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1 December, 2016

Open letter to EU and EU Member States' Leaders

We, the undersigned European parliamentarians, call on the EU leaders and EU heads of governments and states to urgently and at the highest-level call and work for an emergency special session of the United Nations General Assembly, with the aim of appointing a UN Special Prosecutor for the atrocity crimes committed during the Syrian conflict.

Given the humanitarian urgency in Syria, where horrific crimes continue with complete impunity, **it is time for the EU and its 28 member states to pursue innovative approaches that will help raise the price for continued atrocities in Syria.**

Each day we reach an unacceptable new low in Syria, where attacks on civilians, hospitals, schools, rescue workers and humanitarian convoys have become the “new normal”. We acknowledge that the EU and its member states repeatedly have said that those responsible for these atrocity crimes must be held accountable and have called on the UN Security Council to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court. However, in the absence of any progress in the UN Security Council and in response to Russia’s repeated vetoes of meaningful action, we firmly believe that the EU and its member states, acting upon the **Council Conclusions** of 17 October 2016, **should now engage with determination and ambition to work for the establishment of a UN Special Prosecutor** –an independent investigative mechanism that would **be established by the UN General Assembly and mandated to investigate atrocity crimes in Syria**, with a view to prepare cases for future criminal prosecutions without prejudging what court’s would eventually hear and prosecute the cases .

The international community has spent enough time drafting statements calling for accountability, which have all gone unheeded. We believe that a UN General Assembly emergency session and the adoption of a resolution establishing a UN Special Prosecutor is worth fighting for. This is something concrete that we can do for victims in Syria and something that would send a strong message to those who commit war crimes today that they will face criminal prosecutions tomorrow.

As elected parliamentarians, we also commit to using our own leverage and to leave no stone unturned in our own pursuit to make this happen. Syria’s victims deserve no less.

Sincerely,

ADAKTUSSON Lars
BENIFEI Brando
BONI Michal
BULLMANN Udo



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