

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's opening remarks during a meeting with the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura, Moscow, October 19, 2017

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~~My dear Staffan, esteemed Mr de Mistura,~~

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We greatly appreciate your visit to Moscow at this crucial time for progress in the Syrian settlement process. The situation in Syria is approaching its end point in terms of achieving the final results in the fight against terrorism. Through the efforts of all those combating ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusra, it became possible to defeat the terrorists on all key fronts. It seems to me that this work will be accomplished in the foreseeable future.

We fully agree that it is necessary to re-energise the political process in these circumstances. Your arrival helps further harmonise concrete steps to coordinate efforts between the participants in the Astana and Geneva processes. In the nearest future, we are expecting practical steps towards convening regular meetings in these formats.

Today, we are hoping to discuss concrete ways to ensure the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2254, which declares that it is up to the Syrians themselves to decide their future through preparing a new constitution and elections.

It is very important for us today to continue the dialogue that you started at the Ministry of Defence yesterday. I am hoping for a fruitful discussion.