

Ceasefire Goes into Effect in Syria



Damascus, February 27 (RHC)-- A landmark two-week ceasefire has gone into effect in Syria, urging the "cessation of hostilities" by the warring sides of the conflict. Minutes before the midnight on Friday local time, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution, drafted by Russia and the United States, to endorse the truce. The agreement demanded the ceasefire to begin at midnight Damascus time (22:00 GMT Friday).

Under the "Terms for a Cessation of Hostilities in Syria," the participants of the agreement are required to "cease attacks with any weapons, including rockets, mortars, and anti-tank guided missiles" and "refrain from acquiring or seeking to acquire territory from other parties to the ceasefire." They must also permit "unhindered and sustained" access to humanitarian assistance missions and employ only "proportional force, if and when responding in self-defense" against those not party to the agreement.

The Syrian government has accepted the terms on the condition that military efforts against the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group and al-Qaeda-affiliated al-Nusra Front continue.

The Syrian ambassador to the United Nations Bashar al-Ja'afari also told the Security Council that his country is prepared to take part in any "sincere effort" at peace, adding that "the ball again is in the court of other parties which are yet to prove their good intentions" by acting without setting preconditions and without interfering in Syria's affairs.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov told the Security Council that the ceasefire agreement "can contribute to a turning point" in the five-year war, adding: "We now have a real chance to end violence and to step up our collective combat against terrorism."

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