

Cairo: 15/10/2014

Dear Ambassador Laajavaa,  
Dear Jaakko,

I hope you are well.

The Senior Officials Meeting concluded its work yesterday and considered the issue of the preparations for the postponed 2012 conference and the invitation sent by you in the last email addressed to me.

The Committee asked me to respond with the following:

**First:** they asked me to extend to you the following questions regarding your invitation to the next meeting:

- 1- Is this a new process different than the Geneva process? If not, why then the new format and the new venue?
- 2- What happened to all the discussions and outcomes of the previous meetings that you described as positive? Are we going to initiate another round of discussions without any papers or proposals by the Facilitator that would bring closer the different views that were expressed in previous meetings?
- 3- Why are the conveners absent, especially in this critical juncture? They stressed that any meeting should include the presence of the conveners, especially the UN.
- 4- Why Iran is not invited?

**Second:** they also asked me to express on their behalf the following points:

- The Committee expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that this invitation was issued through an informal email and requests that any further communication with the Arab States has to be through formal letters addressed to the Chair of the Senior Officials Committee.
- They stress that the participation of the Arab States and the formation of the delegations is a sovereign right to the states concerned and do not accept that the invitation limits the number of participating states.
- They would like to remind the Facilitator with the criteria they have requested many times for a successful preparatory process, and that all; conveners, facilitator, and regional parties should strictly observe, particularly the terms of reference established through the 2010 Review Conference and the 1995 ME Resolution, and the UN auspices.

**Ambassador,**

As you know I am leaving to a new post, therefore I would like to wish you the best of luck, and any further communications should be extended to my esteemed colleague Fadi Achaia.

Best regards

**Wael Al-Assad**