

## U.N. 'very sorry' as Syria talks end in failure

18th February, 2014



The man in charge of the Syrian peace talks has apologised to the Syrian people. Lakhdar Brahimi is the United Nations' peace envoy to Syria. His job was to help the two sides in Syria's civil war make peace. Syria's government and Syrian rebel leaders are in Geneva to try and find a

way to end the war. It is the second time they have sat down together. There are many difficult problems to discuss. The Syrian people are hoping the two sides can reach a deal. They are tired of the fighting. More than 140,000 have died in the three-year war and three million need humanitarian aid. Mr Brahimi said: "I'm very, very sorry. I think it is better that every side goes back and reflects, and accepts their responsibility."

The two sides in Syria's peace talks ended their discussions being angry with each other. Mr Brahimi asked them if they really wanted the peace talks to continue or not. They did not set a date for future talks. The UK's Foreign Secretary William Hague said the breakdown of the talks was very sad. He said it was "a serious setback in the search for peace in Syria". Syria's opposition leader blamed Syria's government for the failure of the talks. He said: "The regime is not serious....I'm very sorry to say there is nothing positive we can take from this." Syria's government team said the talks failed because the opposition people were "amateurs". Mr Brahimi was still hopeful and said: "I very much hope there will be a third round."

Sources: *The Japan Times* / *Dawn* / *The News.com*

### Writing

*The problems in Syria are too big for the sides to find an answer. Discuss.*

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*in charge / apologized / civil war / difficult problems / reach a deal / fighting / reflect / peace / angry / a serious setback / failure / positive / opposition / amateurs / hopeful*

### True / False

- The U.N. Secretary-General apologized to all Syrians. T / F
- Lakhdar Brahimi is the United Nations' peace envoy to Syria. T / F
- Nearly 100,000 people have died in Syria's civil war. T / F
- Brahimi told both sides to take time to think about their responsibility. T / F
- Brahimi said the two sides didn't want to talk peace. T / F
- The two sides agreed to talk again next month. T / F
- The opposition blamed Syria's government for the failed talks. T / F
- Syria's government suggested the opposition were not professional. T / F

### Synonym Match

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1. in charge | a. thinks     |
| 2. apologise | b. assist     |
| 3. help      | c. problem    |
| 4. deal      | d. finished   |
| 5. reflects  | e. hopeful    |
| 6. ended     | f. agreement  |
| 7. set       | g. in control |
| 8. setback   | h. expect     |
| 9. positive  | i. say sorry  |
| 10. hope     | j. decided on |

### Discussion – Student A

- Do you think the peace talks will bring peace?
- What do opposition leaders want?
- Would you be a good negotiator in the peace talks?
- What do you think life is like for people living in Syria?
- Should the two sides talk on TV so the people can see and hear?
- Why is Syria's war dangerous for all the Middle East?
- What is your solution to the war in Syria?
- What questions would you like to ask Lakhdar Brahimi?

## Phrase Match

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The man in                      | a. aid                   |
| 2. try and find a way              | b. we can take from this |
| 3. humanitarian                    | c. responsibility        |
| 4. I think it is better that every | d. round                 |
| 5. accepts their                   | e. failed                |
| 6. They did not set a              | f. to end the war        |
| 7. Syria's opposition              | g. charge                |
| 8. there is nothing positive       | h. date for future talks |
| 9. the talks                       | i. side goes back        |
| 10. there will be a third.         | j. leader                |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about how Syria's war started?
- How interested are you in Syria's war?
- How and when do you think the war will end?
- Why do you think the peace talks failed?
- Who do you think is wrong in the peace talks?
- Should other countries do more to get the two sides to reach peace?
- What do you think life in Syria will be like in ten years from now?
- What image did you have of Syria before the war?

## Spelling

- oeopsdalig (UK) / pizeaoglod (USA) to the Syrian people
- Syria's nengotvemr
- many difficult problems to ssicusd
- hauataninrim aid
- better that every side goes back and tfereslc
- accepts their loibspiiyenstr
- they really wanted the peace talks to icuetnon
- a oursrie setback in the search for peace
- the lreiufa of the talks
- nothing tispoevi we can take from this
- the opposition people were saumaret
- Mr Brahimi was still flopuhe

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. i	3. b	4. f	5. a
6. d	7. j	8. c	9. e	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Money

You think money is the biggest problem in life. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their problems. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): stress, too much work or relationships.

### Role B – Stress

You think stress is the biggest problem in life. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their problems. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): money, too much work or relationships.

### Role C – Too much work

You think too much work is the biggest problem in life. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their problems. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): stress, money or relationships.

### Role D – Relationships

You think relationships are the biggest problems in life. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their problems. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): stress, too much work or money.

## Speaking - Problems

Rank these problems with your partner. Put the biggest at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| • money         | • what to wear  |
| • stress        | • bad hair days |
| • too much work | • relationships |
| • neighbours    | • weight        |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.