

## PRESS RELEASE ON A MEETING OF SYRIAN CIVIL SOCIETY LEADERS IN VIENNA

A follow-up meeting of the “All Syrian Consultation for Peace”, organized by the International Initiative [www.peaceinsyria.org](http://www.peaceinsyria.org) in Vienna, Austria on October 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> 2014, opened up action oriented perspectives for the implementation of a consensus achieved seven months ago in the Peace Castle of Schlaining in the presence of international observers.

After sometimes quite controversial discussions the 20 Syrian participants who reflected a very wide spectrum of different political milieus in Syria, ranging from pro-governmental to Islamic personalities, agreed on the following plan of action for the near future:

- 1) To distribute in and outside of Syria the “Vienna Call for Peacebuilding in Syria” drafted at the meeting which includes a rejection of foreign fighters as well the use of violence against the civil population, the construction of several “Houses of Peace” in different parts of the country, and the project to organize an “All Syrian National Assembly in Damascus”.
- 2) To organize in preparation of this assembly a series of civil-society meetings in different parts of the country in the near future.
- 3) In case this “All Syrian National Assembly” which can already count on the support of numerous international as well as Syrian Human Rights organizations, could not take place in Damascus, a plan B was drafted to make this assembly happen somewhere else.
- 4) To make concerted efforts to get the support of the United Nations and endorsing governments as well as to widen the spectrum of internationally renown personalities to support this initiative.

In a conclusive panel discussion in the Austrian-Arab Cultural Center OKAZ Professor Aref Dalila, one of the conveners of the initiative, stated that “the further militarization of the conflict through foreign interventions only will lead to further polarization and destruction of human lives.”

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