

# **Statement by the Spokesperson on the continuous abuses and violations of human rights in Syria and the establishment of a mechanism to identify the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks**

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After more than four years of conflict, Syria has become the world's largest humanitarian crisis.

12 million Syrians accounting for almost half of the Syrian population have been forced to flee their homes, victims of massive human rights violations by the Assad regime as well as abuses perpetrated by Da'esh/ISIL and other terrorist groups. Just recently, Da'esh abducted again dozens of civilians, including women and children in the city of al-Qaryatain. These indiscriminate attacks and abuses of human rights which are perpetrated by Da'esh and other terrorist groups, including against Christians and other religious and ethnic groups, add to the enormous human suffering of the Syrian people.

The EU is a vocal promoter of accountability. Those responsible for the numerous grave violations of human rights and murder of thousands of civilians need to be held to account. We therefore welcome the decision by the United Nations Security Council to establish a mechanism to identify the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks in Syria and urge all parties to abide by it. The EU is at the forefront of the efforts to put the Syrian chemical weapons under international control, leading to their eventual destruction, and has contributed significant funds to the Syrian chemical weapons operation led by the OPCW (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons).

A lasting solution urgently requires a Syrian-led inclusive political process leading to a transition, based on the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012 and in line with relevant UNSC Resolutions. In this context, the EU continues to provide full support to the efforts of the UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura.