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Human Rights Council
Sixteenth special session
29 April 2011**Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council****S-16/1.****The current human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic in the context of recent events***The Human Rights Council,*

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations and by General Assembly resolution 60/251,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and relevant international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and that all States are bound to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms,*Recalling* Article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights with respect to rights that may not be derogated from under any circumstances, even in public emergency,*Expressing deep regret* at the deaths of hundreds of people in connection with the recent and ongoing political protests in Syria, and *grave concern* with respect to alleged deliberate killings, arrests, and instances of torture of peaceful protestors by the Syrian authorities,*Noting* the recent statement made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations calling for an independent, transparent and effective investigation into the situation in Syria,*Noting also* the recent statements by United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and certain UN Special Rapporteurs with respect to Syria which call for an end to killings, as well as for accountability, protection of human rights defenders and respect for freedom of expression,*Further noting* the stated intention of the Syrian Arab Republic to take steps for reform, and *urging* the Syrian Arab Republic to take urgent and concrete measures to meet the legitimate demands of its people, including by enlarging the scope of political participation and dialogue, following through on the abolition of the High State Security Court and the lifting of measures restricting the exercise of fundamental freedoms,

Reaffirming that all UN member states shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations,

1. *Unequivocally condemns* the use of lethal violence against peaceful protestors by the Syrian authorities and the hindrance of access to medical treatment and *urges* the Syrian Government to immediately put an end to all human rights violations, protect its population, and respect fully all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and freedom of assembly; *further urges* the authorities to allow access to the Internet and telecommunications networks and to lift censorship on reporting, including by allowing appropriate access by foreign journalists;

2. *Calls upon* the Syrian Government to immediately release all prisoners of conscience and arbitrarily detained persons, including those who were detained before the recent events, as well as to immediately cease any intimidation, persecution and arbitrary arrests of individuals, including lawyers, human rights defenders and journalists;

3. *Urges* the Syrian authorities to refrain from any reprisals against people who have taken part in peaceful demonstrations and to allow the provision of urgent assistance to those in need, including by guaranteeing appropriate access to human rights and humanitarian organizations;

4. *Stresses* the need for the Syrian authorities to launch a credible and impartial investigation in accordance with international standards and to prosecute those responsible for attacks on peaceful protestors in the Syrian Arab Republic, including by forces under Government control;

5. *Urges* the Syrian authorities to enlarge the scope of political participation aimed at ensuring civil liberties and enhancing social justice;

6. *Encourages* relevant thematic special-procedures mandate holders, within their respective mandates, to pay particular attention to the human rights situation in Syria, and urges Syrian authorities to cooperate with these thematic mandate-holders, including by allowing country visits;

7. *Requests* the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to urgently dispatch a mission to the Syrian Arab Republic to investigate all alleged violations of international human rights law and to establish the facts and circumstances of such violations and of the crimes perpetrated, with a view to avoiding impunity and ensuring full accountability, and to provide a preliminary report and oral update on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic to the Council at its seventeenth session, and to submit a follow-up report to the Council at its eighteenth session, and *further requests* the High Commissioner to organize an interactive dialogue on the situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic during the eighteenth session of the Council;

8. *Calls upon* the Syrian Government to cooperate fully with and grant access to personnel from the mission dispatched by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights;

9. *Requests* the Secretary General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide all the administrative, technical and logistical assistance required to enable the mission to fulfil its mandate;

10. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.
