

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC – ADD.1

CZECH REPUBLIC

- According to the UN, there have been at least 2200 casualties of the violent crackdowns of the numerous protests taking place in the past months. Is the Government prepared to prosecute the ones responsible and if so what concrete steps will it take in this regard?
- Could the Government please recall the measures it took to comply with the 3 August 2011 Security Council Presidential Statement on Syria, namely its provisions urging both sides of the conflict to act with utmost restraint, provide respect for human rights and calling for an immediate end to the use of force?
- When does the Government foresee lifting the 38-year-long state of emergency and the associated legislation which deprives citizens of some of their fundamental rights and grants the authorities exceptional powers?
- Secret detention remains in practice in the Syrian Arab Republic, sometimes even resulting in forcible disappearances. Further, there have been reports of a number of people being arbitrarily detained without an arrest warrant. Appreciating that a number of detainees from the previous decades have been released pursuant to amnesties, is the Government prepared to release all those who remain unlawfully detained, grant independent investigation of such cases, provide reparation to victims and possibly establish a truth commission to this purpose?
- We appreciate that the Government recently lifted its ban over some popular social media and video websites. However, other websites remain blocked by the authorities and at the end of August, the new law introduced even stricter press censorship. Could you provide us with the reasoning of the law and its compliance with freedom of expression?

IRELAND

- At its 17th Special Session on 22 August, the Human Rights Council in resolution S-17/1 decided to appoint an Independent International Commission of Inquiry to investigate all allegations of international human rights law committed by the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011. The Commission of Inquiry was also asked to establish the facts and circumstances of these crimes and violations and if possible to identify those responsible and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions. Will the Syrian Arab Republic offer its full cooperation with the Independent International

Commission of Inquiry as established under Human Rights Council resolution S-17/1 and will it grant the Commission full and free access to the Syrian Arab Republic?

UNITED KINGDOM

- What steps has the Syrian Government taken to investigate the deaths of peaceful protestors in Deraa and in Latakia, as announced by President Assad on 31 March, and more widely of the 2700 protestors, including 100 children reported by the UN to have been killed since March 2011?
- What plans does the Syrian Government have to implement article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and ensure the immediate and unconditional release of detainees held on the basis of their participation in peaceful demonstrations and other political prisoners?
- What has the Syrian Government done to ensure the Human Rights Council mandated Commission of Inquiry has immediate access to Syria to conduct investigations into all human rights abuses, irrespective of alleged perpetrator, in the context of protests since mid-March 2011?
- In light of Amnesty International's allegations of widespread use of torture in detention, resulting in the death of more than 88 people in detention in the past 5 months, what action has the Syrian Government taken to investigate those deaths and address the lack of definition of torture in Syrian legislation?
- What is the Syrian government doing to end impunity, including by abolishing legislation which grants security and intelligence personnel virtual immunity from Prosecution?
- What steps has the Syrian Government taken to allow safe and unrestricted access to international and national journalists to investigate and report on the situation in Syria without hindrance and what action has been taken to remedy the failure to implement articles 19 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, by denying the Syrian people freedom to access information, denying media access, and denying freedom of association by disrupting peaceful gatherings using force?

- What plans does the Syrian Government have to implement reform laws which limit leadership of Syrian society and the State to the Ba'ath party, as announced by President Assad on 16 April?
- What practical steps has the Syrian Government taken to implement, the Presidential decree of 7 April 2011, granting citizenship to stateless Syrian Kurds?