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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0176/2021**

8.3.2021

## 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 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the Syrian conflict – 10 years after the uprising  
(2021/2576(RSP))

**Katrin Langensiepen, Hannah Neumann, Saskia Bricmont, Francisco Guerreiro, Rosa D'Amato, Mounir Satouri, Ernest Urtasun, Erik Marquardt, Bronis Ropé, Ignazio Corrao, Alviina Alametsä, Margrete Auken, Jordi Solé, Tineke Strik**  
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the Syrian conflict – 10 years after the uprising (2021/2576(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Syria, in particular those of 15 March 2018 on the situation in Syria<sup>1</sup>, of 18 May 2017 on the EU strategy on Syria<sup>2</sup> and of 24 October 2019 on the Turkish military operation in northeast Syria and its consequences<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to the press statements of the European External Action Service (EEAS) of 8 February 2021 entitled ‘European Union to host Brussels V Conference on Syria’ and of 16 January 2021 entitled ‘Syria: new minister of Foreign Affairs added to the sanction list’,
- having regard to the statements by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on Syria,
- having regard to the Council conclusions on Syria, including those of 14 October 2019 on northeast Syria and of 3 April 2017 adopting the EU strategy on Syria,
- having regard to the most recent reports of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, established by the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), in particular those of 2 March and 21 January 2021 and 15 September, 7 July and 2 March 2020,
- having regard to the UNHRC press releases of 1 March 2021 entitled ‘Disappearance and detention to suppress dissent a hallmark of a decade of conflict in Syria’, of 18 February 2021 entitled “‘Military solutions” in Syria have led to a decade of death, denial, and destruction’, of 15 September 2020 entitled ‘UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria: No clean hands – behind the frontlines and the headlines, armed actors continue to subject civilians to horrific and increasingly targeted abuse’, of 7 July 2020 entitled ‘Rampant human rights violations and war crimes as war-torn Idlib faces the pandemic: UN Syria Commission of Inquiry report’, and of 28 March 2020 entitled ‘UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria: as global pandemic reaches Syria, fighting must stop and urgent steps taken to prevent an even greater tragedy’,
- having regard to the relevant UN Security Council resolutions on Syria, in particular 2533 (2020), 2504 (2020), 2449 (2018), 2401 (2018), 2393 (2017), 2254 (2015) and 2139 (2014),
- having regard to the concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 162, 10.5.2019, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 307, 30.8.2018, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2019)0049.

Child of 6 March 2019 on the fifth periodic report of the Syrian Arab Republic,

- having regard to the statement by UNICEF of 28 February 2021 on the safe reintegration and repatriation of all children in Al-Hol Camp and across the northeast of Syria and to the UNICEF Whole of Syria Humanitarian Situation Report 2020 of 2 February 2021,
  - having regard to the decision adopted by the Committee under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, in respect of communications No 79/2019 and No 109/2019, of 2 November 2020, requesting that France take the diplomatic measures necessary to ensure the protection of the right to life and the integrity of children, including access to any medical care that they may need,
  - having regard to the World Food Programme (WFP) Syria Food Security Update of March 2020 and to the WFP Flash Appeal for the UN Humanitarian Air Service of 19 February 2021,
  - having regard to the most recent situation reports of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in particular those of 2 March 2021 and 17 February 2021,
  - having regard to the UN human rights instruments to which Syria is a state party, including the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,
  - having regard to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the additional protocols thereto,
  - having regard to the Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012,
  - having regard to UN General Assembly resolution 71/248 of 21 December 2016 establishing the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011,
  - having regard to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,
  - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the war in Syria has become one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in recent history and continues to have devastating consequences for the Syrian people; whereas this conflict, which is supported and exacerbated by external actors, continues to have a destabilising impact on the wider region and beyond;
- B. whereas on the cusp of the 11th year of continued armed conflict, more than 400 000 people, mostly civilians, have lost their lives and whereas Syrians have had to endure vast aerial bombardments of densely populated areas, chemical weapons attacks and modern-day sieges, whose perpetrators have deliberately starved the population in a medieval fashion;
- C. whereas all parties to the conflict, including government forces, anti-government armed

groups and the UN-listed terrorist organisations Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham and Daesh have committed crimes, violations and human rights abuses that have amounted to crimes against humanity and war crimes, including extrajudicial killings, torture and ill-treatment, enforced disappearances, mass and arbitrary arrests, targeted and indiscriminate attacks on civilians, collective punishments, attacks against medical personnel and the denial of food and water; whereas under international law, warring parties are obliged to take appropriate measures to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure;

