

In the Name of God Most Compassionate Most Merciful:
Lo! We offered the trust unto the heavens and the earth and the hills, but they shrank from bearing it and were afraid of it. And man assumed it. Lo! He hath proved a tyrant and a fool.

**Report of the LAS Observers Mission to Syria
December 24, 2011- January 18, 2012-01-26**

I- Terms of Reference:

- 1- The Council of the League of Arab States adopted Resolution 7436 dated November 2, 2011 in which it endorsed the Arab plan of action annexed to the Resolution, and welcomed the Syrian government's endorsement of the Plan. It also stressed the need for the government to implement, immediately and in full, all of its provisions.
- 2- On November 16, 2011, The Council of Ministers of the LAS adopted resolution 7439 in which it endorsed the draft protocol relevant to the legal status the LAS observers Mission to Syria and tasks to be entrusted to it. The Mission was established to verify the implementation of the Arab Plan for the settlement of the Syrian crisis and provide protection to Syrian civilians. The Secretary General of the League of Arab States was requested to appoint the head of the LAS observer mission and undertake the necessary contacts with the Syrian Government to sign the Protocol.
- 3- The Council of the League of Arab States adopted resolution 7441 on November 24, 2011 authorizing the Secretary General to dispatch the LAS Observers' Mission to the Syrian Arab Republic in fulfillment of its mandate as stipulated in the Protocol as soon as it is signed.
- 4- The Syrian Arab Republic and the Secretariat of the LAS signed the Protocol on December 19, 2011. The protocol established the Mission of Observers which included Arab civil and military experts chosen from candidates endorsed by Arab states and Arab Human Rights Non-Governmental Organizations. The Mission will be dispatched to the territories of the

- Syrian Arab Republic. It should be noted that Item V called on the Mission to submit periodic reports to the SG of the League of Arab States and to the Syrian Government on the result of its work pending submission of the final report to the Council of Ministers of the LAS through the ministerial committee in charge of the situation in Syria, for consideration and action.
- 5- The Council of the League of Arab States agreed to appoint General Mouhammed Ahmad Moustafa Al-Dabbi of the Republic of Sudan as Chief of the Arab League Observer Mission.

II- Mission Composition:

- 6- The Secretariat of the LAS requested member states and relevant Arab Organizations to submit nominations for candidates who can join the Observers' Mission to Syria. The Mission included 166 observers from 13 Arab states and 6 relevant Arab organizations.

III. Advance Team Visit by the LAS Delegation to Syria:

- 7- In preparation for the Mission of Observers, an advance team from the LAS Secretariat visited the Syrian Arab Republic on December 22, 2011 to discuss logistical arrangements.
- 8- In implementation of the provisions of the Protocol, the Syrian Government confirmed readiness to facilitate the work of the Mission, allow the Mission to bring any technical equipment necessary for its work, guarantee freedom of movement and safety for all members of the Mission throughout the Syrian territories and refrain from imposing any security or administrative obstacles that would impede the completion of the mandate of the Mission. The Syrian side also stressed its commitment to allow the Mission to hold meetings and interviews freely— as deemed necessary for its work, provide full protection to its members taking into account the fact that the Mission is solely responsible for deciding to visit areas against the advice of the security authorities. The Government undertook to allow Arab and International media access to the Syrian territories in accordance with relevant Syrian rules and regulations.

IV Arrival of the Chief of Mission in Syria and His Exploratory Visits:

