and legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people for a peaceful, democratic, pluralistic, and inclusive society, free of any sectarianism or discrimination on any grounds, and committed to stand by them until their aspirations are fulfilled. In this regard, the Group noted the G8 Summit Communiqué's references to Syria, noted the outcome of the Friends of the Syrian People Ministerial Core Group in Doha on June 22, 2013, and expressed its support for the upcoming Geneva Conference to implement the June 2012 Geneva Communiqué. The Group affirmed support for negotiations that would lead to the establishment of a transitional governing body to which full executive powers would be transferred, including military and security institutions, that excludes the central figures and associates whose hands are stained with blood. In this context, Bashar al-Assad has no role in the transitional governing body or thereafter.

3. The Group also noted that the on-going crisis continues to endanger regional security and stability and expressed its concerns regarding the impact of the conflict in Syria on neighbouring countries. The Group deplored the further deterioration of the humanitarian situation, called upon the Syrian regime to grant full and unimpeded access across Syria for all the affected civilians to humanitarian assistance, and urged the international community to respond to appeals by the United Nations and its humanitarian partners to provide urgent financial support to address the growing humanitarian needs of the Syrian population, both for the civilians in Syria affected by the conflict and for Syrian refugees in neighboring countries, which are bearing the major burden in this regard.

4. The Group reaffirmed that the Syrian regime is ultimately responsible for atrocities and the ensuing tragedy in Syria, and the Group also condemned any use of chemical weapons in Syria and called for access for the UN investigating team mandated by the UN Secretary General and drawing on the expertise of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the World Health Organization, in order to conduct an objective investigation into reports of the use of chemical weapons. The Group further condemned all terrorist acts and human rights violations and abuses in Syria.

5. The Group reaffirmed its call for all members of the international community to take swift, responsible and resolute action to either introduce sanctions or enforce existing ones against the Assad regime with the view of depriving the regime of instruments and resources essential to its continued campaign of violence.

6. The Group welcomed the targeted and coordinated sanctions implemented to date by many of the Group member countries and organizations and noted that these measures have been effective in limiting the Assad regime's ability to gain access to much needed revenue and material support. The Group steadfastly maintained that such measures are targeted at the Assad regime and all those supporting it and reaffirmed that it will continue to ensure that humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people will not be impeded by sanctions.

7. The Group also welcomed the recent action taken by the United Nations in May 2013 to amend the UNSCR 1267 listing of al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) to include al Nusrah Front as an alias of AQI. As the Syrian people continue their struggle against the repressive Assad regime, al-Nusrah Front has sought to exploit the instability inside Syria for its own purposes, using tactics and espousing an ideology drawn from AQI that the Syrian people broadly reject. The Group committed to taking appropriate measures to implement UN sanctions on al-Nusrah Front, and to ensure that all efforts to support the legitimate opposition and alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people do not also benefit al-Nusrah Front and other terrorist groups.

8. In this regard, the Group condemned Hezbollah's provision of arms, personnel, and material assistance to the Assad regime in Syria, including by its use of Lebanon as a haven from which to send fighters to Syria, which is exacerbating the conflict and threatens to expand it to the region, and specifically to Lebanon. The regime's repeated attacks on Lebanese targets are egregious examples of the Syrian regime's failure to abide by relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions, notably Resolutions 1559 and 1680. The Group also reminds the opposition of the need to fully respect Lebanese sovereignty and avoid any actions that could increase tensions in Lebanon. The Group noted the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Canadian decisions to take action against Hezbollah and its affiliates and of recent U.S. actions to address Hezbollah's illicit financial activity as potentially constructive efforts to constrain Hezbollah's actions.

9. The Group reaffirmed that by cutting off revenue derived from the export of oil and other goods, by freezing the assets of those involved in or supporting the repression of the Syrian people, and by exercising vigilance to prevent the transfer of weapons and related goods to the Syrian regime and those groups seeking to undermine the goals of the legitimate opposition, it aims to shorten the Syrian people's suffering.

10. The Group also reaffirmed its commendations of the efforts of Syria's neighbours to impose sanctions against the Syrian regime despite adverse effects on their own economy and reiterated its call for other countries, including those neighbours of Syria that have not implemented restrictive measures, to impose similar sanctions.

