European External Action Service (EEAS)

EU General Statement – United Nations 3rd Committee: Draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Syria

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17 November 2021, New York – European Union General Statement at the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee after the vote on the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Syria

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries, the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

In March 2021, we jointly marked 10 years since the peaceful uprising against the Syrian regime and the beginning of a decade of war and repression.

As the conflict continues, the EU recalls that any sustainable solution to the conflict requires a genuine political transition in line with UNSCR 2254. The EU reiterates its urgent call on the Syrian regime, its sponsors and all parties to the conflict to engage fully and in good faith in the Syrian-led political process, including the Constitutional Committee's work.

The crisis, in which a multitude of state and non-state actors are involved, continues to have profound repercussions for the overall stability of the region. The EU notes with concern the particularly fragile situation in the northwest and the ongoing insecurity and water-crisis in the northeast, as well as the situation in the south and reiterates its call for the implementation of a nationwide ceasefire, in line with UNSCR 2254.

We are seriously concerned about reports of social and demographic engineering and mass waves of displacement, committed by all parties to the conflict, including in parts of the northwest and northeast. We stress the recent finding of the Commission of Inquiry that conditions for a safe, voluntary and dignified return are not met.

The EU condemns serious breaches of international law, including gross violations and abuses of human rights law, and violations of international humanitarian law by the Syrian regime, its allies and other parties to the conflict. The civilian population and infrastructure

have been subject to indiscriminate, widespread and systematic attacks that may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The EU continues to demand that all parties to the conflict, in particular the Syrian regime, allow safe, full, rapid, unimpeded and sustained access, both cross-line and cross-border, for humanitarian actors to support the Syrian population in need in all parts of Syria. The failure of the UN Security Council to reauthorize the Ya‘rubiyah and Bab al-Salam border crossings is worsening the humanitarian situation and humanitarian actors’ ability to respond. We welcome continued engagement to increase the level and quality of access to areas that are outside regime control.

The EU condemns the consistent and systematic violations of human rights and the use of arbitrary detention, torture, sexual and gender-based violence, involuntary or enforced disappearance and summary executions by all parties to the conflict, in particular the Syrian regime. In this regard, we welcome the request for a study on how to bolster efforts, including through existing measures and mechanisms, to clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing people in Syria, based on the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry.

Accountability remains of utmost importance and a necessary foundation for finding a sustainable, inclusive and peaceful solution to the conflict. We reiterate our call for the situation in Syria to be referred to the International Criminal Court. The EU will continue supporting the activities of the international, impartial and independent mechanism (IIIM) for Syria, as well as the Commission of Inquiry. The EU insists that the Syrian regime must fully cooperate with these mechanisms and in the investigations of the use of chemical weapons.

The EU remains committed to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian state, and stands ready to assist in the reconstruction of Syria only when a comprehensive, genuine and inclusive political transition, in the framework of UNSCR 2254 and the Geneva process, is firmly under way.

Thank you.

* The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

Source: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/eu-general-statement-%E2%80%93-united-nations-3rd-committee-draft-resolution-situation-human-rights-syria_en