



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 23 January 2012

5633/12

**COMAG 4
PESC 79
COHAFA 8
SY 2**

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: Council
On: 23 January 2012
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Subject: Syria
– Council conclusions

Delegations will find attached the Council conclusions on Syria, as adopted by the Council on 23 January 2012.

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON SYRIA

1. The European Union remains deeply concerned about the deteriorating situation in Syria and the widespread and systematic violations of human rights and calls again for an immediate end to the violence. The EU is particularly concerned by the recent escalation of violence and reiterates its condemnation in the strongest terms of the brutal crackdown by the Syrian government which risks exacerbating even further the spiral of violence, sectarian clashes and militarization. President Assad must step aside immediately to allow for a peaceful and democratic transition.
2. The EU strongly condemns the bombs attacks in Damascus on 23 December 2011 and on 6 January 2012 causing scores of deaths and injuries. Any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation and by whosoever committed. The EU also condemns the attack on 11 January that killed a French journalist and several Syrian civilians, injuring many more people, including a Dutch journalist. The EU calls for light to be shed on this attack. The Syrian authorities have a responsibility to guarantee the safety of journalists in their country. The press must be allowed to carry out its vital role of providing independent information on the events in Syria without fear of violence or repression.
3. The EU welcomes the League of Arab States' resolution of 22 January and its initiative to seek UNSC support for a political solution . The EU is deeply concerned by the Syrian authorities' lack of cooperation and urges them to fully comply with the League of Arab States' Action Plan and their commitments undertaken in that respect, to completely stop acts of violence against civilians, free political detainees, remove troops, tanks and weapons from cities, and allow independent observers and the media, to freely travel in and report on Syria.
4. The EU recalls its support to the League of Arab States' efforts to end the cycle of violence in Syria, and to the deployment of its monitoring mission, including through the setting up of the LAS situation room. The EU welcomes the UN readiness to provide training and assistance to the League's monitors and encourages the League to accept UN assistance to ensure technical support for the mission.

5. The EU welcomes the League of Arab States' decision to extend its observation mission and to reinforce its capacity to report independently on the situation in Syria. The EU takes note of the League of Arab States' decision to appoint a Special Envoy for Syria.
6. The EU condemns in the strongest terms the attacks on the League of Arab States' mission monitors and calls for an impartial and swift investigation into the events. The mission must be able to act safely and with independence and to access all detention facilities.
7. Given the Syrian regime's continued use of violence against civilians, the EU has today designated further 22 individuals and 8 entities to be subject to restrictive measures. The EU will continue its policy of imposing additional measures against the regime, not to the civilian population, as long as repression continues. Following the assessment of EU Member States, the listing of designated persons who have dissociated themselves from the repressive policy of the regime will be reconsidered. The EU calls on the international community to join its efforts to target those responsible for or associated with the violent repression and those who support or benefit from the regime
8. The EU reiterates its strong support to the Syrian people and encourages the Syrian opposition to make all efforts to strengthen coordination on the way forward in order to realise an orderly transition to a Syria that is democratic, stable, inclusive and that guarantees minority rights. It supports the efforts of the League of Arab States in this respect. The EU will continue to engage with representative members of the Syrian opposition, such as the SNC, which adhere to non violence, inclusiveness and democratic values.

9. The EU reiterates its strong concerns about the deteriorating living conditions of the Syrian people in a great number of localities affected by the unrest. The Syrian authorities must immediately alleviate the suffering of the population living in these areas, respect and protect the wounded and sick, guarantee unhindered access to medical care without any discrimination or reprisal and refrain from intimidation of those providing medical assistance. The Syrian authorities must allow full and unimpeded access of relief personnel from international humanitarian organisations for the timely delivery of humanitarian aid to persons in need of assistance.

10. The EU urges all members of the UN Security Council to uphold their responsibilities to end the violence against the Syrian population and support the Syrian people in their desire for freedom and political rights. The EU welcomes the establishment by the UN Human Rights Council of a Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Syria and urges the Syrian Government to fully cooperate with the Rapporteur. The EU recalls the main findings of the report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry which stated that crimes against humanity may have been committed in the country. The EU looks forward to the next debate of the UN Human Rights Council on Syria on the 12 March 2012.
