

CSSR REGIONAL OUTREACH

– *Gaziantep*

Mission Summary Report

CSSR Gaziantep

18-20 July 2022

MISSION SUMMARY

The OSE-Syria Civil society Support Room (CSSR) conducted a regional outreach mission with Syrian civil society to Türkiye from 18 to 20 July 2022 in Gaziantep. These regional visits aim to revive direct communication with actors from the Syrian civil society and share updates related to the CSSR's work and the political process in a broader sense.

In Gaziantep, the team – comprised of OSE-Syria and its implementing partners - held 24 meetings with a total of 60 civil society interlocutors located in Türkiye and inside Syria which included organizations and networks working on humanitarian aid, development, peace building, women's issues, human rights in addition to several Syrian think tanks.

These exchanges were important for the OSE-Syria in order to strengthen their understanding of the perspectives from diverse Syrian civil society actors on key topics, relevant to the political process.

Syrian interlocutors briefed on the humanitarian situation in northwestern Syria (NWS), especially protection concerns for women and children in internally displaced persons' camps and the importance of the continuation of cross-border aid delivery into Syria. The team exchanged views on the implementation of the April 2022 amnesty decree, and on several other topics, including on civic space, women rights, youth, housing, property and land rights, the challenges facing Syrians residing in neighboring host countries, in addition to discussions on administrative decentralization and potential opportunities for working on early recovery among other topics; with the view to promoting a comprehensive political solution, in line with security council resolution 2254 (2015).

The OSE-Syria team briefed the interlocutors on the recent developments of the political process, including on the constitutional committee, the detainees, abductees and missing persons file, humanitarian assistance and early recovery as well as on the CSSR activities.

Some key recommendations from civil society organizations regarding the inclusion of civil society in the political process:

- ◆ Called for a sustainable solution to the Syrian crisis in line with UNSCR2254 and for a sustainable ceasefire;
 - ◆ Expressed concern at possible military escalation in NWS and risk of further displacement and humanitarian suffering;
 - ◆ Called for OSE-Syria to work on other tracks in parallel with the constitutional committee;
 - ◆ OSE-Syria should continue to shed light and work for the release of detainees and missing persons in Syria, and support current discussions on establishing a mechanism to reveal their fate;
 - ◆ Called for accountability mechanisms in line with international law with regards to the crimes committed across the Syrian conflict;
 - ◆ Importance of working on achieving progress on less controversial issues that could lead to success stories, which then could benefit the political process at large. They flagged in particular the issues of early recovery and livelihoods, support to civil society organizations, civil documentation, housing, land and property rights, and education;
 - ◆ Syrians should be part of discussions on return of refugees and internally displaced to ensure that any returns are voluntary, safe and dignified, in line with relevant international standards;
 - ◆ Called for the establishment of formal channels of input and communication between the middle third group of the constitutional committee and the broader Syrian civil society, under the support and sponsorship of OSE-Syria;
 - ◆ Called for an alternative decision-making process for the extension of the resolution on cross-border aid delivery into Syria (possibly through the UN General Assembly), towards this humanitarian life-saving mechanism not being subjected to political negotiations;
 - ◆ Stressed on the difficulties in delivering humanitarian assistance and early recovery projects within the six-months timeframe agreed upon for the extension of this resolution;
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- ◆ The need for political empowerment of women through direct engagement and participation in the CSSR and other high level fora;
- ◆ The CSSR needs to provide a space for youth to engage and communicate, in view of their crucial role in the future of Syria.

Similar outreach missions are foreseen in other host countries in the region in the coming months.

CSSR, 2022

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