

Human Rights Council, 25th Session

18 march 2014

Item 4 – Interactive Dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on Syria

Intervention by the Czech Republic

Mr. President,

The Czech Republic fully supports the intervention delivered on behalf of the EU.

The Czech Republic would like to express its appreciation for the Commission's update on the situation of human rights in Syria.

We are appalled by the continued widespread and systematic gross violations of human rights, violations of international humanitarian law and by the war crimes committed by the Government forces, pro-government militia. We are deeply concerned by human rights abuses and violations of humanitarian law committed by the non-State armed groups.

We strongly condemn the extensive and systematic attacks against civilians, including the use of chemical weapons, air bombardment and artillery shelling across the country. In this respect, we appeal on the Syrian authorities to accelerate the destruction of their chemical weapons in accordance with their previously accepted obligations.

We are deeply concerned by the fact that children make up a large proportion of civilian casualties of the conflict. They have been arbitrarily arrested, tortured and unlawfully detained. We also call on the Government forces to stop using sieges and starvation of civilians as a method of warfare. Sieges violate a number of fundamental rights of the captured populations, including the right to life, human dignity, health and food. Blocking humanitarian access by any actor in the conflict also falls in this category of human rights violations and remains of our utmost concern. In this regard, we reiterate the need to unconditionally implement the Security Council resolution No. 2139.

We cannot allow impunity for the atrocities and crimes against humanity committed by all conflicting parties as reported by the Commission, namely murder, hostage-taking, torture, rape and sexual violence, recruiting and using children in hostilities, targeting civilians in sniper attacks, attacking protected objects and forcibly displacing civilians, targeting the medical and religious personnel as well as journalists.

Therefore, we fully support the repeated encouragement by the High Commissioner to the Security Council to refer the situation to the International Criminal Court.

To conclude, let me stress that the only solution to the Syrian conflict is a genuine political transition, based on the full implementation of the Geneva Communiqué.

Thank you.