- 9- General Mohammad Ahmad Mustafa Al-Dabbi, Chief of Mission arrived in the Syrian Arab Republic on Saturday December 24, 2011. He held a series of meetings with Mr. Walid al-Mouallem, Syrian Minister for Foreign Affairs and other Syrian Government officials who stressed their readiness to cooperate fully with the LAS Mission, and their commitment to the success of its task and to eliminate any obstacles it may encounter. During the meetings, the necessary logistical and security arrangements for the Mission were also agreed.
- 10- The Syrian Side stressed that the Syrian security forces may not be able to enter some areas with the Observers for fear of being attacked by some citizens. The Chief of Mission was of the view that this arrangement could allow the Mission to get in touch with the citizens and members of the opposition away from government control. It may also alleviate the fear [that citizens and opposition] may have of being persecuted as a result of their contacts with the Mission.
- 11- The Chief of Mission completed the technical field preparations, arrangements for means of transportation and the necessary communications equipment for the mission start-up. He also met some of the members of the Mission who began arriving in Syria, shared with them the tasks entrusted to them and the provisions that constitute the basis of their work according to the Protocol. Members of the Mission then took the oath of the Mission prepared by the Chief.
- 12- On 27 December 2011, the Chief of Mission undertook an exploratory visit to Homs accompanied by 10 observers. The city has been known to be among the most tension ridden areas which were the stage for acts of violence and armed confrontations between the Syrian army forces and the Syrian opposition. Some security checkpoints continue to separate neighborhoods.
- 13- Immediately after his arrival in Homs, the chief of Mission met the Governor of the city who explained that the city suffers widespread violence perpetrated by armed groups, kidnappings and acts of vandalism and sabotage to civil and government facilities. The city also suffers severe food shortages as a result of the siege enforced by armed groups estimated

at 3000 persons strong. He confirmed that all attempts for pacification undertaken by religious leaders and the city's notables were doomed. He sought assistance in addressing the problem of soldiers and vehicles detained inside Baba-Amre.

- 14- The Mission visited some residential quarters (Baba-Amre, Kram-ez-Zaitoune, Al-Khaldiyyeh, Al-Ghouta) without being escorted. The Mission met with citizens from the opposition who spoke about the horror, siege and acts of violence they endure at the hands of government forces. The Mission saw firsthand the destruction and devastation in neighborhoods at the outskirts of the city, concomitantly with heavy exchange of fire among the parties. The Mission witnessed heavy exchanges fire in Baba-Amre between the opposition and the army and saw four military vehicles in surrounding areas. They were forced to return to the Municipal headquarters. The Governor of Homs agreed to allow five Mission members to stay in Homs to undertake field visits and meet with as many citizens as they could.
- 15- Immediately after the return of the Chief of Mission from Homs, he held a meeting with government officials and requested that they withdraw military vehicles from the city, cease acts of violence, protect civilians, lift the siege and exchange the bodies of those who fell on both sides.
- 16- During the meeting, the Syrian side stressed that armed elements have been withdrawn from residential neighborhoods except for three broken-down military vehicles that have been under siege. An armed group seized one military vehicle from the army. The Mission was asked to assist in withdrawing and recovering these vehicles in return for the release of four individuals, exchange of the bodies of five persons killed on each side and allowing basic food supplies to reach the inhabitants of the city. The mission was also asked to assist in allowing garbage trucks into the city to collect litter. At the end of the meeting, it was agreed that the Mission will undertake another visit to Homs the next day accompanied by Major General Hassan Al-Sharif, the Government's security coordinator.
- 17- During the visit, the Mission was introduced to a leading opposition figure who works as an information official in the National Council. An extensive discussion ensued on the offer made by the Syrian government and the optimal means for its implementation. As a result, all military vehicles were withdrawn and recovered, bodies of individuals killed were

exchanged and trucks loaded with food supplies entered the city. Three male detainees and two women were released and handed over to their families in the presence of Mission personnel which restored some calm to the city.

18- Five days after the deployment of the Observers in five sectors, the ministerial committee requested the Chief of Mission to submit a report about the work of the mission. The Chief of Mission left Damascus to Cairo to brief the members of the committee in a meeting held on January 8, 2012. It was decided that the Mission will pursue the mandate with which it was entrusted, and that the Chief shall submit a report as agreed in the Protocol by January 19, 2012. Upon the return of the Chief to Damascus, the Mission faced some difficulties by pro government and opposition figures in the wake of statements made after the meeting of the Ministerial Committee and the reports circulated in the media. These difficulties did not ultimately affect the work of the Mission and its deployment to various regions which went on smoothly.

19- Since the arrival of the Mission to Damascus, the Mission received many communications from the Syrian Committee authorized to coordinate with the Mission. These communications outlined the material and human losses suffered by the Syrian Government offices and institutions as a result to so called "acts of sabotage" which as they said affected vital State services.

