



Date : Tuesday 13 September 2011

## **Silence Is Not an Option! Syrians Cannot Afford to Wait!**

<http://www.fidh.org/Silence-Is-Not-an-Option-Syrians>

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**FIDH - Worldwide Human Rights Movement**

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Your Excellency, Dr. Nabil El Araby Secretary General, League of Arab States

We, the undersigned representatives of (176) local and international civil society organisations working in the Arab world, welcome the League of Arab States' (LAS) efforts to find a solution to the human rights crisis in Syria.

We commend the League for including in its thirteen points plan a clear demand for the cessation of violence, the release of all political prisoners and compensation for victims of the crackdown.

While the LAS initiative is commendable, we are concerned that it lacks guarantees and benchmarks to ensure its successful implementation. In order to ensure the principles set forth in the LAS plan are fully respected by the Syrian authorities, clear and publicly established criteria based on international standards are necessary. An effective mechanism of monitoring and reporting to ensure the cessation of violence as well as the implementation of reforms on the ground should be an integral part of the Arab League's initiative.

In addition, an effective Arab approach cannot avoid the principle of accountability for the serious human rights violations the regime has and is committing at the moment. Thus in any meeting with President Assad, we urge the Secretary General to reiterate that Syria should grant access to the Commission of Inquiry mandated by the UN Human Rights Council to investigate human rights violations in Syria.

We hope that the Government of Syria will respond to the LAS initiative. In case the Syrian authorities refuse to cooperate and to commit massive human rights abuses, we urge the League to support sanctions against Syria and its rulers, including through the UN Security Council.

We believe that the LAS can help bring an end to the ongoing human rights violations in Syria by:

- Reiterating a formal, public call for the immediate cessation of the use of force against the civilian population in Syria. Ensure that those responsible for crimes, including unlawful killings, in the use of force are held accountable.
- Sending monitors from the LAS to Syria to verify and monitor the cessation of violations.
- Supporting the UN Security Council to instate comprehensive travel bans and to freeze assets on targeted individuals responsible for the crackdown, stating the conditions under which the above sanctions can be lifted.
- Declaring an immediate embargo on weapons and effectively monitoring and controlling borders to prevent arms smuggling.
- Calling on Syrian authorities to cooperate and grant access to the UN-mandated Commission of Inquiry to investigate allegations of human rights violations.
- Suspending Syria's membership rights at the LAS, including the right to vote.

Citizens of the Arab world share the desire to see an end to the bloodshed in Syria and to see the Arab League act as the leading regional organization to protect and uphold the common values of the Arab world at this critical and historical moment. We trust the League will now play a more active and instrumental role in ending these grave human rights violations against the Syrian population.

**Signatories:** International Organizations: Human Rights Watch, International Federation for Human Rights, AVAAZ

**Egypt:** Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), Arab Forum for Alternatives, Egyptian Initiative for

Personal Rights (EIPR), The Arab Program for Human Rights Activists (APHRA), Arab Foundation for Civil Society and Human Rights Support, Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, Annie Centre for Human Rights and Development, Civil Observatory for Human Rights, Citizenship Human Rights Organization (CHRO), Shumuu (Candles) for Human Rights, Egyptian Association for Scientific and Technological Development, Egyptian Foundation for Refugees Rights (EFRR), The Arab Network for Human Rights Information, The Arabic Center for Development and Human Rights, South Center for Human Rights, The Arabic Media Crisis Network, Center for Alternative Study & Development Programs, Taha Hussein Foundation for Civic Education, Sudan Children Association, Egyptian Center for innovation and development, Maat Foundation for Peace, Development and Human Rights, Bader Foundation for Social Development and Peace, Maan for Human Rights, The Arab Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession (ACIJLP) , New Generation Foundation for Human Rights-North Sinai, Freedom Center for Political Studies and Human Rights, Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement, Egyptian Foundation for Advancement of the Childhood Condition

**Sudan:** Al-khatim Adlan Center Enlightenment and Human Development, Sudan Development Association SDA, Civil Observatory for Human Rights, Darfur Democratic Platform, Amal Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of violence, Sobat Center for Peace and Capacity Building, Solidarity trade union, Center for the Study of Human Development - Fanar, Global Center for Culture of Peace, Africa Centre for Human Rights, Darfur's Lawyers Association, Darfur Center for Promoting Peace, Darfur Media & Press Association, Dwana Organization for Human Development, CDA Community Development Association, Women for cultural and social Development Association, Arbab Cultural Center, Sara Fadil Organization for Peace and Development

**Saudi Arabia:** Human Rights First Society

**Yemen:** Social Democratic Forum, Sisters Arab Forums for Human Rights, Human Rights Information and Training Center, Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights, Yemeni Organization for Defending Rights and Democratic Freedoms, Media Women Forum, Community Development Foundation, Political Development Forum, The National Commission for the Defense of Freedoms (Hood), Democracy School, National Organization for Community Development, Yemeni Syndicate of Doctors and Pharmacists, Partners Foundation for Future Development

**Syria:** Damascus Center for Human Rights Studies, National Organization for Human Rights

**Morocco:** Forum alternatives - Morocco, Democratic Organization of work in Morocco, National Association of unemployed graduates in Morocco, Badail Forum - Juosour, Development Association, Union of Youth of the Future, Nibrass Community Association, Centre for Human Rights Education, Center of people's Rights, Lead Foundation, Moroccan Organization for Human Rights, Moroccan Organization for Human Rights Education

**Bahrain:** Bahrain Youth Forums Society, Bahrain Center for Human Rights, Bahrian Human Rights Society, Bahrain Youth Society for Human Rights

**Mauritania:** Northern League for Development of Democracy and Human Rights, National Commission for Human Rights in Mauritania, Arab Organization for Human Rights / Branch Mauritania, Mauritanian Association for the Protection of Democracy (Protection), Mauritanian gathering of Democratic Women, Mauritanian Association for the Promotion of Human Rights

**Jordan:** Observatory for Human Rights and Environment, Equality Center for Democratic Studies and Research, Justice Center for Human Rights Studies, Center for Civic Collaboration

**Lebanon:** Permanent Peace Movement, Lebanese Transparency Association, Palestinian Association for Human Rights (Monitor- Based In Lebanon)

**Palestine:** Conscience Foundation for Detainees Affairs, Union of Palestinian Women's Committees, Human Rights & Democracy Media Center (Shams)

**Tunisia:** National Council for Liberties, Observatory of the Tunisian trade union rights and freedoms, Tunisian Organization for Democratic women

**Qatar:** National Human Rights Committee, Dr. Najeeb Alnauimi - Ex-Minister of Justice

**Kuwait:** Kuwait Organization for Human Rights, Citizens Against Corruption

**Algeria:** The Algerian League for the Defense of Human Rights, Algerian Coordination for the Families of the missing

**Libya:** Libyan Arab Association for Human Rights, Society for Human Rights

**UAE:** Emirates organization for Human Rights

**Iraq:** Iraqi Network for Human Rights, Iraqi organization for Human Rights - Denmark

**Regional Coalitions:** Non Violence Network in the Arab Countries (20 organisations), MENA Coalition to stop use of Child Soldiers (20 organisations), MENA Action Network on Small Arms (20 organisations), Arab Coalition for Darfur (56 organisations)

**Regional:** Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, the Arab Reform Initiative (France), Middle East and North Africa Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflict (MENAPPAC)

**Total Number of organisations (accounting for coalitions): 176**