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Syrian ceasefire holds, paves way to transition – Putin, European leaders

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President Putin, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, UK Prime Minister David Cameron, French President Francois Hollande and Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi held a conference call to discuss progress in the Syrian ceasefire. They are seeking to lead the country out of five years of hostilities, the Kremlin said.

Read more [Syria ceasefire takes effect, terrorist groups excluded](#)

*"The ceasefire in Syria must be respected everywhere,"* Francois Hollande said, after the conference call, according to Reuters.

The leaders praised the Russian-US agreement that was also supported by the UN Security Council, noting the ceasefire regime is being observed and, more importantly, it is creating opportunities for getting the dialogue between the Syrian government and opposition groups underway.

The roadmap for a peace process in Syria, unanimously adopted by the UN Security Council in December, also garnered support from the five heads of state.

*"The political process must be initiated as soon as possible,"* Angela Merkel said, summing up the results of the talks.

It was also discussed that there is a strong need for tighter cooperation in dealing with the humanitarian crisis afflicting Syria and to eradicate rampant terrorism in the country.

*"Everybody on the call had a common interest in defeating Daesh [Arabic pejorative term for Islamic State] in Syria and tackling the Islamist threat, and therefore it is in all our interest to support a peace process in the country that can lead to a stable, inclusive government that has the support of all Syrians,"* David Cameron's spokeswoman said afterwards, according to the Guardian.

Putin, Merkel, Cameron, Hollande and Matteo Renzi promised staunch support for the International Syrian Support Group (ISSG), the UN Security Council and UN Syria special envoy Staffan de Mistura.

The ceasefire was implemented on February 27, in compliance with the joint statement of the United States and the Russian Federation, which are acting as co-chairs of the ISSG. Terrorist groups such as Islamic State and Al Nusra Front and others that rejected the negotiations are not subject to the ceasefire.

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