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B7-0439/2012

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

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

on Syria
(2012/2788(RSP))

**Guy Verhofstadt, Marietje Schaake, Edward McMillan-Scott,
Robert Rochefort, Graham Watson, Marielle de Sarnez, Sonia Alfano,
Sarah Ludford, Louis Michel, Norica Nicolai, Kristiina Ojuland,
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on behalf of the ALDE Group

B7-0439/2012

**European Parliament resolution on Syria
(2012/2788(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Syria,
- having regard to the Foreign Affairs Council's conclusions on Syria of 23 July 2012, having regard to the European Council's conclusion on Syria of 29 June 2012,
- having regard to the statements by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on Syria of 20 July, 2 and 18 August, and of 5 September 2012,
- having regard to the statements from the European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis response on Syria of 31 July and 29 August 2012,
- having regard to the decision of 17 August 2012 by United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and League of Arab States Secretary General Nabil El Araby to appoint Lakhdar Brahimi as the new Joint Special Representative for Syria,
- having regard to the Council Regulation (EU) No 509/2012 of 15 June 2012 amending Regulation (EU) No 36/2012 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria, and the subsequent Council Decisions enforcing these measures,
- having regard to the UN General Assembly resolution on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic of 3 August 2012,
- having regard to the UN Human Rights Council resolution on the human rights situation in Syria of 6 July 2012,
- having regard to the National Pact and the Common Political Vision for the transition in Syria issued following the Syrian opposition conference held under the auspices of the Arab League in Cairo on 2-3 July,
- having regard to the outcome of the Action Group meeting in Geneva on 30 June 2012,
- having regard to the Annan Plan and the United Nations Security Council resolutions 2042, 2043 and 2059,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed

Conflict, and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, to all of which Syria is a party,

- having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas since the start of the violent crackdown on peaceful protesters in Syria in March 2011 more than 26.000 people have been killed, heavy violence - such as the use of heavy artillery and shelling against populated areas, including in Damascus and Aleppo - and horrific killings by the Syrian army, security forces and the Shabiha have continuously increased; whereas there have been several massacres and targeted (point-blank) killings of men, women and children; whereas torture, mass arrests and wide-spread destruction of populated areas has dramatically escalated; whereas cities and towns throughout Syria are being kept under siege and bombarded, also by helicopters and fighter jets, by government-led forces; whereas the growing militarisation of the conflict has increased the risk of civil war as well as instilling sectarian conflict;
- B. whereas any further militarisation of the situation in Syria would have a serious impact on its civilian population and will also continue to affect the region as a whole in terms of security and stability, with unpredictable implications and consequences;
- C. whereas the Syrian authorities have deliberately cut-off access to food and medical supplies for citizens, as was brutally shown by the bombing of civilians cueing for Aleppo bakeries; whereas over 2 million Syrians are experiencing and facing a fast deteriorating humanitarian situation as a result of the ongoing violence and forced displacements;
- D. whereas commitments to the implementation of the six-point plan of the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria Mr Kofi Annan by President Bashar al-Assad have not been honoured, whereas the Syrian regime has lost all credibility and legitimacy as a representative of the Syrian people;
- E. whereas over the last months high level defections haven taken place, including Syrian Prime Minister Riad Hijab, Brigadier-General of the Syrian Revolutionary Guard Manaf Tlass and several senior diplomats; whereas these defectors have called on others closely aligned to President Assad and the army to follow their example;
- F. whereas a bomb attack on a national security building in central Damascus on 18 August 2012 killed several key figures of the Assad regime;
- G. whereas despite an EU embargo in force on weapons, munitions and other military equipments, as well as a ban on the export of monitoring technologies, several reported incidents involving arms shipments through EU waters and leaked details of business transactions between EU companies and Syrian (state) entities and persons, covered by the EU's sanctions, have indicated the EU's internal incompetence to fully implement its own decisions and regulations;
- H. whereas several external actors, either directly or through regional channels and neighbouring countries, continue to actively support the Assad regime and its use of heavy violence against civilians with financial, operational, logistical and tactical support and aid; whereas forces and groups opposing President Assad also receive military and

technical support from neighbouring countries, indicating the pan-regional nature of the conflict;

