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Situation in Syria

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

The European Parliament,

– having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular its resolution on the situation on Syria, Yemen, Bahrain in the context of the situation in the Arab world and North Africa of 7 July 2011,

– having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966, to which Syria is party,

– having regard to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1975, to which Syria is party,

– having regard to the Joint Communication by the High Representative and the Commission on 'A new response to a changing Neighbourhood' of 25th May which complements the Joint Communication on 'A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean' of 8 March 2011,

– having regard to its resolution on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy - Southern Dimension of 7 April 2011,

– having regard to the Council conclusions on Syria of 18 July 2011,

– having regard to the UN Security statement on Syria of 3 August 2011,

– having regard to the statement by European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek on Syria and the reaction of the international community of 19 August 2011,

– having regard to Council Decision 2011/522/CFSP on amending Decision 2011/273/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Syria; Council Decision 2011/523/EU on partially suspending the application of the Cooperation Agreement between the European Economic Community and the Syrian Arab Republic; and Council Regulation 878/2011 amending Regulation (EU) No 442/2011 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria of 2 September 2011,

– having regard to the resolution adopted by the UN Human Rights Council at its 17th Special Session on the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic of 23 August 2011,

– having regard to the statement by the Arab League Council of 28 August 2011,

– having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the UN estimates that more than 2,200 people have been killed in Syria since anti-regime protests began in March; whereas human rights organisations indicate that 26.000 people have been arrested, nearly 11,000 are still in prison and about 3.000 have disappeared;

B. whereas the High Commissioner's fact finding mission of 19 August found evidence of hundreds of summary executions, the use of live ammunition against demonstrators, the widespread deployment of snipers during protests, the detention and torture of people of all ages, the blockade of towns and cities by the security forces and the destruction of water supplies;

C. whereas the UN Human Rights Council, which convened its second Special Session a few days after the report of the Mission, adopted a resolution on 23 August which calls for the dispatching of an independent international commission of inquiry to investigate human rights violations in Syria, which may amount to crimes against humanity;

D. whereas, despite a widespread international condemnation of the Syrian's regime continued crackdown on peaceful protesters and the adoption by EU and US of targeted sanctions on those benefiting or supporting the regime, including an arms embargo and more recently, a ban on oil import; the escalation of the violence goes on and security forces responded to continuing protests with more excessive use of force and intensified their acts of repression against pro-democracy activist and members of their families;

E. whereas despite repeated commitments to political reforms and changes in Syria, Assad's regime has failed to take any step to fulfil them;

F. whereas an estimated 17 000 Syrians from Jisr al-Shughour and more recently, from Latakia and Hama, have crossed the Syrian-Turkish border fearing reprisals by the security forces; whereas Turkey housed about 7 000 Syrian refugees in six camps spread across Hatay border province;

G. whereas Members of the European Parliament met and had exchanges of views with representatives of the Syrian opposition in exile on several occasions in the past months;

H. Whereas the ongoing brutal repression in Syria constitutes a real threat to the regional stability and whereas this situation is affecting neighbouring countries;

1. Expresses its solidarity and its firm support to the struggle of the Syrian people for freedom, democratic changes and the end of the authoritarian regime;

2. Strongly condemns the escalating use of force against peaceful protesters and the brutal and systematic persecution of pro-democracy activists, human rights defenders and journalists; expresses its deepest concern at the gravity of the human rights violations perpetrated by Syrian authorities, including mass arrests, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, disappearances and torture;

3. Considers that these widespread and systematic violations of Syria's obligations under the international human rights law may amount to crimes against humanity; in this context strongly supports the decision taken by the UN Human Rights Council to urgently dispatch an independent international commission of inquiry to Syria to investigate human rights violations perpetrated by Syrian security forces in order to hold those responsible for the violence to account; urges Syrian authorities to refrain from not providing full cooperation and unhindered access to the office of the High Commissioner and to other UN mechanisms; considers that the UNSC should refer Syria to the International Criminal Court (ICC) with the aim to bring

justice to Syrian population and avoiding more victims;

