

Joint Statement

Syrian Civil Society: Without Pressure, Geneva Process Will Fail

SNHR

SYRIAN NETWORK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

الشبكة السورية لحقوق الإنسان

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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



[9 March 2017] Syrian civil society groups are expressing anger and frustration at the failure of peace talks in Geneva to deliver substantive progress to end the suffering of Syrian civilians. As preparations are made for the next round of talks, civil society groups demand that the international community assert more pressure on the parties to the conflict – in particular the Syrian regime and its allies, which utilized the peace talks to intensify their bombardment of innocent civilians.

“We are bitterly disappointed – though not surprised – that the Geneva IV failed to deliver meaningful progress for our people,” Assaad al Achi of [Baytna Syria](#), a Syrian nongovernmental organization, said. “As we have said repeatedly: without a commitment by the international community to apply meaningful pressure on the Syrian regime and its allies, the killing will continue and negotiations will fail.”

“The international community’s refusal to uphold its responsibility to protect Syrian civilians and enforce the Syrian ceasefire only emboldens war criminals and those who seek to scuttle substantive talks on transition”, Fadel Abdul Ghany of the [Syrian Network for Human Rights](#) continued. “While talks were ongoing in Geneva, the Security Council failed to condemn the regime’s proven use of chemical weapons against innocent civilians. Worse, Member States have refused to take the necessary actions to compensate for Security Council deadlock – failing to assert the leadership that the Security Council so obviously lacks.”

“If the next round of Geneva talks is going to succeed, then the international community must take steps now to secure its success. Heading into the next round of talks, members of the International Syria Support Group must develop the leverage needed to stop the killing – and come to Geneva prepared to use it”, al Achi remarked. “It’s high time the international community moved beyond lofty condemnations of the parties to apply concrete consequences for those who violate the ceasefire.”

“The international community has long made a point of stressing the importance of civil society for peace in Syria. Yet our united demands for protection and justice have consistently been ignored”, Abdul Ghany said. “As members of a committed, diverse Syrian civil society and the cornerstone of a free, peaceful Syria—we are clear: the only solution for the Syrian crisis is one that stops the killing that has decimated our communities. We urge our partners in the INGO community to join us in our demand for civilian protection and justice for our people. We must all be clear that future negotiations are jeopardised when parties to the conflict are allowed to kill with impunity.”





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