



A SPECIAL REPORT BY MPAC

The Current Challenges to the Syrian Democratic Revolution

FOREWARD

On January 26, 2011 a historic moment for the Syrian people occurred. Inspired by events in Tunisia and Egypt, Syrians began to publicly demonstrate against the dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad. For the next month and a half, protests were sporadic, until the country's first mass demonstration took place in Daraa on March 15. From there, the full spirit of the Arab Spring had come to Syria. Soon, protests spread to other major cities and towns, including Hama, Homs, Latakia, Deir Al-Zour, and Jisr Al-Shoughour, among many others.

Realizing that the majority of Syrians no longer neither feared nor respected the regime's bankrupt ideology, al-Assad and his dwindling circle of supporters increasingly turned to bloodshed in the summer of 2011. Unfortunately, the situation has rapidly escalated inside the country, and now the opposition to Al-Assad regime, once exclusively characterized by non-violent civil resistance, is now increasingly turning to arms.

Just as the uprising was entering its bloody phase, on June 29, 2011 the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), in partnership with the New America Foundation (a privately-funded policy research organization in Washington, DC), convened a policy forum where leaders and activists within the Syrian-American community engaged and shared their views with government and non-governmental officials and experts.¹ **In addition to MPAC's own independent research, this publication is influenced by the discussions that took place at that policy forum.**

In its formal advocacy engagement with government officials, MPAC has also pushed for greater measures to punish al-Assad and his supporters for their gross human rights abuses against demonstrators. They include:

- Recall the U.S. Ambassador to Syria
- Limit the movement of the Syrian Ambassador Imad Moustapha in the U.S. to intimidate and disrupt pro-democracy events by Syrian Americans
- Call for the immediate resignation of the President Bashar al-Assad and his Cabinet

We are pleased to note that U.S. government officials took these steps. We commend President Barack Obama and government officials for hearing the voices of American Muslims and Syrians in order to advance effective democratic change in Syria.

MPAC offers this paper to policymakers, community leaders, and non-governmental activists and experts as a resource offering both moral clarity and policy pragmatism in one of the most recent and pressing foreign policy issues facing our nation.

-- The Muslim Public Affairs Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the toppling of dictators in Tunisia and Egypt and Libya, Syria has followed the path for liberation. Syria is home to about 22.5 million people,ⁱⁱ of which the vast majority aspires toward serious and prompt democratic and political reforms. Despite the recent crackdowns, hundreds of thousands of people have been protesting President Bashar al-Assad's regime.

After being in power for more than a decade, al-Assad has squandered an opportunity to fulfill promises of political reforms in order to expand democratic participation. That has become one of the main drivers behind the populist protests. In addition to political issues, socio-economic factors contribute to the civilian discontent. It is in this context that protests erupted in March 2011 and continue in various parts of the country, such as in the cities of Daraa, Homs, and Hama.

The Syrian regime responded to the demonstrations with extreme brutality, while simultaneously enacting cosmetic reforms. As of January 31, 2012, the United Nations estimates more than 5,400 Syrians have been killed since the protests began. Moreover, al-Assad's regime has detained between 12,000-15,000 protestors, including leading political opposition figures, and another 9,600 Syrians have crossed the border to seek refuge in Turkey and another 6,000 in Lebanon.

A growing Syrian American community, about 150,000 people, is a large, organized and affluent minority within the broader Arab and Muslim American communities. In solidarity with Syrian communities around the world, including the United States, the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) has one overarching goal for the Syrian Spring for Freedom: it seeks to support the democratic aspirations of the Syrian people.

MPAC commends the Obama administration's defense of the Syrian people's right to democracy and human rights. In order to achieve this important shared goal, MPAC believes there are three major principles American government policymakers should abide by:

1. Create a free and democratic Syria without resorting to war
2. Remove impediments to humanitarian relief, human rights observers and independent media organizations
3. Bring human rights violators to justice

As such, we recommend the following:

Create a Free & Democratic Syria Without Resorting to War:

- Continue to use direct, regional and international pressure to pressure the Syrian regime to respond to the aspirations of the Syrian people in a swift, clear and comprehensive manner or to step down
- Extend the sanctions to military officials beyond the 13 key officials
- Condemn all sectarian violence, regardless of the perpetrator
- Encourage the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) to engage with Syrian political activists by informing them how to apply for grants regarding "Participatory Politics"
- Engage and pressure Russia and China to end their obstruction in the UN Security Council and arms sales to Syrian forces

- Pressure the Iranian government to end its support of al-Assad and discontinue its transit and training of surveillance and weapons to the Syrian intelligence services
- Provide assistance to Syrian civil society in order to help build democratic infrastructure and prepare Syria for the next phase
- Prevent exploitation of the Syrian revolution by the military industrial complex and the Israeli government, both of which have indicated interests in a military confrontation with Iran, possibly using the Syrian situation as a launching pad for regional war in the Middle East.

