United Nations A/HRC/S-16/L.1

General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
28 April 2011

Original: English

Human Rights Council
Sixteenth special session
29 April 2011

United States of America: draft resolution

S-16/…Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic

The Human Rights Council,

Reaffirming that all States have an obligation to protect the rights to life, liberty and security of persons within their territory,

Recalling that, in accordance with Article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the right to life and freedom from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment cannot be derogated from under any circumstances, even in public emergency;

Recalling also that everyone must be able to express their grievances through public and peaceful demonstrations;

Expressing deep concern at the deaths of hundreds of people in connection with the recent and ongoing political protests in Syria and rejecting unequivocally the violence against peaceful protesters by the Syrian authorities,

Supporting the recent statements made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and UN Special Rapporteurs with respect to Syria which call for an end to the killings, accountability, protection of human rights defenders and respect for freedom of expression,

1. *Strongly condemns* the killing, arrest and torture of hundreds of peaceful protestors by the Syrian government, and the hindrance of access to medical treatment;

2. *Demands* that the Syrian Government meet its responsibility to protect its population, immediately put an end to all human rights violations, stop any attacks against peaceful protestors and respect fully all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and freedom of assembly;

3. *Also strongly calls upon* the Syrian Government to immediately release all prisoners of conscience, arbitrarily detained persons, including those who were detained before the recent events, as well as to immediately cease intimidation, persecution and arbitrary arrests of individuals, including lawyers, human rights defenders and journalists;

Please recycle

4. *Urges* the Syrian authorities to refrain from any reprisals against people who have taken part in the demonstrations and to allow the provision of urgent humanitarian assistance to those in need;

5. *Also urges* the Syrian authorities to protect, preserve and maintain the freedom of expression, to immediately cease the blocking of access to the Internet and telecommunications networks, and to lift censorship on reporting; and further urges the Syrian authorities to allow access by foreign journalists;

6. *Stresses* the need to investigate and, as appropriate, prosecute those responsible for attacks on peaceful protestors in the Syrian Arab Republic, including by forces under Government control;

7. *Recalls* that General Assembly resolution 60/251 provides that when electing members of the Council the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights shall be taken into account, and notes that as such the recent human rights violations committed in the Syrian Arab Republic must be considered when they seek membership in the Human Rights Council;

8. *Calls on* the Syrian authorities to guarantee access to human rights and humanitarian organizations, including human rights monitors;

9. *Decides* to urgently dispatch an independent, international commission of inquiry, to be appointed by the President of the Council, to investigate all alleged violations of international human rights law in the Syrian Arab Republic, to establish the facts and circumstances of such violations and of the crimes perpetrated and, where possible, to identify those responsible, to make recommendations, in particular, on accountability measures, all with a view to ensuring that those individuals responsible are held accountable, and to report to the Council at its seventeenth session, and calls upon the Syrian authorities to fully cooperate with the Commission;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide all the administrative, technical and logistical assistance required to enable the above-mentioned commission of inquiry to fulfil its mandate;

11. *Encourages* relevant thematic special-procedures mandate holders to pay particular attention to the human rights situation in Syria, and urges Syrian authorities to cooperate with and grant immediate and broad access to these thematic mandate-holders, including by allowing country visits;

12. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to carry out a country visit to the Syrian Arab Republic, and urges the Syrian Government to cooperate with and grant immediate and broad access to personnel from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, including by allowing the country visit;

13. *Requests* the High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide a preliminary report and oral update on the abuses and violations of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic to the Council at its seventeenth session, and to submit a follow-up report to the Council at its eighteenth session, as well as to organize an interactive dialogue on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic during the eighteenth session of the Council;

14. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.