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SYRIAN EXPERT HOUSE MEETS WITH THE GERMAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Delegation Holds Meetings with Policymakers on *Syria Transition Roadmap*

Washington, DC – On May 5-6, 2014, [Syrian Center for Political and Strategic Studies](#) (SCPSS) Executive Director Dr. Radwan Ziadeh and a delegation from the Syrian Expert House traveled to Berlin, Germany to hold high-level meetings with German officials and civil society organizations on [Syria Transition Roadmap](#), a document recently published by SCPSS and the [Syrian Expert House](#) detailing the Syrian opposition's vision of the democratic transition in Syria.

The Syrian Expert House delegation included:

Bassam Al-Abdullah - Representative in Germany, National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces

Dr. Radwan Ziadeh - Member of the Syrian Expert House, Executive Director of the Syrian Center for Political and Strategic Studies.

Tareq Belal - Member of the Syrian Expert House, head of the Syrian Center for Statistics and Research.

Muna Mustafa - Member of the Syrian Expert House, former member of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces

On May 5, the delegation met with Ambassador Volkmar Wenzel, Director for the Near and Middle East and the Maghreb at the Federal Foreign Office along with other German officials. In the meeting, the delegation gave an overview of the recommendations of *Syria Transition Roadmap* regarding the democratic transition, while also discussing current plans for the Syrian Interim Government's implementation of these recommendations in the liberated areas of Syria. Ambassador Wenzel expressed his moral and political support for the plan and any other ideas that would result in solutions for the Syrian people. The delegation highlighted also the importance of supporting the interim government through political recognition and overcoming obstacles in order to attain the legal entitlements that come along with political recognition. Additionally, the delegation discussed the necessity of stopping the Syrian government's indiscriminate use of barrel bombs and noted that increased use of such destructive weapons would only worsen the crisis.

Additionally, the Syrian Expert House delegation met with Ambassador Stefan van Wersch, head of the Secretariat of the Friends of Syria Economic Working Group. In the meeting, Dr. Ziadeh and the delegation discussed means for building the foundations of a functioning economy in Syria while also expressing appreciation for the Friends of Syria Group's efforts. The ambassador acknowledged the importance of *Syria Transition Roadmap* and urged the delegation to continue its advocacy efforts. Van Wersch noted also the Economic Working Group's support for the report.

The Syrian Expert House delegation expressed its gratitude to the Friends of Syria Group for its continued support of the Syrian people and welcomed any future collaboration. Also, the Syrian Expert House reaffirmed the necessity of supporting the Syrian Interim Government via developing skills, building technical and administrative capacity, and supporting projects. The delegation also urged the

Friends of Syria Group to pressure the international community to take serious steps towards stopping the daily indiscriminate bombardment of Syrian civilians.

The delegation met the head of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) Mr. Volker Perthes. The attendees discussed means for implementing *Syria Transition Roadmap* and reaching the silent majority in Syria.

On the evening of the same day, the delegation participated in an open discussion with the Syrian community in Berlin. During the event, attendees received an update on the state of the Syrian political opposition and the efforts of the Syrian Interim Government, including the projects of the Syrian Commission for Transitional Justice. The seminar included a constructive and interactive discussion on *Syria Transition Roadmap*. The delegation received many recommendations on how to promote the report inside Syria including holding meetings via Skype or holding seminars in the liberated areas.

Finally, throughout the two days, the Syrian Expert House delegation gave additional briefings on *Syria Transition Roadmap* to a number of German civil society organizations including: the Berghof Foundation, Bertelsmann Foundation, German Council on Foreign Relations, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Heinrich Boll Foundation, and the Kurdish Centre for Legal Studies and Consultancy. The report was received warmly by all of the institutions, many of which are already supporting building the foundations of a future democracy in Syria.

[Syria Transition Roadmap](#) is the result of a year-long consensus-building research process conducted by the Syrian Expert House, a group of approximately 300 Syrian human rights activists, academics, judges, lawyers, leaders of the political opposition, defected government officials, defected military officers, members of local revolutionary councils, and commanders of the armed opposition.

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