- D. whereas before the conflict began, the Syrian Arab Republic had an estimated population of more than 22 million people; whereas by 7 January 2021, more than 11.5 million – around half of the pre-war population – had been displaced, with 6.2 million people internally displaced and 5.3 million registered as refugees, mainly in neighbouring countries but also increasingly as a global diaspora;
- E. whereas the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) remains very high, with a constant flow of newly displaced people; whereas winter and the subsequent flooding, which affected some 121 000 people at 304 IDP sites in northwest Syria, brought an additional level of distress to a population that was already extremely vulnerable;
- F. whereas a variety of weapons and weapons systems have been used to kill and maim civilians, commit international crimes and hasten the deterioration of the overall human rights situation in Syria, including improvised weapons and weapons that have been manufactured in third countries and either sold or supplied to the conflicting parties; whereas Article 1 common to the four Geneva Conventions requires states to refrain from encouraging, aiding or assisting other parties in the commission of violations of international humanitarian law, including through the provision of funding and arms;
- G. whereas the conflict has had a particularly severe impact on the lives and human rights of children in Syria, with scores of casualties, detention, torture, including rape and sexual slavery, and forced recruitment for direct participation in hostilities; whereas more than 2.6 million girls and boys have been internally displaced from their homes and whereas the mental health of many Syrian children has been and will continue to be deeply affected by the sheer brutality of the conflict; whereas the inability of children in Syria to obtain birth registration and identity documents puts them at risk of statelessness; whereas millions of children have missed out on years of education, with 2.8 million currently out of school;
- H. whereas 80 % of Syrians live below the poverty line, with 6.1 million out of work or school; whereas the financial crisis in neighbouring Lebanon and the ensuing currency crisis and unprecedented depreciation of the national currency, coupled with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, has further exacerbated the economic outlook and resulted in food insecurity for more than 9.3 million Syrians; whereas over 11.1 million people in Syria still require humanitarian aid; whereas the EU is the biggest humanitarian aid donor in Syria and the neighbouring countries, providing more than EUR 20 billion in humanitarian, development, economic and stabilisation assistance since the start of the crisis;
- I. whereas in addition to the economic damage of the conflict, unilateral coercive

measures by the US administration on the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as restrictions imposed by the Syrian Government on the delivery of humanitarian aid in government-held areas, have compounded the economic devastation for civilians; whereas in some areas, the impact of unilateral sanctions and other restrictions has further weakened the ability of humanitarian actors to deliver assistance owing to higher prices and the reduced availability of crucial items in local markets;