Provide Access for Humanitarian Relief, Human Rights & Independent Media Organizations

- Call upon the regime to provide open access to medical care, allow free access to humanitarian organizations, particularly:
 - Ensure protection of physicians treating wounded civilians and the availability of open and safe medical care to all wounded civilians
- Pressure Syria to provide open access to international media, human rights groups, humanitarian missions, international observers and watchdog organizations in areas that reported significant violence or triggered political refugee exodus
- Exert pressure on Syria to respect the dignity of journalists by joining the international chorus of voices that denounce violence, harassment and restrictions against journalists, such as the Committee to Protect Journalists
- Enlist diplomatic pressure from other countries on Syria in order to protect civilians, release all political detainees and prevent torture
- Pressure Syria to provide access to the UN Commission on Human Rights investigative team to review the human rights violations in Daraa, Talkalakh, Homs, Hama, Al-Rastan, Talbisa, Banias, Latakia, Jisr Alshgor and Maaret al Nouman
- Engage Turkish officials to continue their humanitarian relief efforts and ensure full safety and security is afforded to all refugees crossing the border to escape regime violence

Bring Human Rights Violators to Justice:

- Per the recent reports of Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International on Syria's crimes against humanity, refer reported cases of brutality and killings to the International Criminal Court (ICC)
- Expel the current regime from international forums and organizations-- as the League of Arab States is moving to do
- Pressure the regime to accept the UN Commission on Human Rights to conduct an investigation into the human rights allegations, including any sectarian violence committed, regardless of the perpetrator
- Bring to the ICC those responsible for the 1982 Hama massacre that led to the killing of more than 20,000 Syrians
- Use all possible means to bring leaders of security apparatus and army units responsible for killing innocent civilians and human rights violations to the ICC, including, but not limited to:
 - Maher al-Assad, Commander of the Republican Guard
 - Assef Shawkat, Deputy Minister of Defense of the Syrian Army
 - Atef Najeeb, the previous Head of Security Forces in Daraa

INTRODUCTIONⁱⁱⁱ

Human rights policy in the Middle East has always been a challenge for the United States. The most repressive regimes of the world, including Egypt and Syria, have gained footholds of power by at least one of two ways: direct assistance from US administrations or benefiting from the geopolitics of the region, leaving the US as an outsider in terms of relations with the Arab people. As a result, the US has been sluggish in gaining credibility with Arab citizens.

The US is attempting to lend support to the revolutions but is inconsistent on how far to go with each case — it calls for some current leaders to step down, some to accept reform and others to establish dialogues with the opposition. This US vagueness is perceived by Arabs as an orchestration to maintain the status quo while providing lip service to democratic movements.

It also is being interpreted as a stall tactic to give time for a dominant opposition group to rise to power so the US government can determine with whom to deal in regards to Syria's future. In either case, American policymakers must take more serious action on the human rights front while the democratic revolution continues its struggle against the current Syrian dictatorship. Many Syrian Americans are pursuing these goals with the Obama administration.

Since the 2010 US Census, voter drives and political action committees have noted that the Arab American community is comprised of more than 1.5 million people. Of those, at least 150,000 are estimated to be Syrian Americans, a large, organized and affluent minority within the broader Arab American community.^{iv}

Hence, as a community-oriented organization, MPAC sees these growing numbers correlating with Syrian Americans' growing interest in civic engagement and enacting change. In solidarity with Syrians worldwide, MPAC has one goal: support the democratic aspirations of the Syrian people.

While vagueness may have colored American policymakers' rhetoric on other Middle East and North Africa uprisings, on February 4, 2012, the Obama administration gave a clear statement outlining its position and US interests regarding Syria:^v

We must work with the Syrian people toward building a brighter future for Syria. A Syria without Assad could be a Syria in which all Syrians are subject to the rule of law and where minorities are able to exercise their legitimate rights and uphold their identities and traditions while acting as fully enfranchised citizens in a unified republic. The United States and our international partners support the Syrian people in achieving their aspirations and will continue to assist the Syrian people toward that goal. We will help because we stand for principles that include universal rights for all people and just political and economic reform. The suffering citizens of Syria must know: we are with you, and the Assad regime must come to an end.

