

## News story: Syria resolution: explanation of vote

The United Kingdom welcomes the adoption of Resolution 2401 and in particular we applaud your work, together with Sweden as penholders.

But this is not a moment for self-congratulation. It's taken us far too long to agree this resolution. While we have been arguing over commas, Asad's planes have been killing more civilians in their homes and in their hospitals, imposing unbearable suffering. And despite the amount of time we have spent in this chamber over many years discussing the devastating humanitarian crisis, we have still not been able to achieve the peace and security that the Syrian people so desperately need.

As the conflict enters its eighth year, the situation in Eastern Ghouta and elsewhere in the country is far worse than we ever thought imaginable. The barbarity and depravity of the Asad regime shows no limits.

We must never lose sight of the fact that the pictures we see and the stories we hear from this comfortable chamber are the agonising reality for hundreds of thousands of civilians. For men, women and children who are being forced to eke out an existence underground to avoid being killed by a regime that commits daily atrocities against its own people.

I've heard some say that the information about the situation in Eastern Ghouta is propaganda. A doctor in Eastern Ghouta, having heard these comments, said this morning: "amid the chaos and the bombs, it is the not being believed that almost hurts the most. We are dying here every day and when people say that they do not believe us, that is pain upon pain."

This isn't propaganda; it is a living hell for hundreds of thousands of residents of Eastern Ghouta.

As we have repeated many times, the intentional and systematic targeting of civilians and civilian objects not only violates international humanitarian law, it is a war crime. And the UK will be unrelenting in our campaign to ensure accountability.

By voting in favour of this resolution today, we are standing up and saying that we will not stand by and let this happen. In the face of escalating violence, devastation and suffering, we must all now take practical steps to improve the situation for those living and dying in a hell of one man's making. This resolution demonstrates our resolve to put a stop to the brutal violence. It demands all parties cease hostilities without delay. That means right now; immediately.

The role and responsibility of this Council does not end with the passage of this resolution. Quite the opposite. All UN Member States, but particularly Council Members, must now take responsibility for ensuring that this resolution is implemented in full, without delay.

The resolution calls for the Council to review implementation within 15 days, but we must all be active in supporting and monitoring implementation from the moment we step out of this room.

If we see any of the parties violate the terms of this resolution, we must bring it back to the Council immediately.

Those with any influence over the Syrian regime – Russia, Iran – have a particular responsibility to ensure that this ceasefire is respected in full and without delay, that all sieges are ended and that humanitarian aid is delivered. This is the absolute minimum that the people of Syria deserve.

As much as we welcome the passing of this resolution today, it is only a small step.

Just as one aid convoy in three months to a besieged area cannot even begin to address the humanitarian crisis, one resolution alone cannot solve the situation in Syria. We must do everything in our collective power to ensure that this resolution is effective in delivering for those whom we have failed to date. And we must all send a clear message to the Asad regime: abandon your attempt to pursue a military strategy; stop fighting and engage seriously in UN-led political talks in Geneva.

In conclusion, let me reiterate the words of my Foreign Secretary. The entire world is looking at the Asad regime, Russia and Iran: you hold the keys not only to the end of this obscene conflict, but to the safety, humanitarian aid and basic medical treatment that is being denied to millions of people right now in Syria. For the mother giving birth underground in Eastern Ghouta, for the child unable to learn as schools are closed for yet another day, for the doctor battling airstrikes to treat patients in Idlib, all of us sitting here today owe it to the people of Syria to work together, with renewed and unyielding energy, to achieve a political solution that will bring peace to the Syrian people.

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## **Labour Department highly concerned about fatal work accident that happened today**

The Labour Department (LD) is highly concerned about the work accident that happened at On Yam Estate, Kwai Chung this afternoon (February 24), in which a male worker, while carrying out lift maintenance work, was suspected to have been trapped to death by the lift, and another worker was injured. The LD is saddened by the death and injury of the workers in the accident and expresses its deepest sympathy to the victim's family and the injured worker.

The LD's spokesman said, "We commenced immediate on-site investigation as soon as we were notified of the accident and issued suspension notice to the contractor involved to suspend the maintenance work of the lift involved. The contractor cannot resume the lift maintenance work until the LD is satisfied that measures to abate the relevant risks have been taken."

The spokesman added, "We will complete investigation as soon as possible to identify the cause of the accident, ascertain the liability of the duty holders and recommend improvement measures. We will take actions pursuant to the law if there is any violation of the work safety legislation."

The general duty provisions of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance require employers to provide safe working environments, safe plant and safe systems of work for their employees. Those who contravene the above provisions are liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for six months.

In regard to today's accident, the LD will issue a Work Safety Alert through its website and email, giving a brief account of the accident concerned to duty holders, workers' unions, professional bodies of safety practitioners and others, and reminding the industry of the importance of following safety precautionary measures to prevent recurrence of similar accidents.

The LD will also remind the employer concerned of the liability for employees' compensation under the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, assist family members of the deceased to claim employees' compensation and closely follow up on the case. For those with financial difficulties, the LD will assist them to apply for appropriate emergency funds. Subject to the needs and wishes of family members of the deceased, the LD will also liaise with the Social Welfare Department for financial or other assistance.

For the sake of securing the safety and health of employees at work, the LD appeals to employers to provide plant and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health. Employees should co-operate with their employers, adopt all safety measures and use personal protective equipment provided properly to avoid endangering their own work safety and that of other workers.

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## **Fatal traffic accident in Western District**

Police are investigating a fatal traffic accident in Western District in the small hours today (February 24) in which a 52-year-old man died.

At about 5.03am, a private car driven by the 52-year-old man was travelling along Connaught Road West Flyover westbound. When approaching near

Sutherland Street, it reportedly rammed into barriers.

The man was trapped inside the car and was rescued by fireman. He was rushed to Queen Mary Hospital in unconscious state and was certified dead at 3.43pm.

Investigation by the Special Investigation Team of Traffic, Hong Kong Island is underway.

Anyone who witnessed the accident or has any information to offer is urged to contact the investigating officers on 3660 6849.

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## **Missing woman in Tsing Yi located**

A woman who went missing in Tsing Yi has been located.

Tong Sun-yuk, aged 24, went missing after she was last seen on Nga Ying Chau Street on February 21 afternoon. Her family made a report to Police on February 22.

The woman was located on Cheung Chau today (February 24) afternoon. She sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

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## **Cluster of Parainfluenza Virus Type 3 cases in PMH**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Princess Margaret Hospital made the following announcement today (February 24):

Five patients (three male and two female, aged 43 to 74) of a mixed medical ward had presented with fever and respiratory symptoms since February 16. Appropriate viral tests had been arranged for the patients and all of them were confirmed positive to Parainfluenza Virus Type 3. Two male and two female patients are being treated under isolation with stable condition, while one male patient passed away on February 20 due to his own underlying illness.

Admission to the ward has been suspended and restricted visiting has been imposed. Infection control measures have already been stepped up

according to established guidelines. All other patients in the ward are under close surveillance.

The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.