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The Syrian Coalition Condemns the Syrian Regime's use of violence against Civilians, including Journalists

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Media Statement

Syrian Coalition Office to the United Nations

New York, NY

July 17, 2013

Today's UN Security Council debate on "The protection of civilians in armed conflict: protection of journalists" is an important reminder of the critical role played by journalists in Syria. Journalists' efforts ensure that the international community is aware of and does not forget the daily atrocities and human rights abuses perpetrated by a brutal regime against its own people.

Since Syria's democratic uprising began in March 2011 as many as 153 journalists have been killed. Countless reports have indicated that regime forces have been engaged in a targeted campaign which has singled out individual journalists with unlawful killings, torture, enforced disappearances and intimidation. These acts are in clear violation of international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

The Syrian Coalition demands that the Syrian regime stop its use of violence against journalists and encourages it to introduce measures that will guarantee journalists greater safety and freedom of movement in Syria.

As the regime's use of violence in Syria intensifies, civilians and journalists continue to be vulnerable and exposed to attacks by regime forces. The Coalition urgently asks that the international community intensify its efforts to protect the civilians of Syria, combat impunity and take all necessary steps to hold the perpetrators of violence against journalists accountable.

In a letter circulated to the Council in advance of the debate, Dr. Najib Ghabbian Special Representative of the Coalition to the UN, called for more international action to help the Syrian people, "The Syrian Coalition calls upon the Security Council to strongly denounce the Syrian regime's attacks against journalists and urges it to increase its efforts to end the regime's campaign of violence against Syria's civilian population."

The Syrian Coalition remains committed to protecting the rights of free speech and ensuring the safety of journalists and continues to recognize the critical role that journalists play in reporting during times of conflict, especially in Syria. In cooperation with the Free Syrian Army, it will strive to ensure that measures are in place to protect journalists operating in the liberated parts of Syria.

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