V. Deployment of the Mission of LAS Observers to Syria:

20- Members of the Mission were distributed on 15 sectors covering 20 cities and localities, according to the dates set below. Differences were mainly attributed to inadequate administrative and technical preparations, including availability of individuals and vehicles. The distribution was nevertheless balanced. Every sector comprised 10 persons from different Arab Nationalities. These sectors were deployed in Syrian Governorates and cities as follows:

- 12/29/2011: 6 Sectors set out to visit to Damascus, Homs, Homs countryside, Idlib, Dar'aa and Hama.
- 01/04/2012: 1 Sector began a visit to Aleppo.

- 01/09/2012: 2 Sectors set out to visit Deir-ez-Zor and Latakya. However, on 01/10/2012, they returned to Damascus having suffered attacks that injured two Observers in Latakya and caused material damage to their vehicles.
 - 01/10/2012: 1 Sector set out to visit Qamishly and Hasakah
 - 01/12/2012: 1 Sector set out to visit the Damascus countryside.
 - 01/13/2012: 4 Sectors set out to visit Sweida, Boukamal, Deir-ez-ZOr, Palmyra, al-Sukhnah, Banyas and Tartous.
 - 01/15/2012 2 sectors set out to visit Latakya, Riqqa and Al-Thawra. (attached is a detailed annex explaining the number of Observors, their nationalities and their deployment locations).
- 21- Members of the group were provided with:
- A map.
 - Observer code of conduct.
 - Duties of the Sector Chief.
 - Duties of the Observer.
 - Some technical equipment (computers, cameras, communications devices..etc.)
- 22- A Control Room was established at the Office of the League of Arab States in Damascus, which operates 24/7 and is directly linked to the Control Room of the LAS in Cairo and to the groups deployed all over the Syrian territories. The Control Room receives daily reports from field dispatchers and reports back instructions on monitoring and follow-up. Given the great number of tasks, a subsidiary control room was opened at the residence of the mission in Damascus, entrusted with dispatching individuals, follow-up committees, detainees committee, and information and finance committee. This subsidiary control room coordinates work with the Primary control room at the Office of the LAS.
- 23- In Latakya and Deir-ez-Zor, the Mission faced difficulties caused by pro-Government supporters. This is particularly true of Latakya where thousands surrounded the Mission vehicles chanting slogans in support of the President and against the Mission. The crowds went out of control, and the observers were attacked. Two observers sustained minor injuries. Their armored vehicle was totally destroyed. The situation was resolved after the Chief Of Mission contacted the head of the Syrian Supreme Committee

entrusted with coordination with the LAS mission. Despite that, the Chief Of Mission ordered the two sectors back to Damascus immediately. He met the Minister for Foreign Affairs and protested strongly. The Syrian minister denounced this incident, and submitted a formal apology. As a follow-up, the deputy minister for foreign affairs met with individuals from the Latakya group and explained that the Syrian government will address the situation while guaranteeing the safety and security of members of the Mission regardless of where there are. He apologized again for these regrettable non-deliberate acts. Immediately thereafter, members of the two groups were redistributed among the sectors and sent to new sectors after a four- day rest.

VI. Implementing the Mission Mandate According to the Protocol:

24- The Chief Of Mission wants to stress that monitoring the provisions of the protocol is the summary of the assessments of the various sectors, based on the conclusions conveyed by the Chiefs of Sectors following meetings with the Chief Of Mission on January 17, 2012:

A- Monitoring and Assessment of the degree of full implementation of the cessation of all forms of violence, regardless of the perpetrators in cities and residential quarters:

25- When the Observers were deployed to various sectors, they began by monitoring acts of violence perpetrated by Government forces, and the exchange of fire with some armed elements in Homs and Hama. Due to the Mission's insisting on bringing all acts of violence to an end and withdrawing vehicles and equipment, this started to diminish. Recent reports by the Mission indicate that these forces practiced self control and that a noticeable calm prevailed.

26- In Homs and Dar'aa, the Mission recorded acts of violence perpetrated by armed groups against government forces leading to death and injury among the ranks of the latter. In some cases, government forces resorts to violence as a reaction to attacks against its members. Observers noticed that armed groups used thermal bombs and anti-armor missiles.

