



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

Sixteenth special session

29 April 2011

### Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council

#### S-16/1

#### The current human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic in the context of recent events

*The Human Rights Council,*

*Guided* by the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006,

*Reaffirming* the purposes and principles of the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and relevant international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and that all States are bound to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms,

*Recalling* article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights with regard to rights that may not be derogated from under any circumstances, even in a public emergency,

*Expressing deep regret* at the death of hundreds of people in connection with the recent and ongoing political protests in the Syrian Arab Republic, and grave concern at alleged deliberate killings, arrests and instances of torture of peaceful protesters by the Syrian authorities,

*Noting* the recent statement made by the Secretary-General, in which he called for an independent, transparent and effective investigation into the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic,

*Noting also* the recent statements made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and certain United Nations special procedures mandate holders with regard to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, in which they called for an end to the killings, as well as for accountability, protection of human rights defenders and respect for freedom of expression,

*Noting further* the stated intention of the Syrian Arab Republic to take steps for reform, and urging that country to take urgent and concrete measures to meet the legitimate demands of its people, including by enlarging the scope of political participation and dialogue, following through on the abolition of the High State Security Court and lifting measures restricting the exercise of fundamental freedoms,

*Reaffirming* that all States Members of the United Nations should refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations,

1. *Unequivocally condemns* the use of lethal violence against peaceful protesters by the Syrian authorities and the hindrance of access to medical treatment, urges the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to immediately put an end to all human rights violations, protect its population and respect fully all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, and also urges the authorities to allow access to the Internet and telecommunications networks and to lift censorship on reporting, including by allowing appropriate access by foreign journalists;

2. *Calls upon* the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to release immediately all prisoners of conscience and arbitrarily detained persons, including those who were detained before the recent events, as well as to cease immediately any intimidation, persecution and arbitrary arrests of individuals, including lawyers, human rights defenders and journalists;

3. *Urges* the Syrian authorities to refrain from any reprisals against people who have taken part in peaceful demonstrations and to allow the provision of urgent assistance to those in need, including by guaranteeing appropriate access to human rights and humanitarian organizations;

4. *Stresses* the need for the Syrian authorities to launch a credible and impartial investigation, in accordance with international standards, and to prosecute those responsible for attacks on peaceful protesters in the Syrian Arab Republic, including by forces under Government control;

5. *Urges* the Syrian authorities to enlarge the scope of political participation aimed at ensuring civil liberties and enhancing social justice;

6. *Encourages* relevant thematic special procedures mandate holders, within their respective mandates, to pay particular attention to the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, and urges the Syrian authorities to cooperate with these thematic mandate holders, including by allowing country visits;

7. *Requests* the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to dispatch urgently a mission to the Syrian Arab Republic to investigate all alleged violations of international human rights law and to establish the facts and circumstances of such violations and of the crimes perpetrated, with a view to avoiding impunity and ensuring full accountability, and to provide a preliminary report and oral update on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic to the Human Rights Council at its seventeenth session, and to submit a follow-up report to the Council at its eighteenth session, and also requests the High Commissioner to organize an interactive dialogue on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic during the eighteenth session of the Council;

8. *Calls upon* the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully with and grant access to personnel from the mission dispatched by the Office of the High Commissioner;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the administrative, technical and logistical assistance required to enable the mission to fulfil its mandate;

10. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*2<sup>nd</sup> meeting  
29 April 2011*

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 26 to 9, with 7 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

*In favour:*

Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chile, France, Ghana, Guatemala, Hungary, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Senegal, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Zambia

*Against:*

Bangladesh, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Gabon, Malaysia, Mauritania, Pakistan, Russian Federation

*Abstaining:*

Cameroon, Djibouti, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Uganda, Ukraine]

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