- J. whereas a combination of the deliberate targeting of medical facilities, hospitals and medical workers by government forces, the incidental damage to these facilities and the flight of health workers has jeopardised access to healthcare; whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has further endangered the already vulnerable population in Syria;
- K. whereas in its most recent public update in 2016, the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) put the number of damaged housing units in Syrian cities at 760 000 and whereas in 2017 the World Bank estimated that 7 % of the housing stock had been destroyed and 20 % damaged; whereas in addition to displacement and destruction, Syrians are routinely denied return to their places of origin, owing in large part to access restrictions imposed by the government and to fear of arrest in retaken and formerly besieged areas, in particular Rif Damashq, Daraa, Quneitra, Homs, Hama and Aleppo, as well as areas controlled by the Syrian National Army and the Syrian Democratic Forces in northeastern Syria;
- L. whereas the lack of security of housing, land and property rights for the millions of Syrians affected has been wilfully compounded by legislation, policies and practices adopted since 2011, including a recent legislative amendment by the government imposing a fine of USD 8 000 or the loss of property as a sanction against those who failed to do military service before the age of 43; whereas this indicates a systematic push to reorganise the management of property rights in Syria, while raising concerns over the ability of all Syrians with property interests, especially the displaced and refugee populations, to secure their rights;
- M. whereas the impact of the conflict on civilians has been deeply gendered, with women and girls disproportionately affected and victimised on multiple grounds, including restrictions on freedom of movement and rape, sexual abuse and systematic discrimination;
- N. whereas several camps for forcibly displaced persons, such as Al-Hol and Roj, have become detention camps where tens of thousands are unlawfully deprived of their liberty with no prospects of a trial for years to come, including foreign women and more than 22 000 foreign children of at least 60 nationalities – including EU Member States – who are stuck there due to their governments' unwillingness to repatriate them; whereas Al-Hol is the largest camp for displaced people in Syria with 62 000 residents, more than 90 % of whom are women and children; whereas the vast majority of these children are under the age of five and suffering from severe health conditions; whereas the conditions in the Al-Hol and Roj camps remain extremely dire and the security situation is of extreme concern; whereas according to accounts of the latest tragic incidents this year, in January 20 people were murdered and in February one woman and three children were killed and at least 20 people were injured following a fire in Al-Hol camp;

- O. whereas in its judgment in the *Ruiz Zambrano* case in 2011<sup>4</sup>, the Court of Justice of the EU specified that the refusal to allow the parent to reside with their children on European territory deprived the children of their right to EU citizenship;
- P. whereas a number of attacks on cultural heritage have been carried out by different parties throughout the course of the conflict, including the destruction and pillaging of archaeological sites at the hand of Daesh, attacks by Ahrar al-Sham on the 13th-century citadel in the old city of Aleppo, and the bulldozing, looting and destruction of archaeological sites and Yazidi shrines and graves by the Syrian National Army in Afrin;
- Q. whereas despite the creation in September 2019 of the UN-facilitated Syria Constitutional Committee (SCC), which sought to bring parties in Syrian together, dialogue and negotiated solutions remain at a standstill;
- R. whereas a number of international actors continue to wield influence and provide support and backing to opposing sides in Syria, including Russia, the United States, Iran, Turkey, Qatar and Israel; whereas notwithstanding the continued application of the March 2020 ceasefire between Russia and Turkey, five foreign militaries are still active in Syria and the risk of regional escalation remains high; whereas while no territory has changed hands for the longest period since the conflict began, the situation on the frontlines in the northwest remains unstable, with artillery shelling from both sides, reports of civilian casualties and potential for further escalation; whereas the military offensive continues, including regular military incursions by Israel and the most recent airstrike by the US on 25 February 2021, which targeted Iran-backed Syrian militias, destroying multiple facilities and reportedly killing at least 22 people;
- S. whereas according to an EU-funded report by Conflict Armament Research on the weapons of the Islamic State<sup>5</sup>, a large number of weapons and ammunitions were repeatedly exported by Bulgaria and Romania to both the US and Saudi Arabia and retransferred, in some cases, in direct breach of specific no re-export undertakings, to non-state groups in Syria and Iraq; whereas the report stated that these unauthorised retransfers were ‘a significant source of IS weapons and ammunition’; whereas these repeated and systematic retransfers contravened clauses in end-user certificates; whereas under criterion seven of the legally binding Common Position 2008/944/CFSP on arms exports<sup>6</sup>, EU Member States are obliged to factor these breaches of commitment into future export licensing decisions;
- T. whereas on 3 April 2017 the Council adopted an EU strategy for Syria, which outlines six key objectives: an end to the war through a genuine political transition; the promotion of a meaningful and inclusive transition; addressing the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable Syrians; promoting democracy, human rights and freedom of speech by strengthening Syrian civil society organisations; promoting accountability for war crimes; and supporting the resilience of the Syrian population and society; whereas

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<sup>4</sup> Judgment of the Court (Grand Chamber) of 8 March 2011 in Case C-34/09, *Gerardo Ruiz Zambrano v. Office national de l'emploi (ONEm)*.