27- In Homs, Idlib and Hama, the Mission was witness to acts of violence against government forces and citizens leading to death and injury of many. A case in point was the attack against a civilian bus which killed eight

persons and injured others, including women and children and bombing a freight train transporting diesel fuel. To this other incidents could be added in Homs that led to the destruction of a bus owned by police forces killing two. A pipeline for fuel was also bombed in addition to some bridges.

- 28- The Mission noticed that many parties issued unfounded statements reporting bombings and acts of violence in some areas. When Observers visited these areas to verify the reports it was apparent that these statements were groundless.
- 29- The Mission also noticed from reports filed by its field personnel that there are exaggerations in the media about the nature of the incidents and the numbers of those who were killed and injured as a result of the events and demonstrations in some cities.

B- Verifying that Syrian Security forces and the so-called "Shabbiha (thugs) Gangs" are not attacking peaceful demonstrations:

- 30- Reports submitted by heads of Field Teams to the Mission and their briefings in person on January 17, 2012 during the meeting with the Chief of Mission in preparation for this report indicated that there are peaceful demonstrations organized in some areas by both Government loyalists and the opposition. No one attacked these demonstrations except for some minor clashes between Mission on one hand and the loyalists and the opposition on the other. No injuries were reported since the last briefing presented to the Ministerial Committee on Syria during the meeting held on January 8, 2012.
- 31- Reports and testimonies by Heads of Sectors confirmed that citizens who oppose [the regime] congregate around mission personnel, and use the field staff as shields to prevent the security forces from attacking them. This phenomenon has gradually subsided.
- 32- The Mission received requests by citizens who oppose [the regime] in Homs and Dar'aa to stay and not to leave, in fear of being targeted by attacks after the Mission's departure.

C- Verifying the Release of Persons Detained due to Current Events:

- 33- The Mission received reports from sources outside Syria that there are 16,237 detainees. It also received reports from the Opposition inside that the number of detainees is around 12,005. Field Teams verified the validity of the information they received. They concluded that the lists include conflicting information, that there are inaccuracies, or that some

facts are missing and some names are repeated. The Mission is currently in contact with Government authorities to authenticate the numbers referred to above.

34- The Mission handed over all the lists it received from Syrian Opposition inside or outside Syria, and requested the release of the detainees in implementation of the Protocol.

35- On January 15, 2012, President Bashar Al-Assad issued a legislative decree granting general amnesty for crimes committed in connection with the events that broke out since March 15, 2012. As a follow up, respective government authorities released detainees in various areas gradually unless their detention was carried out on other grounds. The Mission supervises the release process, and follows-up with the Government which has coordinated and responded fully and positively to this provision.

36- The Syrian Government declared on January 19, 2012 that 3,569 detainees who were held by civil or military prosecution authorities were released. The Mission verified the release of 1,669 prisoners so far. It continued to follow-up on the subject with the Opposition and the Government, while pressing on the Government side the need to release the detainees in order to authenticate the process.

37- The Mission concluded that the total number of detainees that the Syrian Government said it released to date is broken down as follows:

- Released prior to the Amnesty Decree: 4,035 detainees.
- Released after the Amnesty Decree: 3,568 detainees.

This brings the total number of persons released according to Government reports to 7,604 detainees.

38- The Mission verified the total number of detainees who were released. It reached the following conclusion:

- Released prior to the Amnesty Decree: 3,483 detainees.
- Released after the Amnesty Decree: 1,669.

This brings the total number of persons whose release has been verified by the Mission to 5,152 detainees. The Mission continues to follow-up and verify the release process with the Syrian Government to secure the release of other detainees.

D- Verify the withdrawal and evacuation of all armed elements from cities and residential areas that have been witnessing demonstrations and protests:

39- Reports filed by heads of field teams and the meeting held with all heads of field teams on January 17, 2012 enabled the Mission to conclude with certainty that all military vehicles, tanks and heavy weaponry were withdrawn from cities and residential quarters. Security presence remains, however, in the form of berms as well as checkpoints next to important buildings and squares. These checkpoints do not disturb citizens. It should be recalled here that during a meeting between the Chief of Mission and the Syrian Minister of Defense on January 5, 2012, the Minister affirmed his readiness to accompany the Chief on visits to all locations and cities identified by the Chief of Mission, from which armed elements have not yet been withdrawn so that the Minister would issue field orders to correct the violation immediately.

