



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on Syria

*3117th FOREIGN AFFAIRS Council meeting
Luxembourg, 10 October 2011*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. Recalling its previous Conclusions, the EU condemns in the strongest terms the ongoing brutal repression led by the Syrian regime against its population as well as the widespread human rights violations, including killing, mass arrest and torture of civilians, peaceful protestors and their relatives, that may amount to crimes against humanity. It also condemns actions aimed at inciting interethnic and inter-confessional conflict, as well as recent targeted assassinations of renowned political figures such as Mash'al-Tammo. According to the Deputy UN High Commissioner for Human Rights more than 2,900 people, including children, have died since the beginning of the unrest. The EU deplores these deaths and expresses its condolences to the families of the victims. The EU demands that the Syrian authorities put an immediate end to the violence in order to prevent further bloodshed. Those responsible for or associated with the repression must be held to account by the international community.
2. There can be no credible political process without an end to killings and arbitrary detentions, without the release of political prisoners and the right for opposition leaders and activists to meet peacefully and organize in freedom and safety. President Assad must step aside to allow a political transition to take place in Syria.
3. The Syrian authorities must immediately alleviate the suffering of the populations living in crisis areas, including by allowing unhindered and sustained access for humanitarian agencies and workers and restoring basic services including unimpeded access to hospitals. The Syrian authorities must grant access to fact-finding missions, in particular from the independent international commission of inquiry appointed by the Human Rights Council in August, and to allow independent and international media to operate in Syria without restrictions. Syria must abide by its international commitments, in particular its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

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4. The EU strongly condemns attacks on diplomatic personnel. The Syrian authorities are under an international obligation to ensure the protection of diplomatic missions in Damascus in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.
5. The EU reiterates its determination to pursue actively its current policy, including through its targeted sanctions against the Syrian regime and those supporting it, until there is an end to the unacceptable violence and decisive progress towards a genuine, peaceful and democratic transition addressing the legitimate demands of the Syrian people.
6. The EU strives to assist the Syrian people in achieving their legitimate aspirations. Sanctions are aimed at those responsible for or associated with the violent repression and those who support or benefit from the regime not at the civilian population. Those targeted by EU restrictive measures must realize the consequences of their actions and distance themselves from the regime if they want to avoid being subject to EU sanctions. In this context, the EU recalls that the list of persons and entities targeted by restrictive measures is kept under constant review and is adapted accordingly.
7. The EU salutes the unwavering courage of those in Syria who are protesting and their willingness to remain committed to non-violence. It stands with the Syrian people as they express their legitimate aspirations, and as they seek the respect of fundamental rights of individuals regardless of their religion or belief. The EU reaffirms it is for them to decide the future of their country through peaceful and democratic means. It welcomes the efforts of the political opposition to establish a united platform. It calls on the international community also to welcome these efforts. In this regard, the EU notes the creation of the Syrian National Council as a positive step forward. The EU welcomes the SNC's commitment to non violence and democratic values.
8. The EU is deeply disappointed that the UN Security Council has not yet been able to adopt a resolution on the current developments in Syria even after months of ongoing brutal abuses by President Assad and his regime. The EU will continue to press for strong UN action to increase international pressure and urges all members of the Security Council to assume their responsibilities in relation to the situation in Syria. In addition, the EU will pursue efforts with regional partners, to address the situation in Syria.
9. As soon as a genuine democratic transition begins, the EU is ready to develop a new and ambitious partnership with Syria across all areas of mutual interest, including by mobilizing assistance, and strengthening trade and economic links."
