

Vice President Dr Marwah Concludes Visit to the Human Rights Council in Geneva

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Today Vice-President Dr Hisham Marwah concluded his visit to Geneva where he led discussions at a Syria event at the 29th session of the Human Rights Council. At the event, Dr Marwah reiterated that accountability is at the forefront of the Syrian National Coalition's vision for political transition and urged the international community to ensure those responsible for atrocities taking place in Syria were held to account.

Commenting after the meeting, Dr Marwha said:

"I encourage our partners in the international community to use the growing body of credible evidence of human rights atrocities committed by the Assad regime – including the reports of the UN's Commission of Inquiry – to revive the human rights track and refer the situation in Syria to the ICC or to establish an ad hoc international tribunal on Syria. The lack of justice has fostered a culture of impunity that has exacerbated the violence in Syria, as demonstrated by the indiscriminate use of barrel bombs across Syria by Assad's forces. Barrel bombs now account for the majority of civilian deaths.

"Only a comprehensive approach will resolve the crisis in Syria. The first step must be a no-fly zone to protect the basic human rights of millions of Syrians and generate the humanitarian space urgently needed on the ground. An effectively implemented no-fly zone will also compel the regime to negotiate the political transition that the entire international community has endorsed. At the heart of this transition process is the need for accountability and justice for the daily war crimes perpetrated in my country against thousands of Syrians."

In the margins of the Human Rights Council, Dr Marwah also met officials from UN Envoy Staffan de Mistura's team, the UN's Commission of Inquiry, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNHCR and the ICRC. The Vice-President reiterated the Syrian Coalition's commitment to a political transition agreed by mutual consent, based on the Geneva Communiqué as the only sustainable solution to end the crisis. Dr Marwah further stressed the need to defeat the dual threat posed to global security by the Assad regime and ISIL, and set out how the creation of a Transitional Governing Body, under the auspices of the Geneva communiqué, will allow Syrians to lead efforts on the ground to ensure that there can be no resurgence of tyranny and extremism.