40- Armored vehicles (personnel carriers) are still present at some check points, some in Homs others in Madaya, Zabadani and the Damascus countryside. These vehicles were reported, and accordingly withdrawn from Homs. It has also been confirmed that the inhabitants of Zabadani and Madaya reached a bilateral agreement with the government that led to the withdrawal of checkpoints and vehicles.

E- Verifying that the Syrian Government Granted Credentials to Arab and International Media, and allowed media representatives to move freely in Syria:

41- The Syrian Minister of Information stressed that the Syrian Government granted credentials to 147 Arab and Foreign media outlets between December 2011 and January 15, 2012. 112 Media agencies entered the Syrian territories, in addition to the other 90 media outlets that already have credentials to work in Syria whose correspondents are already working on the ground.

42- The Mission followed-up on this issue, and confirmed that there are 36 Arab and Foreign news media registered and some journalists are present in a number of Syrian cities. The Mission received complaints that the Syrian Government issued authorizations to some media outlets to work for four days only, a duration that is barely sufficient in their view. Furthermore, the government did not allow them to be present unless their

whereabouts are known, and unless they sought another permit. They were prevented from visiting certain areas. On the other hand, the Syrian side confirmed that it grants the media permits to work for 10 days that could be renewed.

43- Reports and testimonials by some Sectors indicated that there are some restrictions imposed by the government on the movement of the media in the areas where the Opposition is active which prompted those journalists to trail the Mission in many instances to do their job.

44- A French journalist working as a correspondent for the French Channel "France 2 TV" was killed, and a Belgian journalist was injured. The Government and the Opposition exchanged accusations about the responsibility for the incident. Both parties issued Statements of condemnations. The Government established a committee to investigate the circumstances of the attack. Reports of the Mission already indicate that the French journalist died as a result of mortar attacks fired by the Opposition.

(Annex 2 includes the media outlets which were monitored and which entered Syria according to official statements).

VII. Obstacles that the Mission Faced:

A- Observers:

45- In some instances, experts who were nominated were not qualified for the job, did not have prior experience and were not able to shoulder the responsibility.

46- Some Observers underestimated the burden of the responsibility with which they were entrusted, and the importance of giving the Arab interest precedence over personal interests.

47- During field work, it was noted that some Observers were not able to face and rise to difficult situations that are an essential part of their responsibilities. By their nature, the tasks at hand call for specific qualifications and competencies by the Observer.

48- Some of the Observers who partook in the Mission are old, and some suffer health conditions that prevent them from fulfilling their duties.

- 49- 22 Observers declined fulfillment of their mission for personal reasons while others used flimsy pretexts that were not accepted by the Chief of Mission. Others had personal agendas. (Annex 3 includes the names of Observers who did not continue to work for the League of Arab States Mission of Observers).
- 50- Some Observers failed to honor their commitments and the provisions of the Oath they took. They contacted officials in their countries, transmitted an exaggerated assessment of events on the ground, and painted a very gloomy picture. This resulted in a misunderstanding and faulty assessment by those officials of the situation.
- 51- Some Observers in the Sectors demand accommodations comparable to those granted to their counterparts in Damascus, or equal financial compensation as a result of the ratings of the hotels in which they were accommodated. Absent this, they requested to stay in Damascus which a fact that does not even warrant a comment.
- 52- Precarious circumstances in some areas, apprehensions by some Observers to undertake their job under these circumstances and lack of armored vehicles and bullet proof vests for all locations adversely affected the ability of some observers to fulfill their duties.

Comments by the Chief of Mission:

- 53- Regrettably, some Observers thought that their visit to Syria was for pleasure. They were taken by surprise in view of the prevailing circumstances, their assignment to various Sectors, their confinement to stations away from the capital and other unexpected difficulties they faced.
- 54- Some Observers lacked knowledge about the region and its geography. Lack of bullet proof vests and armored vehicles negatively impacted some of the Observers.
- 55- Provocations by the Opposition or Loyalists to the regime also adversely affected some of the Observers.
- 56- Despite all of the above, the performance of many Observers was excellent and deserves to be commended and appreciated. It should be stressed performance shortcomings will be addressed and remedied with further practice and guidance, God willing.

