



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

"Dedicated since 1952 to the primacy, coherence and implementation of international law and principles that advance human rights"

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ICJ Oral Intervention on the Adoption of the Outcome Document of the Universal Periodic Review of Syria

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Madam President,

The International Commission of Jurists notes that these UPR recommendations come after over a year of widespread violations of human rights and breaches amounting to crimes under international law, including torture, summary executions, unlawful killings, arbitrary detention and disproportionate and indiscriminate attacks against the civilian population and civilian objects.

While Syria purports to accept recommendations to end the violence and use of torture, and to release prisoners of conscience or those detained for exercising freedom of expression (Recommendations 100.21-25, 101.9, 101.10), torture and ill-treatment continue to be used in a widespread and systematic way. Although Syrian authorities lifted the state of emergency on 21 April 2011, they have failed to abolish the 1962 State of Emergency Law. The practice of secret and other arbitrary detentions, including in unofficial detention facilities, remains widespread and systematic under this and other restrictive laws and military decrees.

The Council has repeatedly called on Syria to investigate human rights abuses and hold perpetrators to account. While Syria claims to accept recommendations calling for effective and transparent investigations and accountability (Recommendations 100.39, 100.40, 102.3), the Syrian authorities have failed to prosecute any State official or law enforcement officer for the ongoing gross human rights violations. Reports of OHCHR's fact-finding mission, and this Council's Commission of Inquiry, concluded that these violations might amount to crimes against humanity. The Security Council must urgently refer this situation to the International Criminal Court.

The Syrian army continues to deliberately and indiscriminately fire explosive shells into populated areas, target civilian objects resulting in civilian deaths, in particular in Homs and Edleb, and subject whole cities and neighbourhoods to effective siege. The human rights and humanitarian situation continues to gravely deteriorate. The UN bodies responsible respectively for peace and security and human rights, and the states present today, must take effective measures to allow regular access of humanitarian assistance, including essential supplies of food, water and medicines.

I thank you.

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