

## Open letter to Bashar Al-Assad, President of Syria

Mr President,

The martyrdom of the Syrian people afflicts humanity. Each day, the dead join the dead, the wounded join the wounded and destruction joins destruction. Today, Syria, this beautiful country whose history is a lesson of greatness for humanity, is in the process of disappearing.

Humanity is scared. It wants to help but does not know how, it calls out for help for the Syrian people but nobody comes. The large States are caught up in their calculations; the UN counts the blocked resolutions. To the lamentations of some, it adds its own, to their hesitations it responds with its own.

During this time, in your country the number of victims is growing at a staggering average of 150 deaths per day. Tomorrow, as always, we will know that we were off the mark, as the wounded will die for lack of care and those arrested will disappear. We will find them tomorrow in secret mass graves. There are also the refugees in neighbouring countries, whose number is growing by the hour and we know that many will not return to their country for quite a while. What took place in Algeria, in Iraq, in Libya, in Yemen, in Bahrain, is happening in Syria with a stronger intensity, with an even more terrible ferocity.

All this you know, Mr President, for you receive masses of daily reports on your desk. Reading them may perhaps frighten you, or perhaps are you only smiling.

But don't cultivate illusions: the help you receive from certain countries, directly such as Russia or China which are blocking the Security Council's action, or indirectly through silence, cannot legitimate your acts, or reduce their horror. Sooner or later you will have to respond on them in front of the Syrian or international justice.

Mr President, the situation seems hopeless, but there is however a simple way to save the Syrian people: resign. This is the only real solution for everyone, for the Syrian people, for you, for your family, for your friends, for the region and for the world. Everything is in your hands.

Other leaders have done when their countries were in extreme danger. In Algeria, President Chadli and President Zeroual did it. Mubarak also. And even President Abdullah Saleh. Around the world, heads of state managed to withdraw so as to protect their people and their country.

Announce your resignation and call the parties to negotiate a transition towards free elections under the auspices of the UN. Negotiate your departure, with your family, as the cunning Saleh managed to do. If the Russians and the Chinese refuse to welcome you, go to Algeria, Algerians have a long memory, they will for sure remember that Syria gave hospitality to their hero, Emir Abdelkader, when he was defeated by France and authorized in 1852 by his friend Napoleon III to move to Syria, where he was joined by thousands of Algerians fleeing French colonization.

Apart from this solution, there is but one for you, though unfortunate for your family : death as Saddam Hussein or Gaddafi. Or life in prison in a sanitized cell in The Hague.

Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013

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