

Statement attributable to the Head of the UN Supervision Mission in Syria, General Robert Mood

There has been an intensification of armed violence across Syria over the past 10 days. This escalation is limiting our ability to observe, verify, report as well as assist in local dialogue and stability projects - basically impeding our ability to carry out our mandate.

The lack of willingness by the Parties to seek a peaceful transition, and the push towards advancing military positions is increasing the losses on both sides: innocent civilians, men women and children are being killed every day. It is also posing significant risks to our observers.

In this high risk situation, UNSMIS is suspending its activities. UN observers will not be conducting patrols and will stay in their locations until further notice. Engagement with the Parties will be restricted.

This suspension will be reviewed on a daily basis. Operations will resume when we see the situation fit for us to carry out our mandated activities.

Let me be very clear, UNSMIS is committed to the people of Syria. We stand ready to work with all Parties to assist in bringing an end to the violence and promote political dialogue. A return to normal operations remains our objective.

Damascus, 16 June 2012