

# *Geneva II Conference Gets Underway in Switzerland*

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Montreux, January 22 (RHC)-- A long-awaited international conference on the ongoing crisis in Syria kicked off in Switzerland on Wednesday.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon opened the Geneva II conference, urging the warring sides in the Arab country to seize the opportunity to resolve their differences.

The UN chief said that this is "an enormous opportunity and responsibility to render a service to the people of Syria," addressing representatives of the Syrian government and delegates from some 40 nations who have convened in the Swiss town of Montreux.

The conference is believed as the most serious effort yet to end the crisis in the Middle Eastern country as the Syrian government and the main opposition meet there for the first time.

Syria has been gripped by deadly crisis since March 2011 with the Western powers and their regional allies-- especially Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey-- supporting the mercenaries operating inside Syria.

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