

# CSSR REGIONAL OUTREACH

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– *Erbil*

## Mission Summary Report

CSSR Erbil

07<sup>th</sup>, 08<sup>th</sup> February 2023

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## MISSION SUMMARY

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The OSE-Syria Civil society Support Room (CSSR) conducted a regional outreach mission with Syrian civil society to Iraqi Kurdistan, on 07 and 08 February 2023 in Erbil. These regional visits enhance direct communication with Syrian civil society and provide an opportunity for civil society to advocate for priority concerns and for OSE to discuss regional developments and brief on efforts to advance a political solution in line with Security Council Resolution 2254.

In Erbil, Deputy Special Envoy Rochdi led the CSSR team – comprised of OSE-Syria and its implementing partners – through a series of meetings with active civil society interlocutors located inside Syria and in Iraqi Kurdistan. The team held a total of 11 bilateral meetings in addition to one group meeting with 15 civil society interlocutors who represented a diverse range of Syrian organizations and networks working on humanitarian aid, development, education, peace building, research, women’s issues and human rights.

As the mission coincided with the earthquake that hit several areas across Türkiye and Syria, its devastating impact featured prominently in the discussions, as interlocutors pleaded for rapid rescue assistance for Syrians still trapped under the rubbles and called on the Special Envoy to use his good offices to facilitate access and remove obstacles to the delivery of assistance to all affected areas. Many interlocutors also touched upon the situation on the ground including on local efforts and initiatives for aid delivery and support across conflict lines. Participants also raised the Kurdish representation in the political process, including in the Constitutional Committee, the situation in northern Aleppo, in Al Hol, Northeast Syria and civic space in the area.

## Some key recommendations from civil society organizations:

- ◆ Several interlocutors voiced concern at what they say was insufficient Kurdish representation in the CC, calling on the UN to consider adding more representatives, especially in the CC middle third.
- ◆ They called for a sustainable solution for Al-Hol Camp, including the repatriation of foreign women and children and support for initiatives to promote education and social cohesion, with the view to combating Violent Extremism and contribution to facilitating reintegration into the society.
- ◆ The need for an efficient legal mechanism to address violations to Housing, land and Property (HLP) rights.
- ◆ They advocated for the opening of more border crossings, especially for humanitarian aid delivery (eg. Yaaroubia crossing).
- ◆ Some called for more engagement of WAB members with local CSOs and for transparency about their role and contributions. They also called for a more diverse representation.
- ◆ CSOs called for more Kurdish participation in CSSR activities and meetings, preferably in-person participation but also through digital means.
- ◆ Several advocated for the continuation of the thematic working groups (TWGs), possibly through periodic online meetings, and to consult experts on relevant topics when needed.
- ◆ Interlocutors requested to have similar engagements more regularly, and to be kept updated -via email- on the latest CSSR activities and the OSE work on the political process.

### CSSR, 2023

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 interlocutors and do not necessarily reflect the UN standpoint.

### CONTACT

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