

28 February 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,  
President of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Human Rights Council on the Urgent Debate on Syria**

Madam President of the Human Rights Council,  
Madam High Commissioner for Human Rights,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor for me to attend this urgent debate of the Human Rights Council.

I would like to express my appreciation to Member States who called for this urgent debate and supported an outcome.

The world is observing us. Expectations and hopes in particular by the Syrians.

We are meeting at a crucial moment for Syria. The report on Syria published by the Commission of Inquiry gives an appalling image of the situation on the ground. It indicates that the Syrian Government, and I quote, “has manifestly failed in its responsibility to protect its people. Since November 2011, its forces have committed more widespread, systematic and gross human rights violations”. End of quote. I also saddened to learn about the lack of medical supplies which is a major concern.

I am deeply concerned by this situation. Especially with the use of tanks, rockets and artilleries by the Syrian Authorities against civilians.

The international community must increase its mobilization.

The Syrian authorities must immediately end the killings and halt all human rights violations.

All parties in Syria must immediately stop all violence and reprisals, in accordance with the League of Arab States’ initiative that was endorsed by the UNGA resolution 66/253.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I want to commend the active role played by the Human rights Council and the High Commissioner in the past few months.

The three resolutions adopted by this Council and the three special sessions you held have been instrumental in increasing the attention of the international community to the situation in Syria. I believe today's urgent debate will also contribute to keeping the spotlight on this critical issue.

Madam President, when you sent me the first report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, on 28 November, I immediately circulated it to Member States. I will do the same once I receive the second report. In this regard I would like to commend the bravery and tireless efforts of the commission.

On the basis of the resolution adopted on 2 December by the Human Rights Council and the concerns I received from Member States, I decided to invite Mrs. Navi Pillay, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to brief the General Assembly during a UNGA meeting on 13 February 2012.

Many Member States who spoke during that meeting expressed their concern about the ongoing violence in Syria, and highlighted the need to end the killings and halt all human rights violations.

A large majority of Member States regretted the inability of the Security Council to adopt a resolution in support of the Arab Initiative, in return, the UNGA did not remain silent, therefore, on 16 February the General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/66/253, condemning the continued and widespread violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the Syrian authorities.

Member States also demanded that the Government of Syria act in accordance with the Plan of Action of the League of Arab States, and requested the Secretary-General to provide support to the efforts of the Arab League.

I am pleased that implementation of this resolution has quickly begun. On 23 February, the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr. Nabil El Araby, announced the appointment of former United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, as the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States on the Syrian crisis. Mr. Annan started his mission.

I urge all Member States to cooperate with the Special Envoy. I am encouraged that the Special Envoy started to engage quickly with all relevant parties within and outside Syria, in order to end the violence and the humanitarian crisis, and to facilitate a peaceful, Syrian-led and inclusive political solution. I hope to see this mediation bearing fruits.

This is a high time for the High Commissioner of Human Rights, the President of the Human Rights Council, the Security Council and the General-Assembly, this is the time for acting as one to face this crisis and end it with the least loss possible. This is the moment that we shall unite to save lives, right to life as I emphasized yesterday shall be cherished.

The United Nations Membership will receive the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution A/RES/66/253 in the next few days.

I stand ready to consider once again this issue whenever Member States deem it necessary including OP11 that gives a role for the relevant UN bodies to play.

I wish all the success for this meeting.

I thank you.