

*Thursday, 7 July 2011 - Strasbourg*

*Explanations of vote:*

*Pino Arlacchi (S&D), in writing* . – I voted for this important resolution because the implementation of significant political and social reforms in the Arab countries is now imperative. In Syria the escalation of brutal repression against peaceful protesters has to stop. With this text we call on the Syrian authorities and President Bashar al-Assad to put an end to the massacre of innocent people and to engage in an immediate and genuine political process in order to contribute to a democratic transition in the country.

I also want to stress our serious concern about the increasingly bad humanitarian situation in Yemen and in Bahrain. The unconditional release of all peaceful demonstrators, including political activists, journalists and human rights defenders is a matter of priority. The national dialogue launched by King Hamad in Bahrain can produce effective results only if the participation of all political forces is granted. For these reasons we call on the political leaderships of these countries to immediately meet their commitments by opening a constructive political dialogue involving all democratic political parties, movements and civil society representation.

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