

**Joint Statement by the Representatives of Iran, Russia and Türkiye on the 17th
International Meeting on Syria in the Astana Format
(Nur-Sultan, 21-21 December 2021)**

The representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Türkiye 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. Expressed their determination to continue working together to combat terrorism in all forms and manifestations and stand against separatist agendas aimed at undermining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria as well as threatening the national security of neighboring countries. Condemned the increasing terrorist activities in various parts of Syria which result in loss of innocent lives including the attacks targeting civilian facilities. Reiterated the necessity to further continue their ongoing 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 ensuring the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure in accordance with international humanitarian law. 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 Idlib de-escalation area;

3. Reviewed in detail the situation in Idlib de-escalation area, agreed to make further efforts to improve the humanitarian situation in and around the area. Highlighted the necessity to maintain calm on the ground by fully implementing all agreements on Idlib.

4. Discussed the situation in north east of Syria and agreed that constant security and stability in this region can only be achieved on the basis of preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. Rejected all attempts to create new realities on the ground, including illegitimate self-rule initiatives under the pretext of combating terrorism. Reaffirmed their determination to stand against separatist agendas in the east of the Euphrates aimed at undermining the unity of Syria as well as threatening the national security of neighboring countries.

Expressed grave concern, in this regard, with increasing hostilities and all forms of oppression by the separatist groups against civilians in east of Euphrates.

Reiterated their opposition to the illegal seizure and transfer of oil revenues that should belong to Syria;

5. Noted that ongoing local settlement process in Daraa and Deir Ezzor may contribute to stabilization efforts.

6. Condemned continuing Israeli military attacks in Syria which violate the international law, international humanitarian law, the sovereignty of Syria and neighboring countries, endanger the stability and security in the region and called for cessation of them; Stressed that the Israel's abuses of civil aircraft as a cover in its aggressions on Syrian territory in stark violation of international regulations, endangering lives of civilians.

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 the important role of the Constitutional Committee in Geneva, created as a result of the decisive contribution of the Astana guarantors and in furtherance of the decisions of the Syrian National Dialogue Congress in Sochi;

9. Noted the convening of the 6th round of the Drafting Commission of the Syrian Constitutional Committee between 18-22 October in Geneva and called for holding of its 7th round as soon as possible with a constructive approach by the Syrian parties. In this regard, reaffirmed their determination to support the Committee's work through continuous interaction with the Syrian parties to the Constitutional Committee and the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria Geir O. Pedersen, as facilitator, in order to ensure its sustainable and effective functioning;

10. Expressed the conviction that the Committee in its work should respect the Terms of Reference and Core Rules of Procedure-to enable the Committee to implement its mandate of preparing and drafting for popular approval a constitutional reform as well as achieving progress in its work and 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;

11. Reiterated grave concern at the humanitarian situation in Syria and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which presents a profound challenge to health system, socio-economic and humanitarian situation in Syria. Rejected all unilateral sanctions, which are in contravention of international law, international humanitarian law and the UN Charter.

12. Emphasized the need to eliminate the impediments and to increase humanitarian assistance to all Syrians throughout the country without discrimination, politicization and preconditions. Welcomed the adoption of Resolution 2585 (2021) by the Security Council on 9 July 2021, reiterated their determination to facilitate full implementation of the Resolution.

13. 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 their assistance to whole of Syria through early recovery and resilience 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;

14. Highlighted the need to facilitate safe, dignified and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their original places of residence in Syria in compliance with international humanitarian law, ensuring their right to return and right to be supported. In this regard, called upon the international community to provide the necessary assistance to Syrian refugees and IDPs 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.

15. Welcomed the successful operation of mutual release of detainees on 16 December within the framework of the Working Group on the Release of Detainees / Abductees, Handover of Bodies and Identification of Missing Persons. The operation confirmed once again the willingness of Syrian parties to strengthen the mutual trust with the assistance of the Astana guarantors. It also reaffirmed the determination of the Astana guarantors to increase and expand their cooperation within the Working Group, which is a unique mechanism that proved to be effective and necessary for building confidence between the Syrian parties. Agreed that the scale of future operations on the release of detainees needs to be increased, and the activities of the Working Group - to be extended to the handover of bodies and identification of missing persons.

16. Took note with appreciation the participation of delegations of Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon as observers of the Astana format as well as representatives of the United Nations and the ICRC;

17. Expressed their sincere gratitude to the Kazakh authorities for hosting in Nur-Sultan the 17th International Meeting on Syria in the Astana format;

18. Decided to convene the 18th International Meeting on Syria in the Astana format in Nur-Sultan in the first half of 2022 taking into consideration the pandemic situation. Reaffirmed their intention to arrange another ministerial meeting in the Astana format. Also recalled the Joint Statement of 1 July 2020 to hold the next Tripartite Summit in the Islamic Republic of Iran as soon as conditions permit.