

UN Office of the High Commission for Human Rights releases Report of the Fact-Finding Mission in Syria

18 August 2011

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights released the [Report of the Fact-Finding Mission in Syria](#) on 18 August 2011. Reminding of the 2005 commitment by Member States to uphold their Responsibility to Protect from mass atrocity crimes, the Report made specific recommendations to the Syrian government, the Human Rights Council and the LAS to halt ongoing atrocities, allow full access to humanitarian aid and prevent further crimes.

(...) IV. Recommendations 95. Bearing in mind the findings of the Mission on Syria, the response thus far provided by the Government of Syria and the international community, as well as the on-going situation on the ground, the High Commissioner, reminds that States unanimously agreed at the 2005 Summit that each individual State has the **responsibility to protect**

its populations from crimes against humanity and other international crimes. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means. When a State is manifestly failing to protect its population from serious international crimes, the international community has the responsibility to step in by taking protective action in a collective, timely and decisive manner.

96. In particular the High Commissioner recommends the following:

To the Government of Syria

1. Immediately put an end to the gross human rights violations, including the excessive use of force against demonstrators and the killing of protestors, torture and ill-treatment of detainees and enforced disappearances; halt violations of economic, social and cultural rights.

2. Take immediate steps to end impunity, including by abolishing legislation which grants security and intelligence personnel virtual immunity from prosecution.

3. Ensure the immediate and unconditional release of detainees held on the basis of their participation in peaceful demonstrations and other political prisoners.

4. Ensure the safe and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their areas of origins in Syria.

5. Allow safe and unrestricted access to international and national journalists to investigate and report on the situation on Syria without hindrance.

6. Take immediate measures to ensure full and unhindered access for humanitarian workers to provide aid and assistance to those in need in Syria.

7. Allow OHCHR immediate access to Syria to conduct investigations into all human rights abuses, irrespective of alleged perpetrator, in the context of protests since mid-March 2011.

8. Invite the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, in particular the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, and Special Rapporteur on Torture, and the Working Group on arbitrary detention, to visit Syria to monitor and report on the

human rights situation.

To the Human Rights Council

1. Ensure that the situation of human rights in Syria remains on the agenda of the Human Rights Council through the establishment of appropriate monitoring and investigating mechanisms, including the possibility of extending the mandate of the Fact-Finding Mission on Syria, as well as through periodic reporting.

2. Urge Syria to cooperate with OHCHR and the Human Rights Council's Special Procedures, including by granting them unfettered access to Syria.

3. Urge the Security Council to remain seized of, and address in the strongest terms the killing of peaceful protestors and other civilians in Syria through the use of excessive force and other grave human right violations; to call for an immediate cessation of attacks against the civilian population; and to consider referring the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court.

To the League of Arab States

1. Continue being actively engaged in calling for concerted action for the protection of human rights in Syria. (...)

See the [Report](#) of the fact-finding mission.