European External Action Service (EEAS)

EU Statement - HRC58 - Interactive Dialogue with Commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic

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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

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Interactive Dialogue with Commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic

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EU statement

Mr President,

The European Union thanks the Commission of Inquiry for its latest report. We reiterate our strong support for your work and for the work of other UN mechanisms on Syria such as IIIM and IIMP. We welcome the Syrian authorities' recent engagement with these mechanisms and encourage them to continue to cooperate with and grant further full access to these mechanisms.

Transitional justice and respect for human rights, including the human rights of women and children, will be key to achieve sustainable peace and reconciliation. We stand ready to support a fully inclusive Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political transition process in the spirit of the fundamental principles of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254.

We are gravely alarmed by the widespread violence in Syria's coastal region in early March, which has caused a high number of victims, including many civilians. We strongly condemn the attacks by pro-Assad militias against security forces. We also condemn in the strongest terms the horrific crimes committed against civilians, including summary killings, many of which have been allegedly perpetrated by armed groups supporting the security forces of the transitional authorities.

All parties responsible for violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) or violations and abuses of human rights during or following the Assad era must be held accountable and investigated in accordance with international law. Impunity cannot prevail.

We call on all actors to avoid any further violence, to ensure the protection of all civilians, and to uphold international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law.

Civilians must be protected without discrimination, including Syrians from all religious and ethnic backgrounds. The investigative commission established is a welcome commitment that needs to be translated into action.

We call on the transitional authorities to allow the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic to investigate all violations. Everything must be done to prevent any such crimes from happening again.

Given the evolving situation, we would appreciate the Commissioners' insights on recent developments beyond the period covered in their written report, particularly regarding concrete steps that can be taken by the transitional authorities and the international community to ensure accountability and reconciliation among Syrians.

I thank you.

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