

Statement for media following Astana format talks

Following the trilateral talks, the presidents of Russia, Iran and Turkiye issued a statement for the media.

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A joint statement has been adopted following the summit.

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President of Iran Sayyid Ebrahim Raisi (retranslated): In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful, I would like to thank the journalists and media representatives, and all those present, especially our distinguished guests – the esteemed President of the friendly Russian Federation Mr Putin, and also President of the friendly and fraternal Republic of Turkiye, as well as the attending ministers and high-ranking officials of the two countries.

We held the seventh meeting of the Astana Process guarantor states. At this meeting, the presidents of the three countries covered various issues. The main provisions are as follows.

Firstly, we emphasised our commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria. We are convinced of the need to preserve the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the entire country.

Thus, the presence of the Americans to the east of the Euphrates River cannot be justified, and they must leave this territory. All regions of Syria must be under the sovereignty of the lawful Syrian government.

All of us reaffirmed our commitment to the struggle against terrorism. We emphasized the need for cooperation with all countries in countering terrorism. Today, terrorist movements pose a real

threat to the region. The Islamic Republic of Iran has gained successful experience in fighting terrorist movements.

May Allah rest the soul of the deceased Qasem Soleimani, a symbol of tenacity, resistance and the struggle against terrorism.

All countries have worked to counter terrorism, but their serious resolve for this is again needed because of the concerns in Syria, in Idlib over the presence of terrorists. We are convinced that this resolve is the key to success in countering terrorism.

We reaffirmed the need to continue rendering humanitarian aid to the oppressed people of Syria. All parties also confirmed the need to work for resolving the economic problems in the Syrian nation, but steps that violate the sovereignty of Syria cannot be allowed. All adopted measures must provide for the preservation of its territorial integrity.

We also reaffirmed the need to denounce Israel's attacks on Syria, to end them as soon as possible. These attacks on the people and the armed forces of Syria violate Syria's sovereignty and must be stopped as soon as possible.

The cooperation of our three countries – Russia, Turkiye and Iran, including joint actions with the Syrian government – are still required in carrying out the declared plan to ensure Syria's security.

We are confident that this meeting in the Astana Format has been successful. This format has become a positive response to the security challenges in Syria, and these efforts must be continued. Cooperation between Iran, Russia and Turkiye, as well as other countries in the region, will help us establish stability in Syria's sovereignty as soon as possible with a view to creating peace in this country and allowing its people to live a normal life.

The need to create conditions for the early return of refugees is one of our confirmed provisions. People who had to flee to different countries need to return home as soon as possible. I hope to Allah, the conditions for their return will be ready.

We hope the cooperation of the guarantor states of the Astana Process along with other countries in the region will make it possible to establish calm in Syria as soon as possible.

I would like to thank again the journalists and our dear distinguished guests – the presidents of Russia and Turkiye.

I will now give the floor to the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin.

President of Russia Vladimir Putin: Mr Raisi, Mr Erdogan, ladies and gentlemen,

This meeting of the heads of the Astana process guarantor states to facilitate the Syrian settlement was really useful and very substantive. Mr Raisi, Mr Erdogan and I held detailed discussions of our interaction on Syria in a business-like and constructive atmosphere.

We have adopted a joint statement to reaffirm our commitment to strengthening the trilateral cooperation of Russia, Iran and Turkiye in the interests of a lasting and sustainable normalisation in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Our three states share the belief that the Syrian crisis can only be settled comprehensively through political and diplomatic methods based on intra-Syrian dialogue, which is stipulated in UN Security Council Resolution 2254, and in strict compliance with the fundamental principles of respect for sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity.

The future of Syria will be determined by the Syrian people themselves without any enforcement of external formulas or models.

I would like to point out that today we have agreed with our Iranian and Turkish colleagues to continue with the practice of regular international expert consultations on Syria within the Astana format. Apart from delegations from our three countries, these consultations are also attended by Syrian parties, namely the government and the opposition, observer states – Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon – and UN representatives. In particular, it has been agreed that the next, 19th round of consultations will be held this year. Plans also provide for holding consultations by the foreign ministers of the Astana format countries.

Of course, much attention at the talks was paid to the activities of the Constitutional Committee. Let me remind you that this body was actually created through the coordinated efforts of diplomats from our three countries. It eventually brought together representatives of the Syrian government, the opposition and civil society, giving them the opportunity to engage

in direct dialogue and reach agreement on the parameters of the future state structure of their own country.

Of course, we are ready to cooperate with our Iranian and Turkish partners and, in coordination with the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria, to continue to facilitate the steady and uninterrupted functioning of the committee in every possible way, while maintaining the Astana format's leading role in the Syrian settlement.

Today's meeting included a lengthy discussion of the counterterrorism agenda in Syria. The terrorist threat and the level of violence in the Syrian Arab Republic has been steadily decreasing in recent years thanks to the effective joint efforts by our three countries. The main forces of ISIS and other groups that had the run of that country have been defeated. The legitimate authorities have regained control of most of the country's territory.

