

**Statement by Msgr. John Putzer, Chargé d’Affaires, a.i.**

**Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other**

**International Organizations in Geneva**

**at the 40th Session of the Universal Periodic Review**

**Syrian Arab Republic**

*Geneva, 24 January 2022*

Mr. President,

The Holy See welcomes the Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic on the occasion of the presentation of its third National Report to the Universal Periodic Review.

The Holy See believes that “political and constitutional reforms are required for the country to be reborn, but the imposition of sanctions should not strike directly at everyday life, in order to provide a glimmer of hope to the general populace, increasingly caught in the grip of poverty.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

My Delegation would like to present the following recommendations:

1. To criminalize, both in law and practice, the use of torture and all forms of cruel, degrading, or inhuman treatment or punishment, as well as combat sexual violence.
2. To protect children from the impact of the conflict and from child labour, as well as guarantee their access to quality and inclusive education.
3. To redouble efforts to assist migrants and refugees, including by introducing alternative and simple identity determination procedures to address the challenges faced by displaced Syrians in accessing civil documentation in the place of displacement.
4. To involve fully all religious and ethnic groups in a transparent and inclusive negotiating process with a view to building a peaceful future.
5. To ensure access to and the independence of the judicial system in order to provide redress for victims.
6. To place a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, with a view to its eventual abolition.

Thank you, Mr. President.

1. Pope Francis, Address to the Members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, 10 January 2022. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)