B- Security Restrictions:

57- Despite welcoming the Mission and its Chief, and continuously stressing that no security restrictions will be imposed to hinder the movement of the Mission, the Government put in place a tight strategy to limit its access to the core areas, and keeping the Mission occupied with issues of concern to the Government. The Mission resisted this approach, and reacted in a manner that guaranteed the fulfillment of its tasks as envisaged. The Mission succeeded in overcoming the obstacles that impeded its work.

C- Means of Communication:

58- The Mission contacted the various parties through the local Syrian network comprising cellular phones and faxes. These services are at times interrupted thus impeding contacts with various groups.

59- Ten satellite (Al-Thurayya) telephones were given to the Mission. They are difficult to use inside buildings due to difficulty in receiving satellite signals. Accordingly, these phones were not used to file daily reports. Regular phone lines and faxes were used, both of which are unsecure.

60- Means of communications which were the property of regional Observers were withheld at the Jordanian borders despite requests by the Chief of Mission to the Syrian side to authorize their release and use. Even if such authorization were to be granted, the number of available units is insufficient to cover all locations and stations.

61- The Mission does not have enough walkie-talkies to facilitate communications among members of the Mission teams. The Chinese Embassy gave 10 units as a gift to the Mission. The Unites were used in three Sectors only.

62- Some areas are not serviced by internet providers. The service is unreliable in many areas, including the capital.

63- There are no vehicle mounted cameras that could facilitate the task of the Observers in dangerous areas.

D- Means of Transportation:

64- The Mission had 38 vehicles to use, 23 of which were armored, and 15 un-armored. 28 Vehicles were 4X4, and 10 sedans. The tasks entrusted

to the Mission require that its motorcade be comprised of armored 4X4 vehicles. The number of vehicles currently available to the Mission does meet the Mission requirements particularly with regard to the Mission transportation needs in critical areas.

65- In the early days of its deployment, the Mission rented cars locally to use while fulfilling its monitoring tasks. In view of the riots that the field teams encountered, car rental companies withdrew their cars in fear for their safety and the safety of their drivers.

66- The Mission also experienced shortages in the availability of drivers. The opposition refused to allow local drivers into their areas because they were considered to belong to the security services. Observers had to drive their own cars.

67- Some Observers requested to use the cars that their countries dispatched. The Chief of Mission declined this request. He distributed the cars to meet the requirements of the Sectors.

(Annex 4: An inventory list of the number of vehicles, their distribution and the names of the states that sent them).

E- Information:

68- The Mission endured a hostile media campaign which has continued un-abated since the early days of its work. Some media outlets published unfounded declarations ascribed to the Chief of Mission. They also exaggerated events to the extent of distorting the truth.

69- This type of fabricated news stories increased tension among the ranks of the Syrian people, and prompted some to undermine the reputation of the Mission and its Chief and try to abort its mandate.

VIII. Basic Requirements of the Mission:

- 100 Additional Observers, preferable young with military background.
- 30 Armored vehicles.
- Light protective vests.
- Vehicle-mounted cameras
- Modern communication equipment
- Day and night vision binoculars

IV. Assessment:

- 70- The aim of the Protocol is to protect the Syrian people by committing the Syrian Government to stop acts of violence, release the detainees and remove all armed elements from cities and residential quarters. This would be the prelude to a dialogue among Syrian parties, and the beginning of a parallel political process. Absent this scenario, the presence of the Mission will be prolonged and will not achieve the desired objectives.
- 71- The Mission concluded that there is an armed element that has not been addressed in the protocol. It is undoubtedly a development on the ground that was the direct result of the Syrian Government's forces excessive use of force which preceded the deployment of the Mission and came in response to calls for a regime change. These elements attack Syrian security forces and citizens in some sectors. The government's reaction is violent. Innocent civilians pay the ultimate price, many of whom are killed or injured.
- 72- The Mission also realized that since the early days of its deployment, the Opposition welcomed its presence and members. The presence of the Mission was assuring to citizens. They submitted their requests, despite prior apprehensions expressed by the Opposition to deal with the Mission openly justified by detentions that preceded the arrival of the Mission to Syria. The only exception to this is the period that immediately followed the last statement of the Ministerial Committee, and the tensions that began to subside gradually.
- 73- The Mission also noted that the Government responded positively by helping the Mission conclude its work successfully and alleviate any obstacles the latter may face. The Government facilitated meetings and interviews with all stakeholders. No restrictions were imposed on the Mission's freedom of movement or its meetings with Syrian citizens whether loyalists or from the Opposition.
- 74- The Mission also sensed the acute stress, injustice and oppression endured the Syrian citizens. Yet they are convinced that the Syrian crisis must be resolved peacefully, in the Arab context, and not internationalized so that they can live in peace securely, and achieve the desired reforms and changes. The Mission was informed by the Opposition, particularly in

