

Joint Statement

141 Syrian Civil Society Organisations Urge for Unhindered Humanitarian Access and Civilian Protection Across Syria

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

Saturday, June 24, 2017

The Syrian Network for Human Rights, founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, non-profit independent organization that is a primary source for the United Nations on all death toll-related statistics in Syria



[23 June 2017] Amid ongoing indiscriminate attacks against civilians in Daraa, Raqqa and across Syria, and as Syrians under siege suffer their longest wait for humanitarian aid, Syrian civil society are calling on International Syria Support Group (ISSG) members to carry out airdrops to break the sieges and to ensure credible monitoring and enforcement of de-escalation efforts.

In a 23 June [letter](#) to Jan Egeland, ISSG Humanitarian Task Force Chair, 141 Syrian civil society organisations and humanitarian aid groups stressed the urgency of the humanitarian access situation in Syria, declared a red line by French President Emmanuel Macron, and urged the ISSG to exhaust credible alternatives for aid delivery, including airdrops, where land access remains blocked.

“In the face of the shameful state of humanitarian access, the UN and Member States must seek a step-change to ensure aid reaches those in most need, including through airdrops. We fully appreciate that airdrops are not the best means of delivering aid, but they will nonetheless save some lives and may create the leverage required to force the regime’s hand on land delivery. Nor should we hold out hope for regime consent in this endeavor: the regime that uses the Syrian people’s suffering for its political gain will never be a partner in delivering full relief and aid to those in need.”





In parallel, civil society groups stressed the need for comprehensive civilian protection against all indiscriminate attacks. Any ceasefire or de-escalation efforts must be impartially monitored by the UN and credibly enforced with consequences by Member States, according to groups: “We, more than anyone, will support all viable efforts to protect civilians. Sadly the most recent de-escalation agreement was flawed from the outset. A deal that allows parties to the conflict, mainly the Syrian regime and its backers, to commit violations with impunity was never the solution.”



The 141 Syrian Civil Society Organisations call on Mr. Jan Egeland to:

1. Explicitly call on members of the ISSG to break the humanitarian sieges through the effective delivery of airdrops to all those in need across Syria. Member States must provide protection for UN-led airdrop operations or carry out airdrops unilaterally using their own resources if the political will for multilateral action is absent.

2. Demand credible monitoring and enforcement of the de-escalation agreement. The UN, as an observer to the Astana process, must assert its role and ensure that any ceasefire agreement is comprehensive, impartially monitored through the UN, and enforced with concrete consequences for violators by Member States. Make clear that any ceasefire agreement must include sustained and unhindered humanitarian access with credible security guarantees for aid convoys and personnel.

3. Ensure the credibility of political talks in Geneva by calling for comprehensive civilian protection across Syria. The credibility of the Geneva process and the ISSG is at great risk. We need a guarantee that indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure by any weapon will be met with consequences.

The full text of the letter and list of signatories can be accessed [here](#).





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