



UN Human Rights Council

19th special session on the "deteriorating human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and the recent killings in EI-Houleh"

1 June 2012

Statement by CIVICUS UN Geneva representative Renate Bloem

Thank you, Mme President

CIVICUS is appalled by this new chapter of killings in EI-Houleh, including of 49 innocent children, and by the overall deteriorating human rights situation in Syria. We therefore welcome this Special Session.

CIVICUS has called for some time for the international community to show stronger political will to stop human rights abuses in Syria. The international community must ensure that President Bashar al-Assad's regime is brought under pressure to abide by international law, and that there are investigations and accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is time for the UN Security Council to refer Syria to the International Criminal Court.

A key part of a solution to the crisis in Syria must be to hold perpetrators of war crimes to account. Addressing issues of impunity and accountability are paramount for any reconstruction of the Syrian social fabric and long-lasting peace.

The division and lack of consensus within the international community over the crisis is prolonging violence and suffering in Syria and gives no incentive to President Assad's regime to abide by Kofi Annan's six point peace plan, which at least shows a way out of the current situation. Negotiations at the UN Security Council to agree on humanitarian intervention and adequate sanctions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter have stalled as some governments have prevented the unanimous and decisive action needed to end the crisis, further encouraging the Damascus government.

Today is the chance for the Council to speak with one voice and say "enough is enough" and commit President Bashar al-Assad to immediately ending all violence and gross human rights violations.

Thank you, Madame President.