

A Joint Stance on the Need for Responsible Civil Discourse in Light of the Statement Issued by "Madaniya" about Northeast Syria

As the Syrian context grows increasingly fragile and societal divisions persist, the responsibility borne by civil actors becomes ever more significant. In such a critical moment, a principled civil stance is essential to safeguarding social peace, advancing justice, and preventing any slide toward hate or the resurgence of conflict. From this perspective, the undersigned organizations have closely followed the recent [statement](#) issued by the “Madaniya” Network on November 27, 2025, which included several points that raise concerns about the core responsibilities of a network representing more than 250 organizations across the Syrian landscape.

It is not merely a technical matter; it also concerns the integrity of civil discourse, the civil stance, and the ethical and professional responsibilities it carries. The statement put forward a politically biased reading of developments in North and East Syria, undermining the Network’s neutrality, eroding the confidence of communities already lacking proper representation, and reinforcing harmful hate-speech dynamics that have persisted for years in areas outside the Transitional Government’s control.

First: Inconsistent Legal and Human Rights Terminology

The statement employed inconsistent and unjustified labels for affected populations—referring to the residents of Serê Kaniyê/Ras al-Ayn, Afrin, and Tall Abyad as “Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)” in cases of forced displacement, while describing those displaced from Northeast Syria as “displaced persons.” This overlooks clear and internationally recognized standards. Such inconsistency goes beyond a misuse of terminology; it reinforces political narratives that downplay the nature of the violations committed against the residents of Serê Kaniyê/Ras al-Ayn, Afrin, and Tall Abyad. It reflects an unstructured and problematic approach to describing the humanitarian and human rights realities on the ground.

Second: Inconsistency and Fragmented Arguments

The statement highlighted the deterioration of infrastructure without acknowledging its direct causes—among them years of fighting ISIS, bombardment by the former regime, and repeated Turkish military attacks targeting essential and service facilities in North and East Syria. Ignoring these facts strips any discussion about protecting infrastructure of its substance and reduces it to a fragmented narrative that lacks credibility.

Third: Selectivity and Political Bias

The statement employed selective and unbalanced framing of violations. It focused extensively on alleged abuses in North and East Syria while overlooking widespread violations occurring along the frontlines and in areas controlled by the Transitional Government and other actors—including [repeated checkpoint closures and arbitrary, identity-based arrests](#). Such selectivity produces a misleading picture that places the burden of Syria's complex dynamics on North and East Syria, rather than recognizing that violations occur across all areas without exception.

Fourth: Oversimplifying the Political Landscape and the Context of Agreements

The statement overlooked the political and international context surrounding the March 10 Agreement, which emerged from a genuine commitment to initiating a national dialogue under the sponsorship of international actors, foremost among them the United States. The Agreement was not merely the outcome of internal negotiations, as portrayed by the “Madaniya” Network. Such oversimplification diverts the discussion from the foundations of the political process and reduces an event with significant national and international implications to a simplified narrative that fails to reflect the realities of negotiation or the balance of powers shaping it.

Fifth: Overlooking Ongoing Threats and Ignoring the Humanitarian Reality

The statement failed to mention the continued ISIS attacks, which remain a direct threat to security and stability, nor the repeated assaults by armed factions along the frontlines. It also overlooked the severe funding cuts affecting camps, the existence of unrecognized camps that fall entirely outside any humanitarian response, and the deprivation faced by hundreds of thousands of residents due to Turkey's control over the Alouk Water Station and the sources of the Euphrates and Khabur rivers, as well as the closure of crossings to humanitarian and civilian movement. Ignoring these pressing challenges undermines the credibility of any analysis and renders the statement inconsistent with the most basic standards of professionalism.

This interpretation reflects a serious decline in the standards of civil discourse, which should transcend political divisions and uphold the rights of all Syrians without selectivity, bias, or political exploitation. When a statement of this significance comes from a Network representing tens of organizations, its impact goes far beyond a temporary debate: it threatens trust among different segments of society, deepens feelings of exclusion and discrimination, and jeopardizes both civil space and social peace.

In light of our shared responsibility to protect civil space, we call on the “Madaniya” Network to:

1. Call on the “Madaniya” Network, in particular, to review its recent statement, retract it, apologize, learn lessons from it, and return to an approach that reflects its declared commitment to independence and objectivity.
2. Urge all civil actors, including major platforms, to take responsibility for the discourse they produce, ensuring it aligns with the principles of impartiality, inclusiveness, and non-discrimination.
3. Strengthen dialogue among Syrian civil society actors across all regions, including organizations operating in North and East Syria, inside Syria, and in the diaspora, with the aim of overcoming stereotypes and biased positions, and fostering professional cooperation.
4. Adhere to the fundamental principles of civil work by adopting a comprehensive, non-selective, and unbiased approach, grounded in human rights rather than political alignments, to prevent civil statements from being used as tools for polarization or political agendas.
5. Be mindful of the extreme sensitivity of the context in North and East Syria, ensuring that discourse does not, even unintentionally, fuel hate speech or perpetuate patterns of exclusion.

In conclusion, the undersigned organizations affirm that the future of a just Syria cannot be built through statements that deepen divisions or reproduce one-sided narratives. It requires responsible discourse that respects the realities and rights of all communities. The moral and professional responsibility of civil society today is to act as a bridge, not a divider; to protect civil peace rather than undermine it.

The Signatory Organizations (in alphabetical order):

1. Accountability Advocates Organization
2. Act for Afrin
3. Analysis and Strategic Study Organization (ASO)
4. Aras Association
5. Artist Organization for Culture and Development
6. ASHTI Foundation
7. Bader Organization for Community Development
8. Centre Zagros pour les Droits de l'Homme
9. Dan for Relief and Development
10. DAR Association for Victims of Forced Displacement
11. Dar For Peace and Prosperity
12. DemoS Organization
13. Fajr organization

14. Fariq Sunaae al-Mustaqbal
15. Geostrategic Organization for Kurdish Civil Society
16. Green Tress
17. Hori Organisation for Jinan Rights
18. Human rights organization afrin - syria
19. Humanitarian Development Cooperation Organization
20. Jiyan Humanitarian Organization
21. Kobani for Relief and Development
22. Lelun association for victims
23. Life step Environmental Association
24. Malva for Arts, Culture and Education
25. Network of Statelessness Victims in al-Hasakah (NSVH)
26. Nujin Association for Community Development
27. Peace Land Organisation
28. PEACE SHE LEADAR NET WORK
29. Peyam for Development
30. PÊL - Civil Waves
31. RÊ for rehabilitation and development
32. Reng for development
33. Roj kar for Relief and Development
34. Rose for Support and empowerment
35. Salam for Hope Foundation
36. Sara Organization for Combating Violence Against Women
37. SCSD
38. Shams Organization for Rehabilitation and Development
39. Shawshka Women's Association
40. SMART Foundation for Community Development
41. Synergy Association for Victims
42. Tara Organization
43. TBS organization
44. We Care
45. White Hope Organization
46. Women of Tomorrow
47. Zameen for development and peacebuilding