MPAC commends the current administration's defense of Syrians' right to democracy and human rights. In order to achieve this important shared goal, MPAC believes there are three major principles that policymakers should abide by:

1. Create a free and democratic Syria without resorting to war
2. Provide access for humanitarian relief, human rights and independent media organizations
3. Bring human rights violators to justice

BACKGROUND

Syria is home to more than 21 million people, of which the vast majority are protesting President Bashar al-Assad's regime. This includes at least 9,600 Syrians who have crossed the border into Turkey seeking refuge from the violence.^{vi} The al-Assad regime has ruled for 40 years with the enactment of the 1963 Emergency Rule Law.

The current Syrian regime, mainly composed of, and supported by, the elite Alawite minority, has prevented free speech and engaged in arbitrary detention. Current President al-Assad assumed power in 2000 following the death of his father, Hafez al-Assad, who ruled Syria for 30 years.

The Arab Spring has found support with those seeking the right to democratically determine their nation's futures. This support goes beyond Arab countries and Arab diaspora communities; pro-democracy freedom fighters and high-profile figures around the world have expressed their solidarity with the movements.^{vii} As such, Syria is no exception.

When Bashar al-Assad first came into power, he had an opportunity to implement his promise of reforms to expand democratic participation. His long record of human rights abuses and authoritarianism clearly demonstrated he squandered that opportunity.^{viii} That has become one of the main drivers behind the populist protests.

One of the al-Assad family's most authoritarian and abusive legacies was establishing the 1963 Emergency Rule Law. The law serves to:

- Suspend Syrian citizens' civil liberties
- Commit human rights violations through torture and "disappearances"
- Suppress alternative voices through imprisonment, restricting public forums, denying internet access and imposing censorship
- Oppress minorities such as non-Arab Kurdish community

The effects of the Emergency Rule Law are clear, as the Bashar al-Assad regime uses it to justify its brutal crackdown against protesters. Gross human rights violations continue to occur in Daraa, Homs and Hama. Syrians protesting against the regime have become victims of mass violence and repression. Yet, as one Western diplomat in Syria put it, "Despite everything... [regime supporters] have done over the past few weeks -- killing, torture, mass arrests and raids -- the protests are continuing".^{ix}

As of February 5, 2012, the United Nations estimates that more than 5,400 Syrians have been killed; however, the BBC reports "The UN stopped estimating the death toll in Syria after it passed 5,400 in January, saying it was too difficult to confirm."^x French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe cited the death toll to be 6,000,^{xi} while the BBC cited a death toll of 7,000 from unnamed "human rights groups and activists".^{xii} (see Table 1)

Reputed human rights group Amnesty International estimates the regime has arbitrarily arrested another 12,000 to 15,000.^{xiii} Testimony from Syrians and YouTube footage has shown a mass grave of 26 bodies from the Daraa uprising.^{xiv} Approximately 9,600 Syrians remain as refugees in Turkey and 6,000 in Lebanon to escape government crackdowns.^{xv}

Table 1: Death Tolls Resulting from Uprisings in Arab Spring Countries

Country	Death Toll
Libya	10,000-15,000 ^{xvii}
Syria	5,400-7,000 ^{xviii}
Yemen	1480 ^{xix}
Egypt	846 ^{xx}
Tunisia	300 ^{xxi}
Bahrain	“At least 50” ^{xxiii}

Though much of the international community now views Bashar Al-Assad and his supporters as pariahs for their killings, the regime still has support from key foreign nations such as Russia and China. Both nations are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and vetoed draft resolutions denouncing recent massacres and demands to stop the bloodshed.

