
UN Human Rights Council
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ID with the Commission of Inquiry on Syria

Delivered by Ambassador Aviva Raz Shechter,
Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations

Thank you, Mr. President,

We thank the Commission of Inquiry for its report, and encourage it to continue investigating the atrocities committed by the Syrian government against civilians, with a view of ensuring accountability. Those responsible for these crimes should be brought to justice.

While we appreciate the due focus this Council gives to the devastating civil war in Syria, we are deeply concerned by the lack of attention given to Iran's destabilizing presence in this country. Iran's increasing military presence in Syria puts the human rights of all the people of the region in jeopardy, as does its regional aggression in other parts of the Middle East. It is incumbent upon the Council to be much more vocal in denouncing Iran's complicity with the Syrian government in committing atrocities against its own people, together with the Hizbullah terrorist organization.

We are gravely concerned about the repeated use of chemical attacks by government forces, seemingly undeterred by the international response. We share the Commission's concern about the mass displacements due to the fighting in Afrin and other regions. And we are also concerned about the residents of Idlib who face an uncertain fate in view of an impending attack by the regime, which may result in a "humanitarian nightmare" to use the words of the Secretary General.

On its part, Israel will continue to extend humanitarian assistance to Syrians in need, while protecting its vital interests along the border with Syria. This is why, for example, we helped evacuate the members of the White Helmets civil defense group from south-western Syria through Israeli territory.

I thank you Mr. President.