

**Nations unies - Libye - Syrie -  
Remarques à la presse du  
représentant permanent de la  
France auprès des Nations unies**  
(New York, 27 novembre 2017)

(en anglais)

Q - Qu'est-ce que vous attendez de la réunion sur la Libye ?

A - The question is about the meeting on Libya tomorrow at the initiative of France and under the chairmanship of the Italian presidency. This is a very important emergency meeting, requested by France at the highest level of the French government, confronted with the situation of the migrants and the human trafficking in particular.

So I would say the two goals of this meeting are:

1/ Number one to raise awareness within the international community about the tragedy that is happening there and to express the Security Council's unified and strong opposition against such despicable practices, that shock the conscience of the world.

2/ The second goal of the meeting is to work on the most efficient responses to effectively deal with such a scourge; not only to break the model of these human traffickers but to find short and long term solutions able to destroy these practices and prevent them from reappearing. In a nutshell this is what the French initiative is all about. I will come back to it tomorrow. Again, it will be under Italian presidency and you know how Italy is also mobilized.

Q - Ambassador, your colleague spoke about sanctions. You will raise this tomorrow at the UN Security Council?

A - We are working on every front and considering any possible measure to fight against these shameful practices (...). We will also hear the UNHCR, Filippo Grandi, and other briefers and examine their proposals. So again this is a very important meeting. We wanted this meeting to be held but we also want it to produce some tangible results to better fight against human trafficking in Libya.

Q: Ambassador, how do you respond to the criticism that Europeans in fact created this problem in the way that they address human trafficking, which is to try to break off trafficking roots?

A - What I see is that the Europeans are entirely mobilized to fighting against this scourge. This is one of the reasons why this very issue will be at the agenda of the summit between the European Union and the African Union, that will take place on November 29th and 30th in Ivory Coast. Because there will be no short and long term responses to this without a strong partnership between Africa and Europe in particular and between the African Union and the European Union to be more specific. So there is a strong European mobilization, under a French leadership with Italy and all our partners, in close partnership with the African Union.

Q - Mr Ambassador, we had a Council meeting on trafficking last week, it was right after this whole issue of African men being sold as slaves. What is new that is going to come out from this briefing tomorrow morning?

A - This is a very good question. This meeting we requested for tomorrow does not come out of the blue. Again, I think there is now a growing awareness of the extreme gravity of the situation. The meeting you are referring to is an illustration of this, this is a step, but it is certainly not the end of the road. So based on what we did last week, we must now go much further to bring such a tragedy to an end and find short and long term solutions to get rid of this scourge.

One word on Syria with 3 messages that I will underscore during this also important meeting.

1/ The first is to underline the fact that bombings and fighting must stop. There have been increasing bombings and fighting notably in Eastern Ghouta, where the situation is very grave. Despite the implementation of de-escalation areas, dozens of civilians and more have been killed in the most horrific conditions there. This is unacceptable. And this is something I will underscore during the meeting.

2/ The good news is that we much welcome the progress achieved in Riyadh by the Syrian opposition, establishing a unified, credible and pragmatic group that will be able to negotiate in Geneva. Now it is up to the regime to live up to the expectations. That is also a message that I will underscore. This important outcome in Riyadh also reinforces the role of the Geneva process and gives it new chance and new opportunities. That is the other message that I will underscore to my colleagues.

3/ Because we have now a unified opposition, there is a new chance for the Geneva process to prosper. So the message is that more than ever after the Riyadh outcome, the Geneva process must be front and center. The UN must be front and center. The UN-led political process is the one chance that we have and it is the only way to restore the stability and the unity of Syria. So any political initiative must be compatible, part of the Geneva process in order to succeed. Any initiative that would be outside of the Geneva process and that would contradict its terms would be doomed to fail.

This is exactly the goal of France's initiative of an international contact group: to bring together the key powers of the international community, but also of the region, around the

table with a view to give a boost to the political process in Syria. And after Riyadh we believe there is a stronger chance to give a boost to this political process. So now, more than ever, we should work within the Geneva process, put the UN front and center and work on the French initiative to create an international contact group and to create the conditions for giving a new boost of this political process.

Q - Ambassador, any comments on Syrian delay arrival in Geneva talks?

A - As I said, now that we have a unified opposition, it is up to the regime to live up the expectations, to come to Geneva and to negotiate with the opposition under UN auspices./.