They also have significant economic interests in the country: Syria is one of Russia’s largest weapons importers and provides it with Moscow’s only Mediterranean naval base while China has significant energy and trade interests with Damascus.^{xxv} Both nations also support the regime as a mechanism for at least partially offsetting US influence in the region, and both – at least publicly claim – they are opposed to outside interference in other nations’ domestic affairs (perhaps because they are concerned about criticism of what is happening in their own countries).^{xxvi}

Another country providing support to the embattled al-Assad regime is Iran. Aside from political support, Tehran has a number of material interests in Syria, not least of which is a regional alliance that seeks to counter American and Israeli power and Saudi political influence. It also acts as a base and transit for militant groups Hamas and Hezbollah. Finally, the Iranian government has also supplied Damascus with extensive surveillance technologies and training used by its domestic intelligence services to spy on and hunt down dissidents.^{xxvii}

Political and socio-economic factors seem to have also played a significant role, in places such as Daraa, to mobilize anti-regime opposition. Like Egypt and Tunisia, Syria has experienced rapidly rising inflation. According to the World Bank’s Food Price Watch report, Syria saw a 13 percent increase in food by the beginning of 2011, while 32 percent of Syrians continue to live below the poverty line.^{xxviii}

Meanwhile, the latest International Monetary Fund report found Syria’s youth unemployment stood at 60 percent in 2010, and thereby “(high numbers) imply substantial social and economic costs”.^{xxix} Because oil does not comprise a significant portion of Syria’s gross domestic product (GDP), unlike Libya and Bahrain, it is extremely difficult for the government to cushion many of these harsh economic conditions.

While some analysts say limited political freedom triggered Syrian civilian protests, others point to national deteriorating socio-economic conditions as the main driver; it appears a combination of both of these factors is at work in Syria.

A SHORT LIST OF SOME KEY FIGURES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations

- [Tharwa Foundation](#), based in Syria and Maryland, USA
- [Arab American Institute](#) (AAI), based in Washington, DC
- The [British Syrian Society](#), UK-based NGO initiated to attract foreign direct investment, which allegedly receives funding from regime
- [Jamal Atassi Forum](#) (JAF), banned Syrian based group, now found on Facebook
- [National Initiative for Change](#), umbrella organization representing 150 Syrian members of Syrian-based groups including:
- [Movement for Justice and Development](#) in Syria (MJD)
- [Syrian American Council](#) (SAC)
- [Syrian American Medical Society](#) (SAMS)
- [Syrian American Society](#) (SAS)
- [Syrian Emergency Task Force](#) (SETF)
- [Syrian National Council](#) (SNC)

Individuals¹

- [Ammar Abdulhamid](#), author, political and human rights Activist; co-founder of Tharwa Foundation
- [Rami Abdul Rahman](#), director of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights
- [Abdulhamid Alatassi](#), engineer and political activist based in England, representative of the Syrian Democratic People's Party in France
- [Suhair Atassi](#), journalist and founder of Jamal Atassi Forum;^{xxx} Also participated in Egypt's Arab Spring uprising
- [Faraj Bayrkqdar](#), poet and activist based in France
- [Nour Douchi](#), founder of activist blogs on Syria: SyrianHawk
- [Wasim Entabi](#), businessman, executive director of SETF based in Virginia
- Florence Gezlaan, activist based in France
- [Dr. Najib Ghadbian](#), academic based in London, president of opposition group, SNC
- [Dr. Burhan Ghalioun](#), Syrian-French academic and thinker, director of the Centre d'Etudes sur l'Orient Contemporain (CEOC) in Paris and a professor of political sociology at the Université de Paris III (Sorbonne Nouvelle)
- [Subhi Hadidi](#), writer and critic, based in England
- [Dr. Murhaf Jouejati](#), professor at National Defense University, Syrian specialist based in the Virginia/DC area
- [Dr. Mohyeddin Kassar](#), economist and founder of SAS
- [Dr. Haytham Manna](#), Syrian writer and physician with a doctorate in anthropology; spokesman for the Arab Commission for Human Rights; co-founder of the Committees for the Defence of Democratic Freedoms and Human Rights in Syria

¹ Suggested key figures without hyperlinks come from interviews with Syrian Americans and may be provided upon contacting MPAC.

- [Ausama Monajed](#), communications consultant and political activist; spokesman for MJD; developed Facebook page Syrian Revolution 2011 which currently has more than 207,000 “Likes”
- [Dr. Louay M. Safi](#), Common Word fellow, Center for Christian-Muslim Understanding at Georgetown University, chairman of the SAC
- [Bashar Shibli](#), member of SETF, Syrian-Druze; father was former vice president during the ‘60s before his exile to Lebanon
- Fares Shoufi, political activist based in Paris
- [Dr. Talal Sunbuli](#), physician and president of SAC
- [Dr. Radwan Ziadeh](#), founder of the Damascus Centre for Human Rights, professor at Carr Center for Human Rights at Harvard University, former US Institute for Peace fellow, and a member of Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (Sweden)

Create a Free & Democratic Syria by Peaceful Means

According to the Human Rights Watch (HRW) 2010 report, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has imprisoned at least 30 known political opposition leaders and human rights activists to stifle Syrian civil society. For example, the regime imprisoned Riad Seif, a former member of parliament, and Dr. Kamal al-Labwani, a physician and founder of the Syrian Democratic Liberal Gathering.

