

Dialogue is possible

Results of Düsseldorf's convention for a political solution to the Syrian conflict

On April 13th 2013 in Düsseldorf, Germany, a meeting of German speaking Syrians took place who originate from all milieus participating in the conflict. Representatives of the German peace movements provided the frame for the debates. Declared aim was to promote a dialogue of civil society in order to pave the way for political negotiations. On this way a first step was realized in Düsseldorf.

Already at the beginning of the day a large consensus was achieved on the need for such a dialogue in order to diminish the suffering of the Syrian population living in fear within the ruins of Daraa, the outskirts of Damascus and the city of Aleppo. The proposals to promote local cease fires by intensifying the interaction with the local population and to give free access to humanitarian organizations were as much accepted by the defenders of the government and of the opposition as the plan to organize, in the near future a peace conference in Vienna, Austria.

The discussions dealt also with the problem of the intensification of the civil war-like circumstances along the lines of religious confessions. The participants underlined that also in this respect negotiation and dialogue could provide a necessary distension of the situation. Others expressed their opinion that religious sectarianism is mostly induced by the outside and does not correspond neither to the tradition nor the character of the Syrian population. The participants ultimately expressed the need to oppose the geo-strategical interests of the international powers as well as the neighbouring countries by fermenting an inner-Syrian political solution.

In this context all current attempts of religious leaders for dialogue in order to stop violence and to contribute to the unity of Syria are welcome.

Last, but not least the representatives of the German peace movement agreed to do everything they can in order to bloc by political means any foreign direct or indirect military intervention. Especially the growing military threats and arms supply by our own governments as well as their hypocritical way to deal with democracy was condemned. (How otherwise the alliance with the dictatorships on the Gulf could be possible?) That transforms into the demand for an immediate withdrawal of the German Patriot rockets on the Syrian border.

For all these reasons our principal claim YES TO DEMOCRACY – NO TO MILITARY INTERVENTION has to be accompanied by real and realistic steps to implement our peace promoting work. Besides our empathy for the efforts of the Syrian population to democratize the country we have to deliver concrete aid, especially with regard to the provision of health and alimentation for the population in need. Our aim should also be to contribute to the creation of less violent political spaces, which make it possible to create independent networks of communication on the local, regional and international level.

Finally it will depend also on us, if we can develop, for Syria and with the Syrians, the capacity to create a peace movement that is able, through political pressure, to move the international actors to give up their blockade of a political solution and thus show the way out of this devastating military scenario and prepare concrete measures:

Negotiations for a democratic peace in Syria are possible!

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