

Human Rights Council 19th Session

Item 6 Universal Periodic Review

Report of the Syrian Arab Republic

Statement of the General Arab Women Federation

15 March 2012

Mr. Chairman,

The crisis in Syria is persisting. It is affecting all dimensions of the people's lives and is not giving a chance for the process of reform and peace building to be implemented.

According to media reports, the violence in some parts of Syria is taking a heavy toll, leaving thousands of people dead, wounded and traumatized with dramatic effects on women and children. From the start of the upheaval the media has played an unprecedented function of misinforming, agitating internal conflict, mobilizing international pressure and blocking all efforts for dialogue.

We are deeply concerned about the criminal acts that are being carried out, such as bombing buildings and vehicles carrying fuel, explosions targeting the police, the media members, religious and educational centres, and destroying the country's infrastructure.

The Arab League Observers' Mission has provided a detailed report which clearly confirms the existence of an armed insurgency carried out by terrorist groups.

On the other hand, the economic sanctions are creating a humanitarian crisis similar to that experience in Iraq which is punishing the entire population.

We wish to draw the attention of the Council to the fact that Syria is presently hosting one of the largest urban refugee, 93% from Iraq, estimated to be about one million. These have been given free access

to all basic services including job opportunities, education and health care, which has had a tremendous impact on the country's economy, stability and security.

We consider that all these criminal acts do not help to provide a solution to the crisis. The conflict can only be resolved by peaceful means.

- We call on all parties to the conflict and concerned international bodies, to support a comprehensive process of national dialogue; help develop mechanisms for the disarmament and stop arming, funding and training insurgence groups.

- We call for the immediate lifting of all sanctions imposed on Syria, as they affect the lives of the Syrian people.

- WE call on the Syrian government to accelerate the political process and the national dialogue in order to create a climate of trust that will give chance to the implementation of the new constitution and the planned reforms.

Thank you

Juliette Sayegh