



Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression's Activities during the Human Rights Council's 52nd session

Agenda and annotations



The 52nd session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) activities and events was launched on 27 February and continued until 04 April 2023.

Within the agenda of the session, the SCM team identified a number of interactive dialogue sessions with working groups and special rapporteurs that fit into its programs and activities. Consequently, the team worked on drafting oral interventions on a number of items, in cooperation with partner organisations. Under the 3rd item on its agenda -which focuses on promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, including the right to development-, a number of thematic issues were addressed, including: "torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" and "children and armed conflict." And under the 4th item -which focuses on human rights cases that require the Council's attention- the human rights situation was addressed for a number of states, such as: Iran, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Belarus, and Syria. While the 5th item discussed human rights bodies and their mechanisms.

The SCM team also prepared and uploaded other interventions on the 6th item, which deals with the universal periodic review of states, and the 7th item, which deals with the situation of human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories. All of these interventions were included in the official documents of the session of the Human Rights Council.

Human Rights Council Resolution on “The Situation of Human Rights in the Syrian Arab Republic” and the Mandate of the “Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria”

Date 2023-04-04 Time 13:12

A/HRC/52/L.16 - Situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic

NO	ALGERIA	YES	GABON	ABST	NEPAL	
YES	ARGENTINA	YES	GAMBIA	ABST	PAKISTAN	
ABST	BANGLADESH	YES	GEORGIA	YES	PARAGUAY	
YES	BELGIUM	YES	GERMANY	YES	QATAR	
YES	BENIN	YES	HONDURAS	YES	ROMANIA	
NO	BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL STATE OF)	ABST	INDIA	ABST	SENEGAL	
ABST	CAMEROON	ABST	KAZAKHSTAN	ABST	SOMALIA	
YES	CHILE	ABST	KYRGYZSTAN	ABST	SOUTH AFRICA	
NO	CHINA	YES	LITHUANIA	ABST	SUDAN	
YES	COSTA RICA	YES	LUXEMBOURG	YES	UKRAINE	
YES	COTE D'IVOIRE	YES	MALAWI	ABST	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	
NO	CUBA	ABST	MALAYSIA	YES	UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND	
YES	CZECHIA	ABST	MALDIVES	YES	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	
NO	ERITREA	YES	MEXICO	ABST	UZBEKISTAN	
YES	FINLAND	YES	MONTENEGRO	ABST	VIET NAM	
YES	FRANCE	YES	MOROCCO			
	YES	26	ABST	16	NO	5

On the date of April 4, regarding the periodic resolution on the situation of human rights in Syria, and the decision to extend the mandate of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria (CoI), 26 countries had voted in favour of the resolution, while Algeria, Eritrea, Cuba, China, and Bolivia objected. While /16/ countries abstained from voting.

The text of the adopted resolution included an extension of the mandate of the Col for a period of one year, reaffirming the importance of full cooperation by the Syrian authorities with the Council and the Col by granting them immediate, full and unrestricted access to all parts of the country. This renewal indicates the international community's continued commitment to follow up and document the grave human rights violations that continue to occur in Syria, and that justice, reconciliation, and truth remain an international priority. The Council requested the investigation committee to provide an oral update during an interactive dialogue in its upcoming 53rd session and to submit an updated report during an interactive dialogue in each of the 54th and 55th sessions of the Council.

The resolution also included many condemnations about the human rights situation and demanded that the truth be revealed and the perpetrators brought to justice. The resolution welcomed the progress made with regard to international accountability and notes the importance of these measures. The Council strongly reiterated the call of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria for a complete and immediate ceasefire and national level across the country.

In the resolution, states expressed their sincere condolences to the victims of the February earthquake that struck southern Turkey and marginalised northwest Syria and called on all parties, in particular the Syrian authorities, to maintain rapid and unhindered humanitarian access in a safe and sustainable manner to the intended beneficiaries who are most vulnerable as a result of the devastating conflict that has continued for more than a decade and the deteriorating humanitarian situation.

Activities held by the Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression during this session



The SCM team prepared and submitted two interventions on item /6/ and item /7/ to the HRC, but both interventions were not presented due to the limited time granted to civil society organisations during the interactive dialogue sessions.

[Oral intervention on item /6/](#) of the session's agenda, which focuses on the «Universal Periodic Review.» The intervention focused on the deterioration of the human rights situation in Syria for the past decades, and the exacerbation of gross violations of the rights of Syrians. SCM suggested that a serious and in-

depth discussion should be held regarding the method of approving the reports of countries whose record includes gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law, by keeping the country's report open until it implements the relevant recommendations, and in a way that leads to improving the human rights record of the concerned country.

[Oral intervention on item /7/](#) of the session's agenda, which focuses on «the human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories.» The intervention focused on the expansion of Israeli settlements in the Syrian Golan which has been occupied for 56 years. SCM appealed to the international community to condemn Israel's continued occupation of the Golan, and calls on the Security Council to put pressure on it to discourage it from taking any expansionist step inside Syrian territory.

Cooperation with regional organisations and Syrian civil society organisations

As part of SCM's cooperation and integration policy, the center cooperated with a number of regional organisations and Syrian Civil Society Organisations and Coalitions to provide oral interventions in several sessions,

Oral Interventions

[Oral intervention on item /3/](#) of the session's agenda, which focused on "the promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural, including the right to development." The intervention was recorded by Kutaiba Al-Mashaan, from the Caesar Families Association (CFA) on 14 March 2023, during the interactive dialogue session with the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The intervention referred to the Syrian laws related to torture, guaranteeing immunity from accountability, and perpetuating the state of impunity for crimes of torture and gross violations of human rights He asked the Council to put pressure on the Syrian government to immediately and comprehensively stop the practices of violating torture in prisons and detention centers, to reveal the fate of the forcibly disappeared, and to hold accountable those responsible for human rights violations in Syria. The intervention recording was not shown during the session due to the limited time available to civil society.



[Oral intervention on item /3/](#) on March 16, 2023 during the interactive dialogue session with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for children and armed conflict, during which Riyadh Al-Najm from Hurras Network recorded an intervention in which he held the Syrian authorities responsible for their failure to comply with their international contractual and customary obligations. This failure resulted in gross violations of the rights of children and their places of education, as confirmed by the reports of the HRC and the Col on Syria. The recording of the intervention was not shown during the session, due to the lack of time available to civil society.



[Oral intervention on item /4/](#) of the session's agenda, which focuses on human rights cases. Presented by Yara Badr from SCM, in cooperation with the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), on March 21, 2023. CIHRS and SCM called on the HRC to demand that the Syrian government grant the investigation committee, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, other United Nations human rights mechanisms and experts, and civil society activists immediate and unrestricted access to all parts of the country, enabling them to carry out their duties represented in monitoring and documenting the human rights situation. In addition to referring the Syrian file to the International Criminal Court to hold accountable all those involved in committing crimes that amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.



[Oral intervention on item /5/](#) on March 24, 2023. During the general discussion session, which focuses on human rights bodies and mechanisms, Mouhannad Sharabati from the Syrian Legal Development Program (SLDP) presented from inside the Palais des Nations in Geneva. Recognizing the important role played by civil societies within the United Nations, SCM, in cooperation with SLDP, affirmed their intention to continue their cooperation and urged the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to demand respect for human rights from the various Syrian parties within the conflict.