Dar'aa , Homs, Hama and Idlib that some parties in the opposition resorted to arms as a result of the oppression and tyranny at the hands of the Regime, and the corruption that affected all sectors of society. To this list they added torture at the hands of security forces and human rights violations.

- 75- Some recent developments may lead to furthering the gap and accentuating bitterness among parties. They may entail ominous repercussions and further losses to life and property. They include bombing some buildings, freight trains carrying fuel, diesel trailers, police forces, information interests and pipelines. The free army claimed responsibility for some of these acts while armed groups belonging to the Opposition claimed responsibility for others.
- 76- The Mission faithfully implemented its mandate according to the Protocol through first-hand knowledge of events on the ground. It undertook this task with objectivity and complete independence in a manner that guarantees transparency and integrity in reporting events despite difficulties and un-disciplined conduct by some individuals.
- 77- The duration of the mandate – one month according to the Protocol is not enough for administrative preparations let alone for the completion of the work of the Mission. In 23 days, the Mission completed its work. This duration is definitely inadequate in view of the many tasks that should have been undertaken, and of the need to be present on the ground with the citizens, to observe events and live them. There have been previous experiences that lasted months and at times years.
- 78- The credibility of the Mission has been undermined in the minds of the Arab and Foreign viewers and listeners following the news in the media. Some media sources used information technologies to change the facts. It will be very difficult to undo the damage unless the mission is given political and information support. Negative aspects are unavoidable at times in missions of this nature.
- 79- The Mission arrived in Syria in the wake of sanctions imposed on the country to implement the provisions of the Protocol. It was welcomed by loyalists and opposition forces alike and by the Government as well. The question remains though, how could the Mission fulfill its mandate? It should be recalled here that the task of the Mission as provided for in the Protocol changed as a result of developments and associated violent

reactions on the ground by parties which were not addressed in the Protocol. This calls for a change in the mandate of the Mission. The starting point in this context is the need for a commitment by all parties to end all acts of violence so that the Mission can complete its mission under circumstances that assist in creating favorable conditions for the desired political process that it ultimately seeks to establish.

80- Should there be an agreement on renewing the mandate of the Mission, it must be properly equipped, provided with means of communications and transportation among others to allow it to complete its task on the ground.

81- On the other hand, any termination of the work of Mission after this short term will undermine the positive results – even if incomplete – that have been achieved so far. This may result in complete chaos on the ground given that parties are neither qualified nor ready for the political process which aims at resolving the Syrian crisis.

82- Since its establishment, the Mission has not been treated in good faith nor had positions towards it been serious. The Mission was met, even before beginning its work and the arrival of the Observers with a ferocious campaign against the League of Arab States and the Chief of the Mission. The campaign gained strength after deployment. It continues to suffer lack of political and information support necessary for the fulfillment of its mandate. If it were to continue, the objectives of the Protocol will not be met without this support, and without backing it with a view to bring the Arab solution to the crisis to a successful conclusion.

V- Recommendations:

83- In view of the above, and of the results so far achieved as stipulated in the Protocol to which the Syrian Government is committed I recommend:

- Providing administrative and logistical support to the mission to enable it to undertake its tasks ; the Mission must be also given information and political support to help in the creation of a political atmosphere that is conducive to the fulfillment of the mandate'

- The need to expedite the political process and launch national dialogue in parallel to the work of the Mission. This will help in creating an atmosphere of confidence that would contribute to the success of the Mission mandate and prevent unnecessary and unproductive extensions to its duration.

Signed

Chief of Mission General
Mohamed Ahmed
Moustafa Al-Dabbi

Enclosures: Four Annexes