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B7-0722/2011

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Syria (2011/2880(RSP))

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B7-0722/2011

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Syria (2011/2880(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Syria, in particular of 27 October 2011 on the situation in Egypt and Syria, in particular of Christian communities, of 15 September 2011 on the situation in Syria, of 15 September 2011 on the case of Rafah Nached, and of 7 July 2011 on the situation in Syria, Yemen and Bahrain in the context of the situation in the Arab world and North Africa,
- having regard to the conclusions on Syria of the Foreign Affairs Council of 1 December 2011,
- having regard to Council Decision 2011/782/CFSP of 1 December 2011 concerning restrictive measures against Syria and repealing Decision 2011/273/CFSP,
- having regard to the statements of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the outcome of the special session of the Human Rights Council on Syria of 2 December 2011, on the publication of the report of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic of 28 November 2011, and following her meeting with the Syrian National Council of 23 November 2011,
- having regard to the resolution of the UN Human Rights Council on the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic of 2 December 2011,
- having regard to the Statement of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay at the UN Human Rights Council's 18th Special Session to examine the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic of 2 December 2011,
- having regard to the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic of 23 November 2011,
- having regard to the resolution of the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic of 22 November 2011,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, to which Syria is a party,
- having regard to the decisions of the League of Arab States of 16 November 2011 on suspending Syria's membership and of 27 November 2011 on imposing economic sanctions on Syria,
- having regard to the Final Declaration of the Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference of 27 and 28 November 1995 (Barcelona Declaration) and the Joint

Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean of 13 July 2008, to which Syria is a signatory,

- having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas according to UN estimates, more than 4000 people, including over 300 children, have been killed, many more have been injured, more than 14,000 are reported to be detained, and tens of thousands have sought refuge in neighbouring countries or have been internally displaced since March 2011 in Syria as a result of the brutal repression by the regime against its population; whereas, despite widespread international condemnation, violent crackdowns and grave human rights violations by the Syrian authorities and military and security forces against civilians continue and further intensify;
- B. whereas the reforms and amnesties announced and promised by President Bashar al-Assad have never been put into practice and the regime has lost all credibility; whereas an increasing number of Syrians are facing a deteriorating humanitarian situation leading to a humanitarian crisis in some areas of the country; whereas the violence is accompanied by actions of the regime and its supporters to increase sectarian tensions and incite inter-ethnic and inter-confessional conflict in the country;
- C. whereas the resolution of the UN Human Rights Council of 2 December 2011 strongly condemned the widespread, systematic and gross violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms – such as the killing, arbitrary execution, persecution, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, and torture and ill-treatment of, and rape and other acts of sexual violence against civilians, including children, as well as the denial and obstruction of medical assistance to the injured - by the Syrian authorities and military and security forces, and proposed to establish the mandate of a special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the country;
- D. whereas the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, in its report of 23 November 2011, presented a substantial body of evidence which indicates that gross violations of human rights, which may amount to crimes against humanity, have been committed by the Syrian authorities and military and security forces since March 2011; whereas the Syrian government refused to cooperate with this commission;
- E. whereas, in her statement of 2 December 2011, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights *Navi Pillay* warned that the continued ruthless repression of the Syrian regime against its population may drive the country into a civil war and also expressed, in this context, her concerns about reports of increased armed activities by opposition forces, including the so-called Free Syrian Army;
- F. whereas no international monitors, humanitarian and human right organisations or media are being allowed access to Syria;
- G. whereas, in its decision of 1 December 2011, the Council reinforced the EU sanctions against the Syrian regime by targeting its ability to conduct the brutal repression;

