Uniting for Peace in Syria: Global Civil Society Appeal to UN Member States

The UN Security Council has failed Syrians. In almost six years of conflict, close to half a million people have been killed and eleven million have been forced to leave their homes. Most recently, the Syrian and Russian governments and their allies have carried out unlawful attacks on eastern Aleppo with scant regard for some 250,000 civilians trapped there. Armed opposition groups have also fired mortars and other projectiles into civilian neighbourhoods of western Aleppo, though according to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, "indiscriminate airstrikes across the eastern part of the city by Government forces and their allies are responsible for the overwhelming majority of civilian casualties." Efforts to stop these atrocities and hold those responsible to account have been blocked repeatedly by Russia, which continues to misuse its veto power in the Security Council.

The UN's special envoy to Syria, Staffan de Mistura, has warned that the UN must not allow "another Srebrenica, another Rwanda, which we are sadly ready to recognize written on that wall in front of us, unless something takes place." Yet, there is no sign that the Security Council deadlock will end anytime soon. The guardian of international peace and security has failed to fulfill its task under the UN Charter and has failed to uphold its responsibility to protect the Syrian people.

This is why we, a global coalition of 223 civil society organizations, urgently call upon UN member states to step in and request an Emergency Special Session of the UN General Assembly to demand an end to all unlawful attacks in Aleppo and elsewhere in Syria, and immediate and unhindered humanitarian access so that life-saving aid can reach all those in need. Member states should also explore possible avenues to bring perpetrators of serious crimes under international law on all sides to justice.

We welcome Canada's leadership in seeking UN General Assembly action and we strongly urge all Member States to join the 73 countries from all regions by endorsing their initiative. These countries should work toward an Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly at the earliest opportunity, as UN member states have done in the past when the Security Council was deadlocked.

We call in particular upon the 112 supporters of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) Code of Conduct, which includes a pledge to support "timely and decisive action" aimed at preventing or ending the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, to join this effort and actively promote meaningful action through the UN General Assembly.

Inaction should not be an option. UN member states should use all the diplomatic tools at their disposal to stop the atrocities and protect the millions of civilians in Syria. History will judge harshly those that fail to step up.

Signatories:

ABBAD

Abong - Brazilian Association of NGOs

Abrar Halap Association for Relief and Development*

ActionAid International

Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture (ACAT)

Afghanistan Global Civil Society Consortium (AGCSC)

Africa Atrocities Watch

African Centre for Transitional Justice (ACT-J)

African Youth Initiative Network (AYINET)

Ahl Horan*

Alkawakibi Organisation for Human Rights

Al Seeraj For Development And Healthcare*

Amnesty International

Amrha*

Antiwar Committee in Solidarity with the Struggle for Self-Determination

Arab Human Rights Organization - Libya

Arab Program for Human Rights Activists (APHRA)

Asia Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)

Assistance Mission for Africa (AMA)

Association For Promotion Sustainable Development

Association Medina

Assyrian Human Rights Network (AHRN)

Association de Soutien aux Médias Libres (ASML)

Attaa for Relief and Development (ARD)* Attaa Association* Avaaz Badayl-Goa Badhon Human Development Organization (Badhon Manob Unnayan Sangstha) Balad Syria Organization* Basmeh & Zeitooneh For Relief and Development Basmet Amal Charity* Baytna Syria **Big Heart Foundation** Bihar Relief Organization* **BINAA** for Development Bonyan* Bridge of Peace Broederlijk Delen Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC) Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) **CARE International** Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) Center for the Development of International Law (CDIL) Center for Conflict Resolution (CECORE) Christian Aid UK Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC) Collectif pour une Syrie Libre et Démocratique

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) Concern Worldwide Conectas Human Rights Control Arms Foundation of India Council for Arab-British Understanding (Caabu) **CCFD-Terre Solidaire** Damascene House Foundation for Society Development* Deir Elzzor United Association - FURAT* Democratic Republic Studies Center Doctors of the World UK East African Civil Society Organisations' Forum (EACSOF) Economic Justice Network Sierra Leone Education without borders - MIDAD* Emaar AL Sham Humanitarian Association* Emissa for Development End Impunity Organization (EIO) Enjaz Development foundation* Equitas EuroMed Rights (Euro-Mediterranean Network for Human Rights) Foundation for Democracy and Accountable Governance (FODAG) Fraternity Foundation for Human Rights Fundación Jóvenes y Desarrollo Ghiath Matar Foundation* Ghiras Al Nahda* Ghiras Syria* GOAL Greater Upper Nile, Bahr el Ghazal & Equatoria Youth Association (GUBEYA) Halina Niec Legal Aid Centre (HNLAC) Help 4Syria Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia (MHC) Humanitarian Relief Association - IYD* **Human Appeal** Human Rights Documentation Organization (HURIDO) Human Rights First Society - Saudi Arabia Human Rights Now (HRN) Human Rights Watch (HRW) Hungarian Helsinki Committee Instituto Brasileiro de Analises Sociais e Economicas (IBASE) ICJ Kenya IHH Humantiarian Relief Foundation Independent Doctors Association (IDA) Insan for Psychosocial Support* Instituto de Estudos Socioeconômicos (INESC) Institute for Promotion of Civil Society (IPCS) Instituto Igarapé Intercultural Resources International Alert International Association of World Peace Advocates International Center for Policy and Conflict (ICPC) International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) International Humanitarian Relief* International Rescue Committee (IRC) International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)

