

# SIDE EVENT ON THE MARGINS OF THE BRUSSELS CONFERENCE

---

**On supporting the Future  
of Syria and the Region**

– *Brussels*

CSSR Brussels

June 25-30, 2020

---

# CONTENTS

---

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. JOINT MESSAGE OF CSSR PARTICIPANTS DURING THE OPENING SESSION OF THE BRUSSELS IV CONFERENCE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. JOINT MESSAGES BY CSSR PARTICIPANTS ON THE MARGINS OF BRUSSELS CONFERENCE IV TO THE UN SPECIAL ENVOY FOR SYRIA AND THE EU HIGH REPRESENTATIVE</b>	<b>4</b>

---

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

On the margins of the fourth Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region, which took place from 25 to 30 June 2020, the UN Office of the Special Envoy for Syria (OSE-Syria) and the European External Action Service (EEAS) co-hosted a virtual side event for Syrian civil society actors between 25 and 30 June 2020. The side event aimed at providing a high-level advocacy opportunity for civil society actors to raise issues of concern and priority regarding the Syrian conflict.

Following closed-door discussions among the Syrian Civil Society Support Room (CSSR) participants from various geographical areas of the country, the

participants presented a number of joint advocacy messages to the UN Special Envoy for Syria, Geir Pedersen, and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Josep Borrell. The Syrian participants then sent three representatives to deliver remarks on behalf of the group to the opening session of the Brussels Conference. Both the joint advocacy messages and the remarks to the conference reflected what the participants saw as the basic requirements that the UN-facilitated Syrian peace process needed to fulfil.

.

---

# 1. JOINT MESSAGE OF CSSR PARTICIPANTS DURING THE OPENING SESSION OF THE BRUSSELS IV CONFERENCE

---

Hence, the representatives of Syrian civil society have a strong sense of responsibility for its vision and role, and we also look to the northern Mediterranean region with optimism. You have experienced the cruelty of war and the happiness of peace, and we believe that this allows you to understand our country's reality through the creed of creative solidarity.

As for the future of our country and the region, and despite a hard reality, hundreds of thousands of activists and civic actors are building and developing personal and collective experiences, theoretical knowledge and practical tools that reduce this constant loss of life, resources and positive social structures.

Committed to civic values and to the profound interests of the population, these actors are integrating this vision into constructive policies and are confident that the main entry point for all of this is the provision of support to an inclusive political solution, shifting the efforts from investing in conflict to investing in a solution, and we trust that you share this approach with us. We are also interested in presenting the following list of common points for the current phase:

1. We believe that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civic and Political Rights are key reference points for civic work in Syria.
2. We believe that a just and comprehensive political solution based on UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2254 is the main entry point for ensuring the future of Syria – a just and comprehensive future that includes all Syrian citizens within the country's territorial integrity and guarantees the withdrawal of all occupying and foreign forces from all Syrian territory, including the occupied Golan Heights.
3. We demand the release of all detainees, abductees and kidnapped persons, and that all parties should help to uncover the fate of all missing persons.
4. To ensure a just and prosperous future for Syria, we need a safe, voluntary and dignified return of all refugees and displaced persons to their homes of origin, while ensuring their rights are secure in a safe and neutral environment.
5. We are aware of the depth of the economic crisis that Syrians are exposed to both inside and outside Syria, and that the Syrian economy is on the verge of disaster. We are, therefore, working to avoid the humanitarian consequences of this crisis and to ensure that all the people's needs are serviced through all modality options with optimal direct action. We demand that all civilians be spared from the impact of sanctions and restrictive measures, and we demand that all humanitarian exemptions be put into effect to ensure the greatest possible humanitarian access to all Syrians wherever they are, and to ensure the transparency of such access.

These are the values that drive our public service engagement and stimulate our relations with Syrians both inside and outside our country, and that is our agenda that we have developed through our continuous dialogue in the CSSR, in our meetings here with you and in other consultations. When we think of our lists of friends and allies, we would like to say that these are open lists that welcome any international efforts that make Syria's peaceful future

possible, just and responsive to human rights; that ensures that the conflict is stopped; and that makes the eastern Mediterranean a real partner in international peacebuilding.

Our humble request is for all interested parties to join forces to plant the seeds of hope and dignity instead of allowing the destruction that is destroying our country to continue.

## 2. JOINT MESSAGES BY CSSR PARTICIPANTS ON THE MARGINS OF BRUSSELS CONFERENCE IV TO THE UN SPECIAL ENVOY FOR SYRIA AND THE EU HIGH REPRESENTATIVE

---

1. We are committed to international human rights law and the various UN-issued treaties and conventions on political and civil rights, and we wish to adopt them as the framework of civil society work in Syria
  2. We believe that the fair and comprehensive political solution based on UNSC 2254 is the main guarantor of a fair and inclusive future in Syria that includes all Syrians within its unified territory, and for the departure of all occupying and foreign militias from all Syrian lands, including the occupied Golan Heights.
  3. We demand the release of all detainees and abductees and the disclosure of the fate of the forcibly disappeared from all sides of the conflict.
  4. To guarantee a bright and just future for Syria, we need the voluntary, safe and dignified return of all refugees and IDPs to their original homes while guaranteeing their rights within a safe and impartial social and political environment.
  5. We are aware of the economic crisis faced by Syrians both inside and outside the country; therefore, we are working to avoid the negative humanitarian impact of this crisis and guarantee the delivery of basic needs through all available, direct and feasible methods. We demand that civilians should be spared from all sanctions and unfair restrictions, and that exemption for humanitarian needs are activated for all Syrians in a transparent manner, regardless of their location.
-

## **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](mailto:contact@cssrweb.org)

[www.cssrweb.org](http://www.cssrweb.org)