According to HRW, both Seif and al-Labwani are serving prison terms for publicly criticizing the authorities. Bashar al-Assad sentenced human rights activist Muhannad Al-Hassani to three years in prison for delivering a human rights report before the State Security Court. Al-Hassani is the president of the Syrian Human Rights Organization (*Swasiya*), which Syrian authorities have refused to accept its official registration as an organization.^{xxxix}

In 2001, Bashar al-Assad’s regime banned the [Jamal Atassi Forum](#) (JAF) because of its reformist pro-democracy goals. Suhair Atassi, Seif and other intellectuals established the group during the Damascus Spring of 2000.^{xxxix} Currently, the JAF group operates from its Facebook page and via other networking tools to engage its supporters on common goals such as ending the Emergency Rule Law.

Syria’s ban on many political associations, such as the JAF, parties^{xxxix} and activities extends to NGOs as well. For example, Syria exiled the Tharwa Foundation’s founders, the intellectual and activist Abdulhamid family in 2005. Tharwa continues its Syrian office with French funding while advocating from Maryland.

Despite the regime’s repression, umbrella organizations facilitate communication and advocate in both the US and the UK. For example, the National Initiative for Change (NIC) represents a spectrum of Syrian activist group members.^{xxxix} NIC calls for two actions: requesting that the Syrian military should lead a transition period toward a democratic government, similar to Egypt’s current situation; and imploring the international community to expand the sanctions against 13 political figures and the security forces responsible for shooting protesters in Daraa and elsewhere.

Provide Access for Humanitarian Relief, Human Rights & Independent Media Organizations

The Bashar al-Assad regime controls both the substance of and access to political, social, and economic developments in the nation. Consequently, state media disseminate a narrative uncritical of the regime. For example, the mass grave images, mentioned above, were available only through YouTube.^{xxxv} In

addition, *Reuters* reported that a Syria-based diplomat contradicted government accounts that the uprisings resulted from the efforts of “Salafi fundamentalists as propaganda.”^{xxxvi}

Not only is independent reporting and verification difficult, but when Syrian journalists find inconsistencies in state reports, they are severely penalized. In April 2011, Samira Masalmeh, former editor of state-run newspaper *Tishrin*, was fired because she told Al Jazeera that Syrian security forces were responsible for the April 7 violence in Daraa. The Associated Press corroborated Masalmeh’s firing as “an official at the newspaper confirmed Saturday that the editor, Samira Masalmeh, was fired because of the interview.”^{xxxvii}

Meanwhile, alternative news voices and watchdog groups lack the opportunity to corroborate and report on the ground developments. Since the March protests, Syria refused entry of news agencies such as CNN and Al Jazeera. The CPJ found that, “about 20 local and international journalists had been physically assaulted, detained or expelled from Syria since social unrest erupted...”^{xxxviii} Five journalists, including Dorothy Parvaz, an Al-Jazeera English reporter and former editorial writer for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, were held by Syrian authorities.^{xxxix} The UN Human Rights Council (UNHCR) has consistently implored Syria to allow their officials entry to conduct investigations. Nonetheless, Syria denies UNHCR and other international groups’ requests.

Bring Human Rights Violators to Justice

For 40 years, torture and disappearances have functioned as the al-Assad regime’s tools to suppress dissent. Although the Syrian Constitution prohibits torture under Article 28, both al-Assad presidents sidestepped this law by arguing that political prisoners present a security threat, and thereby, hold vital information that must be obtained for state security.^{xl}

Consequently, Amnesty International has reported that Syria’s Tadmur Prison holds mainly military and political prisoners. It further notes:^{xli}

Tadmur Prison appears to have been designed to inflict the maximum suffering, humiliation and fear on prisoners and to keep them under the strictest control by breaking their spirit. Prisoners are not only completely isolated from the outside world, they are also prevented from communicating with each other. Every aspect of life in Tadmur Prison is a dehumanizing experience.

