

Urgent Appeal to Protect Civilians and Prevent Escalation

Issued by Civil Society Organizations Operating in Northeast Syria to Members of the International Coalition against ISIS, including the United States, the European Union, and Arab States

We are writing to you from Kobani and al-Hasakah, amid escalating fear and a rapidly deteriorating security and humanitarian environment. Despite the declared ceasefire, the reality on the ground reflects its systematic erosion. Our communities are paying the price through severe shortages of food and medicine, collapsing public services, and overcrowded shelters lacking even the most basic protection and essential services.

As armed actors reposition and tensions intensify, we are witnessing clear indicators of an imminent escalation. There is a credible and growing fear of collective punishment, forced displacement, and sectarian violence targeting predominantly Kurdish areas—patterns that mirror the atrocities recently inflicted on civilians in As-Suwayda and along the Syrian Coast. Continued ceasefire violations are not isolated incidents; they are warnings of a broader collapse that could trigger new mass displacement and widespread violence, hence further exacerbating the humanitarian crisis.

Current data confirms that over 170,000 people have already been displaced from al-Hasakah, Raqqa, and Aleppo, the vast majority women and children. Most of the displaced are being housed into temporary facilities, such as schools, mosques, and public buildings that lack the most basic conditions for survival. Meanwhile, displacement figures continue to rise daily due to ongoing violations.

Within this dire situation, we urgently call on the international Coalition countries to take immediate and decisive action to enforce the ceasefire and ensure strict compliance; They must exert direct and sustained diplomatic pressure to prevent any military escalation, making evident that political dialogue is the only legitimate path to resolving conflicts. We further demand the Coalition member states to instruct their embassies in Damascus to engage urgently and publicly with the Syrian transitional government at the highest levels, to demand full compliance with de-escalation commitments and explicit guarantees for civilian protection—actions that must be both transparent and enduring.

Any collapse of the ceasefire will have catastrophic and foreseeable consequences, including mass displacement, large-scale migration, the siege of cities, the disruption of essential services, and the replication of the Kobani scenario on a much wider scale. Any failure to contain the situation or to take serious preventive measures would place hundreds of

thousands of civilians at collective risk and constitute direct complicity in the violations and crimes that may follow.

Accordingly, we present the following demands as urgent and concrete measures to protect civilians, prevent escalation, and support stability:

- 1- Reject the entry of government forces, or any affiliated or auxiliary armed formations, into predominantly Kurdish areas under any pretext, due to the direct risks this poses to civilians and to social peace. We further demand clear arrangements for the integration of local forces into relevant state institutions in a manner that preserves stability. These arrangements must be enshrined in clear legal provisions within both the Constitutional Declaration and the permanent Constitution.
- 2- Compel all parties to uphold their obligations to protect civilians under International Humanitarian Law, including an explicit prohibition of indiscriminate attacks, collective punishment, forced displacement, sieges, and any measures that lead to starvation or deprivation of essential services.
- 3- Grant immediate and unconditional access to the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (COI) to the affected areas, enabling it to conduct field investigations, document violations, and issue public reports, thereby ensuring accountability and curbing impunity.
- 4- Establish an independent international ceasefire monitoring mechanism to verify violations, including the deployment of international observers and a professional monitoring team, regular public reporting, and a rapid verification process to prevent the recurrence of military confrontations and to protect civilians.
- 5- Guarantee the safe, voluntary, and dignified return of all forcibly displaced persons to their areas of origin, including those displaced from Afrin, Serê Kaniyê/Ras al-Ayn, and Tell Abyad, with protections for property rights, prevention of unlawful seizure, and the provision of fair compensation and reparations.
- 6- Prohibit the use of sieges and the cutting of services as tools of pressure—including water, electricity, telecommunications, and medical supplies—and ensure unhindered humanitarian access to Kobani, al-Hasakah, and surrounding rural areas.
- 7- Implement concrete accountability measures, urging international partners to define clear consequences for any party proven to be involved in violations, such as targeted sanctions, asset freezes, travel bans, and conditioning any political or financial support on demonstrable compliance with civilian protection obligations.
- 8- Support a binding constitutional process that entrenches decentralization and robust local governance, with clearly defined and broad authorities, as a means to safeguard populations and ensure stability in Northeast Syria.
- 9- Guarantee the meaningful participation of civil society representatives and local bodies in any negotiation processes or security and administrative arrangements concerning the affected areas, ensuring genuine representation, enhancing

transparency, and preventing the imposition of coercive arrangements that would fuel renewed conflict.

Finally, we remind you that these communities stood on the front lines of the fight against ISIS, paying an immense price in blood and destruction. Abandoning them now would leave civilians vulnerable to forced displacement and violence, while further destabilizing an already fragile region.

The Signatory Organizations (in alphabetical order):

1. ACCESS
2. Accountability Advocates Organization
3. Afrin media center
4. Ahimsa for nonviolence
5. Ambassadors Association for Persons with Disabilities
6. Aras Association
7. Ashavan Organization For culture, coexistence and tolerance
8. ASHNA for Development
9. ASHTI Foundation
10. ASO Center for Consultancy and Strategic Studies
11. Aso News Network
12. Diaspora friends aidgroup for kurdistan
13. Dijla Organization for Development and Environment
14. Ella organization for Development and peacebuilding
15. Emma organization
16. Navenda kurdin Aachen
17. Enlil Center
18. Ezdina Organization
19. Fajr organization
20. Humanitarian and Development Cooperation Organization
21. Jiyan Foundation for Human rights
22. Jiyan Organization - JHO
23. justice network for prisoners
24. Kobani for Relief and Development
25. Komela kurde le swissra
26. Kurdischer kulturverein wolfsburg e.v
27. Network of Statelessness Victims in al-Hasakah - NSVH
28. Payam for Mental Health
29. PEACE SHE LEADAR NET WORK
30. PÊL- Civil Waves
31. Peyam Organization for development
32. Platform Syrische Koerden in Nederland
33. RÊ for rehabilitation and development
34. Roj Ava - RORD
35. Roj Kar Relief and Development Organization

36. Rony peywend
37. Rose for support and empowerment
38. Salam for hope
39. Shams NGO
40. SHAR for Development
41. Shawshka Women's Association
42. Synergy Association for Victims
43. Taa marbouta
44. TEVIN
45. Vejîn initiative
46. We Care
47. Yasna Rojava Organization for the Development of Zoroastrian Philosophy