

UN Human Rights Council 45: statement for resolution L.45, The Human Rights Situation in the Syrian Arab Republic

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Speech

The UK's International Ambassador for Human Rights, Rita French, delivered this statement during the session on the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic

From:

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and Rita French

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Madame President,

The UK is proud to present resolution L.45 on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic on the behalf of the core group of France, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, the Netherlands, Qatar, Turkey and the UK.

Madame President,

The Commission of Inquiry's most recent report, indeed all their reporting this year, shows us that there continues to be absolutely no improvement to the human rights situation across Syria. This is a tragedy. The people of Syria need and deserve better.

Next March will see the tenth anniversary of the beginning of this conflict and it is beyond reproach that the regime, supported by their allies, continue to routinely – and in some cases as a matter of state policy – violate the rights of their own citizens. Whether it is through arbitrary detention, unlawful disappearances, sexual and gender based violence or any of the plethora of human rights violations the Commission of Inquiry has documented, the Syrian regime continues to act with almost total impunity. We must remember that these are not just abstract findings in a UN report, but evidence and testimony of the lives of real men, women, girls and boys across Syria. It is beyond unacceptable.

The text presented highlights recent developments including the meeting of the Constitutional Committee, the findings of the Commission of Inquiry's latest report, the humanitarian situation – including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the particular situation of women and girls across Syria.

Madame President,

We held two open informal negotiations on this text, and were glad to be able to incorporate many of the requests made by member states. We thank all our colleagues for their constructive engagement, which, as ever, we value highly.

We did not choose to present this resolution again lightly. However, with no improvement in the human rights situation, we continue to believe that we owe it to the people of Syria to keep the Council's close attention on this situation.

Madame President,

This resolution should enjoy the support of all at this Council, and be adopted by consensus.

In the event we must have a vote on this text, we urge all delegations to vote in favour of the text as drafted.

Thank you Madame President.

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