

Resolution 2138 (2016)¹

The situation in Aleppo

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly is appalled by the tragic situation in Aleppo, a Syrian city that has been partially under the control of rebel fighters and jihadist groups since 2012 and has become the epicentre of the Syrian war, now in its sixth year.
2. Throughout one of the worst humanitarian crises since the Second World War, over 300 000 Syrians have lost their lives, more than 6.5 million people have been displaced inside the country and some 4.8 million have sought refuge in neighbouring countries. About 70% of the population are without access to drinking water, one in three people is unable to meet his or her basic food needs, more than 2 million children are out of school, and four out of five people live in poverty.
3. The Assembly refers in particular to its [Resolution 1878 \(2012\)](#) and [Recommendation 2026 \(2013\)](#) on the situation in Syria, [Resolution 2016 \(2014\)](#) and [Recommendation 2055 \(2014\)](#) “Threats against humanity posed by the terrorist group known as ‘IS’: violence against Christians and other religious or ethnic communities” and [Resolution 2107 \(2016\)](#) on a stronger European response to the Syrian refugee crisis.
4. Since late March 2016, there has been a marked upsurge in the fighting, with indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks on civilian-inhabited areas, particularly through aerial bombardments. Since 21 September 2016, some of the heaviest bombardments have been inflicted on eastern Aleppo by Russian and Syrian forces.
5. The Assembly firmly condemns the indiscriminate attacks on civilians, including on medical workers and hospital facilities, blocked humanitarian convoys, enforced disappearances, summary executions and other crimes committed by all parties to the conflict, which have left Syrians in a state of despair and violence at unprecedented levels in Aleppo. It is particularly concerned about the tragic situation of children in Aleppo, which has not received United Nations humanitarian aid since early July 2016, as many schools and hospitals have been hit (by Russian and Syrian aerial bombardments) and many children left to die.
6. The Assembly notes that the conflict has drawn in numerous rebel groups, opposition figures, terrorist elements, international powers and religious factions, and has even strengthened Daesh and other jihadist groups, in particular the Al-Nusra Front, now known as “Jabhat Fateh al-Sham”.
7. The Assembly deeply regrets that the political process has stalled despite intense negotiations, for example in the framework of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG), several multilateral meetings and international conferences.
8. Fully supporting the United Nations Special Envoy for Syria, Mr Staffan de Mistura, in his efforts to create the conditions for the resumption of intra-Syrian talks, in line with United Nations Security Council [Resolutions 2254 \(2015\)](#) and [2268 \(2016\)](#) and the Action Group for Syria’s Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012, the Assembly:
 - 8.1. calls for the immediate implementation of the ceasefire agreement of September 2016 and an immediate end to all aerial bombardments of Aleppo by Syrian and Russian forces;

1. *Text adopted by the Standing Committee*, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 25 November 2016 (see [Doc. 14197](#), report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, rapporteur: Mr Jean-Claude Mignon).
See also [Recommendation 2096 \(2016\)](#).



- 8.2. calls on all parties, in particular the Syrian authorities and their allies, to promptly allow humanitarian organisations unhindered and sustained access to conflict areas, including across conflict lines and borders;
 - 8.3. condemns all human rights violations and abuses committed by the Syrian regime and its allies, by Daesh and other terrorist groups designated as such by the United Nations, and by all other parties to the conflict, including rebels and opposition groups;
 - 8.4. strongly supports the global coalition in countering Daesh in Syria and Iraq;
 - 8.5. calls for all breaches of international humanitarian law and human rights law, some of which may constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity, to be brought to justice, including, as appropriate, before the International Criminal Court;
 - 8.6. condemns the use of chemical weapons, which has been proved by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons–United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism;
 - 8.7. reiterates its message that the Syrian refugee crisis is the responsibility not only of neighbouring States and of Europe but of the international community as a whole;
 - 8.8. encourages all States to respond positively to the appeals launched by the relevant agencies of the United Nations, support the humanitarian organisations and Syria's neighbouring countries that are providing assistance to refugees, and open up humanitarian corridors for the admission and resettlement of Syrian refugees;
 - 8.9. supports the United Nations Human Rights Council's decision to request the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic to conduct a special comprehensive, independent inquiry into the events in Aleppo, and identify all those responsible for alleged human rights abuses and violations of international human rights law;
 - 8.10. supports the European Union in imposing restrictive measures against Syria that target Syrian individuals and entities supporting the regime, as long as the repression continues.
9. The Assembly fears that the escalation of violence and the magnitude of the crisis could lead to even deeper conflicts in Syria and in the whole region, in particular in Iraq, and represent a threat to worldwide security. It urges the Russian Federation, the United States of America and all parties involved in the conflict to search for a common position and take joint international action.
10. Finally, the Assembly stresses that an inclusive Syrian-led political process leading to a genuine political transition must meet the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people and enable them to determine their own future independently and democratically, through free and fair elections, after the country has been stabilised.