



Syrian Civil Society Platform Statement

End the Syrian Tragedy

October, 15th, 2016

The tragedy facing Syrian civilians increased after the recent halt of the US-Russia agreement for ceasefire in Syria. The truce gave hope for initiating a political solution in Syria to solve the daily tragedy of the Syrian people; instead, there was an unprecedented increase in the frequency of violence, and it took unprecedented forms.

The eastern neighbourhoods of the city of Aleppo have seen the worst wave of violence, targeting every medical service facility and residential quarter with all types of cluster weapons and white phosphorous, as well as anti-military fortification weapons, which affected even civilians hiding in shelters. This is in addition to the suffocating siege applied to these neighbourhoods.

Between September 19 and October 10, 2016 the Syrian Civil Society Platform (SCP) documented more than 2,360 air raids on all of Aleppo's neighbourhoods. Those raids put the majority of hospitals and medical points out of service, which led to the almost total paralysis of health service in the city and the loss of emergency medicine. Three Civil Defense centres were also targeted, leading two of them (Ansari and Hanano) to be out of service. In addition to that, the water pumping station in Bab al-Nairab was bombed, and the main water pipe lines in al-Shaar neighbourhood and old Aleppo were destroyed. The Zorba electricity conversion station was targeted on September 22nd, 2016. The bombardment also led to technical damage to power transmission lines, such as the main tension line that feeds Suleiman al-Halabi station, which stopped the pumping of water to entire neighbourhoods of the old city.

All of this represents a collective punishment of the population targeted, leaving them with few ways to survive. Other parts of Syria, where some cities were under three years of truce, witnessed a similar escalation by the Syrian government in order to re-control or "destroy" as one of the negotiators of the Syrian government said to armed opposition groups. This is what happened with Qudsaya, Hameh, al-



Moadamieh and the al-Waeer neighbourhood in Homs. In addition, besieged civilians in Eastern Ghouta, in the Damascus Suburbs, have been exposed to a violent escalation of aerial bombardment.

Syrian civilians, witnessing this increase in violence, have lost their trust in the international community who failed to issue a binding resolution to stop the violence from all parties, lift the siege, deliver humanitarian aid, and evacuate the wounded and the sick for treatment. Despite the tragedies experienced by Syrian civilians every day, they aspire to live in peace, and they hope that the international community will support their demands for the most basic rights to life, freedom and dignity enshrined in international human rights conventions.

The international and regional actors in the Syrian crisis will meet in Lausanne, Switzerland, on October 15th, 2016 and also in London, England on October 16th, 2016. The Syrian Civil Society Platform, seeking to find a solution to alleviate the suffering of Syrian civilians, holds the Russian government responsible for the humanitarian tragedies in Syria, and in Aleppo in particular. The SCP demands that Russia stop the bombing of residential neighbourhoods and tells its ally, the Syrian government, to stop killing and displacing thousands of Syrian civilians.

To the actors who will meet in Lausanne, Switzerland, and London, UK, the Syrian Civil Society Platform recommends:

- A binding resolution for ceasefire that has practical and clear mechanisms for implementation with the presence of observers and supervisors of the implementation.
- Strengthen the principles of ensuring delivery of humanitarian aid for all areas of Syria, which should surpass even VETO.
- Ensure that all service utilities as hospitals, Civil Defense centres, bakeries, markets, and civil gatherings are considered neutral and not targeted by attacks.
- Ensure freedom of movement for civilians, in addition to the evacuation of wounded and sick people.



- Identify humanitarian safe corridors in different areas, approved by all the armed forces on the ground, and ensure that those corridors are considered neutral from the conflict, and not targeted by attacks.
- Develop an international force from neutral countries to oversee the opening of humanitarian crossings with the help of local Syrian civil organizations to bring aid to the besieged areas.
- Establish monitoring task forces run by the Syrian civil organizations located on the ground, so that they can issue daily reports on the violations taking place.
- Include sectarian militias allied to the Syrian government in any ceasefire agreement, since its social sensitivity may lead to fomenting sectarian strife.
- Include Syrian civil society and their participation in any future agreement because their great importance in ensuring that any agreement is applied and enforced on the ground.

In conclusion, the Syrian Civil Society Platform calls on international actors to look for alternative solutions outside of the Security Council to break the monopoly of the great powers who have the power to veto, to stop the intensification of the crisis facing civilians in all areas of the conflict, and to work to amend the Security Council's mechanisms (particularly the abolition of the right to veto), which is considered the most destructive obstacle to world peace. The Syrian Civil Society Platform also emphasizes the need to reinstate the political transition track that can lead to alleviating the suffering of the Syrians and achieving their aspirations, and which will at the same time play a large role in counter-terrorism.