



September 29, 2011

Dear Ambassador,

### **Strong and Urgent Security Council Action on Syria**

We, the eight human rights and advocacy organizations below, write to urge you to support a strong resolution in the Security Council on the situation in Syria. After months of ongoing human rights violations that very likely amount to crimes against humanity, it is necessary for the Security Council urgently to take formal action.

Since mass protests began in mid-March, the United Nations has estimated at least 2600 civilians have been killed across Syria, the majority of them protesters and local residents shot with live ammunition by the security forces and army. Thousands of others have been arrested or held incommunicado at unknown locations where torture is reported to be rife. Over 100 people have reportedly died in detention in highly suspicious circumstances.

We strongly urge Security Council members to support a resolution that, at the very least:

- Calls on the Syrian authorities to uphold their responsibility to protect and immediately cease systematic killing, use of torture and unlawful detention of civilians.
- Demands that Syria abide by its international obligations to respect fundamental human rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and association.
- Demands that Syria cooperate fully with the international Commission of Inquiry created by the Human Rights Council, and provide it with immediate and unfettered access, especially to places of detention.
- Demands access for humanitarian missions, foreign independent media and independent human rights organizations and for the release of detained human rights defenders and journalists.
- Clearly states that those individuals that have committed crimes must be held accountable.
- Requires states to prevent the delivery of weapons to Syria.
- Articulates that there will be consequences if the Syrian regime fails to comply with the Security Council measures.

Many bilateral, regional, and multilateral diplomatic efforts have failed to change Syria's approach: government forces have continued to kill, arbitrarily detain and torture peaceful protesters. It is therefore incumbent upon the Security Council to do more than merely condemn the violence in Syria. At a minimum, in order to be effective, any Security Council resolution should contain the elements outlined above. During the recent UN General Assembly Debate, a

wide cross-section of member states expressed concern about Syria. Strong action from the Council will bolster its credibility in the face of ongoing violations.

If we can provide you with any more detailed information please let us know.

Sincerely,

1. Amnesty International
2. Avaaz
3. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
4. Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
5. Human Rights Watch
6. International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
7. Reporters without Borders (RSF)
8. United to End Genocide (formerly the Genocide Intervention Network and Save Darfur)