Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

"As Syria enters its fifth winter of war, the international community must deliver an unambiguous message of condemnation."

2016-11-15

Madam Chair

The United Kingdom urges delegates to support this important resolution, which condemns all human rights violations and abuses that are taking place in Syria, and which calls for full access for the independent UN Commission of Inquiry.

As Syria enters its fifth winter of war, the international community must deliver an unambiguous message of condemnation of a regime whose vicious actions have caused the deaths of an estimated 400,000 people.

The regime and, no doubt, its allies will claim that this resolution is politically motivated. That is not true: this resolution is based on clear evidence of the regime's human rights violations, not least from the UN's own independent Commission of Inquiry.

It is the Commission of Inquiry that has identified the regime's indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks on civilian areas. It has detailed the attacks on schools and hospitals, denying Syrian civilians the most basic of services. It has drawn attention to the thousands of Syrians, including women and children, who have been arbitrarily detained, tortured and killed in the regime's brutal detention centres. None of these violations can be disputed.

The regime has the primary responsibility for the protection of the Syrian people. Instead, it has inflicted untold suffering on its people, and has been responsible for more than 90% of civilian deaths.

The regime and its backers, including Russia and Iran, are currently besieging up to 275,000 people in eastern Aleppo. Starvation is being used as a weapon of war: These people have received no food supplies in four months.

In this resolution, the international community can unite to send a strong signal to the regime, and its backers, to end the violence against civilians, to end the violations of human rights,

and to allow sustained humanitarian access to besieged areas like Aleppo, and to commit to a political process to end the conflict.

I thank you Madam Chair.

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/as-syria-enters-its-fifth-winter-of-war-the-international-community-must-deliver-an-unambiguous-message-of-condemnation