

**Keep up international pressure against abuses in Syria** Amnesty International 26 March 2013

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bal pressure must be applied to all parties in the Syrian conflict to abide by international humanitarian and human rights law, Amnesty International said as the League of Arab States gathered in Qatar for a summit and BRICS nations met at a separate event in South Africa.

The Arab League gathering – where the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces has been given Syria’s seat after the suspension of the Syrian government in November 2011 – should see a tough message emerge against abuses perpetrated by armed groups.(...)

While it is clear that the vast majority of war crimes and other gross violations continue to be committed by government forces, Amnesty International’s research points to an escalation in abuses by armed opposition groups, which have increasingly resorted to hostage taking and to the torture and summary killing of soldiers, pro-government militias and civilians.

In a recent briefing

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*Summary Killings and other abuses by armed opposition groups*

, the organization documented dozens of such cases.

Amnesty International also urged Brazil, Russian, India, China and South Africa - which make up the BRICS nations attending a summit in South Africa this week - to show international leadership at the level of the UN Security Council regarding the situation in Syria.(...)

“BRICS members must press both sides – and in particular the Syrian government with whom the Russian government has a close relationship - to end war crimes and crimes against humanity, which it is continuing to commit.

“The Syrian government must also allow unimpeded access to all parts of Syria for humanitarian organizations to deliver much-needed aid, as well as to international human rights monitors such as the UN independent international Commission of Inquiry.”

Amnesty International has most recently documented violations by Syrian security forces and pro-government militias in the briefing,

*Government bombs rain on civilians*

, in a long line of reports highlighting targeting of civilians, arbitrary arrest, torture and other ill-treatment, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial executions and other abuses since the start of the Syrian uprising in March 2011.

“In this regard, BRICS countries must do all within their power to ensure that the UN Security

Council refers the situation in Syria to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court as soon as possible, to ensure accountability for international crimes committed by all sides in the conflict”.

**See the full article**

[here](#)

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