<sup>5</sup> *Weapons of the Islamic State: A three-year investigation in Iraq and Syria*, December 2017.

<sup>6</sup> OJ L 335, 13.12.2008, p. 99.

EU restrictive measures against the Syrian Government based on Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union have been in place since 2011;

- U. whereas the ministerial conference on supporting the future of Syria and the region will take place in Brussels on 29 and 30 March 2021 and will aim to maintain the focus of the international community on Syria;
1. Expresses its gravest concerns at the protracted, decade-long war in Syria, which has been characterised by external involvement, internal fragmentation and continued suffering on the part of civilians and citizens;
  2. Strongly deplores the lack of progress towards a political solution to the Syrian conflict; recalls that there can be no sustainable military solution to the conflict and calls on all parties to fully comply with the UNSC resolutions;
  3. Reiterates its condemnation, in the strongest possible terms, of the atrocities, war crimes and widespread violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed by the forces of the Assad regime with the support of its allies, as well as by non-state armed groups; calls on all parties to halt and prevent these violations as a matter of urgency; supports the recommendations of the recent report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, including the immediate release of all those who have been detained arbitrarily and of children, women, the infirm and disabled and elderly persons, as well as the call to allow independent monitoring of detention facilities and unconditional access to all places of detention by independent monitors and improve conditions;
  4. Calls for support for the civilian victims and survivors of the conflict as well as their families, including psychosocial support, and for efforts to facilitate the identification of people who are missing or have disappeared; calls for the creation of an independent mechanism with an international mandate to coordinate and consolidate claims regarding missing persons, including those subjected to enforced disappearance; considers that this mechanism should be tasked with defining the necessary elements to trace and identify missing and disappeared persons efficiently and effectively, with helping to consolidate the claims filed with a wide variety of non-governmental and humanitarian organisations, and with coordinating overtures to the parties to the conflict in order to track down the missing persons or their remains, including those buried in mass graves;
  5. Is appalled at the fact that despite knowing from an early stage the scale of the violations committed in Syria, influential third states present in the country, while supporting the need for a political solution, have simultaneously deepened their military involvement, accentuating the internationalisation of the conflict and supplying the warring parties with money, fighters and weapons, notwithstanding the violations being enabled; calls on all third states present in Syria to immediately withdraw their troops, to surrender all unlawfully occupied territories, and to play a constructive role in the resolution of the conflict;
  6. Reaffirms, in this context, the continued primacy of the UN-led Geneva process and supports the efforts of the UN Special Envoy to ensure a genuine political transition in line with UNSC resolutions; reiterates the importance of including women in the



conflict resolution process in line with UNSC resolution 1325; stresses the importance of supporting the work of the UN-facilitated SCC to ensure lasting positive change; calls for the EU and the Member States to prevail upon all sides to show commitment to the SCC and to establish a monitoring mechanism to allow the UN to track any possible reports of threats or harassment by any party against SCC members;

