European External Action Service (EEAS)

HRC 49 - EU Intervention: Interactive Dialogue with Commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic

2022-03-18 · Geneva

Mr President,

The European Union welcomes the latest report by the Commission of Inquiry and reiterates its full support to the Commission. Its important work is indispensable to achieve accountability for violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law committed in Syria.

Eleven years into the conflict, the Syrian people continue to suffer from unthinkable levels of violence and hardship. The report again firmly establishes the massive and grave violations committed across the entire country, in particular by the Syrian regime and its allies but also by non-state actors, including the Syrian National Army. The EU condemns the persistent, widespread, systematic and serious violations and abuses of human rights and all violations of international humanitarian law by all parties to the conflict, in particular by the Syrian regime and its allies.

As noted in the report, insofar as the violations are committed in areas under its effective control, Turkey must abide by relevant international humanitarian law as well as human rights treaty obligations. We call on all parties to the conflict to uphold the non-conditionality of any delivery of humanitarian aid, abide by their international humanitarian law and human rights obligations and permanently cease indiscriminate airstrikes and shelling against civilians and civilian objects. We reiterate our demand for a meaningful engagement by the Syrian regime and its allies towards the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2254.

Accountability remains a fundamental priority for the EU. We reiterate our call to have the situation in Syria referred to the International Criminal Court. We underscore our full support to the indispensable work of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) and the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team. We reiterate our deep concern with arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances and call on the Syrian regime to stop arbitrary detention and provide transparent information on the situation of the missing. We strongly support the Commission’s recommendation to strengthen efforts to consolidate and coordinate international efforts to address the issue of missing persons in Syria. In this regard look forward to the written report by the UN Secretary General pursuant to UN GA A/RES/76/228.

We are gravely concerned about the ongoing high-level of sexual and gender-based violence as well as an increase in the number of child, early and forced marriages as child labour and the persistent violations against children and persons with disabilities, first and foremost by the Syrian regime. We reiterate our strong concern about reports of social and demographic engineering in all areas throughout Syria. Conditions for a safe, voluntary and dignified return of refugees and displaced persons, including IDPs, are still not met.

We also wish to recall our long-standing position on the need for full, safe, unhindered and sustained humanitarian access and for a credible, sustainable and inclusive political solution based on the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2254, as well as our support to the efforts of the Special Envoy.

I thank you.

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