



## Security Council briefing on Syria (Political/Humanitarian), 28 November 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Francesca Gatt,  
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Thank you, President. I begin by thanking Deputy Special Envoy Rochdi and Director Wosornu for their briefings. As we have heard, Syrians continue to suffer the political, economic, and humanitarian consequences of this devastating conflict.

President

Recent developments in the region, paint a troubling picture. Mortar fire emanating from Syria into the occupied Golan has been reported. Israeli airstrikes have continued to target areas of Damascus including Damascus International Airport. Attacks on US military forces in the north-east have spiked.

Against this backdrop, increased military action by Syrian forces in the north-west has continued unabated; with over 70 people being killed - a third of them women and children - as a result.

President

We are deeply concerned at reports of an increase in children being killed and maimed in Syria, as well as in attacks on schools and hospitals. We reiterate our call on all parties to adhere to their obligations under



international law, and to swiftly implement their action plans to end and prevent grave violations against children.

In Syria's northwest, some 4.1 million remain in need of acute humanitarian assistance. We again express our utmost concern for the needs of the displaced in the northwest as we head into the cold and harsh winter months.

These circumstances leave the most vulnerable groups, including women and children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly, at increased risk. Furthermore, without safe spaces for displaced women and girls, many are forced to resort to negative coping mechanisms to survive; including early and forced marriage. They continue to face pervasive threats of gender-based violence and barriers in accessing critical services due to the destruction of the public healthcare service. This means drastically limited maternal and paediatric healthcare is available to many of Syria's most vulnerable.

President

Malta welcomes the renewal of the agreement between the UN and Damascus on the use of the Bab Al Rai and Bab Al Salam crossings for the provision of vital humanitarian assistance. We express our continued support for the provision of aid via all modalities in Syria. All pathways must remain in place as long as the needs persist.



We regret, however, that the Syria humanitarian response plans remains critically underfunded. While greater resources are urgently needed, what Syria needs now more than ever is genuine political progress in accordance with resolution 2254. All parties must work to ensure de-escalation across Syria. This is essential in moving towards a much-needed nationwide ceasefire.

Malta again calls for the reconvening of the Constitutional Committee at the earliest opportunity and for the committee to undertake its work in a credible manner. To this end, we continue to support the tireless work of Special Envoy Pedersen with representatives in the region and encourage engagement via his step-for-step approach.

We also welcome the recent order of the International Court of Justice in Syria in the case concerning the application of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

President

At this time of grave instability and danger across the whole of Syria and the wider region, we must all redouble our efforts to ensure the restoration of calm and the cessation of all hostilities. From there, we all must refocus to ensure the realisation of a just and lasting peace for the people of Syria.

I thank you.