



CAIRO INSTITUTE  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES  
Institut du Caire pour les études des droits de l'homme  
مركز القاهرة لدراسات حقوق الإنسان

United Nations Human Rights Council: 34<sup>th</sup> Session  
Item 4 - Oral Intervention: High Level Panel on Syria  
The Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)  
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CIHRS expresses our solidarity and support for the courageous Syrians who testified today before the Human Rights Council on the horrific acts committed against them.

Tomorrow will mark the six- year anniversary of what began as a peaceful uprising of the Syrian people demanding democratic reform. In response, the government of Syria launched an all-out war against its own population for daring to demand fundamental rights. This war continues to devastate the lives and dignity of millions of people; people like those we listened to today.

The UN member states must move beyond simply monitoring the situation and expressing moral outrage. Several states, like Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and others, have begun to take concrete steps to ensure that their national judicial systems will hold perpetrators of crimes in Syria to account. Although these initial efforts are commendable, they can and must be strengthened; and more states must begin to move in this direction.

The recent creation of a General Assembly mechanism tasked to prepare evidence for the prosecution of perpetrators of grave crimes in Syria is a hopeful sign. However, this mechanism risks becoming irrelevant unless more states dedicate the required resources for national-level investigations and court proceedings, and improve transnational coordination on this matter.

In this regard, we call on the Council to mandate a study to identify good practices and deliver detailed, practical recommendations on the steps that governments can take to strengthen and improve the use of national and universal jurisdiction in relation to crimes committed in Syria.

Doing so would allow the Council to move beyond rhetoric and instead provide concrete solutions to the victims. We owe this to the Syrians who testified before us today and the millions like them.

Thank you.