SYRIA: Italy speaks out on human rights at the UN “Listening to the people’s legitimate aspirations”

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“The situation in Syria is unacceptable. The people’s legitimate aspirations must be heard, and for that reason Italy supports the Arab League’s efforts toward to find a peaceful and democratic solution to the crisis under way”. The comment came from Deputy Italian Permanent Representative to the UN Antonio Bernardini, who spoke at the UN General Assembly on the humanitarian situation in Syria, underscoring the need for the immediate cessation of the hostilities. The Italian representative also pointed out Italy’s firm pledge to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis, in keeping with the Arab League plan of 22 January last. “Italy and its European partners have already adopted numerous measures aimed at increasing the pressure on Damascus, first and foremost with the activation of individual sanctions on those responsible for the repression”, Bernardini said, reiterating the Syrian authorities’ obligation to allow access to humanitarian organisations.

Minister Giulio Terzi, the day after the Arab League decision, “hailed” its foreign ministers’ proposal to send a joint League/UN peacekeeping force to Syria to “monitor application on the ground of a ceasefire”. “Italy”, Terzi, “continues to support the Arab League’s efforts to seek a peaceful and democratic solution to the Syrian crisis”. In the Minister’s meeting at the foreign ministry in Rome with his Czech counterpart Karel Schwarzenberg, Terzi expressed his deep concern over the dramatic consequences – not least humanitarian – of the Syrian regime’s unacceptable repression of its people, and reiterated the need for the international community’s concerted mobilisation on behalf of a peaceful and democratic solution to the Syrian crisis, to be pursued by means of the active role of regional actors, particularly the Arab League, with which Italy maintains continuous contact, and support for the Syrian opposition, while at the same time encouraging unity.

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