

ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

2ND BATCH

BELGIUM

First of all, Belgium wishes to express its strong solidarity with the people of Syria, who continue to suffer immensely due to the ongoing conflict.

- Belgium is very alarmed about the great increase of enforced disappearances since the beginning of the conflict. Tens of thousands of Syrians are missing, many in circumstances that suggest they have been forcibly disappeared. What measures is the Government of Syria taking to facilitate the tracing of the disappeared and missing, and to ensure monitoring of locations and situations linked therewith? Is the Government of Syria considering to respond positively to the outstanding request of the Working Group on Enforced Disappearances to visit the country?
- Another issue of grave concern are the arbitrary arrests on a large scale, including the detention of children for their alleged association with armed opposition group. When will the Government of Syria allow independent international monitoring bodies access to detention facilities?
- The increase of physical and sexual violence against women in detention facilities is another issue which has exacerbated. Which measures is the Government of Syria taking to prevent such violence and to prosecute those responsible?
- Belgium also remains very concerned about the impact of the conflict on Syrian children. Continually exposed to unbearable levels of violence, they suffer from ongoing, multiple and frequently untreated trauma. Numerous children are also deprived of education. Which concrete steps is the Government of Syria taking to guarantee effective protection of child rights, including access to education and protection from child labour?

SLOVENIA

- One of the dangers that has increased as a result of the crisis is the recruitment of child soldiers for use in combat. What steps have the authorities taken to fight the recruitment of child soldiers?
- The risk of statelessness is aggravated by the conflict and the forced displacement of the population, something further worsened due to a legal provision that prevents women from granting citizenship to their children. How do the authorities plan to address the issue of statelessness, and are they planning on changing the law so as to allow children citizenship based on their mothers' citizenship?

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- We note the repeated reports of human rights organizations, documentation groups, and the UN on the systematic imprisonment by Syrian authorities of tens of thousands of Syrians without fair trials, including women, children, doctors, humanitarian aid providers, human rights defenders, journalists, and others who it routinely subjects to torture, sexual violence, and inhumane conditions. International organizations are continually denied access to Syrian detention facilities and detainees. What measures are the Syrian authorities taking to stop the massive detention of people without trial, immediately release those currently being unfairly detained, and put an end to any torture and murder in its facilities? What measures are the

Syrian authorities taking to grant international agencies unfettered and immediate access to all detention facilities?

- We are deeply disturbed by Syrian authorities' use, over the past five years, of indiscriminate bombings, chemical weapons, incendiary weapons, and barrel bombs, particularly in opposition-held areas, that appear to be intended to inflict maximum civilian casualties and continued destruction to civilian infrastructure. Any targeting of civilians, medical facilities, health care providers, and first responders is unconscionable. What steps are the Syrian authorities willing to take to end the violence and to save innocent civilians lives? What steps are the Syrian authorities taking to mitigate civilian casualties and avoid civilian targets, including in Aleppo?
- We note that in sieges of civilian populations in Syria, Syrian authorities have denied its citizens access to food, water, essential medicines, and surgical supplies, and the International Syria Support Group has called for the immediate lifting of all sieges. All parties must allow immediate, unimpeded, and sustained humanitarian access throughout Syria, and allow humanitarian assistance to reach all people in need, particularly in all besieged and hard-to-reach areas, as defined by the UN and called for in UNSCR 2254. What steps are the Syrian authorities taking to ensure that the basic needs of those in besieged and hard to reach areas are met? What steps are the Syrian authorities taking to grant unfettered access to humanitarian agencies to provide aid to all those in need throughout Syria, including those in hard to reach and besieged areas?