



## **Road Map for Rebuilding Syria**

### **CREATE CONFIDENCE**

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#### **Strategy**

- Create Confidence through political reform: forming an honest, patriotic and competent government. Assure local and foreign investors that their businesses are safe from confiscation and blackmail.
- Raise people's skills and attract international talent. Train and educate the workers to meet the needs of employers.
- Create superior infrastructure.
- Industrialize.
- Benchmark with successful countries and adapt world class solutions: Singapore, Dubai, India, Poland, Sweden, South Africa.

#### **Political**

- Intelligence services should report to the ministry of interior.
- Allow free political representation (parties, NGO)
- Insure the complete independence of judicial power
- Spread proper religious awareness and tolerance ( Malaysia example, Dr. Shahrour teachings)

- Compensate citizens who were nationalized ( even symbolically)
- Promote social reconciliation
- Try offenders fairly

### **Defense**

- Organize a small, technologically advanced, standing army plus the capacity to mobilize the whole civilian population who should be trained and put into reserve. For a few weeks each year, they do in-camp training.
- The army should be subordinate to the political leadership.
- Teach practical skills and English to army personnel.
- Give scholarships to promising officers to study at leading international universities.
- Organize courses in public or business administration.

### **Economy**

- Encourage public and private spending on research and development.
- The government should take the lead by starting new high-tech industries.
- Try to rehabilitate all non profitable state enterprises. Shut down the hopeless cases.
- Do not encourage creating industries based on low technologies and cheap labor such as textiles, clothing, shoes, toys, etc.
- Concentrate on knowledge-based, large scale activities.
- The key to success is the quality of the people in charge.
- Encourage the private sector to invest in the technologies of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (alternative energy sources, environment protection, robotics, medical engineering, nanotechnology, digital economy, etc..) by creating special economic zones, smart villages, industry clusters, start-up incubators and private equity funds.
- Invest in Research and Development, register patents worldwide, educate people in the new discoveries, create enterprises to manufacture and commercialize the new products or services.
- Give incentives to the private sector to do the same.
- Privatize state enterprises (use example of East Germany)

- Capitalize on the strategic location of Syria to make it an excellent logistics hub.
- Attract investments from large multinationals to transfer expertise.
- Activate the Syrian business councils formed with a multitude of countries.
- Enlarge the private holdings of farmers to make their businesses more profitable.
- Another unique advantage of Syria is its unequal historical heritage from over a dozen civilizations. Tourism should be a key factor in the country's economic development. Give free land to investors in tourism projects. Rent out historical sites to use them for cultural events and management retreats of large multinational corporations. Hire a prominent public relations/ advertising firm to develop a comprehensive master plan for this vital sector.
- Privatize Syrian Air to transform it into a leading airline, serving as the ambassador of Syria.
- Another important initiative is to make Syria an international medical hub. This will attract patients from all over the world (like Cuba, Jordan, Singapore, and other countries). It will also attract pharmaceutical companies to create local R&D activities and conduct clinical testing.

### **Social Justice**

- Redistribute wealth by asset enhancement, not by subsidies for consumption.
- Subsidies should be on things that improve the earning power of citizens: education, housing and public health.
- Every citizen should manage his own pension fund. He should be encouraged to use it for down payment to own his house.
- Medical expenses should not be borne entirely by the government. Co-payment by patients prevents waste.
- Selling profitable state firms (like mobile companies, tobacco, cement, etc.) to the public (through floating of shares) at a big

discount from the real market value, gives the chance for all citizens to accumulate assets.

- Reduce personal and corporate income taxes. Eliminate capital gains taxes. Welfare undermines self-reliance. People lose their drive to achieve when they pay too much in taxes (like in Sweden).

### **Labor Relations**

- Enforce the principle that wage increases must not exceed productivity increases.
- Set up labor union cooperatives and let union leaders sit on the board of directors to oversee the professional managers of these enterprises. They will soon understand that good management is critical for success.
- The government should provide the union cooperatives with state land at nominal prices in order to build housing for their members at affordable prices.
- Create an institute of labor studies to teach industrial relations and leadership development.

### **Governance**

- The goal should be to create an effective, pragmatic and incorrupt government and civil service.
- Good governance includes transparency, honesty, accountability, and seeking popular consensus.
- Executive power rests with the cabinet. The president is elected through a popular vote and serves only a ceremonial role.
- Any official living beyond his means or owns assets that his income could not explain, should be investigated for possible corruption.
- Candidates running for election should not need large sums of money to finance their campaign.
- Remuneration of ministers and public officials should match their counterparts in the private sector.