



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION INITIATIVE FOR AN IMMEDIATE HALT TO THE BLOODSHED AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN SYRIA, AND THE NEED TO ENSURE ACCESS TO HUMANITARIAN AID FOR ALL PERSONS IN NEED AND TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL RELEVANT ARAB LEAGUE AND UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS AND PEACE EFFORTS

Resolution adopted by consensus* by the 126th IPU Assembly
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling the resolution on "Strengthening democratic reform in emerging democracies, including in North Africa and the Middle East", adopted unanimously by the 124th IPU Assembly (Panama City, 2011), which urged all parties to refrain from violence and to ensure in particular that human rights are respected; called on all governments to respect the right to peaceful self-determination of peoples; and expressed concern for the humanitarian impact of the political changes in the region on vulnerable groups, particularly women and children,

Also recalling the resolution entitled "Furthering parliamentary democracy in order to protect human rights and encourage reconciliation among peoples and partnership among nations", adopted by the 110th IPU Assembly (Mexico City, 2004), in which the Assembly "underlines that the holding of truly free and fair elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage, monitored by independent election authorities, is always of paramount importance in the establishment of parliaments reflecting national diversity and, particularly in countries emerging from violent conflict, is essential in consolidating and advancing the reconciliation process" and "calls on parliaments to respect the political rights of opposition parties and freedom of the press",

Expressing its solidarity and sympathy for the Syrian people, whose democratic freedoms and human rights are being systematically and brutally undermined by their own government,

Noting that sustained and unjustified violence continues to be perpetrated against the Syrian people, including the killing and persecution of protestors, human rights defenders and journalists, denial of access to medical treatment, and the torture of and violence against men, women and children,

Cognizant of the serious humanitarian crisis and dismayed by the mounting loss of life and injury being caused by this violence, largely due to armed attacks perpetrated by the Syrian Government against its own population,

Alarmed by these authorities' use of heavy military equipment, including artillery and combat tanks, against towns and other population centres and their resorting to mass murder, arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment of detained persons, in particular children,

Noting the need to hold to account the perpetrators of human rights violations, including those that may amount to crimes against humanity,

Also noting the League of Arab States plan of 2 November 2011 and their decisions of 22 January and 12 February 2012 respectively, agreed to by the Syrian Government, which called in particular for an immediate end to violence against protestors, the release of political prisoners, the removal of all tanks and armoured vehicles from the streets and the convening of a meeting in Cairo for dialogue with the opposition,

Further noting the declaration of the League of Arab States of 29 March 2012,

Considering the repeated demands by the United Nations and the League of Arab States for the Syrian Government to honour its commitment to the Arab League plan and to permit the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the evacuation of wounded persons,

Recalling the decisions of the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in Geneva from 28 November to 1 December 2011, on strengthening international humanitarian law and domestic legislation for disaster-risk reduction, addressing regulatory barriers to providing emergency and transitional shelter in a rapid and equitable manner after natural disasters, and humanitarian access and assistance,

Noting the United Nations General Assembly resolution of 16 February 2012, which strongly condemned "the continued widespread and systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the Syrian authorities, such as the use of force against civilians, arbitrary executions, the killing and persecution of protestors, human rights defenders and journalists, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, interference with access to medical treatment, torture, sexual violence, and ill-treatment, including against children",

Recalling the statement issued by the President of the UN Security Council on 21 March 2012, in which the Security Council expresses its full support for the efforts of Kofi Annan, the Special Joint Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, and his six-point proposal to commit to appoint an empowered interlocutor to address the aspirations of the Syrian people; a cessation of violence; the provision of humanitarian assistance in affected areas; the release of arbitrarily detained persons; freedom of movement for journalists; and freedom of association and the right to demonstrate peacefully,

Also recalling United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010) on women and peace and security,

Further recalling the resolutions of 29 April 2011, 23 August 2011, 2 December 2011 and 1 and 23 March 2012 of the UN Human Rights Council on the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, and underscoring that in its resolutions of 2 December 2011 and 1 and 23 March 2012, the Council strongly condemns the systematic and widespread violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms that the Syrian authorities continue to commit,

Underscoring its respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, and rejecting any external military intervention,

Noting that the Syrian Government held discussions with the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, and that it agreed on 27 March 2012, but has not yet implemented, his six-point proposal, which envisages a UN-supervised ceasefire and the establishment of political dialogue between government and opposition groups,

Concerned by the grave risk to regional stability and security posed by the Syrian Government's use of violence rather than dialogue to address calls for reform,

Frustrated by the continued failure of the Syrian Government to respond to or implement the decisions and resolutions of international and regional bodies,

1. Calls for an immediate cessation of the violence and human rights violations and abuses in Syria and also calls for full compliance by all parties with international human rights and international humanitarian law obligations;
2. Supports the efforts of international and regional organizations to bring about a peaceful end to the crisis in Syria;
3. Urges the United Nations and the League of Arab States to redouble their efforts to assist in bringing about an end to armed violence in Syria and to address the current humanitarian crisis;
4. Supports the unprecedented leadership and efforts of the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States and his six-point proposal for resolving the situation in Syria;
5. Calls upon the Syrian Government to honour its commitment to this proposal and its earlier commitment to the Arab League Plan, including withdrawing military personnel from cities, ending the use of heavy weapons, releasing political prisoners and cooperating fully and immediately with the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to facilitate the unhindered and safe provision of humanitarian assistance and to allow the evacuation of the wounded from affected areas;
6. Urges the commencement of an inclusive political process in Syria to address the legitimate democratic aspirations and concerns of the Syrian people;
7. Underscores that this political process must be conducted in an environment free of violence, torture, fear, intimidation, discrimination and extremism;
8. Expresses the hope that this process can lead to an all-inclusive democratic political system, in which all citizens are equal;
9. Underscores the pivotal role the IPU can play in coming to the assistance of emerging democracies,

fostering political reconciliation and the peaceful settlement of conflicts, and in upholding and protecting the principles of representative democracy, human rights and gender equality;

10. Requests the IPU to dispatch an international parliamentary fact-finding mission to the Syrian territories to examine the reality of the situation arising from the violence and the deliberate hampering of the activities of international and Arab relief organizations, and to issue an urgent report to the IPU membership with a view to taking the necessary measures;
11. Urges parliaments to provide all necessary humanitarian assistance to all persons in Syria affected by the violence and to participate in making immediate preparations for extending such assistance, including in neighbouring countries;
12. Supports the continuation of diplomatic and economic sanctions on the Syrian Government until such a time as the situation improves significantly;
13. Requests the IPU President to report on the implementation of this resolution at the 127th IPU Assembly and at the United Nations.

* The delegations from Chile, Cuba, South Africa, Uganda and Viet Nam expressed a reservation on operative paragraph 12, while the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (the Islamic Republic of), the Syrian Arab Republic and Venezuela rejected the entire resolution, which, in their view, was unbalanced.