



## Security Council briefing on Syria (Political/Humanitarian), 29 June 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Darren Camilleri  
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Thank you, President, and I also thank Deputy Special Envoy Najat Rochdi and Under-Secretary-General Griffiths for their briefings.

The updates you have given this morning underscore the need for this Council to come together and make sure Syrians remain supported.

Regrettably, after 12 years of conflict, the depth and breadth of needs are higher than ever. Continued fighting, political obstruction, and deep distrust has led to the destruction of the remaining life sustaining infrastructure and basic services across much of the country.

Families facing hunger, violence, disease, and a profoundly insecure future have turned to the most damaging, negative coping mechanisms just to make ends meet. Women and girls, the elderly, and the disabled bear the brunt of this trauma, as they do in many conflicts around the world.

Despite our divergent views in this Council, we have the ability to ensure the continued delivery of the critical protection, medical, and humanitarian care which is the difference between life and death for too many in Syria.

Malta is pleased to see the increase in Early Recovery, Livelihoods and Resilience (ERL) across all governates of Syria.



Whether the light rehabilitation of a maternal care clinic, the repair of a critical water pumping and treatment station, or building the capacity for schoolteachers, each action restores the innate dignity of the Syrian people and reduces dependence on cyclical, emergency humanitarian aid.

Malta welcomes the successful crossline operation from Aleppo into the north-west of Syria last Friday; the first since before the earthquake in February. We also welcome the agreement by the UN and Damascus for the continued authorisation of Bab Al Salam and Al Raei.

While we urge their continuation and support for all modalities of aid delivery in Syria, we know the scale, scope, and transparency of the UN's cross-border mechanism at Bab Al Hawa cannot be matched at this time.

In this respect, Malta echoes the Secretary-General, and the UN's Emergency Relief Coordinator and calls for a renewal of the humanitarian cross-border mechanism at Bab Al Hawa for twelve months as a minimum. Anything less would amount to cynical politicisation of humanitarian assistance.

What the people of Syria need now is predictable, safe, reliable humanitarian access to deliver aid, protection services, and ERL programmes throughout the country.

In this respect, we were pleased to see members of the international community step up once again at the Brussels VII conference this month; pledging 5.6 billion euros to support humanitarian efforts in Syria and the



region. At a time of great financial strain, these resources are precious, and every cent must be maximised for the benefit of the Syrians who need it the most.

We also note the extraordinary support that states in the region have provided in the hosting of refugees. They too must continue to be supported. However, Malta reiterates that any formal returns of refugees and those displaced within Syria must be safe, legal, voluntary, and dignified.

President

On the political track, we reiterate our support for the work of the Special Envoy. We urge the parties to take their obligations seriously, moving the political process forward in line with UNSCR 2254. Securing Syria's future requires coordinated, multilateral, and inclusive efforts that engages Syrian civil society and women peacebuilders. Nothing less will usher in the change which is so sorely needed, and this is why we too call for the reconvening of the Constitutional Committee in Geneva without delay.

Malta is also deeply concerned by airstrikes carried out in the past week in the north-west which resulted in a dozen civilian casualties. We once again call for a nationwide ceasefire and the protection of all civilians across the country.

To conclude, President, I cannot but stress and reiterate that at this critical time, this Council must work together and set aside differences to support



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millions of Syrians in an adequate and predictable manner in their hour of continued and clear need. The situation demands nothing less.

I thank you, President.