



**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: 54th Session
- Item 4 - ID with the COI on Syria
- Oral Intervention
- Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)

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Current approach supports Syrian government in continuing to commit violations

CIHRS commends the COI on their persistence in pursuing accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity that have been, and which continue to be carried out in Syria.

We note with deep concern attempts by some UN member states, including members of the League of Arab States, to move toward the normalization of relations with the Syrian government authorities.

In this regard, CIHRS is alarmed by the report on Syria submitted by the Special Rapporteur on Unilateral Coercive Measures this session which recommends the *de facto* normalization of economic and other relations with the Syrian authorities in Damascus.

We fully agree with the COI that humanitarian aid and life-saving assistance should be delivered by third parties and the blocking of this aid, including by the Syrian authorities, should immediately cease.

In contrast, the Special Rapporteur's approach ignores the latest report and information gathered by the COI, which makes clear that the conflict in the country has not ended, and that atrocities continue to be widespread. Such an approach would, in effect, legitimize and reward the same government which has primary responsibility for the "apocalyptic" level of destruction and brutality inflicted on Syria and its people. This would provide it with more resources to continue to bomb, kidnap, torture and murder.

We note the harm to civilians that unilateral coercive measures can have and the recommendation of the COI for states to review such measures to mitigate civilian harm. Does the COI have, or can it provide a more detailed analysis on how to ensure that the review of unilateral measures does not contribute to rewarding or legitimizing those responsible for mass atrocities in Syria?