



(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

EMHRN's New Elected Body Alarmed at Escalating Violence in Syria

Copenhagen, October 10, 2012 – The newly elected Executive Committee of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN) expressed increasing concerns over the intensifying conflict in Syria, at their first formal meeting in Copenhagen on 27 September.

The EMHRN is deeply alarmed over the situation of open civil war that currently prevails in Syria. It emphasizes that this situation stems from years of dictatorship imposed on the Syrian people by the Hafez al-Assad regime and later by his son. It is also made worse by incoherent and sometimes conflicting policies by the international community, with countries either fighting or supporting the Syrian regime, in a bid to follow their own interests. The Security Council's catastrophic inability to put an end to the crisis highlights the failings of a global governance system to ensure that the principles of the UDHR are both followed and applied.

At this stage of the conflict, the EMHRN wishes first of all to hail the legitimate fight by the Syrian people in its revolt against a dictatorship that it has endured for decades.

In time of war, massive violations of human rights and of the principles of humanitarian law make the suffering of the Syrian people even more intolerable, in particular for women and children, who are forced to flee and seek refuge in neighbouring countries, thus creating a humanitarian disaster. The U.N. Security Council is responsible for authorising the creation of secure humanitarian corridors to meet the needs of civilians on an emergency basis. All parties to the conflict are also responsible for complying with the principles of humanitarian law.

The EMHRN believes that all crimes committed by all perpetrators during the conflict must be referred to the International Criminal Court. Whoever their perpetrators may be, these crimes must be documented immediately in order to pave the way for transitional justice to reveal the truth, acknowledge and compensate the victims, and identify their perpetrators.

The EMHRN recommends that the international community, neighbouring countries and U.N. agencies alike provide the resources needed to give shelter for displaced persons. The EMHRN also recommends that the European Union and its Member States grant asylum to Syrians seeking refuge, without restrictions.

During this meeting, the EMHRN has elected the representative of the Collective for the Families of the Disappeared in Algeria (CFDA), Nassera Dutour, as Vice President.

The EMHRN Executive Committee has also expressed unwavering solidarity with its member, Osman Isci, currently remanded in custody in Turkey. Lastly, the EC has condemned the

restrictive policies by European governments that have unacceptably- and as a consequence- prevented another member, Mahmoud Abu Rahma, from attending the meeting.

(Ends.)

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