

Sochi Conference Threatens Syria Peace Process

Joint Statement by Syrian Civil Society

3 January 2018

Russia has announced that it will host a “Syrian Congress on National Dialogue” in Sochi. The undersigned organizations believe that such a Conference would not allow meaningful representation and participation for all Syrians, and poses a serious threat to the potential for any viable peace process in Syria.

The signatories recognize the need for a fair and credible national dialogue process. However, the proposed “Syrian Congress on National Dialogue” is neither fair nor credible. It will instead only further undermine the Geneva Peace Process and all relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including Security Council resolution 2254.

Russia’s military intervention in Syria and its repeated use of the veto at the United Nations Security Council makes Russia a party to the conflict. Given its actions in Syria, Russia cannot be regarded as either a neutral mediator or a fair convener of a national dialogue process. The only process that is legitimate or credible is the UN-led process.

Syrian Civil Society acknowledges that the Geneva Process has many flaws, yet it remains the only legitimate political track and the only one perceived as neutral by the Syrian people. It is critical that the UN continue to reaffirm the primacy of Security Council resolution 2254, which established a clear sequencing for a credible political process, starting with political transition, followed by a constitutional referendum and free and fair elections. The Sochi Conference undermines the primacy of UN Security Council resolution 2254 and the UN-led peace process and risks providing legitimacy to the Assad regime. Any participation by the UN Special Envoy for Syria, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, in the Sochi Conference represents a dangerous departure from the UN-led Geneva process.

Any successful peace process must first begin by gaining the trust of the Syrian people. No real transition can occur without accountability for crimes and justice for victims and their families. Equally, no real transition can occur without an end to the ongoing airstrikes and besiegement of civilians or in the absence of a solution for detainees and missing persons.

The undersigned organizations demand the continuation of a credible political process that is UN-led and genuinely engages Syrian civil society, which is united on the need to end the indiscriminate attacks, break the sieges and secure the release of political detainees and arbitrarily-held persons. The international community must be clear that it will not allow the political process to be diverted from achieving the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people, in Sochi or elsewhere.

Signatories:

1. Agriculture engineering syndicate of Daraa
2. Al-Gouta Youth Volunteering Team
3. Alkawakibi Organization for Human Rights
4. Alqunaitra free Governorate Council
5. Baytna Syria
6. Daraa Bar Association
7. Daraa free Governorate Council
8. Decostamine Initiative
9. Detainees' Voice Team
10. Emergency Team in Daraa
11. Emissa for Development
12. Engineers Association - Hama
13. Family issues Directorate in Daraa
14. Free Agriculture directorate in Qunaitra
15. Free Daraa Seeds Association
16. Free Directorate of Real Estate in Daraa
17. Free Directorate of Transportations in Daraa
18. Free engineering syndicate of Daraa
19. Free Syrian Lawyers Aggregation
20. Free Syrian Writers
21. FREE-Syria Foundation
22. FSCSO
23. General Directorate of Civil Registry in Daraa and Qunaitra
24. Ghayth Charity
25. Help4Syria, UK
26. Houran Independent Journalists
27. House Of justice in Daraa
28. Jasmine Dream Organization
29. Kawakibi Center for Transitional Justice and Human Rights
30. Kesh Malek
31. Kurds House
32. Lawadessa Center
33. Local Council of Alghadir
34. Local Council of Alharra
35. Local Council of Alhirak
36. Local Council of Aljizah
37. Local Council of Alkahil
38. Local Council of Alkoum
39. Local Council of Allajat
40. Local Council of Almuhajrin
41. Local Council of Almusifra
42. Local Council of Alqahtanya
43. Local Council of Alsanamin
44. Local Council of Alsawara
45. Local Council of Alsheikh Maskin

46. Local Council of Alsheikh Saad
47. Local Council of Alshwa
48. Local Council of Ataman
49. Local Council of Beir Ajam
50. Local Council of Bousra Alsham
51. Local Council of Bouyda
52. Local Council of Busr Alharir
53. Local Council of Dael
54. Local Council of Daraa Albalad
55. Local Council of Dourwin
56. Local Council of Ebtaa
57. Local Council of Em Batnah
58. Local Council of Em Walad
59. Local Council of Enkhil
60. Local Council of Gharbya Gharya
61. Local Council of Jasim
62. Local Council of Jbab
63. Local Council of Jillin
64. Local Council of Jubata Alkhashab
65. Local Council of Karak
66. Local Council of Khan Arnaba
67. Local Council of Kharab Alshakhim
68. Local Council of Kharbit Ghazala
69. Local Council of Kodana
70. Local Council of Mashara
71. Local Council of Museika
72. Local Council of Muzirib
73. Local Council of Najih
74. Local Council of Namar
75. Local Council of Namir
76. Local Council of Nasib
77. Local Council of Nawa
78. Local Council of Qusaiba
79. Local Council of Rafid
80. Local Council of Saida
81. Local Council of Shariaa
82. Local Council of Sharqia Gharya
83. Local Council of Souesah
84. Local Council of Tafas
85. Local Council of Tal Shihab
86. Local Council of Yadoudah
87. Local Council of Zaizoun
88. Local Development and Small Projects Support (LDSPS)
89. Masar Research Center
90. Mazaya
91. Mouwatana for Civil Action
92. New Syrian Network

93. Obaida Organization
94. Office for the Documentation of Violations in the Southern Region
95. Orphans association in Nahta
96. Peace and Justice for Syria, London
97. Pro Media Group
98. Reformation Assembly in Houran
99. Rethink Rebuild Society
100. Revolutionary Council of Houran
101. Roia Organization
102. Sanad for People with Special Needs
103. Save The Rest Campaign
104. Scotland4Syria
105. Seeds increasing association in Qunaitra
106. Shahid Media Association
107. Shaml Coalition
108. Sonbola Group for Education and Development
109. Sound and Picture Organization
110. Syrian American Council (SAC)
111. Syrian Association of Yorkshire
112. Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression
113. Syrian Civil Defence (The White Helmets)
114. Syrian Concourse of Tomorrow
115. Syrian Freedom Youth for Citizenship and Secularism
116. Syrian Journalists Association (SJA)
117. Syrian Network for Human Rights
118. Syrian Nonviolence Movement
119. Syrian Revolutionary Committee
120. Syrian Society of Nottinghamshire
121. Syrian Welsh Society
122. Syrian Women Association for Development in Qunaitra
123. Syrian Women Association Slalam
124. Syrian Women's Network
125. Syrians for Truth and Justice - STJ
126. Technical services directorate in Qunaitra
127. The Day After
128. The Syrian Authority for Sports and Youth
129. Women Now for Development
130. Working Group for Syria
131. Zaad - Syrische Jeugd Forum
132. Zaiton Magazine
133. Zenobia, Syrian Women's Association