

General Assembly 78th Session, Third Committee, Interactive Dialogue with the Chair of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, 24 October 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Justine Micallef, First Secretary

Thank you, Chair

Malta aligns itself with the statement [*to be*] delivered by the European Union.

I thank Mr Pinheiro for his presentation and the Commission for its tireless efforts to investigate and document human rights abuses in Syria.

Over 15 million Syrians need humanitarian assistance. We read with concern that you have received multiple reports of aid diversion, extortion, corruption, and aid obstruction in the aftermath of the earthquake. We echo your call on all parties to allow for predictable access to humanitarian assistance based on a transparent and impartial humanitarian assessment.

We reiterate our position that humanitarian aid must reach all those in need across Syria, via all aid modalities. We again call on Damascus to ensure the unhindered facilitation of humanitarian aid to the north of the country for as long as it is required.



We condemn the cases of detentions and arrests of activists, community leaders and journalists, as well as the continuing widespread and systematic patterns of torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, including enforced disappearances. Here too, we reiterate our call on all parties to uphold fundamental human rights and international humanitarian law.

Chair

The most recent report by the Commission sets out the gendered impact of the protracted conflict. This includes the inability to meet basic needs, lack of access to health care, including for reproductive health, increase in early and forced marriages, and violence against women and girls.

What more can the international community do to support women's rights, and gender equality in Syria, and how can we ensure that women human rights defenders can continue to do their essential work?