International Supporting Woman Association - ISWA*

International Youth For Africa (IYA) Irtiqaa Foundation* Jonglei Development Agency (JODA) Jugend Eine Welt – Don Bosco Aktion Österreich Karam Foundation Kesh Malek KHOI Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation (LAPAS) Maram Foundation for Relief & Development* Médecins du Monde France Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) Middle East and North Africa Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (MENAPPAC) Misiones Salesianas Mother of Hope Cameroon (MOHCAM) Mountain Foundation* Najda now* Nasaem Khair* NGO NO-WAR NETWORK Non C'è Pace Senza Giustizia (No Peace Without Justice) Norwegian Church Aid Nuon Organization for Peace-Building Ohaha Family Foundation (OFF) Organization for Non-violence and Development (ONAD) Orient for Human Relief* Orphan Care Organization Agency (OCOA) [tbc] Oxfam International Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU)

PAX Pax Christi Flanders Peace and Development Collaborative Organization (PDCO) People in Need (PIN) People's Action For Rural Awakening (PARA) People's Empowerment Foundation (PEF) Permanent Peace Movement (PPM) Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) **Protection Approaches** Qitaf Al Khair Relief Association* Quaker Peace and Social Witness Radanar Ayar Rural Development Association Relief International Relief & Reconciliation for Syria Rethink Rebuild Society Revivre Rideau Institute Rwanda Green Initiative [tbc] Saed Charity Association* Sanayee Development Organization (SDO) Save A Soul* Save the Children Sedra Association For Charity* Shama Association* **Shaml Coalition**

Solidarity Ministries Africa for Reconciliation & Development (SMARD)

Snabel Al Khyr*

Souria Houria

South Solidarity Initiative

South Sudan Action Network on Small Arms (SSANSA)

South Sudan Christian Community Agency (SSCCA)

South Sudan Human Rights Society for Advocacy (SSHURSA)

South Sudan Law Society (SSLS)

South Sudan Youth Peace and Development Organization (SSYPADO)

South Sudanese Diaspora Civil Society Network (SSDCSN)

Sri Lanka-United Nations Friendship Organisation (SUNFO)

STAND

Stichting Vluchteling (Netherlands Refugee Foundation)

SUDO (UK)

Syria Charity

Syria NGO Alliance

Syria Relief*

Syria Relief and Development (SRD)

Syria Relief Network (SRN)

Syria Relief Organization*

Syrian American Council

Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS)

Syrian Center For Legal Studies and Research

Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM)

Syrian Center for Statistics and Research (CSR-SY)

Syrian Education Commission - SEC*

Syrian Engineers For Construction and Development Organization - SECD*

Syrian Expatriate Medical Association - SEMA*

Syrian Institute for Justice and accountability

Syrian Institute for Justice Syrian League for Citizenship Syrian Medical Mission* Syrian Network for Human Rights Syrian Orphans Organization* Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ) Takaful Al Sham Charity Organization* **Tearfund** The Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) The Commission for Disappearances and Victims of Violence (KontraS) The Global Centre for Responsibility to Protect The Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (MIGS) The Red Elephant Foundation The Syria Campaign The Syrian Establishment for Human Care & Enhancement – MASRRAT* The Violations Documentation Center in Syria (VDC) Trócaire Tuba Dernegi* Unified Revolutionary Medical Bureau in East Gouta* Union Of Syrians Abroad* URNAMMU Vision GRAM-International Voice for Change (VFC) War Child White Hands - Beyaz Eller* Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Women Monthly Forum

World Federalist Movement—Institute for Global Policy (WFM-IGP)

World Renew

World Vision

Youth Forum on Foreign Policy

Youth for Peace and Development

Youth in Action Balochistan

Youth in Action Nepal

Yuwalaya

Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights)

Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum

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^{*}These organizations are members of the Syria Relief Network (SRN), an umbrella organization of Syrian humanitarian NGOs working inside Syria and neighboring countries to provide relief to Syrians in need of assistance.