Importantly, all participants supported continued cooperation in the fight against any manifestations of terrorism and extremism until the complete elimination of this threat in Syria and neighbouring countries. We will continue to closely monitor and effectively suppress any external forces' attempts to use militants on Syrian territory to attain their own selfish geopolitical objectives in the Middle East or elsewhere.

This was the context for our discussion of the aggravated situation in northeastern Syria, east of the Euphrates, where, with the support of certain countries, attempts are being made to consolidate the illegal foreign military presence and incite separatist sentiments in violation of the Syrian state's sovereignty.

Russia reaffirmed its principled approach: the area to the east of the Euphrates should return under the control of the legitimate government of Syria.

When considering humanitarian aid to the Syrian people, we agreed from the outset that such assistance should be carried out in strict accordance with international law and the UN Charter. It is important to help all Syrians without exception to return to normal life.

In this regard, we once again call on the international community, especially the UN humanitarian agency, to increase support for Syria through the implementation of projects to restore the core infrastructure, water and electricity supply, schools, hospitals, as well as mine

clearance projects. The successful implementation of these jobs will create favourable conditions for the safe and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their places of permanent residence.

Ladies and gentlemen,

During our visit to Iran, the Russian delegation and I personally also held very useful bilateral talks. During my meeting with Supreme Leader of Iran Ali Khamenei, we talked about the strategic aspects of Russian-Iranian relations. Both sides have reaffirmed their commitment to the further all-round development of these relations in a truly good neighbourly and mutually beneficial spirit. We also expressed readiness for constructive partnership in addressing acute regional and international issues.

During my meeting with President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi, we held an in-depth discussion on the practical aspects of bilateral cooperation in the political and economic spheres. We paid particular attention to the strengthening of cooperation in energy, industry and transport. We have agreed to implement large joint projects and to make more active use of our national currencies in direct settlements between our countries.

As for the situation around the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran's nuclear programme, our representatives maintain regular contact on this issue. We believe that it is important to continue making efforts to preserve the nuclear deal and to create conditions for resuming its stable implementation based on UN Security Council Resolution 2231. In addition, we believe that it is necessary for all parties to the joint plan, provided it is relaunched, to have guaranteed equal rights to the free development of cooperation in all spheres without any discrimination.

During my bilateral meeting with the President of Turkiye, Mr Erdogan, we pointed out that Russian-Turkish interaction has been developing dynamically in various spheres. I would like to note that we also discussed the issue of food security and cooperation to facilitate the delivery of Russian and Ukrainian grain to the global markets. At the same time, we expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the meeting on that issue, held in Istanbul on July 13.

In conclusion, I would like to once again express gratitude to our Iranian and Turkish partners for these substantive and fruitful talks and to thank Mr Raisi for the hospitality and the brilliant organisation of our meetings.

I am confident that the decisions adopted at this summit will help establish peace and stability in Syria and in the region as a whole. Since it will be our turn to host the next meeting of the 'Astana three' process, I have invited our Iranian and Turkish friends to Russia.

Thank you.

President of Turkiye [Recep Tayyip Erdogan](#) (retranslated): My dear brother, Mr Raisi,

My dear brother, Mr Putin,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to greet you all here in Tehran at this meeting.

At the outset, I would like to thank Mr Raisi and all our Iranian brothers for the excellent organisation of this visit and for your hospitality.

The Astana Format and our meeting today, the seventh meeting of the heads of state in the Astana Format, are of great importance. We have discussed in great detail all aspects of the Syrian issue. Our work to establish stable peace and security in Syria is a major focus for our efforts.

I know that today we have discussed very important steps we can take to establish a secure and stable situation on Syrian land. I believe that our meeting today is one of the important steps in establishing and continuing our states' efforts to establish peace in this land.

The fight against terrorism and against international terrorist organisations is our priority. We, Turkiye, guarantee that our fight against ISIS, that our fight against the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party), the People's Protection Units and the Democratic Union Party will continue. We

will not give up our resolve in this fight; we will never accept any justification for these terrorist groups' activities. We will continue to fight whoever supports these terrorist groups.

Any force that poses a threat to our national security, to our borders, will be a target for our struggle. We will continue to fight them on all fronts. I hope that the international community and our colleagues in the Astana Format will help us in this effort.

We have discussed the steps we can take at this point in the current situation, because the problem with the Kurdistan Workers' Party, the YPG – the People's Protection Units, the PYD – the Democratic Union Party – is a common problem. We must work together to combat this common problem.

A full Syrian settlement can only be achieved through political means. No military solution to this problem will endure. We have discussed the possible steps that should be taken in the near future to resolve this problem and to establish a stable peace in Syria. We will make every effort to expedite the political steps to resolve the Syrian problem.

The only mechanism that currently includes all parties to the conflict in Syria is the Constitutional Committee, which is also a product and the fruit of the Astana Three's efforts. It is also the only mechanism that contributes to the stabilisation of the country.

We insist that the ninth meeting of the Constitutional Committee be held as soon as possible to comprehensively discuss the existing articles of agreement within the framework established by the United Nations. We believe that the Constitutional Committee must ensure that all the legitimate rights of the Syrian people are upheld and all their legitimate demands are met. And we hope that Syria, the Syrian regime will also promote greater activity of the Constitutional Committee.