- I. whereas the intensification of the violence and the ever growing humanitarian crisis, has led neighbouring countries in recent weeks to take in a dramatically growing number of Syrian refugees, particularly by Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon; whereas over 235.000 Syrian refugees have been registered in these countries; whereas over 1.5 million civilians are internally displaced and over one million are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance;
 - J. whereas as of 19 August 2012 the United Nations USMIS monitoring mission has been forced to withdrawn from Syria due to the deteriorating security situation;
 - K. whereas the EU and its Members States have up to date provided over EUR 146 million in humanitarian assistance to human rights organisations, including activists and civil society within Syria and Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries in areas affected by an influx of Syrian refugees;
 - L. whereas members of the Syrian opposition issued a National Pact and Common Political Vision for the transition in Syria following a conference held under the auspices of the Arab League in Cairo on 2 and 3 July; whereas a follow-up committee has been established to continue the efforts to unite the Syrian opposition;
 - M. whereas the Action Group for Syria in Geneva on 1 July 2012 agreed on principles and guidelines for a Syrian-led transition which includes the establishment of a transitional government body exercising full executive powers;
 - N. whereas vetoes by Russia and China have prevented the UNSC from adopting a resolution endorsing the outcome of the Action Group for Syria and also prevented foreseen measures to enforce compliance with the six-point Annan Plan under Article 41 of the UN Chapter;
 - O. whereas the international community so far has failed to unite and move towards the implementation of the Annan plan as well as other agreed principles and guidelines to accommodate a Syrian-led political transition;
1. Reiterates its condemnation in the strongest possible terms of the ever increasing use of indiscriminate violence by the regime of President Assad against the Syrian civilian population, in particular the targeted killing of children and women and mass executions in villages; expresses its deepest concern at the gravity of the human rights violations and possible crimes against humanity authorised and/or perpetrated by the Syrian authorities, the Syrian army, security forces and affiliated militias;
 2. Condemns the summary extrajudicial executions and all other forms of human rights violations committed by groups and forces opposing the Assad regime;
 3. Stresses that medical attention should never be withheld from those who are injured and in need of help and calls on all parties involved to protect civilians and refrain from using all forms of intimidation and violence against patients, doctors, medics and aid workers;

4. Expresses its sincere condolences to the families of the victims; commends the ongoing courage and determination of the Syrian people and continues to strongly supports their aspirations to secure full respect for human dignity, democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms and a guarantee of better economic and social conditions;
5. Deplores the fact that the UN Security Council has failed to act and has not agreed on a resolution to add more robust and effective pressure to end the violence in Syria; including the forced compliance with UNSC resolutions 2042 and 2043;
6. Reiterates its call on the all UNSC members, in particular Russia and China, to uphold their international responsibility to ensure that the use of violence against the Syrian civilian population ceases immediately and a political Syrian-led transition can start;
7. Calls in particular on all permanent members of the UNSC to work relentlessly on an agreement to break the current stalemate, allowing the heavy violence to continue and the death toll to rise. Calls on the UNSC to affirm and implement the Responsibility to Protect doctrine to help save Syrian civilians being massacred by the Assad regime;
8. Reiterates its call for President Assad and his regime to step aside immediately, so as to allow a peaceful, inclusive and democratic Syrian-led transition to take place as soon as possible;
9. Urges the regime of President Assad to immediately cease the horrific, indiscriminate and criminal violence against the Syrian civil population, in particular against children, and to immediately remove all troops and tanks from cities, to immediately release all detained protesters, political prisoners, human rights defenders, bloggers and journalists, and to allow for the imminent provision of humanitarian assistance;
10. Calls on all parties to agree on (local) ceasefires as soon as possible, as to allow for a broader negotiated meaningful ceasefire;
11. Calls on all parties to allow full and safe access for international and local humanitarian workers, as well as to the international media and to respect international humanitarian law;
12. Expresses its concern about further militarisation of the conflict and sectarian violence; notes the role of different regional actors, including the delivery of arms and is concerned about the spill-over effects of the Syrian conflict in its neighbouring countries;
13. Condemns the expressed willingness by the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons against 'external terrorist threats' and reminds President Assad of its obligations under the Geneva protocol about the non-use of chemical weapons and calls on the Syrian authorities to rigorously abide by its assumed international obligations;
14. Regrets that all efforts by the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria Mr Kofi Annan, including his six point plan, to end the violence and to promote a political solution in Syria have failed; welcomes and fully supports all efforts by the new Joint Special Representative Mr Lakhdar Brahimi and urges the international

community, in particular the UNSC, to provide him its unconditional and unified support;