7. Insists on the importance of including Syrian civil society and all ethnic and religious minorities in the talks on Syria's future and its governance structure; encourages the VP/HR to step up outreach to regional and local actors in the conflict and attempts to find common ground for peace in order to lead discussions on the future of Syria; stresses that Syrian citizens should be allowed to assess their own priorities and needs for recovery, and calls for the EU and its Member States to allocate adequate resources to surveys dedicated to this purpose that are localised, context-specific, gender-sensitive and centred on human security; stresses that such assessments must be unaffected by and independent from the Assad regime and should be completed before projects are begun;
8. Welcomes the emphasis on supporting the resilience of the Syrian population in the EU strategy for Syria; stresses that Syrian civil society will be vitally important to rebuild social cohesion and social capital, promote reconciliation and provide basic services in Syria; calls for the EU and the Member States to step up their support for capacity-building for the Syrian people and civil society, including with and through actors that promote human rights, equality, including gender equality and minority rights, democracy and empowerment, as well as those of Syrian refugees living in exile in the region or in Europe; calls on the VP/HR, as part of the long-term planning for the response in Syria, to develop a robust human rights due diligence policy for future rebuilding interventions in close cooperation with Syrian civil society, including a monitoring framework with dedicated indicators for universal human rights standards;
9. Calls, in this respect, for increased support for peaceful and democratic Syrian civil society organisations and human rights defenders, including through the Madad Fund and the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument; calls on the Member States to provide practical support for the implementation of the EU strategy for Syria, which establishes a solid and comprehensive basis for enhanced EU action in both conflict and post-conflict phases;
10. Highlights that the imminent fifth ministerial conference on supporting the future of Syria provides a key opportunity for the EU and its Member States to adopt and discuss a longer-term vision of change and lasting stabilisation in Syria; stresses that such a long-term vision should be aimed at strengthening the resilience of Syrian society, improving living conditions and preventing the further erosion of public services by targeting humanitarian aid more effectively through fundamental reforms, dismantling certain sectoral sanctions and supporting the rehabilitation of infrastructure, including for health services and education, throughout the country, while urgently stepping up support for the prosecution of war crimes, grave human rights violations and the use of internationally proscribed weapons;
11. Is deeply concerned by the worsening humanitarian situation in the country, where 60 % of the population, namely 12.4 million people, do not have regular access to



enough safe and nutritious food and more than 500 000 children under the age of five are suffering from the effects of stunting; calls for the EU and its Member States to include livelihoods and cash modalities in the strategic priorities for donors in order to enable self-reliance and ensure that humanitarian funding in Syria addresses resilience and recovery needs;

12. Stresses that over 11.1 million people in Syria still require humanitarian aid; reiterates that in the light of the economic crisis, the situation of food insecurity and the COVID-19 pandemic, all obstacles to humanitarian aid should be removed as a matter of urgency, including those due to sanctions that impose overly cumbersome humanitarian exemption procedures, in order to ensure access to food, essential health supplies and medical support for COVID-19; calls for the EU to engage closely with the new US administration to this end; calls for the urgent reinstatement for a minimum of 12 months of the UNSC-mandated humanitarian cross-border mechanism, including cross-border access through Bab al-Hawa; condemns Russia's continued use of its power of veto to eviscerate the cross-border aid mandate; calls on the EEAS to support humanitarian NGOs to address financial challenges and to explore the option of creating a dedicated humanitarian transfer mechanism for partners in Syria in order to facilitate the direct transfer of humanitarian funds, including by supporting state and EU level meetings between financial service regulators, banks, NGOs and foreign affairs ministries;
13. Is particularly concerned at the myriad challenges faced by Syrians, especially those who are displaced, in obtaining basic civil documents including identity cards, birth, marriage or death certificates and property records, which prevents them from gaining access to essential services, such as healthcare, education and humanitarian aid; strongly condemns the difficulties faced by Syrian women in registering their children, as Syrian nationality is conferred to a child through the father;
14. Is concerned by the lack of security of housing, land and property rights for Syrians, coupled with the worrisome adoption of legislation, policies and practices since 2011, not least the government's recent legislative amendment imposing a fine of USD 8 000 or the loss of property as a sanction against those who failed to do military service before the age of 43;
15. Is appalled by the conditions in the Al-Hol and Roj detention camps following a deadly fire at Al-Hol on 27 February 2021 in which at least three children died and 20 were injured; expresses its gravest concerns over the humanitarian situation in the Al-Hol detention camp; is deeply concerned about the extreme insecurity facing camp residents and expresses dismay at the killing of a Médecins Sans Frontières staff member on 24 February 2021 and the killing of 20 persons in January 2021; stresses that detention is never in the best interests of the child and that children should not be detained on the sole basis of suspected family ties with armed groups or the membership of family members in armed groups; welcomes, as a first step to this end, the Belgian Government's proactive decision to immediately repatriate Belgian children aged 12 and under and, on a case-by-case basis, children over 12 and their mothers; looks forward to the swift implementation of this decision; welcomes, in this connection, the repatriation operations organised by Finland and Germany in December 2020; deplores the lack of action by EU Member States hitherto and the absence of coordination at EU

level;