11. The Group reiterated the urgency for companies in all countries to cease providing surveillance technology that could be used by the Assad regime to restrict the free flow of information and communications within Syria and abroad, illegitimately disrupt

communications, or monitor or track individuals in Syria. The Group's members also committed to refrain from the printing or provision of currency for the Syrian government and called on all members of the international community to also cease providing this kind of economic support to the Assad regime.

12. The Group reiterated its call on all states to impose a ban on arms shipments and military technical assistance to the Syrian regime, and registered strong opposition to the continued provision of such assistance to the regime by Iran, Hezbollah, and others that continue to provide such assistance. The Group encouraged its members and others to consider appropriate action against those who supply weapons to the Syrian regime that are used to commit violence against the Syrian people. The Group recalled that UN Security Council sanctions impose a total arms embargo on Iran, prohibiting the supply by Iran or the procurement from Iran of arms and related materiel. It also welcomed the recent meeting of the Australia Group plenary, which expressed its grave concern at the growing body of evidence pointing to the use of chemical weapons in Syria and at the danger of more use on a potentially larger scale.

13. The Group reiterated its call on members to refrain from purchasing Syrian phosphates, a key source of revenue for the Assad regime. The Group welcomed the decision of the Australia Group to require government control of an additional number of items of dual use that could contribute to chemical or biological weapons programs and are therefore of particular concern if destined for end-users in Syria, in conformity with their own legislation, regulations or other practices inter alia such as through sanctions or export control. The Group called upon its members to implement this additional list as a matter of priority, to the greatest possible extent. The Group stressed the need for vigilance in enforcing petroleum sanctions on Syria, and urged members to consider measures that would prevent petroleum imports to Syria for use by the Assad regime.

14. The Group commended the efforts taken by certain members, including the European Union and the United States, to implement the calibrated easing of economic sanctions for the benefit of the legitimate opposition, and committed to continue exploring ways to support the Syrian opposition and the Syrian people. The Group specifically discussed the modalities, as well as challenges, associated with efforts to ease economic restrictions on Syrian petroleum and other sectors to benefit the National Coalition of the Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces and its supporters, and agreed to continue to consider such efforts going forward. The Group welcomes further discussion on the implementation, information sharing and communication in this regard, also with a view to supporting the National Coalition of the Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces in building up the necessary capacities and liaising with humanitarian and economic actors on the ground. Close coordination and increasing cooperation with the Economic Recovery and Development Working Group would be welcomed.

15. The Group appealed again to the international financial and business communities to diligently comply with on-going and forthcoming measures against the Syrian regime. The Group strongly encouraged institutions and enterprises in those countries that have not joined the international sanctions regime to refrain from engaging in business with entities affiliated with those responsible for and contributing to the violence in Syria, or face severe reputational harm and other risks. The Group also supported the issuance of financial advisories by member

states to banks and financial institutions within their jurisdictions to urge vigilance on potential regime asset flight from Syria.

16. The Group agreed that the National Coalition of the Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces, in close coordination with the international community, must prepare for transition in Syria, and urge the National Coalition of the Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces to complete its leadership and expansion process. The Group reaffirmed its commitment to take the necessary steps to enable transition, including overturning certain restrictive measures, once a credible democratic transition is initiated in order to eliminate obstacles to the recovery and development of the Syrian economy. The Group reaffirmed its intention to closely coordinate this effort with the Friends of the Syrian People International Working Group on Economic Recovery and Development, and welcomed the participation of its representatives at the meeting in Ottawa. The Group reaffirmed its opposition to the extension of any financing in the form of loans or credits to the Assad regime that could be used to support the Syrian government's campaign of violence against the Syrian people, and urges those that may be providing such financial support to cease immediately. To that end, the Group, in coordination with the Friends of the Syrian People Economy Recovery and Development Working Group, reaffirmed its readiness to work with a future government of Syria to address Syria's debts and contracts in accordance with internationally established processes.

17. The Group committed to continue sharing information on measures taken to increase the pressure on the Syrian regime. To that end, the Group has established ways to ensure continued coordination between meetings, thanking in particular the Netherlands and the United States for maintaining a list of current sanctions regimes being implemented by the members of this group and the list of competent authorities in charge of implementing domestic sanctions regimes. ([CURRENT SANCTIONS REGIMES](#))
