

UN Human Rights Council 49: UK cross-regional Core Group statement introduce Item 4 resolution on Syria

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Speech

Simon Manley, UK Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, delivered the statement on behalf of a cross-regional Core Group of France, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Qatar, Turkey, the USA, and the UK.

From:

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and Simon Manley CMG

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1 April 2022 (Transcript of the speech, exactly as it was delivered)



Thank you Mr President,

The UK has the honour to present draft resolution L.30 on the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, on behalf of a group of states: France, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Qatar, Turkey, the United States, and my own country, the United Kingdom.

Mr President,

The brutalities and horrors that we have seen in recent weeks in the Ukraine should remind us that the people living in Syria have seen similar attacks for over a decade.

Medical workers in hospitals.

Teachers and students in schools.

People at prayer in Mosques.

Small children at home on a farm.

A bride on her wedding day and her four young sisters.

These are just some of the tragic deaths that have taken place in the last six months and that are reported in the latest Commission of Inquiry report.

As the Commission of Inquiry said so succinctly – the horrors of the conflict have left no Syrian family untouched.

Now, more than ever, this Council needs to address this tragic situation.

Today we need to send a message – loud and clear to the Syrian people – you are not forgotten.

This draft resolution focuses on key violations and abuses happening across the country. It expresses deep concern for the millions of Syrians who remain displaced far from their homes and the hundreds of thousands of people missing and detained. It calls for a strong response to address the effect of conflict on children and the horrendous sexual and gender based violence that continues. It welcomes progress made on international accountability including the recent verdict made at the Koblenz Regional Court which found a former Syrian Intelligence Officer guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes.

And perhaps most importantly it seeks to renew the mandate of the Commission of Inquiry – whose excellent documentation work remains vital.

We held two informal negotiations on this draft, and express our sincere thanks to all those who engaged constructively in this process.

Mr President, given the scale of the devastation of this conflict, the very least this Council can do is to adopt this resolution and show the people of Syria that we have not forgotten them.

If a vote is called on this resolution, I would urge all members of the Council to vote in favour of it.

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