



Statement by H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, Permanent Representative of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, at the 25th Special Session of the Human Rights Council, “On the deteriorating situation of human rights in the Syrian Arab Republic, and the recent situation in Aleppo.”
Geneva, 21 October 2016

Mr. President,

The Delegation of the Holy See expresses its gratitude to the Members States of the Council for requesting this special session to address the tragic and prolonged crisis in Syria. The gruesome facts of this conflict, well into its sixth year, that it has brutally taken hundreds of thousands of lives, especially innocent women and children, that it has forced even more people to flee for their lives, that it is destroying societies and cities, should be sufficient motivation for the International Community to renew its commitment to finding a peaceful and durable solution.

The political, social and economic, complexity underlying the situation in Syria, which also concerns the stability of the Middle East and beyond, must not be a barrier for the International Community to address urgently the pressing need of finding a solution through diplomatic dialogue. The ongoing conflict has only produced a disastrous humanitarian situation, leaving many without the basic needs of food, water and medicines. The human rights situation in Aleppo is one among many examples where the humanitarian situation is dire. An effective response will begin with an immediate ceasefire, allowing humanitarian assistance through safe corridors to be provided for victims and the continued and committed “formal and informal” negotiations for a peaceful resolution.

Mr. President,

My Delegation would like to conclude by echoing the appeal of last October 12th of Pope Francis: “I want to underline and reiterate my closeness to all the victims of the inhuman conflict in Syria. It is with a sense of urgency that I renew my appeal to leaders, imploring with all my strength, to take steps for an immediate ceasefire, to be imposed and respected at least for the time necessary to evacuate the civilians, especially children, who are still trapped by the cruel bombings.”

Thank you, Mr. President.