- H. whereas, in its conclusions of 1 December 2011, the Council encouraged again the Syrian opposition to establish a united platform, confirmed that the EU would continue to engage with representative members of the Syrian opposition which adhere to non-violence, and welcomed the Syrian National Council's commitment in this regard;
- I. whereas Members of the European Parliament have established a dialogue and exchanged views with various representatives of the Syrian opposition in exile and in the country over the past months;
- J. whereas, on 16 November 2011, the League of Arab States decided to suspend Syria's membership in the organisation and, on 27 November 2011, imposed economic sanctions on the Syrian regime; whereas, on 5 December 2011, Syria announced the conditional acceptance of the Arab League's plan, which remains to be implemented;
- K. whereas, on 30 November 2011, Turkey announced economic and financial sanctions on the Syrian regime; whereas tens of thousands of Syrian refugees have sought refuge in Turkey since March 2011;
1. Condemns again in the strongest terms the brutal repression by the Syrian regime against its population; extends its condolences to the families of the victims; reiterates its solidarity with the Syrian people fighting for freedom, dignity and democracy and applauds their courage and determination, with special regard to women who play a crucial role in this struggle;
 2. Calls on the Syrian authorities and military and security forces to put an immediate end to all acts of violence, torture, repression and harassment against civilians and to immediately release all prisoners of conscience and those arbitrarily detained;
 3. Reiterates its call for President Bashar al-Assad and his regime to step aside immediately to allow a democratic transition to take place in the country;
 4. Calls for prompt, independent and transparent investigations into the widespread, systematic and gross violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the Syrian authorities and military and security forces with the aim of ensuring that all those responsible for these acts, which may amount to crimes against humanity, are held to account by the international community;
 5. Calls on the Syrian government to ensure immediate and full access, without any harassment or intimidation, for international monitors, humanitarian and human rights organisations and media to the country, with special regard to the areas most affected by the violence; underlines, in this context, the calls made by Syrian opposition forces and peaceful demonstrators for the sending of international observers to the country; calls on the Syrian government to put an end to the inflammatory rhetoric targeting foreign countries that support economic sanctions against the regime;
 6. Calls for a peaceful and genuine transition to democracy, which meets the legitimate demands of the Syrian people and is based on an inclusive and non-sectarian process of national political dialogue with the participation of all democratic forces and civil society

in the country; urges the opposition forces to avoid the trap of the further escalation of violence and militarisation of the situation when defending the population;

7. Calls on the Syrian government to facilitate the voluntary return and guarantee the safety of all those Syrian refugees abroad who wish to return to the country;
8. Continues to support the emergence of organised Syrian democratic opposition forces both within and outside the country and encourages them to work together and establish a united platform with the aim of achieving freedom and democracy for all in Syria; stresses, in this context, the importance of full respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rights of all ethnic and religious communities in the country, which is an essential element of genuine democracy; urges the EU and its Member States to find new ways in strengthening their non-military assistance delivered to opposition forces;
9. Welcomes and supports the Council decision of 1 December 2011 that reinforces the EU's restrictive measures against the Syrian regime; calls for further EU sanctions, which target the Syrian regime but minimise the negative impacts on the population, as long as the repression continues as well as for the setting up of adequate mechanisms to tackle the current and future humanitarian emergencies in the country; welcomes and supports the Council conclusions on Syria of 1 December 2011, which also declares that the EU is ready to develop a new and ambitious partnership with Syria across all areas of mutual interest, including by mobilizing assistance and strengthening trade and economic links, as soon as President Bashar al-Assad steps aside and a genuine democratic transition begins;
10. Welcomes and supports the resolutions on the human rights situation in Syria adopted by the UN Human Rights Council on 2 December 2011 and by the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly on 22 November 2011 as well as the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria of 23 November 2011;
11. Deplores that the UN Security Council has not been able to give adequate response to the ongoing brutal events in Syria so far; reiterates its call on the UNSC members, and on Russia and China in particular, to uphold their responsibilities to support the Syrian people in their fight for freedom, dignity and democracy, to protect civilians against the brutal repression, and to put an end to violence in the country; continues to support the efforts of the EU and its member states in this field; encourages at the same time the UNSC to refer the crimes committed by the Syrian regime against its population to the International Criminal Court;
12. Welcomes the decision of the League of Arab States to suspend the membership of Syria in the organisation and to impose economic sanctions on the regime as well as its initiative to send an observer mission to the country;
13. Welcomes the economic sanctions imposed by Turkey on the Syrian regime as well as Turkey's efforts in accepting Syrian refugees;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the government and parliament of the People's Republic of China, the government and parliament of the

Russian Federation, the government and parliament of the Syrian Arab Republic, and the government and parliament of the Republic of Turkey.