4. Supports the recent decision to further extend the scope of EU sanctions to the ban of Syrian oil and other petroleum products to the EU to respond to the increasingly violent crackdown; calls however on the Council and on EU Member States to further step up sanctions on Syria by banning European companies investing in the Syrian energy sector, as EU Member States take about 95% of Syrian oil exports; reiterates, at the same time, its strong support for the diplomatic efforts of EU Member States in the UN Security Council aimed at finding adequate responses by the international community to the escalation of violence in Syria; underlines the call made by Syrian opponents for the sending of international observers to deter attacks against civilians;

5. Calls again for an immediate end to the violent crackdown against peaceful demonstrators; the release of all detained protesters, political prisoners, human rights defenders, and journalists; full access of international humanitarian and human rights organisations as well as of international media to the country; and access of citizens to communication and information networks in Syria;

6. Considers that the Syrian regime have failed to enforce its obligation under international law to protect its population and to respond to the calls to immediately stop the violence and to engage in meaningful reforms;

7. Calls on President Bashar al Assad and his regime to relinquish power immediately; considers that this act would pave the way and facilitate the transition process which should be based on a credible and inclusive dialogue involving all democratic forces and civil society actors with the view of launching deep democratic reforms, including the lifting of the Emergency Law, the end of the monopoly of the Bath party over the Syrian society and the organisation of free and fair elections;

8. Calls on the HR/VP, the Council and the Commission to further support politically and technically the emergence of organised Syrian democratic opposition forces both within and outside Syria;

9. Urges the Turkish government to grant the UNHCR unrestricted access to the camps hosting Syrian refugees, and to allow for refugee registration of those who wish to do so according to international Conventions as well as to facilitate media access and oversight by international and local human rights organisation and calls on the EU to provide the necessary support and assistance to the Turkish authorities, if requested, in hosting Syrian refugees;

10. Encourages the EU and its Member States to continue cooperating closely with Turkey and neighbouring countries of Syria, the Arab League and other international actors in order to prevent the potential escalation of the current crisis in Syria, including the humanitarian crisis, to other areas in the region;

11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Commission, the Government and Parliament of the Syrian Arab Republic, and the UN Human Rights Council.

Recommended

Press release

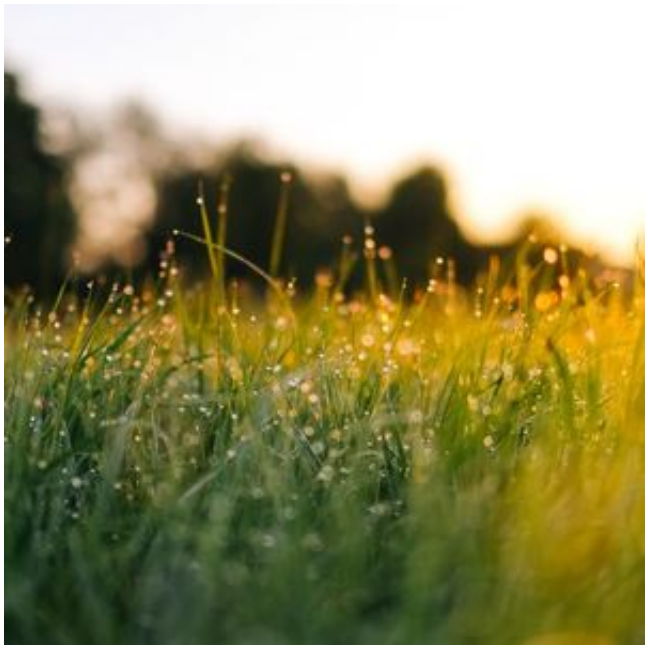
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Responsible MEPs



Barbara Lochbihler

Member



Ulrike Lunacek

EP Vice-President, Member



Helga Trüpel

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