



Security Council briefing on Syria (Political/Humanitarian), 20 September 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Mr Darren Camilleri

Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President, and I also thank Special Envoy Pedersen and Director. Rajasingham for their briefings to us this morning.

Malta is deeply concerned by the escalating violence in the region. Shelling and attacks in the north-west and north-east, and continued Israeli airstrikes across Syria, are adding to an already unstable and precariously volatile situation.

The airstrikes last week have the potential to further enflame the region.

We stress that a broader regional escalation would have devastating and long-term consequences, and must be avoided at all costs.

The presence of foreign militaries, terrorist groups, and other combatants only worsen the environment, particularly for the civilian population which finds itself trapped in an endless cycle of conflict.



After nearly 14 years the humanitarian and protection situation in Syria remains catastrophic.

Acute food insecurity affecting millions, a lack of education for Syrian children, economic collapse, and the prevalence of illicit drugs threaten the future of millions of Syrians.

We once again call for a significant scale-up of humanitarian resources to meet the immediate humanitarian needs, as well as the budgets for Early Recovery and Livelihood programs.

Regrettably, despite the generosity of many states, the Humanitarian Response Plan for this year remains just 25.8 per cent funded.

Ensuring adequate and predictable funding is essential.

It is the only way in which we can begin to address the severity of the crisis, and work toward meaningful and durable solutions.

In this regard, we once again commend the work of the UN in reaching an agreement with Damascus on the continued use of the border crossings at Bab Al Hawa, Bab Al Salam, and Al Ra'ee.



All crossings should remain authorised and in effect as long as they are needed. Additionally, we emphasise the need for tangible progress on aid delivery via all modalities, including that of crossline.

President

The fate of Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons is critical. We reiterate that any return must be safe, voluntary, and dignified.

We also remain deeply concerned about the fate of those missing or arbitrarily detained in Syria.

Progress in this area is also key to moving confidence-building measures forward, allowing hundreds of thousands of families finally receive the information they entitled too.

Malta reiterates its support for the UN's Independent Institution on Missing Persons in Syria. We urge that its mandate be carried out in a gender-responsive and survivor-centred approach.



As we have heard once again today, there is no military solution to this conflict. Only political progress in line with Resolution 2254, can unlock the just and lasting peace that the Syrian people so desperately need and deserve.

Malta once again calls for the reconvening of the Constitutional Committee as soon as possible. This intra-Syrian dialogue is the only way in which tangible breakthroughs can be achieved.

In conclusion, Madame President, Malta reaffirms its support for the Syrian people, the humanitarian organisations working to reach them, and the office of the Special Envoy.

De-escalation, a nationwide ceasefire, the resumption of the Constitutional Committee, and genuine confidence-building steps are the only path forward out of this nightmare.

I thank you.