

Russia Prepared to Extend Aleppo Ceasefire



Berlin, October 20 (RHC)-- Russian President Vladimir Putin says Moscow is prepared to extend a humanitarian ceasefire in Syria's Aleppo. "We have made clear our intention to extend as far as possible, depending on the current situation on the ground, the halt in our airstrikes," said Putin following a meeting with French President Francois Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin on Wednesday.

"We are ready to do this for as long as there are no clashes with rebel formations entrenched in Aleppo," he added. The Syrian army has announced a humanitarian truce will be implemented on Thursday for three days from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. local time.

Aleppo, Syria's second largest city, remains divided between government forces in the west and foreign-backed terrorists in the east, making it a frontline battleground.

Russia, which has been conducting an aerial military campaign against extremist militants in Syria, has repeatedly voiced its readiness for a ceasefire. Russia has been insisting, however, that any such lull in fighting should be accompanied with a meticulous separation of terrorists from less extremist militants fighting against the Syrian government. Putin also called for speeding up the adoption of a new constitution in Syria to facilitate future elections in the Arab country.

Syria has been gripped by foreign-sponsored militancy since March 2011. Moscow has been conducting airstrikes against Daesh and other terrorist groups in Syria at the Damascus government's request since last September -- a little over a year ago.

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