

Committee on Human Rights

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Joint statement by the parliamentary groups of the CDU/CSU, SPD, FDP and Alliance 90/The Greens in the Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid on the human rights situation in Syria:

The Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid condemns the gross violations of human rights committed against the Syrian people and calls for an immediate end to the violence

Since March 2011, the Syrian regime has countered the protests for democracy and human rights in its own country with brute force. The systematic and widespread attacks against its own population have claimed more than 6,000 lives. More than 60,000 people are missing. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria, which submitted its report to the U.N. General Assembly on 23 November 2011, raises grave allegations against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The systematic use of force against civilians, arbitrary executions, the killing and persecution of protestors and members of the media, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, interference with access to medical treatment, torture, sexual violence and ill-treatment, including against children, constitute crimes against humanity.

The Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid is appalled and follows the nature and scale of the violence perpetrated by the Assad regime against the Syrian people with horror and disgust. It calls upon the regime to immediately stop the gross violations of human rights, protect the people of the country and fully comply with its obligations under applicable international law (responsibility to protect). President Bashar al-Assad must clear the way for peaceful and democratic change in Syria. Humanitarian assistance for the injured and for the civilian population in particularly embattled areas, especially Homs and Hama, is absolutely essential. The Syrian regime is called upon to allow unhindered access for humanitarian aid and to closely cooperate with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent. It is not enough to allow international observers to enter Syria. The regime must neither hinder nor restrict their work.

The failure of the U.N. Security Council resolution on Syria of 4 February 2012 is deeply disappointing. The veto lodged by Russia and China in the United Nations Security Council is a misguided decision and a decision against the people in Syria. Since then, the Syrian regime has perpetrated even greater violence. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's visit to Syria and his triumphant reception by the regime have further exacerbated the situation. The Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid appeals to the international community of nations to take responsibility for the protection of the Syrian people and to use all non-military means to put an end to the crimes against humanity. This also includes the continuation of efforts to bring about a resolution in the U.N. Security Council – also in the U.N. General Assembly, if necessary – as well as the appointment of a special envoy to Syria. Bashar al-Assad and other culprits who have shamelessly enriched themselves at the expense of the Syrian people and have perpetrated crimes against them should be held accountable before the International Criminal Court.

The Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs of the German Bundestag welcomes and supports the work of the Federal Government to bring about a U.N. Security Council resolution on Syria and its efforts within the Security Council. It supports the endeavours of the Federal Government within the framework of the United Nations, within the European Union and in close coordination with the Arab League to further isolate the Assad regime. The Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs calls upon the Federal Government to reserve the option of expelling the Syrian ambassador. It encourages the Federal Government to continue to receive, consult with

and give diplomatic support to the Syrian opposition. The Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs supports the Federal Government in its further efforts to accord greater attention to the security of the Syrian exile community, which has recently increasingly become the target of criminal attacks by thugs and spies loyal to the regime.