

CSSR CONSULTATION IN GENEVA

*Summary of
meeting outcomes*

– *Geneva*

CSSR Geneva

January 20-24, 2020

CONTENTS

PREFACE	1
1. TRANSCRIPT OF REMARKS MADE BY SYRIAN PARTICIPANTS TO SE PEDERSEN	2
2. KEY JOINT MESSAGES FROM CSSR PARTICIPANTS TO ISSG MEMBER-STATES	3

PREFACE

The Office of the Special Envoy for Syria (OSE-Syria) convened consultations of the Civil Society Support Room (CSSR) in Geneva between 22 and 24 January 2020. During this period, Syrian participants engaged with one another, Special Envoy (SE) Geir Pedersen and Deputy SE Khawla Matar, and International Syria Support Group (ISSG) member-states. Throughout the various discussions, participants focused on a number of issues, including humanitarian, human rights, and economic issues and the role that civil

society could play in efforts to resolve the Syrian conflict in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015). At the end of their meeting, participants delivered remarks to the SE and Deputy SE on the future role the CSSR process could play in the UN-facilitated Syrian peace process. Their message to the ISSG member-states laid out the urgent and wide-ranging steps that the ISSG needs to take to bring peace to Syria and its people.

1. TRANSCRIPT OF REMARKS MADE BY SYRIAN PARTICIPANTS TO SE PEDERSEN

Ladies and gentlemen,

We believe that Mr Pedersen, Dr Matar, Mr Pedulla and everyone knows the extent of pressure at this stage. We know with certainty the awareness of the SE and the team as a whole of how important it is to meet under this umbrella with this group of civil actors and influencers as individuals or institutions, and it is clear to you the urgent need to activate the role of this Room outside the framework of "discussion and debate only" and the need for a broader role than advising the SE.

Today we are meeting after a long interruption of the meetings of this CSSR and the launching of the work of the Constitutional Committee, and after the clear shrinking of the civil space in Syria at the level of effectiveness and influence, on the geographical and access level, and on other levels as well.

We find that a wide range of tasks and responsibilities fall on this platform, with its advanced and active role in many local and international forums as a result of the support and endorsement of the SE, and as a result of the unique nature of this umbrella that brings harmoniously together the different, diverse Syrian mix.

Based on these important roles, the attendees agreed on a number of points that give you a picture of the advanced role that we see this group has a great opportunity to play in order to fill the many gaps in the wider political process.

First:

"We suggest a meeting at the end of March 2020 to conduct a deep evaluation of the CSSR process and to enrich the CSSR experience. In preparation for this meeting, we propose to share all existing reports and documents with all CSSR participants in all rounds, and for the themes covered by this meeting to include;

- ◆ A review of the CSSR's Terms of Reference.
- ◆ The development of future strategies and interventions.
- ◆ The discussion of common societal values.

We believe it would be extremely beneficial for the OSE-Syria to also participate in the evaluation process."

Second: on the potential roles the CSSR could play in 2020:

- ◆ It could influence the political process, including the Constitutional Committee.
- ◆ It could communicate CSSR outcomes to the wider Syrian civil society.
- ◆ It could participate in knowledge creation and dissemination
- ◆ It could collectively advocate for humanitarian and civil society issues and priorities.
- ◆ It could continue to build trust among participants"

2. KEY JOINT MESSAGES FROM CSSR PARTICIPANTS TO ISSG MEMBER-STATES

The CSSR wishes to:

- ◆ Reaffirm that the economic situation of Syrians has become catastrophic for many reasons. Therefore, it is necessary to step up the emergency humanitarian response on all Syrian soil, in addition to activating exemptions in the sanctions programmes for humanitarian reasons to prevent any unintended humanitarian consequences.
- ◆ Support the CSSR in submitting to the Constitutional Committee suggestions that reflect the desire of the Syrian people to see constitutional reform take place.
- ◆ Ensure a safe legal environment for civil society across Syria and in host countries in a manner that preserves a working space for it in the present and future Syria by supporting its roles and building its capacities across all sectors.
- ◆ Protect Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries from forced return through various means, and assist internally displaced Syrians to return to their places of origin and provide them with the necessary support to do so.
- ◆ Request donors and concerned governments to commit to engaging civil society in identifying needs and priorities, and in planning and implementing projects and programmes in a balanced manner among all Syria's regions and in refugee host countries.
- ◆ Provide adequate and necessary support to the health and education sectors to ensure the availability of equipment, the training of personnel, and the rehabilitation of health and education facilities.
- ◆ Provide healthcare and economic assistance to the wounded and those affected by the war through special programmes.
- ◆ Immediately ascertain the fate of the detainees, abductees, missing and forcibly disappeared and ensure their immediate release without preconditions. Access to all conflict parties' prisons and detention centres in Syria must be given to the ICRC and Red Crescent.
- ◆ Commit to protecting the property, and movable and immovable assets of Syrians in all of Syria and assisting in the recovery of these assets by helping them to obtain the necessary legal documentation.
- ◆ Put an end to all hostilities and revive the political process.

CSSR, 2020

The Civil Society Support Room (CSSR) was established in January 2016 by the Office of the Special Envoy for Syria as a mechanism to consult with a broad and diverse range of civil society actors. Through the CSSR, civil society actors can meet, interact and provide their insights and ideas to the Office of the Special Envoy, relevant United Nations actors, as well as international stakeholders.

This mechanism aims at rendering the UN mediation process more inclusive.

The overall supervision and guidance of the CSSR rests with the OSE-Syria. NOREF Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution and Swiss Peace foundation have been mandated by the OSE to provide methodological expertise, operational and technical support to the process.

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the UN standpoint.

CONTACT

CSSR Team

Email address:
contact@cssrweb.org

www.cssrweb.org