16. Urges the Member States to repatriate all of their nationals and to investigate and prosecute those suspected of crimes in accordance with international standards for fair trials; urges the Member States to provide returnees, including the numerous children, with adequate rehabilitation and reintegration services;
17. Welcomes the EU's commitment to ongoing humanitarian aid to Syria's neighbours, which are hosting millions of refugees; calls, in addition, for the EU to continue to support the UN Relief and Works Agency and the vulnerable community of Palestine refugees from Syria; calls on the Member States, however, to show much stronger commitment to responsibility-sharing, so as to enable refugees fleeing the Syrian war zones to find protection beyond the immediate neighbouring region, by means of resettlement, humanitarian admission schemes, simplified family reunification and more flexible visa regulations; recalls that in order to achieve enduring solutions for displaced persons, sufficient long-term funding and programming are crucial to support IDPs and refugees beyond the humanitarian programme cycle;
18. Calls for the EU and its Member States to strictly abide by the principle of non-refoulement and rejects the notion of 'safe zones' along the border in northeast Syria; stresses that any forcible transfer of Syrian refugees or IDPs to this area and any acts with the aim of ethnic cleansing would constitute a grave violation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, international refugee law and humanitarian law, which may amount to a crime against humanity or genocide; insists that no EU stabilisation or development assistance be delivered to such areas; recalls that in order to abide by the principle of non-refoulement, any return of refugees must in all cases be safe, voluntary and dignified, while noting that the current circumstances are such as to categorically prevent such movements; is appalled, in this regard, by the recent decision of the Danish Refugee Appeals Board to uphold decisions not to renew residence permits for several refugees from Syria's southern Rif Dimashq region and recalls that since 2019, Denmark is the only EU Member State that has refused to renew and even withdrawn residence permits for Syrian nationals;
19. Calls on the Member States to adopt a pragmatic approach and reconsider their criteria for family reunification, given that the requisite language certificates are nigh on impossible to attain as they require travel to Lebanon or Iraq during the current pandemic, with border crossings severely limited and such travel posing additional dangers;
20. Urges the Turkish authorities to refrain from transferring Syrian nationals from occupied areas in northeastern Syria and detaining and prosecuting them in Turkey, and to immediately allow all detainees in their custody to contact their families, be they in Turkey or abroad; urges that all Syrian detainees who have been transferred to Turkey be immediately repatriated to the occupied territories in Syria;
21. Strongly condemns the impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of serious crimes in Syria; considers that the lack of accountability provides a breeding ground for further atrocities and compounds the suffering of the victims; insists, therefore, on the need to hold all perpetrators to account and to provide reparations to the victims; stresses that

restorative justice for the missing, the disappeared and the arbitrarily detained, support for families, the demobilisation of child fighters, the provision of holistic psychosocial support, in particular for children and the victims of sexual and gender-based violence, and the preservation and restoration of vital civil documentation cannot wait until the end of the conflict; urges the EU and its Member States, therefore, to step up their support for processes led by representative groups of Syrians;

