



THE
LUTHERAN
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FEDERATION

Office of the
General Secretary

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LWF STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN SYRIA

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has witnessed with great pain and deep concern the continued deterioration of the situation in Syria. Our direct involvement in the Za'atri refugee camp in Jordan—the second largest refugee camp in the world today —has brought our attention to the plight and the suffering of Syria's civilian population, which has been and still is exposed to brutal violence. Over the last months, the violence seems to have spiraled into new dimensions of brutality and horror.

The alleged use of chemical weapons in the conflict represents such a new dimension. It is for good reasons that the international community has agreed that there should be no place for chemical weapons in our world, and we want to repudiate the use of such weapons in the strongest possible terms.

We deplore the fact that the inability of the international community today to work together in ways that are conducive for global peace has partly resulted in the failure to find a political and diplomatic solution to the conflict in Syria. Foreign national interests have prevailed over the interests of the Syrian population. The prevalence of conflicting national security interests of some nations has resulted in a painful paralysis within the United Nations (UN) Security Council. This critical and dangerous situation has made Syria, the Middle East and even the entire world more insecure. The prospects for durable security have become more volatile, putting the overall respect for human rights in a precarious situation.

At this crucial juncture in history we want to issue our firm call to those governments considering military options:

- To refrain from any military action as a means to address the complex matters at stake in Syria. Never has a fire been put out by adding more fuel to it. A punitive military strike, such as the one currently being considered by some governments, does not lead to any durable solution. Instead, it will only exacerbate extremism and violence, thus adding to the further escalation of instability in Syria and the entire Middle East, if not the whole world.

Similarly, we want to issue our firm call to the international community:

- To work together through the United Nations systems and instruments in order to support efforts for a durable process of resolving conflict without the use of violence, and a political process to respond to the crisis in Syria. In the short

term, this means waiting for the United Nations inspectors' report regarding the alleged use of chemical weapons before considering any further option or action.

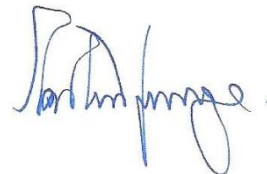
The difficulty of the international community to cope with the challenges posed by the developments in Syria points to the urgent need of reform of the systems and instruments of the United Nations so that they indeed serve humanity as it strives to live together in justice, peace and dignity.

In this regard we call upon the international community:

- To work further on the necessary reforms of the UN Security Council, so that it is better equipped to respond to the challenges that humanity faces today. Security in today's world cannot be designed and pursued anymore as a negotiation for national interests between a few UN members. Neither can security in today's world be dissociated from the social, economic and ecological challenges that the human family faces altogether. Instead of bypassing the UN Security Council, we call upon the international community to ensure its effectiveness so that it responds to the complexity of both the specific situation of Syria, and the wider security challenges in the world. Looking at the Syrian refugees and at the suffering civilian population in Syria, the LWF is convinced that a reformed UN Security Council must work in particular for the security of those who are deprived of their rights and who bear the burden of conflict and violence.



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