

UN Human Rights Council 51: UK statement on Syria

Thank you, Mr President,

I have the honour to present draft resolution L.18 on the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, on behalf of a group of states: France, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Qatar, Turkey, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Mr President,

Month after month, year after year, the situation on the ground in Syria continues to deteriorate before our very eyes. Human rights violations remain widespread and systematic. The now critical humanitarian situation is exacerbated by the insecurity which the regime and its backers continue to provoke.

The Commission of Inquiry recently warned this Council that we risk further dire consequences if this trajectory continues.

In our draft resolution, we specifically focus on developments in Syria over the last six months.

Targeted attacks on civilians, in their homes, at markets, have killed innocent women and children.

Civilians are being deprived of food, water, and the basic needs required simply to survive.

Those in detention continue to suffer appalling conditions, ill-treatment and torture.

Meanwhile families endure a different type of torture, that of not knowing if and when they will see ever their loved ones again.

Mr President,

This Council cannot turn away, cannot stay silent, when it comes to the regime's blatant disregard for the rights and lives of its people.

The resolution put forward today condemns the lethal violence inflicted on the Syrian people; demands that critical humanitarian aid is delivered without hindrance; and calls for further support for those seeking the fate of their loved ones, in the face of very real threats to their safety and their livelihoods.

Let me, Mr President, thank all those delegations who have engaged constructively in the informal consultations on this resolution.

Given the lives lost, the suffering endured and the unwillingness of the regime to protect the Syrian people, the very least this Council can do is to adopt this resolution. Together, we can send a message that the world has not forgotten the people of Syria.

If a vote is called on this resolution, I urge our fellow members of this Council to vote in favour of it.