15. Urges the VP/HR, the Council and Member States to jointly seek an imminent international solution to the crisis in Syria; urges, furthermore, the VP/HR to immediately step up the efforts to exert diplomatic pressure on Russia and China to unblock the status-quo with respect to quick and strong international action by the UNSC to end the crisis in Syria;
16. Supports the EU's ongoing effort of increasing the pressure on the regime of President Assad through restrictive measures, calls on the EU to consider broadening the scope of its restrictive measures to external entities or groups that undisputedly provide or facilitate crucial financial and operational support to the Syrian authorities;
17. Urges the VP/HR and EU Member States to make every effort to unify the Syrian opposition, to establish a clear agenda for democratic Syria based on the National Pact and Common Political Vision, and which will have broad input and agreement from those within Syria, in order to implement a political transition in Syria as soon as possible that will promote and protect the universal rights and fundamental freedoms of all Syrians; encourages the VP/HR to continue facilitating opposition seminars, bringing together a broad range of opposition figures;
18. Calls on the Syrian opposition to form an inclusive and representative transitional government body in exile as a credible alternative to the regime of President Assad, which could eventually become the legitimate representative of the Syrian people;
19. Supports calls by several opposition groups and the Turkish government to establish safe havens along the Turkish-Syrian border, and possibly within Syria, as well as the creation of humanitarian corridors by the international community; calls on the HR/VP to intensify discussions with Turkey, the Arab League and the Syrian opposition on the establishment of these safe havens to take in Syrian refugees and to allow those persecuted by the regime to find refuge and protection;
20. Welcomes the EU's readiness to offer additional support including financial to help neighbouring countries and calls on the VP/HR and the Commission to explore all ways to provide direct humanitarian assistance to civilian councils on the ground, as well as to UN agencies and international NGOs in response to needs in those neighbouring countries that, in particular through the influx of refugees, are most affected by the crisis in Syria;
21. Welcomes the strong support shown by Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and in particular Turkey to harbour the increasing number of Syrian refugees and their willingness to increase humanitarian assistance; strongly supports the efforts by these countries to deliver humanitarian assistance to the Syrian citizens which are seeking protection in their countries;
22. Reiterates its call for a prompt, independent and transparent investigation into the widespread, systematic and gross violation of human rights by the Syrian authorities, the Syrian army, security forces, militias as well as by forces opposing the Assad regime, with the aim of ensuring that all those responsible for these acts, which may well amount to crimes against humanity, will be held to account;

23. Reiterates its strong endorsement of the call by the UN Human Rights Commissioner for a referral by the UNSC of the situation in Syria to the ICC for a formal investigation; strongly commits itself to ensure that all those responsible for human rights violations and violations of international law will be identified and held accountable;
24. Calls for a peaceful and genuine Syrian-led political transition to democracy which meets the legitimate demands of the Syrian people and is based on an inclusive dialogue involving all democratic forces and components within Syrian society with a view to launching a process of deep democratic reform, that also takes account of the need to ensure national reconciliation and is committed to ensuring respect for the rights and freedoms of minorities;
25. Recalls that as soon as a genuine democratic transition begins, including free and fair elections, the EU should be ready to develop a new and ambitious partnership with Syria across all areas of mutual interest, including by mobilising assistance, strengthening trade and economic relations and supporting transitional justice and the Syrian-led political transition;
26. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government and Parliament of the Russian Federation, the Government and Parliament of the People's Republic of China, the Government and Parliament of the Republic of Turkey, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and the Government and Parliament of the Syrian Arab Republic.