

# Syrian Coalition Demands Immediate Action by UN Security Council to Improve Humanitarian Access

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Press Statement  
Syrian Coalition  
New York, NY  
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In advance of today's briefing of the UN Security Council by UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, the Syrian Coalition issued a letter to members of the Council calling for urgent action to improve humanitarian access and facilitate immediate relief to the 9.3 million Syrians in need of food, water, and medical care.

Since this conflict began, the Syrian regime has for almost three years systematically delayed and prevented the delivery of humanitarian aid, using its control of access as a war tactic to starve civilians into submission and achieve its military goals. This action has been widely acknowledged, by the Security Council and international organizations alike. Most recently on December 2, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Madame Navi Pillay cited overwhelming evidence implicating high-level Syrian government officials, including the head of state, of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

"Since this conflict began, the Syrian regime has – for almost three years – systematically delayed and prevented the delivery of humanitarian aid, using its control of access as a war tactic to starve civilians into submission and achieve its military goals. The regime's policy has caused the deaths of thousands, enabled the re-emergence of diseases such as polio and allowed malnutrition to become a chronic condition facing many of Syria's most vulnerable groups," wrote Dr. Najib Ghadbian, Special Representative of the Syrian Coalition to the UN, in his letter to the Council.

In the absence of regime action, the UN Security Council must be prepared to vigilantly enforce its Presidential Statement of October 2, 2013, and to further improve the situation by promoting the adoption of a binding Security Council resolution that will remove bureaucratic obstacles and deliver serious and sustainable improvements in the lives of vulnerable Syrians. Civilians such as the spokesperson for the Moadimiyah Local Council, Qusai Zakarya, have resorted to such dire tactics as hunger strikes to demand an end to the blockade of humanitarian access through the regime's continued siege of Moadamiyah. Increased efforts must be made to ensure that aid can be delivered directly to people in need, and not be required to be centrally routed through Damascus for redistribution.

The Syrian Coalition remains committed to implementing the UNSC Presidential Statement, and to ensuring humanitarian access for all Syrians, irrespective of their religion, ethnicity or politics. The Coalition has appointed designated interlocutors to work directly with humanitarian aid personnel. Most recently, interlocutors of the Coalition have negotiated a coordinated effort for the provision of aid from UNHCR through the Syrian Red Crescent. Aid NGOs, FSA brigades and relevant intermediaries have helped secure the transport of aid which originated from regime-controlled areas, passed through both regime and opposition controlled checkpoints and reached remote opposition controlled areas.

We ask for Mercy for our martyrs, health for our wounded, and freedom for our detainees.

Long live Syria and its people, free and with honor.