22. Insists that the EU should take more action in this area, including the adoption of an accountability strategy for the crimes of atrocity committed in Syria, which should also reflect the important role of the Member States in this regard; calls on the VP/HR and the EU Commissioner for Justice to take a proactive role in this matter, notably in building the capacity of Member States and non-EU countries to apply the principle of universal jurisdiction in their domestic legal systems; encourages the Member States to support the decision of the Netherlands to prosecute Syria for misconduct under the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment with a view to bringing a case before the International Court of Justice; reiterates its call for the EU and its Member States to make a sustained effort towards the creation of a Syria war crimes tribunal, pending a successful referral to the International Criminal Court; calls on the Member States to extend all the necessary support to the IIIM; urges all the Member States to take all the necessary measures to hold the alleged perpetrators to account; welcomes the successful efforts to pursue justice through the principle of universal jurisdiction in Germany, Sweden, France and Austria; encourages all the Member States to enhance their national legal frameworks with regard to the prosecution of mass crimes and to support and pursue similar efforts to bring to justice individuals allegedly responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity, in accordance with national laws, and by investigating and prosecuting EU nationals responsible for crimes of atrocity in Syria; strongly recommends, in this context, that trials in the EU of those responsible for crimes in the Syrian conflict must ensure that victims can testify safely at trial proceedings, preferably in person or by video link as an alternative, and are given the opportunity to follow the trial proceedings;
23. Expresses concern over and condemns the politically motivated harassment and increasing systematic intimidation and transnational repression of members of the Syrian diaspora, such as governmental critics and human right defenders; calls on the Member States to ensure the all-encompassing safety of refugees and to work proactively to address cross-border repression;
24. Urges the members of the Global Coalition against Daesh to prioritise efforts to ascertain the fate of those kidnapped by Daesh, including by supporting the creation of a centralised civilian body or focal point with a team across the area of control of each authority in order to register cases of those missing at the hands of Daesh and to coordinate the collection of information on the missing with other authorities in Syria;
25. Urges all Member States to ensure full compliance with Council Decision 2013/255/CFSP on restrictive measures against Syria<sup>7</sup>, in particular the freezing of assets of individuals listed therein and the restrictions on the admission of persons

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<sup>7</sup> OJ L 147, 1.6.2013, p. 14.

benefiting from or supporting the regime in Syria; calls for the EU and its Member States to expand the list of those subject to targeted sanctions to include civilian and military commanders who have been credibly implicated in war crimes, crimes against humanity and other serious violations committed in northwest Syria, including those falling within command responsibility; reiterates the importance of ensuring that EU restrictive measures against Syria consistently include humanitarian exemptions or clearly exclude humanitarian activities from their scope in order to ensure their compatibility with states' obligations under international humanitarian law;

26. Is appalled at the number of weapons and ammunitions made in the EU that are ending up in the hands of Daesh in Syria and Iraq; notes the failure of Bulgaria and Romania to effectively apply Common Position 2008/944/CFSP on arms exports in relation to retransfers that contravene end-user certificates; calls on all Member States to refuse similar transfers in the future, notably to the US and Saudi Arabia, and calls on the EEAS and the Member States, in particular Bulgaria and Romania, to explain in the context of the EU Working Party on Conventional Arms Exports (COARM), but also in public through Parliament's Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE), what steps have been taken on this matter; calls on the EEAS to address the numerous cases brought to light by the recent Conflict Armament Research report and to explore more effective methods for diversion risk assessment in COARM and the relevant forums, including, in the context of the review process, making it compulsory for Member States to refuse an export licence if there is a clear risk that the military technology or equipment for export could be diverted; calls for an investigation to be launched into this matter;
27. Remains distressed by the continued disappearance of the human rights defender and Sakharov Prize laureate Razan Zaitouneh, who was reportedly kidnapped in Douma in December 2013 by the armed group Jaysh al-Islam; calls for an interinstitutional EU task force to be established in order to coordinate and enhance efforts to determine her whereabouts and secure her release;
28. Recalls that any measures taken to combat Daesh and other UNSC-recognised terrorist groups must be in strict compliance with international law; denounces the ongoing military interventions carried out by third countries, including the US and Israel, and calls on the Member States and their allies, notably the US, to ensure transparency, accountability and full compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law in their participation in international coalition efforts and their military cooperation with parties to the conflict;
29. 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 Secretary-General of the United Nations, the UN-Arab League Special Envoy to Syria, the members of the International Syria Support Group, and the parties involved in the conflict in Syria.