

Syrian CSOs Urge Renewal of Core Mandate of Commission of Inquiry on Syrian Arab Republic Under Item 4

Ahead of the 61st Session of the Human Rights Council, the signatory Syrian civil society organisations urge Member States to renew the mandate of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic in full under Item 4 of the Council's agenda.

Although the fall of the Assad regime has altered the political context, the Commission's role is more critical than ever. At this pivotal stage, its findings and recommendations can meaningfully contribute to tangible accountability and institutional reform. For over a decade, the CoI has established the most authoritative and credible record of violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law in Syria. Its rigor and impartiality provides an essential benchmark against which domestic accountability processes can be measured. Far from undermining national institutions, international independent accountability mechanisms strengthen their credibility by reinforcing adherence to international standards.

Despite the fall of the Assad regime and the steps undertaken by the Syrian transitional government, the human rights situation in Syria continues to meet the threshold for Item 4 scrutiny. In 2025, grave violations have persisted, including massacres in the [Coastal areas](#) and in [Sweida](#) as well as the abductions of women, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, and other abuses committed by multiple actors. These violations, and their re-occurrence in early 2026, demonstrate that the gravity and scale of abuses remain of serious concern.

The actions taken by the transitional government in this regard still lack the trust and confidence of the affected communities, and still fall short of international standards of independence, impartiality, transparency and access to effective remedies for victims. This further underscores the importance for full renewal of CoI under Item 4 in order to ensure credibility and confidence in the justice process, and to show transitional government's willingness to build trust with affected communities.

Moreover, fundamental questions regarding the inclusivity of Syria's transition and its adherence to rule of law and political and civil rights remain unresolved. Sustained international engagement through a strong, independent, and adequately resourced Commission remains essential to support Syria toward a transition that is inclusive and fully compliant with international human rights standards.

Shifting Syria from Item 4 or imposing any change to its core mandate, work and power is premature and not reflective of the reality on the ground, especially in regards to lack of access to justice for victims. Any such changes should not be the result of abrupt and unilateral political decisions taken shortly before a Council session, but rather must be the result of sustained dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry and Syrian civil society, affected communities and victims' associations. Furthermore, any exit strategy should only be based on objective criteria relating to the human rights situation, and on tangible improvement and independently verified progress in accountability and institutional reform.

Any change to the Col's mandate or agenda item would erode accountability, marginalise victims and jeopardize the prospects for a future Syria founded on justice, equality before the law and respect for human rights.

Signatories:

1. ADAD
2. Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR)
3. Action for Sama
4. Amal Healing and Advocacy Center
5. ASO Center for Consultancy and Strategic Study
6. Badael
7. Baladna Organization
8. Baytna
9. Bidayetna
10. Caesar Families Association
11. Center for Civil Society and Democracy
12. Civil Center
13. Civil Society Empowerment Unit (CSE Unit)
14. Dar Justice
15. Dawlaty
16. Equal Citizenship Center (ECC)
17. Families for Freedom
18. Families of Truth and Justice
19. Free Syrian Lawyers Association
20. ForFeminist Organization
21. Hevy for Relief and Development
22. House of Citizenship Organization
23. Huquqyat
24. Human Rights Guardians
25. Humanitarian and Development Cooperation (HDC)
26. Justice for Life (JFL)
27. Kurdish Journalists Network
28. Lelun Association for Victims
29. Local Development and Small-Projects Support (LDSPS)
30. Malva Organization for Arts, Culture and Education
31. Media for Women
32. Mnemonic – Syrian Archive
33. PEACE SHE LEADER NETWORK
34. PÊL – Civil Waves

35. Rose for Support and Empowerment
36. Syrian Center for Media and Freedom of Expression (SCM)
37. Seen for Civil Peace
38. Synergy Association for Victims
39. Syrian Feminist Lobby
40. Syrian Legal Development Programme (SLDP)
41. Syrians for Truth and Justice (STJ)
42. Ta'afi Initiative
43. The Day After
44. The Syria Campaign
45. Transformative Pathways
46. Truth Guardians Foundation
47. Women Now for Development
48. Women Now for Development Lebanon
49. Women of Tomorrow