



Европейски парламент Parlamento Europeo Evropský parlament Europa-Parlamentet Europäisches Parlament
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04th of May 2017

We, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, call on the EU High representative/Vice President and 28 EU Member States' Foreign Ministers to urgently step up and collectively ensure the full funding of the vitally important new Syria accountability mechanism established by the UN General Assembly on 21 December 2016 to collect, preserve, and analyse evidence of atrocity crimes committed by all parties to the Syria conflict, and to prepare files to facilitate and expedite criminal proceedings.

We welcome EU Member States' unanimous support for the UN General Assembly resolution establishing the mechanism (The International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism 'IIIM'), as called for in a joint MEP [letter](#) sent earlier that month.

However, four months on, the new mechanism, that has an annual budget of \$13 million and is dependent on voluntary contributions, is not fully funded with some \$4,6 million still missing to ensure the budget for the first year.

We welcome the substantial financial contributions pledged particularly by Denmark, Finland, Germany, and The Netherlands; at the same time, however, we regret that other EU Member States have pledged much more meagre contributions – or not promised any support at all. And, we deeply regret that, in spite of repeated EU statements about the importance of justice for war crimes committed in Syria, the EU and its 28 Member States have failed to collectively solve the small funding gap that effectively prevents the UN Syria accountability mechanism to start its important work.

The recently adopted EU Strategy on Syria adopted by EU Foreign Ministers on April 3, places a strong emphasis on accountability, and specifically on the importance of providing the UN Syria accountability mechanism with sufficient resources. That call for support was echoed just 2 days later in the Co-Chairs Declaration closing the "Supporting the future of Syria and the region" conference in Brussels. We agree that justice is not an impediment to peace in Syria, the fact that perpetrators can continue to commit war crimes with impunity is.

The importance, and the urgency, of getting the UN Syria accountability mechanism up and running cannot be stressed enough. With the decision to establish it the international community sent strong messages that finally went beyond mere condemnation of atrocities and calls for justice; a message of hope to the victims and their loved ones, and a message to perpetrators that evidence would be analysed with a view to prepare criminal prosecutions. But, these messages risk to be undermined if we fail to quickly secure the \$4.6 million needed to cover the budget for the mechanism's first year of activity.

With this letter, we urge the EU's High Representative/Vice President to coordinate with EU member states to urgently secure the missing amount of \$4,6 million. And, we urge the High



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Representative/Vice President to lead by ensuring a substantial contribution from the European Commission, at a minimum similar to the \$1 million pledges made by four EU member states.

We, as Members of the European Parliament, commit to using our leverage, including by seeking the support of our counterparts in the National Parliaments, to press Member States to make the needed funding available.

Without justice –and indeed without a credible threat of justice-, war crimes and crimes against humanity will continue in Syria. Victims of atrocities deserve more than our policy pledges. Securing the full funding of the new UN Syria accountability mechanism is the least the EU and its 28 member states can do. This is urgent.

Sincerely,

GOMES Ana

WEIDENHOLZER Josef

STAES Bart

AUSTREVICIUS Petras

COZZOLINO Andrea

GRAPINI Maria

COZZOLINO Andrea

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