

Syrian Envoy Says Political Settlement with Terrorists Impossible

Montreux, January 23 (RHC)-- The Syrian ambassador to the United Nations says it is impossible to reach a political settlement with terrorists, who are fighting against the government.

"We need all to put an end to the terrorism and the violence because the political settlement cannot go hand-in-hand with the terrorism," Bashar al-Ja'afari said in a press conference after the first day of the Geneva II conference came to an end in the Swiss city of Montreux on Wednesday.

Ja'afari added that talks between the Syrian government and the foreign-backed opposition, due to be held in Geneva on Friday, are mainly aimed at "implementing the provisions of the Geneva I" conference, which was held in June 2012.

The Syrian UN ambassador called the statements made during the first day of the talks counter-productive, repetitive and based on hatred towards Damascus.

"So, we had today 40 countries seemingly pre-selected in a way that most of them would be anti-Syrian delegations, meaning that they are coming from governments, who do have hostile policies towards the Syrian government," he said.

In his opening statement during the conference, US Secretary of State John Kerry called for a regime change in Syria, insisting that President Bashar al-Assad should not be part of a transitional government.

Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem rejected Kerry's assertion, saying only Syrians have the right to choose their president.

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