Such practices and the current human rights abuses during Syria’s protests reinforce the Syrian regime’s historical pattern of human rights violations. In particular, the 1982 Hama Massacre highlights the egregiousness of state-centered violence against its own citizens. Hafez al-Assad ordered the wholesale bombardment of Hama, killing between 10,000^{xlii} to 40,000 Syrians.^{xliii} This also led to thousands of children being orphaned.^{xliv}

An American-based nonprofit organization, SETF, recognized the severity of human rights violations committed since the March protests. SETF, like Syrian civilians who have fallen victim to human rights violations, are demanding accountability and have filed a collective lawsuit (Abdul Aziz, et al. v. The Syrian Republic) in the US District Court of the District of Columbia. The plaintiff is comprised of US and Syrian citizens against the following defendants:

- The Syrian Arab Republic
- Syria’s Ministry of State Security Intelligence
- Other individuals aligned with the al-Assad family

SETF has documented cases, interviewed victims and filed a series of cases. Such efforts mirror the course that the ICC is pursuing with Libya in issuing arrest warrants to Col. Moammar Gaddafi. SETF hopes that their efforts will prompt the ICC to issue arrest warrants against the al-Assad family and aligned individuals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The above outlines the challenges on the ground in Syria regarding Syrian civilians and the international community's hampered efforts. As such, MPAC recommends the following actions that address the three principles:

How to Create a Free & Democratic Syria without resorting to war:

- Call for the immediate resignation of President Bashar al-Assad and his Cabinet and transfer power to a caretaker government that would hold internationally-monitored free and fair elections
- Continue to use direct, regional and international pressure to pressure the Syrian regime to respond to the aspirations of the Syrian people in a swift, clear and comprehensive manner or to step down
- Extend the sanctions to military officials beyond the 13 key officials
- Condemn all sectarian-based violence, regardless of the perpetrator
- Condemn the al-Assad regime for fomenting sectarian conflict and for promoting the myth that Syrians of all backgrounds cannot unify and protect minority populations
- Debunk the myth that the conflict in Syria is emanating from an armed rebellion, especially when the Syrian regime has tanks and military machinery
- Encourage the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) to engage with Syrian political activists by informing them how to apply for grants regarding "Participatory Politics"^{xlv}
- Engage and pressure Russia and China to end their obstruction in the UN Security Council and arms sales to Syrian forces
- Pressure the Iranian government to end its support of Assad and discontinue its transit and training of surveillance and weapons to the Syrian intelligence services
- Provide assistance to Syrian civil society in order to help build democratic infrastructure and prepare Syria for the next phase

How to Provide Access for Humanitarian Relief, Human Rights & Independent Media Organizations

- Call upon the regime to provide open access to medical care, allow free access to humanitarian organizations
 - Assure protection of physicians who are treating wounded civilians and ensure the availability of open and safe medical care to all wounded civilians
- Pressure the Syrian regime to provide open access to international media, human rights groups, humanitarian missions, international observers and watchdog organizations in areas that reported significant violence or triggered political refugee exodus
- Join the chorus of international voices, such as the CPJ, to exert pressure on the Syrian government to respect the dignity of journalists
- Enlist diplomatic pressure from other countries in order to protect Syrian civilians, release all political detainees and prevent torture

- Engage Turkish officials to continue their humanitarian relief efforts and ensure full safety and security is afforded to all refugees crossing the border to escape regime violence

Pressure Syria to provide access to the UN Commission on Human Rights investigative team to review the human rights violations in Daraa, Talkalakh, Homs, Hama, Al-Rastan, Talbisa, Banias, Latakia, Jisr Alshgor and Maaret al Nourman

How to Bring Human Rights Violators to Justice:

- Expel the current regime from international forums and organizations, as the League of Arab States is moving to do.^{xlv}
- Pressure the regime to accept the UN Commission on Human Rights to conduct an investigation into the human rights allegations, including any sectarian violence committed, regardless of the perpetrator
- Bring to the ICC those responsible for the 1982 Hama Massacre that led to the killing of more than 20,000 Syrian civilians
- Use all possible means to bring leaders of security apparatus and army units responsible for killing of innocent civilians and human rights violation to ICC, including, but not limited to:
 - Maher al-Assad, Commander of the Republican Guard,
 - Assef Shawkat, Deputy Minister of Defense of the Syrian Army, and
 - Atef Najeeb, the previous Head of Security Forces in Daraa

ENDNOTES

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